CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CUSTOMER AND CENTRAL SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at Room 15, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Monday, 24 January 2011

PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)
Cllr D J Hopkin (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs	J A E Clarke	Cllrs	R W Johnstone
	P A Duckett		D Jones

Apologies for Absence:	Cllrs	M Gibson
		Ms J Nunn

Substitutes:	Cllrs	P Snelling (In place of Ms J Nunn)
		J N Young (In place of M Gibson)

Members in Attendance:	Cllr	R C Stay

Officers in Attendance:	Mr I Brown	– Interim Assistant Director Assets
	Mr B Carter	– Overview and Scrutiny Manager
	Mr R Ellis	– Director of Customer and Shared Services
	Mr C Jones	– Assistant Director Customer and Systems
	Mr L Manning	– Committee Services Officer

CCS/10/122 Members' Interests

    (a)   **Personal Interests:-**

    None.

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

    None.

    (c)   **Any political whip in relation to any agenda item:-**

    None.

CCS/10/123 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman advised the meeting that the running order of the agenda had been changed. Item 10 (Your Space) would now be considered before Item 9 (ICT Strategy) because the presenting officer for the latter had been delayed.

CCS/10/124 **Petitions**

No petitions were received from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Part D2 of the Constitution.

CCS/10/125 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

No questions, statements or deputations were received from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

CCS/10/126 **Call-In**

No decisions of the Executive were called-in to be reviewed in accordance with the Call-In Procedure as set out in Part D2 of the Constitution.

CCS/10/127 **Requested Items**

No items were referred to the Committee for consideration at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

CCS/10/128 **Portfolio Holders' Updates**

Members were aware that consideration of this item had been deferred by the previous meeting of the Committee (minute 10/112 refers).

Members noted that the Portfolio Holders for Customers, Systems and Assets and Finance, Governance and People had been unable to attend the meeting.

The Committee received a verbal update from the Portfolio Holder for Policy and Performance. The Portfolio Holder reported that the Authority was making good progress in achieving efficiencies and, based on the data available as at 26 October 2010, he would be surprised if the Council did not meet its efficiency target.

The Portfolio Holder referred to the Council's engagement agenda and the meetings organised under the title of 'Lets Talk Together'. The Committee noted that the first of the meetings had been held at Cranfield and the second was due to be held that evening at Sandy.   The Portfolio Holder stated that the

first meeting had seen attendance by a range of public bodies and positive feedback on its value.

The Portfolio Holder reported that positive feedback had also been forthcoming from the latest town and parish council meeting. He added that the next one was scheduled to be held in October.

Turning next to the revamp of Performance Indicators the Portfolio Holder reported that these were currently out to consultation.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the local Chief Executives' Forum had developed four business cases around Total Place and the most important dealt with procurement.

The meeting was advised that the Council's upgraded web site would launch, on time, in April.

The Portfolio Holder reminded the Committee that briefings, meetings and consultation were ongoing with regard to the Budget.

The Committee noted that the latest edition of News Central would be published in the following week. Although £25k had been received in advertising this sum had not covered the production costs in full. The Portfolio Holder stated that the magazine had been generally well received and the option existed to go online.

The Portfolio Holder stated that, following a request by Members, an emergency contact sheet was being drawn up. He also stated that the Members' Year Book would be available in a filofax style format.

Following comments by the Chairman regarding the difficulty experienced by his wife in registering a complaint the Portfolio Holder asked that details be sent to him so he could take action.

The Vice-Chairman commented that the times originally given for the 'Lets Talk Together' meeting at Leighton Buzzard had apparently been incorrect and new, later, times of 7.00 – 9.00 p.m. had been emailed to him. He sought clarification as to between what times the meeting would take place. In response the Portfolio Holder explained that the original times given were only suggested times and he confirmed that the meeting would now be held between 7.00 p.m. and 9.00 p.m.   Following a further query by the Vice-Chairman the Portfolio Holder stated that he would investigate when local residents would be notified of the change in times and advise the Vice-Chairman.

A Member queried the cost of arranging the 'Lets Talk Together' sessions. The Portfolio Holder stated that the costs were not great and arose mainly from officer time, the hire of the hall and advertising. He added that he wished to see the sessions build on and enhance what had gone before. Arising from this discussion the Chairman requested that, at the end of the process, an evaluation of the exercise be undertaken to include: an analysis of costs

(including staff time), the numbers of public present (with Members of local authorities recorded separately) and of any lessons learnt. It was agreed that the matter would be discussed after Easter.

