

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



**please ask for** Bernard Carter  
**direct line** 0300 300 4175  
**date** 17 November 2011

## NOTICE OF MEETING

### CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date & Time

**Tuesday, 29 November 2011 10.00 a.m.**

Venue at

**Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford**

Richard Carr  
**Chief Executive**

To: The Chairman and Members of the CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

Cllrs Mrs D B Gurney (Chairman), N B Costin (Vice-Chairman), P N Aldis, D Bowater, Mrs S Clark, A L Dodwell, P Hollick, K Janes, I A MacKilligan and R B Pepworth

[Named Substitutes:

P A Duckett, Mrs S A Goodchild, Ms C Maudlin, A Shadbolt and N J Sheppard]

Co-optees: Mrs Beattie (Parent Governor), Ms Copley (Parent Governor), Ms Image (Roman Catholic Diocese), Mr Landman (Parent Governor) and Mr Reynolds (Church of England Diocese)

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**

Apologies for absence and notification of substitute members.

2. **Minutes**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 October 2011 and to note actions taken since that meeting.

3. **Members' Interests**

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
- (c) any political whip in relation to any agenda item.

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

To receive any announcements from the Chairman and any matters of communication.

5. **Petitions**

To receive petitions from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

6. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

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

7. **Call-In**

To consider any decision of the Executive referred to this Committee for review in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.10 of Part D2.

8. **Requested Items**

To consider any items referred to the Committee at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

## Reports

<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page Nos.</b>
9	<b>Adoption and Fostering Processes</b>  To receive a presentation regarding the Council's adoption and fostering processes.	*
10	<b>Children Centres; Delivery in Central Bedfordshire</b>  To consider a draft report regarding the delivery of Children Centres in Central Bedfordshire.	* 9 - 28
11	<b>The Future of Special Schooling in the South of Central Bedfordshire</b>  To receive a verbal update regarding alternative proposals for special schooling in the south of Central Bedfordshire.	*
12	<b>Customer Feedback - Complaints, Compliments Annual Report</b>  To consider the Council's annual report regarding Children's Services complaints and compliments.	* 29 - 48
13	<b>Work Programme 2011 - 2012 &amp; Executive Forward Plan</b>  The report provides Members with details of the currently drafted Committee work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.	* 49 - 72

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**CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 18 October 2011

**PRESENT**

Cllr Mrs D B Gurney (Chairman)  
Cllr N B Costin (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:	P N Aldis Mrs S Clark A L Dodwell	Councillors:	P Hollick I A MacKilligan
Parental Co-optees:	S Beattie H Copley D Landman		
Apologies for Absence:	Cllrs	D Bowater K Janes R B Pepworth  J Reynolds Mrs F Image	
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	Mrs S A Goodchild  D Jones M A G Versallion  P Williams	Executive Member for Children's Services
Officers in Attendance:	Mr K Armstead  Mr B Carter  Mrs E Grant  Dawn Hill	Senior Education Officer (Planning)  Corporate Scrutiny & Research Manager Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services Senior Finance Manager - Children's Services	

CS/11/48 **Minutes**

During consideration of this item, a Member raised the issue of the Committee visiting a Children's Centre, which had been discussed at the last meeting. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services confirmed that such a visit would be arranged immediately prior to the November meeting.

With reference to the request made at the last meeting regarding Youth Support Services, the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services

circulated a briefing paper outlining the commissions awarded in relation to these services.

## **RESOLVED**

**that the Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6 September 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

CS/11/49

### **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

Cllr Norman Costin.

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

None.

CS/11/50

### **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman had no announcements.

CS/11/51

### **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.

CS/11/52

### **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

The Chairman confirmed that no questions, statements or deputations from members of the public had been received in accordance with Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

CS/11/53

### **Call-In**

The Panel was advised that no decisions of the Executive had been referred to the Panel under the Call-in Procedures set out in Appendix "A" to Rule No. S18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

CS/11/54

### **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.

CS/11/55

### **Base Budget Review**

The Executive Member for Children's Services presented the Base Budget Review report, which proposed the budget for the Children's Services directorate for the financial year 2012/13. In doing so, he wished to congratulate the Director and her financial team in particular for the work done

to date to achieve a base budget position in 2012/13, which contained a relatively small pressure of £0.172M (when set against a total budget of £35.743M).