CCS/10/129   **Your Space**

The Committee received a presentation by the Director of Customer and Shared Services which analysed the Council's Your Space programme through an examination of the key drivers, the programme scope, omissions from the original brief, chronology, outcomes versus objectives, lessons to be learnt and a summary. In addition a list of the proposed benefits of the programme was provided. A copy of the presentation is attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

The Director explained that although the programme had originally been commissioned in the summer of 2009 he had evaluated it against the most recent and complete business case from March 2010.

A Member raised a number of queries regarding the excess travel payments made to staff as a result of their relocation and the current position regarding Technology House. In response the Director explained that contracts issued by the legacy District Councils stated that staff were expected to work anywhere within the relevant District boundaries. This had emerged as a shortcoming when staff were relocated within the new, enlarged boundaries of Central Bedfordshire Council and it had proved necessary to make payments for 'excess' travel (known as 'Appendix E payments' because the relevant terms and conditions were contained in Appendix E of the Green Book). He added that negotiations were being held with the unions on changing employees' terms and conditions including the travel payments. The Director also added that new employees were expected to work anywhere within Central Bedfordshire and that it was not expected that any further staff relocations would require such payments to be made to any employees.

With regard to office requirements the Director referred to proposed changes through the widespread introduction of homeworking and 'hot desking', the changes in general desk allocation to staff and reductions in employee numbers. Arising from these points it was apparent that the Council could, in the future, operate from the administrative headquarters buildings at Dunstable and Chicksands. It was probable that the Council would be able to vacate Technology House within the next four years.

Discussion took place on the omissions from the original brief including travel payments and car parking provision following which the Chairman requested that copies of Appendix E be circulated to Members for examination.

The Chairman commented that the original aim of Your Space had been changed from simply relocating staff from their accommodation in County/Borough Hall, Bedford to new accommodation in Technology House, Bedford to the relocation of whole teams to different offices and that this had been carried out without reviewing the original business case. He also referred

to the costs which had arisen with regard to staff travel and the lower than estimated level of overall savings. With these issues in mind the Chairman was of the opinion that improved project planning was necessary and it would be a worthwhile exercise to re-examine the original programme to establish what could be learnt.

Whilst acknowledging that lessons had been learnt, and others were still to be learnt, the Portfolio Holder for Policy and Performance reminded the meeting of the difficult circumstances, particularly with regard to staff accommodation at County/Borough Hall, which the Council faced at that time and the need to take action as quickly as was possible.

The Chairman queried desk numbers and usage and the Interim Assistant Director Assets advised that a survey had revealed that between 33-38% of desks were empty on a day by day basis. The Chairman commented on the potential for large efficiency savings through moving away from the concept of personal desks and to adopting multiuser workstations as the norm.

In response to a Member's query regarding the location of approximately 5% of the Council's front line services outside both Central Bedfordshire and Bedford the meeting was advised that these were services shared with other bodies.

The Chairman commented that approximately 50% of Central Bedfordshire staff remained users of that part of Central Bedfordshire Council's ICT network located at Bedford Borough Council. In response the Director explained that Your Space had aimed to consolidate 18 office locations (including County/Borough Hall and Melbourne House in Bedford) into five, primarily focussed on the three main sites of Priory House, Watling House and Technology House, and that this had been achieved. ICT provision was a separate issue and it was hoped to accelerate the pace of change in this area.

The Portfolio Holder for Policy and Performance referred to the progress of the new Job Centre Plus arrangements, which had just been signed off, as an example of what could be achieved with regard to shared accommodation. He advised that three organisations would share premises in Biggleswade, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard in an agreement which was the first of its kind.

With regard to the Chairman's request to re-examine the Your Space programme the Director reminded the meeting that two years had passed since the original briefing and that many of the officers involved had since left the Authority taking with them their knowledge and experience of this matter. Nonetheless the Chairman was of the opinion that a number of lessons could still be learnt and that a Member Task Force should be formed to undertake this work.

RESOLVED

that the Committee form a Task Force in six months time in order to carry out a full review of the Your Space programme from beginning to end and to identify, in particular, any lessons to be learnt.

NOTED

the presentation.

CCS/10/130   **ICT Strategy**

The Committee considered a presentation by the Assistant Director Customer and Systems which outlined the main principles of the Council's ICT Strategy, along with the overall vision, objectives, current and future challenges and influences, proposed key programmes and the key outcomes. A copy of the presentation is attached at Appendix B to these minutes.