Members of the Committee discussed the contents of the report in detail and raised the following key issues:

- The forecast overspend in Children’s Services operations due to the ongoing pressures within the child protection and children in care budgets and the thresholds used by the directorate when assessing cases; and
- The affect on staffing levels, morale, recruitment and retention as a result of revised terms and conditions and the Directorate’s programme for career development and progression within the service;

In considering this item, Members acknowledged that a further more detailed Draft Budget 2012/13 report would be presented to their December meeting. The Director said that whilst thresholds were challenging, she felt that the recent unannounced inspection had validated her view that children remained as safe as possible.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the report be noted.**

CS/11/56

**Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring**

The Executive Member for Children’s Services presented the Quarter 1 Performance report, which highlighted performance within the Children’s Services directorate for the first quarter of 2011/12. In doing so, he wished to thank the Director and her team for the hard work thus far in achieving good performance across all key directorate indicators.

Members of the Committee discussed the contents of the report in detail and raised the following key issues:

- Concerns over the difficulty in encouraging effective partnerships between some schools. In this respect, the Executive Member gave his assurance that he was doing all that he could politically to encourage greater partnership working and noted positively that the advent of academy schools would help given the legislative duty of these schools to partner;
- The drop in performance regarding CS1, the percentage of initial assessments within seven working days of referral (albeit acknowledging that performance was still better than target);
- The 2011/12 target percentage of children in need that led to initial assessments compared to the previous year; and
- The rationale behind target setting and comparison with statistical neighbours.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the report be noted.**

CS/11/57

**School Organisation Plan**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services delivered a presentation to the Committee, which covered standards and school organisation in Central Bedfordshire. The presentation was supplemented by additional handouts, which signposted Members to the School Organisation Plan itself and provided further details regarding process.

Members of the Committee discussed the contents of the presentation in detail and raised the following key issues:

- The implications surrounding any move by a school to change its age range and the impact on neighbouring schools;
- The role of the Council in improving educational attainment;
- The ability of the Council to plan for growth and manage admission criteria and perceived "catchment areas";
- The delegated role of the Executive Member in decision making and potential conflicts of interest;
- The ability of schools to organise themselves independent of local or national government control and the impact this has on the Council's ability to effect collaboration and partnerships; and
- The statutory consultation process and the role of the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the report be noted.**

CS/11/58

**Work Programme 2011 - 2012 & Executive Forward Plan**

The Committee considered its current Work Programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the Children's Services OSC Work Programme be noted.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 11.30 a.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated .....



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**Meeting:** Overview and Scrutiny  
**Date:** 29 November 2011  
**Subject:** Children Centres; Delivery in Central Bedfordshire.  
**Report of:** Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services.  
**Summary:** Attached at Appendix A is a draft Executive Report on the reconfiguration of Children Centres. The Committee is asked to note the content and make comment on the report. The new contracts for Children Centres will be awarded from April 2012.

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**Advising Officer:** Edwina Grant Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services.  
**Contact Officer:** Catherine Parry Assistant Director Children's Services Operations (Acting).  
**Public/Exempt:** Public.  
**Wards Affected:** All.  
**Function of:** Council.

#### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Council Priorities:**

The Report supports Priority 2 of Central Bedfordshire's Strategic Plan 2009-2011, Educating, Protecting and Providing Opportunities for Children and Young People and the Children and Young People's Plan Priority; Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention.

**Financial:**

This is laid out in the Executive paper.

These proposals will not increase costs for the Council.

**Legal:**

The legal framework is set in the draft report.

**Risk Management:**

Risk Management is set out in the report.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

None for the Council.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

Adherence to Human Rights and Equality issues is maintained.

**Community Safety:**

There are no new community safety issues arising from the Report.

**Sustainability:**

If the Early Intervention Grant is not extended beyond 2013 the Council will need to review the funding source for Children's Centres. This will require a review of the provision.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the content of the report and make comment.**

Appendices:

Appendix A – Executive Report – Children Centres; Delivery in Central Bedfordshire

Appendix A - **DRAFT**

**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 10 January 2012.  
**Subject:** Children Centres; Delivery in Central Bedfordshire.  
**Report of:** Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children Services.  
**Summary:** This report outlines proposals for the reconfiguration of Central Bedfordshire Children Centres to be implemented by March 2012.

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Advising Officer: Edwina Grant Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children Services  
Contact Officer: Catherine Parry Assistant Director Children Services Operations (Acting)  
Public/Exempt: Public  
Wards Affected: All  
Function of: Executive  
Key Decision Yes  
Reason for urgency/  
exemption from call-in Not Applicable.  
(if appropriate)

**CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Council Priorities:**

This Report supports Priority 2 of Central Bedfordshire's Strategic Plan 2009-2011, Educating, Protecting and Providing Opportunities for Children and Young People. It also supports the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan Priority; Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention.

**Financial:**

Appendix A - **DRAFT**

1. The Children Centres are funded through the allocation of Early Intervention Grant the total annual cost is £2.1 Million.

The Grant is not secured post March 2013, however nationally many Local Authorities have funded their Children Centres and other provisions to ensure effective use of the Grant and release base budget for other activities. In October 2011, the Children's Minister gave a verbal commitment to the continuation of the Grant until 2015.

The current contracts cease in March 2012 requiring new tenders and contracts to be completed and awarded from March 2012. The funding position will be made clear to new providers during this process.

None of the proposals would increase costs for the Council.

**Legal:**

2. The legal framework is set in the 2006 Childcare Act; this was amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009).

The 2009 legislation included a Sufficiency Requirement; this requires the Council to make sufficient provision' to meet local need. The level of need is locally determined by partnership work and service user consultation.

Children Centres are subject to Ofsted inspection. To date no Centres in Central Bedfordshire have been inspected.

3. The legislation requires Local Authorities to consult before making a 'significant change' to services offered through existing Children Centres. This has been completed and the findings presented to Overview and Scrutiny on 29 November 2011.

There is a presumption against the closure of Children Centres as outlined in the updated Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Education in 2010.

Following consultation, the recommended Option ensures the Council is compliant with current guidance and legislation.

**Risk Management:**

4. There is the potential of financial risk as identified.

Regulatory risk; if the Council does not provide the statutory required services.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

5. There are no staffing implications from these proposals.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

Appendix A - **DRAFT**

6. An updated Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out when proposals are agreed to take account of all relevant issues.

Option One does not discriminate and when approved will not cause any disproportionate allocation of services or unfairness in service provision for any member of Central Bedfordshire's Community.

**Community Safety:**

7. There are no implications from these proposals.

**Sustainability:**

8. If the Early Intervention Grant is not extended beyond 2013 the Council will need to review the funding source for Children's Centres. This will require a review of the provision. However, this likelihood is considered low risk.

**Procurement:**

9. The retendering process is subject to procurement regulations and guidance.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

10. ***This matter has been considered by Overview and Scrutiny on 29 November 2012. – to be added***

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Executive is asked to:**

- 1. Approve the proposals for the delivery of Children Centres in Central Bedfordshire as set out in this report and this approach remain in operation until such a time as the provision or contracts require a review.**
- 2. Agree the proposal for the delivery of Children Centres as set out in the exempt papers on this agenda.**

*Reason for Recommendations:*

- 1. To ensure that the Council is compliant with Statutory Guidance and legislation.*
- 2. To ensure that there is a successful transition from the Children Centres contracts ceasing in March 2012 and new tenders and providers being in place by April 2012.*

**Executive Summary**

Appendix A - **DRAFT**

The Council has a duty to provide Children Centres in Central Bedfordshire under the legislation laid out in this report.

The current provision was due for review by March 2012 as the contracts for them cease at that time.

To ensure a successful continuing of the service it was necessary to undertake a review of provision and identify potential models for delivery going forward that took account of current legislation and guidance.

Given this position a thorough review of provision has been undertaken resulting in the potential of three options.

Any changes to provision if 'significant' must be subject to public consultation and the three options were subject to this process between 14 September 2011 to 26 October 2011.

The Options identified were :

**Option 1;** Reconfigure all existing Centres into 9 clusters, with an enhancement of resources available in the areas of greatest need.

**Option 2;** Close eight Centres in areas of less need with the remaining open.

**Option 3;** Focus all resources on five areas with the highest levels of deprivation and remove all services from the remaining 13 Centres. Buildings would be made available for local communities to run services aimed at children.

90% of responses were in favour of Option 1; 9 Clusters across the Council with an enhancement of resourcing in the greatest areas of need.

**Appendix A** is the consultation document that was used; it outlines the three options including the advantages and disadvantages.

**Appendix B** is a map which demonstrates in which geographical areas the 9 clusters will be covering.

## **Background**

11. Since the third and final national implementation phase of Children Centres was completed in March 2011, the Coalition Government have reviewed their approach to Children Centres.

The Government's published vision for the core purpose of Children Centres states that they should focus on improving outcomes for young children and their families. There is a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families in order to reduce inequalities in child development, school readiness, support improved parenting aspirations, self-esteem and parenting skills, child and family health and life chances.

These aspirations have been taken into account in these proposals.

This local reconfiguring exercise has enabled the Council to review its provision and consider how it can be enhanced. It will ensure the consolidation of Universal services and deliver enhancements that concentrate on the areas of greatest need and deprivation.

Central Bedfordshire currently has 22 Children Centres. All the Centres are commissioned out to external providers.

Managing Organisations are:

- Health.
- Six individual schools.
- Voluntary/Community Organisations.
- Action for Children.
- Children's Society.
- Spurgeons.
- Christian Family Care.

Many of the Centres work in collaboration with other agencies including health, education, job centre plus and early years teachers. They provide a community hub and are a valued resource as demonstrated by the consultation and its responses.