The meeting was aware that the draft ICT Strategy was scheduled to be submitted to the meeting of the Executive in March and the Committee's views were sought so they could be included within the consultation. The Chairman asked that any detailed comments be emailed directly to the Assistant Director.

The Chairman commented that a clear, overarching ICT Vision which covered the options available had not been included. In response the Assistant Director explained that the options would be present in the individual business cases.

Turning next to the use of SAP the Chairman queried if the Council should consider whether it needed to change the way in which it worked and whether it was willing to do so. He suggested that, alternatively, the Council could consider no longer using SAP. The Assistant Director Customer and Shared Services acknowledged that, whilst the question was whether to optimise the use of SAP or use another means of undertaking the work, the emphasis was on the need to first optimise the use of SAP to establish whether it was suitable or not before taking action to seek an alternative. He added that processes and utilisation formed part of the Strategy. The Chairman asked that it be made clear that organisational change might be needed.

The Assistant Director stated that whilst ICT was the physical enabler the efficiencies were dependent on implementation.

A Member queried the position regarding the merger of the legacy data bases given that this impacted on the implementation of SAP. In response the Assistant Director stated that the merger was scheduled for September.

NOTED

the presentation.

CCS/10/131   **Short Term Corporate Asset Management Plan**

The Committee considered a report by the Portfolio Holder for Customers, Systems and Assets which set out the Council's Interim Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) for 2011/12.

The meeting discussed maintenance related issues including the growing level of backlog maintenance and the lack of funding to reduce this. Discussion also took place regarding the disposal of assets. Arising from this discussion a Member referred to land in Biggleswade and queried its proposed use for the provision of 17 football pitches. In response the Interim Assistant Director Assets assured the Committee that under the existing asset disposal protocol alternative uses would be considered. Either a planning brief could be drawn up setting out the types of land use that could be acceptable or, alternatively, the land could simply be placed on the market to see what proposals emerged. The Chairman stressed the need to ensure that the maximum value was obtained for the Council's assets.

In response to a query by the Chairman regarding the opportunity to examine the Council's strategy for vacating leased buildings the Interim Assistant Director Assets stated that the modelling was already finished and the work in full would be completed within the next few months. A report would be submitted during the new Council.

NOTED

the Interim Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) for 2011/12.

CCS/10/132   **Work Programme 2010-2011 and Executive Forward Plan**

Members were aware that consideration of this item had been deferred by the previous meeting of the Committee (minute 10/112 refers).

The Committee received its current work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan. Members were advised that there were no reports to be submitted to the February meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED

that the meeting of the Customer and Central Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee scheduled to take place on 21 February 2011 be cancelled as there are no reports to be considered.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 2.00 p.m. and concluded at 4.20 p.m.)

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Presentation to
Customer & Central Services
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
24th January 2011

Key Drivers for Your Space

- Better utilisation & rationalisation of CBC property assets
- Customer service – accessibility to customers & communities
- Joint occupancy arrangements impacting on staff morale and productivity – need to create CBC culture & identity
- Co-location of service teams
- Flexibility – smarter working opportunities for staff
- Creation of a common CBC ICT platform
- Enhance member facilities at HQ

Programme Scope

- Reduce 18 buildings down to 5
  - 3 key sites at Priory House, Dunstable, and Technology House
- Accommodation & ICT improvements for c1600 people
- Create a single ICT network from 4 existing networks
- Migrate 674 applications to the CBC network
- Merge 3 phone systems and allocate 1500 numbers

yourspace

Developing and Connecting
Central Bedfordshire Council

Omissions from original brief

- Requirements:-
  - Car parking facilities
  - Senior Member/Officer accommodation at PH
  - Co-location of teams and Access to customers

- Governance:-
  - Effective Programme Management
  - Member involvement
  - Comms/engagement programme
  - Appendix E costs

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Chronology

Executive agreed original Business case	July 2009
Executive agree extension to timescales	Dec 2009
Revised Business Case agreed	Mar 2010
Programme governance reviewed	Mar 2010
Programme completed	Aug 2010

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Outcomes vs objectives

A) Financial Benefits

Spend	£m budget	£m spend
Capital	4.966	4.766
Revenue	Nil	0.200

Return on investment:

- £1.100m revenue savings over four years
- £0.5m pa thereafter

Outcomes vs Objectives

B) Customer Service Benefits

Of front line services:-

- Approx 70% located in Central Beds (was 50%)
- Approx 25% located in Bedford (was 47%)