The Council's contracts for Centre management run until 31 March 2012. Management Organisations have been briefed to expect both a re-configuration and re-tendering exercise to take place during 2011/2012.

These proposals will ensure the Council is able to ensure the successful transition of the contracts to March 2012, and that the Council can respond to updated legislation and guidance.

## **OPTIONS**

Appendix A - **DRAFT**

12. The three options subject to consultation are laid out in Appendix A.

**Consultation on proposed changes to Children's Centres.**

It highlights the disadvantages and advantages of all three options.

The consultation and preferred Option 1 states ;

'No centre would close and services would continue to be delivered in all parts of the authority but with a focus on areas of greatest need. This proposal will consolidate the Centres into nine clusters operating a 'hub and spoke' model of service delivery. The 'hubs' will be centred primarily in areas of greatest need, with the addition of three clusters which make geographic sense in order to maintain a universal service.'

**THE CONSULTATION PROCESS**

- 13 The public consultation ran for a period of 6 weeks, from 14 September until 26 October 2011.
14. The consultation took place through active use of questionnaires available both on-line and as hard copy. Information about the questionnaire was distributed through Children Centres, Schools and Early Year's education settings. Hard copies of the questionnaire were available at all Centres.

There were 3 Partnership events which took place in different parts of the authority, Stakeholders, Partners and other interested Parties were invited.

**THE CONSULTATION RESULTS**

15. 472 paper questionnaires were received and there were 249 online responses. (A total of 721)  
50 people attended the three consultation events.
16. 91% of responses preferred Option 1  
7% of responses preferred Option 2  
1% of responses preferred Option 3
17. 66% of responses were received from parents who are currently using Centres, 7% from parents who did not use a centre, 4% from Children Centre Staff and 4% from schools and early years settings, 2% from health organisations.
18. The largest numbers of responses were received from the Wards of Stotfold (15%) and (Dunstable 11%)
19. 39% of respondees considered that Children Centres are a valuable asset for the whole community.  
30% of respondees requested that Centres should remain configured as they are.



Appendix A - **DRAFT**

**PROPOSED RECONFIGURATION**

20. 90% of the responses supported Option One as the preferred delivery model for Children Centres in Central Bedfordshire.

This new configuration will enable Centres to deliver more targeted services to the most vulnerable, whilst maintaining a universal provision and ensuring the statutory duties of the Council are met.

**TENDERING PROCESS**

21. If Option One is agreed, the approval of the outcome of the tendering process is set out in the exempt papers on this agenda.

**Conclusion and Next Steps**

22. The Executive is recommended to;
1. approve Option One as the preferred service delivery model of Children Centres in Central Bedfordshire Council from March 2012.
  2. agree the proposal for the delivery of Children Centres as set out in the exempt papers on this agenda.

**Appendices:**

**Appendix A** is the consultation document that was used; it outlines the three options including the advantages and disadvantages.

**Appendix B** is a map which demonstrates in which geographical areas the 9 clusters will cover.

**Background Papers:** (open to public inspection) None

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**Appendix A.**

# **Consultation on proposed changes to Children's Centres**



## 1. Introduction

Children's Centres have been developing over the last decade as part of the Sure Start Children's Centre programme.

The core purpose of Children's Centres is to improve outcomes for young children and their families by working with families with young children, often termed as "early intervention".

Children's Centres have a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families, in order to reduce inequalities in child development and readiness for school and to support parents aspirations, self-esteem and parenting skills, child and family health and life chances.

## 2. Background

Children's Centres were rolled out in three phases depending on local levels of deprivation. Centres were introduced first in areas with the highest levels of deprivation. Centres were created during each of the three phases in Central Bedfordshire.

Central Government funding for the establishment of Children's Centres was based on how many children aged 0-5 lived in a 'reach' area. Phase one and two of developing Children's Centres were intended to reach approx 800 children aged 0-5 while those in phase three were designed to reach up to 1,200 children because they tend to serve wider geographical areas (Population Numbers were based on estimates from 2005-6). Funding designated at the time this work begun specified how many Centres were to be created.

At the time of their establishment, Centres in different phases were required to offer services from amongst the following:

- Family Support
- Parental Outreach
- Local information on and signposting to childcare, early learning, information on parenting and drop in groups
- Opportunities to access parenting support and education
- Child and family health services – including children and families with disabilities
- Links with Job Centre Plus – information about employment, education and training

Health and Job Centre Plus colleagues are actively involved in Central Bedfordshire Children's Centres.

Unlike some Children's Centres in the country, none of the Children's Centres in Central Bedfordshire run childcare or early years education provision directly, but instead signpost users to local providers.

Central Bedfordshire currently has 22 Children's Centres. All the centres are commissioned out to external providers such as the NHS, some School Governors and some Voluntary Organisations, however the Council retains overall responsibility for their provision. Contracts to run the Centres all expire in March 2012, and a re-tendering process will take place.

The 22 Centres have varied accommodation. Some have a full centre with office, delivery space and consulting room, some just have a delivery space. Some do not have a permanent built base but deliver services across their areas using community buildings such as village halls or schools especially in rural areas. Several have a van in order to be able to deliver services to those who are most isolated.

### 3. Why is Central Bedfordshire Council re-organising Children's Centres?

The 2006 Childcare Act (amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and learning Act (2009)) included a sufficiency requirement which means local councils are required to provide 'Sufficient Provision' to meet the local need. The decision on "Sufficient Provision" is taken by the Central Bedfordshire Council in consultation with Health Services, Job Centre Plus, other partners, local families and communities.

In Statutory Guidance which was re-issued to Councils by the Department of Education in 2010 the Government stated that whilst Children's Centres are a universal service there should be a targeted approach to vulnerable children and families.

There is a need for a more focused approach to early intervention in Central Bedfordshire which targets areas of greatest need. Our population continues to grow, there are health challenges ranging from infant mortality and teenage pregnancy to obesity and smoking. Educational achievement is not as good as we want it to be and child and family poverty is also an issue. Early intervention through Children's Centres is key to tackling some of these issues.

### 4. Options for the future

The proposals have been developed with a focus on providing services to the most vulnerable children and families who presently have the poorest life chances. This has involved consideration of the following:

- where current resources are
- current areas of highest deprivation (where there are differences from 2006)
- increasing focus on Early Intervention work
- numbers of children and future building growth.

As a result of this work, three alternative options for Children’s Centre organisation have been identified. These are set out below each followed by a table highlighting the main advantages and disadvantages of each option.

At present there are no plans to reduce the overall sum spent on Children Centre services. In all models financial resources will be focused on the areas of greatest need (highest deprivation).

None of the options will impact on the provision of early year’s education and childcare as these services are not delivered through Children’s Centres in central Bedfordshire.

### **OPTION 1 - Rearrange all 22 existing Centres into nine clusters**

No centre would close and services would continue to be delivered in all parts of the authority but with a focus on areas in greatest need. This proposal will consolidate the Centres into nine clusters operating a ‘hub and spoke’ model of service delivery. The ‘hubs’ will be centred primarily in areas of greatest need, with the addition of three clusters which make geographic sense in order to maintain a universal service.

Below are the nine proposed Cluster Centres (hubs). All of these Cluster Centres are based at current Children’s Centres where performance is recognised as good.

Cluster Hub	Hub Lower School:	Driver for Development of Hub: Area:
1. Dunstable North	Beecroft Lower School	Deprivation
2. Dunstable South	Downside Lower School	Deprivation
3. Houghton Regis	Tithe Farm Lower School	Deprivation
4. Leighton Buzzard	St. George’s Lower School & The Moorings	Deprivation
5. Flitwick	Templefield Lower School	Deprivation
6. Sandy	Laburnum Lower School	Deprivation
7. Biggleswade	The Lawns Nursery School	Geographic need
8. Shefford & District	Shefford Lower School	Geographic need and presence of 2 military bases
9. Stotfold & Arlesey	St. Mary’s Lower School	Geographic need

Below is a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of this model.

Advantages:	Disadvantages:
No Centre would close.	There would be a reduced presence in some current centre bases that are not classed as Cluster Centre hubs.
All parents would be able to access services.	Some Centres (such as numbers 4 and 5) will have a very large reach serving large numbers of children (4000+).
Some services would be delivered across the entire area thus maintaining the universal services listed in the statutory guidance.	In some rural areas considerable distances will need to be covered by parents and children to access services. Public transport is poor in rural areas where travelling would be required.
Some services and financial resources would be refocused into the areas of greatest need.	
All previously funded buildings would continue to be used.	
Efficiency in size will produce some cost savings which can be used for other early intervention work with children and families.	

## **OPTION 2 - Close Eight Centres in areas of less need and transfer these resources to the remaining 14 centres.**

The eight Centres that would close are listed below. These were established in Phase 3 of the Children's Centres development and therefore are predominantly in more affluent areas of Central Bedfordshire.

- Ampthill
- Barton
- Cranfield
- Henlow/Stondon
- Icknield/Watling in Dunstable
- Linslade
- Silsoe
- Stotfold

Although the legislation and guidance says that there should be a presumption against closure it goes on to state that this does not mean a Children’s Centre should never close. It is intended that local authorities are able to make necessary changes, to forward plan and to re-shape services to make them responsive to need. It would not be possible to fully prioritise and deliver Children’s Centre services into our areas of greatest need, if the other centres remained open in the current configuration.