Outcomes vs Objectives

C) Working environment benefits

- Co-location of teams – productivity gains
- Staff satisfaction with place of work:-
  - 59% in 2009
  - 73% in 2010
- Modern/refurbished facilities on 3 key sites
- Increased access to meeting facilities

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Central Bedfordshire Council

Central Bedfordshire

Outcomes vs Objectives

Central Bedfordshire

D) Technology benefits

- ICT/telephony
  - Single IT network at 3 key sites
  - 674 IT applications migrated
  - Single telephony application (from 3)
  - MFDs roll-out
- Flexible working
  - Enabling home/mobile workers
  - Remote conference calling
  - Increased hot desking/drop down facilities

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Lessons to be learned

- Improved decision making

- Governance arrangements

- Programme Management

- Communications & Engagement

- Financial management of projects

Summary

- Massive organisational change programme, delivered to time and budget
- £1.1m revenue benefit over 4 years
- Optimisation of Property assets
- Improved staff working environments and morale
- Enhanced facilities and flexible working
- Single ICT and telephony platform for major sites and majority of staff
- Established basis for further rationalisation of property estate via Med Term Accommodation Plan
- And…..a number of valuable lessons for the future

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Central Bedfordshire Council

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ITC Strategy Principles

Overview & Scrutiny Committee Consultation

24th January 2011

Presentation by Clive Jones, Assistant Director Customer and Systems

Central Bedfordshire Council

Contents

1. Consultation Objectives

2. ICT Strategy Principles

3. Next Steps

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Consultation Objectives

1. Inform members at an early stage of the initial thinking on the ICT Strategy

2. To seek the committees input

3. To seek the committees view on next steps

Background

- Since vesting day major property rationalisation. Still 90 locations

- 48% access systems via Bedford Borough network

- Over 50 ICT improvement projects under way currently. Many national and local initiatives

Central Bedfordshire Council

Current National Challenges

- Comprehensive Spending Review 2010

- Personalisation of adult social care

- Changes to the Benefits System

- The Government ICT Strategy, in particular its "Data Centre Rationalisation" and "The Government Cloud"

Future National Challenges

- Move of preventative health services responsibilities back into the council
- Launch of academies and free schools
- The Munro Review – Child protection
- Changes in the National Health Service

Service Local Challenges

- Supporting the Adult Social Care Recovery programme

- Supporting the transformation of learning and education infrastructure

- The continued harmonisation and rationalisation of applications in Sustainable Communities

- Total Place Access to Benefits Implementation

Central Bedfordshire Council

Corporate Local Challenges

- The Council's priorities
- Supporting the medium term financial strategy
- Disaggregation of ICT from Bedford Borough
- Increased mobile and home working
- Demand for ICT services outstripping resource and support for the C&SS Recovery Programme

Central Bedfordshire Council

ICT Vision

To become the invisible enabler of service delivery for our partners, suppliers and citizens.

Therefore the strategy must ensure the ICT infrastructure is:

- *Fit for a future where service delivery will be to many user communities from many devices and locations*
- *Value for money in these difficult economic times*
- *Integrated, ensuring efficient and effective use of information organised around the service user needs.*

Central Bedfordshire Council

Future Influences

- Pressure on office accommodation driving more home and mobile working

- More sharing of service delivery with other partners

- Increased demand for 24 x 7 x 365 availability

- Simplify the capturing of information and the reporting and access to information.

Central Bedfordshire Council

Proposed Key Programmes

- Application Infrastructure Programme

- Customer Management Programme

- Total Place Programme

- Enterprise Content Management Programme

- Enhancing Social Care Programme

- ICT Recovery Programme

Data Centre Comparison

Benefit	Data Centre (Current Position)	Hosted Public Sector Shared (Proposed)
Increasing speed and flexibility	Yes	Yes
Storage of sensitive data	Yes	Yes
Regulation sensitive data	Yes	Yes
Managed Infrastructure	No	Yes
24X7 Operation	No	Yes
Application Sharing	No	Yes
Best Value	No	Yes

Central Bedfordshire Council

Strategy Outcomes

- A stable and secure ICT voice and data network
- A value for money ICT infrastructure
- A self-service web environment to deliver the best service at lowest cost
- Accurate, timely and appropriate management information
- An architecture that meets the customers' expectations.
- Programme and project management that delivers ICT enhancements to time, cost and quality

ICT Strategy Next steps

Central Bedfordshire

- Obtain feedback from O&S committee

- Develop Strategy

- Portfolio Holder brief Leadership team

- Publish Strategy to staff and Members

- Adoption by Executive

Target publication in March 2011

Central Bedfordshire Council