Below is a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of this model.

Advantages:	Disadvantages:
Free up significant funding to use in areas of greater need. Funding per child in the areas of need would be increased substantially.	Recently funded buildings could be redundant (on school sites) if community groups did not want to use them.
Unused buildings could be used by local community groups for activities based around children and families and/or used to deliver voluntary services.	If the buildings are not used for activities with children and families the Department for Education may ask for the money back that was spent on creating the centre, this would come from the Council.
Some of the money saved in consolidating centres would be used to up skill voluntary and community groups to deliver services based around children and families.	Most of Central Bedfordshire would be considerable distances from Centres, including one of the two military bases.
	Approx 6,200 children and families would no longer be able to access services which could put some children at risk and increase the level and costs of later interventions required.

**OPTION 3 - Close 13 Centres in areas of less need and transfer these resources to the remaining five centres.**

The five Centres that would remain open are listed below. These are in the most deprived areas of Central Bedfordshire.

1. Dunstable	Using the resources of the current Downside Neighbourhood Centre and Beecroft Children’s Centre (including Icknield resources on the Downside site)
2. Houghton Regis	Using the resources of the two current Centres in Tithe Farm and Parkside



3. Leighton Buzzard	Using the resources based at St. Georges Lower School and The Moorings
4. Sandy	Using the existing Sandy Community Children’s Centre
5. Flitwick	Using the existing Flitwick Children’s Centre

Although the legislation and guidance says that there should be a presumption against closure it goes on to state that this does not mean a Children’s Centre should never close. It is intended that local authorities are able to make necessary changes, to forward plan and to re-shape services to make them responsive to need. It would not be possible to fully prioritise and deliver Children’s Centre services into our areas of greatest need, if the other centres remained open in the current configuration.

Below is a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of this model.

Advantages:	Disadvantages:
Free up the greatest amount of funding to use in areas of greater need. Funding per child in the areas of need would be increased substantially.	Recently funded buildings could be redundant (on school sites) if community groups did not want to use them.
Unused buildings could be used by local community groups for activities based around children and families and/or used to deliver voluntary services.	If the buildings are not used for activities with children and families the Department for Education may ask for the money back that was spent on creating the centre, this would come from the Council.
Some of the money saved in consolidating centres would be used to up skill voluntary and community groups to deliver services based around children and families.	Most of Central Bedfordshire would be considerable distances from Centres, including the two military bases.
	Approx 11,400 children and families would no longer be able to access services which could put some children at risk and increase the level and costs of later interventions required.

## 5. The consultation process

The Council is consulting with you now to ensure that parents/carers and the community are able to give us their views before the council’s Executive make a decision about the future organisation of Children’s Centres within Central Bedfordshire.

We are keen to make sure this consultation as broad as possible and we would like to hear from everyone with an interest in Children’s Centres within Central Bedfordshire.

The consultation will be open between Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September and 12 noon on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2011. You can respond to the consultation using the attached form, or you can respond through the Council's website [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations)

There will also be three consultation events for partners and voluntary organisations. These will take place in different parts of the authority and will be by invitation only.

The feedback from the consultation will be presented to the council's Executive on 10<sup>th</sup> January where a final decision will be made about the future organisation of Children's Centres in Central Bedfordshire.

### **Contact us...**

by telephone: 0300 300 8304

by email: [customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

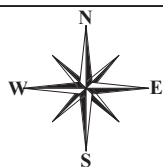
on the web: [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

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

**OPTION 1 - Children's Centre Clusters**

Hub based at:

1. Dunstable North
2. Dunstable South
3. Houghton Regis
4. Leighton Buzzard
5. Flitwick
6. Sandy
7. Biggleswade
8. Shefford & District
9. Stotfold & Arlesey



**Date: 14 September 2011**

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**Meeting:** Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 29 November 2011  
**Subject:** Customer Feedback – Complaints, Compliments Annual Report  
**Report of:** Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services  
**Summary:** This report fulfills the statutory duty to produce an annual report for Children's Social Care. The report provides statistics on the number of complaints received; complaint outcomes (upheld/not upheld); performance; issues complained about; and learning and improvements resulting from complaints for 2010/11.

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**Advising Officer:** Edwina Grant – Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services  
**Contact Officer:** Sonya Branagan – Customer Relations Manager  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Council

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

The annual report for noting links to the priorities

- Creating safer communities
- Supporting and caring for an ageing population

### **Financial:**

Effective management of complaint issues focuses resource on resolution and reduces the risks of financial remedies being paid. The complaints procedure provides for conciliation meetings which are used as an effective alternative to costly independent investigations

### **Legal:**

The production of an annual report is a statutory requirement and should be made available to anyone on request. The report will be posted on the council's web site.

### **Risk Management:**

Complaints are assessed at the point of receipt to ensure risks are managed for example; child protection issues, risks to reputation. Effective complaints management ensures service failings are identified and remedied, thereby reducing the risk of public reports from the Local Government Ombudsman. There were no public reports about children's social care complaints.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

There are no staffing issues arising from the report

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

The report has been reviewed by the Corporate Policy Advisor (Equalities and Diversity) and the feedback taken into account in the final report.

**Community Safety:**

To support children and families to feel safe it is important that they know how to complain about services they receive; feel heard when they raise complaints; and that action is taken. The report evidences that service users have been able to complain, where complaints have been upheld failings are identified and improvements are put in place.

**Sustainability:**

There are no sustainability issues arising from the report

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of the report.**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Council's Customer Relations Team, based in Corporate Services, manages the Council's customer feedback procedures. There are three procedures. Two of the procedures are statutory and are governed by Regulations, relating to Adult Social Care Services and Children's Services respectively. The third procedure covers all other council services.
- 1.2 The feedback procedures are the means by which customer compliments, comments and complaints are handled. Customer Relations provides a point of contact for customers wishing to complain via email, telephone or in writing. This provides confidence to those customers who may have lost faith in the services to respond to their issue.
- 1.3 The Council is required to monitor statutory complaints procedures and prepare an annual report. The Children's Social Care complaints report must be made available to any person on request.

**2. Purpose of this report**

- 2.1 This report provides an overview of the key issues in complaint handling for Children's Social Care for the period 2010/11.

**3. Children's Social Care customer feedback report**

- 3.1 The Regulations require that the annual report should include; the number of complaints at each stage including those considered by the Local Government Ombudsman; the type, timescales and outcomes of complaints, which customer groups made complaints; learning and service improvements and summary equality monitoring data.

- 3.2 The annual report addresses the requirements above and covers:
- The Council's procedure for handling children's social care complaints.
  - Equality and Diversity Monitoring.
  - Summary Statistics including; number of complaints received; number referred to the Local Government Ombudsman; services most complained about; number well founded.
  - Performance.
  - Service improvements resulting from complaints.

3.3 To address the need to make the annual report available to anyone requesting it the report has been posted on the 'Feedback' pages of the Council's website. The feedback pages contain information on how to provide compliments, comments and complaints.

#### **4. Complaints handling practice in 2010/11**

4.1 Following concern expressed by the Director that complaint numbers seemed low, work to improve the recording of complaints took place. There was a rise in the number of complaints recorded compared to last year, from 44 to 79.

4.2 The Customer Relations Manager met with representatives from the Children in Care Council to discuss their needs around the work they were undertaking on the information pack for looked after children. As a result the young person's leaflet was amended for inclusion in the pack.

4.3 As well as the statutory annual report, weekly and quarterly reports on customer feedback have been provided based on the Director's requirements for performance reporting. This meant that senior managers had the opportunity to monitor customer feedback for their services.

4.4 The service worked with customer relations to identify cases suitable for conciliation. This good practice focuses on resolution of complaints through face to face meetings and was successful in remedying seven cases without the need for lengthy formal investigations.

#### **5. Key themes from complaints**

5.1 The main cause for complaint over the year was care management in the Family Support and Intake & Assessment services, including communication and the quality of assessments and investigations. The Family Support Service received 29 of the total 79 received and Intake & Assessment 25 of the 29 complaints.

5.2 Whilst individual complaints were resolved with case specific remedies Section 4 of the report details actions to improve the wider service.

#### **Appendices:**

Annual Report 2010/11

**Location of papers:** Priory House, Chicksands

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# **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

## **CUSTOMER FEEDBACK –**

### **COMPLAINTS COMPLIMENTS COMMENTS**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11**

## INTRODUCTION

This report fulfills the statutory duty to produce an annual report for Children's Social Care. The report provides statistics on the number of complaints received; complaint outcomes (upheld/not upheld); performance; and learning and improvements resulting from complaints for 2010/11.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Children's Services Complaints Procedure

The procedure has three stages:

- Stage 1 Local resolution by Service Manager – 10 working days, up to 20 if the case is complex
- Stage 2 Investigation – 25 working days, up to 65 working days. Externally commissioned investigators are used if cases progress to independent investigation. Regulations require an independent person must also to shadow the investigator.
- Stage 3 Independent Review – panel to be set up in 30 working days
- Alternative Dispute Resolution is also offered as an alternative to the complaints procedure. A complainant can opt back into the complaints process at any time. Conciliation meetings, Chaired by Customer Relations, are used to resolve complaints without the need for protracted investigations. The aim is to provide better outcomes for complainants with a focus on resolution over process.

The Customer Relations Team managed the procedures for Children's Services including social care complaints. Cases were inputted and tracked in the 'RESPOND' database system by the Customer Relations Team. Children's Services received weekly and quarterly reports on customer feedback based on their requirements for performance reporting.

Reflecting the groundwork in 2009/10, to ensure all complaints were logged, there were 79 new complaints received for the period 1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011 compared to 44 reported in 2009/10. 6 complaints were made by young people themselves about the services they received. The services most complained about were Family Support and Intake and Assessment services which also received the most compliments.

14 formal compliments were recorded compared to 11 the previous year.

8 Conciliation meetings were held which remedied 7 complaints without the need for independent investigation.

79 stage 1 complaints were dealt with at stage 1, 59 of them were resolved in 20 working days or less.

46 of the 79 stage 1 complaints dealt with were either upheld fully or in part. Whilst individual cases had specific remedies put in place, wider services improvements were also identified in a number of cases. These are detailed in Section 4.

# 1 SUMMARY STATISTICS

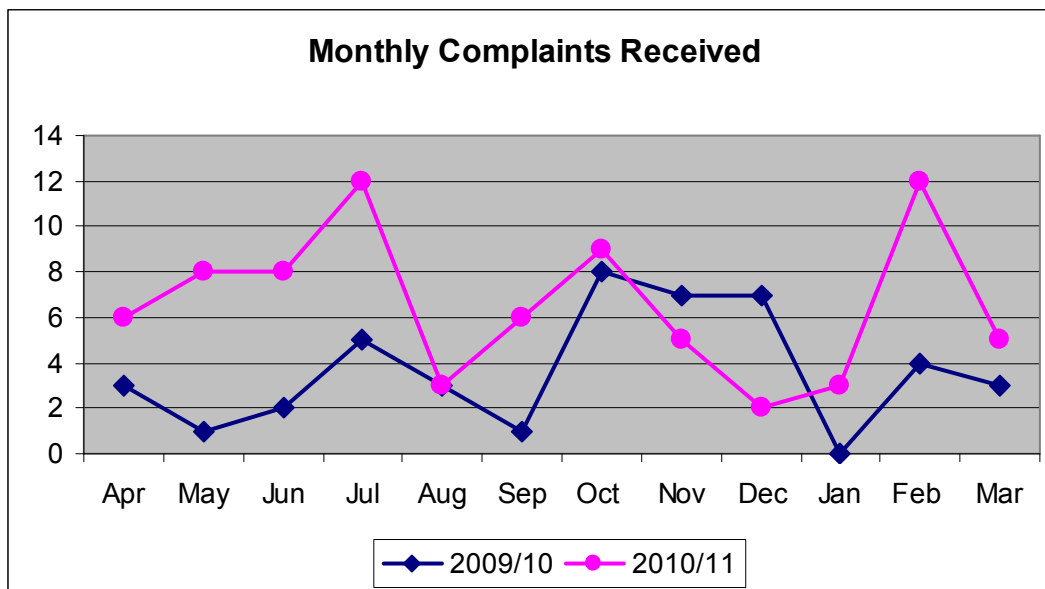
## 1.1 Headline Data for Customer Feedback

New Cases Received 2010/11	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Totals
Complaints	22	21	16	20	79
Compliments	4	4	2	4	14

1.1.1 The total number of new complaints received rose from 44 last year to 79 for 2010/11. Last years report highlighted work undertaken to ensure services captured all complaints which resulted in an increase in the number of complaints recorded in the second half of that year. The good practice of recording was sustained this year.

1.1.2 3472 people accessed children’s social care in the period.

## 1.2 Spread of Complaints Received



1.2.1 The number of complaints for August remained the same this year compared to last suggesting a seasonal low over the main part of the summer school holiday period. The peaks in 2010/11 were July and February which did not mirror the peaks in the previous year of October and December. There were no seasonal peaks for complaints year on year; however, numbers for October were similar in both years.

## 1.3 Alternative Dispute Resolution

1.3.1 With a focus on resolution over process Customer Relations offered alternative dispute resolution to those who requested independent investigation of their complaints. 8 complainants took up the offer and 7 of the 8 cases were remedied in full. This resulted in better outcomes for complainants resolving complaints without the need for protracted investigations. Conciliation meetings rebuild confidence and improve communications between the complainant and service. There are significant cost savings by remedying cases without the need for externally commissioned investigators.

In one case the complainant remained unhappy and progressed to a stage 2 investigation.

#### 1.4 Stage 2 & 3 Complaints

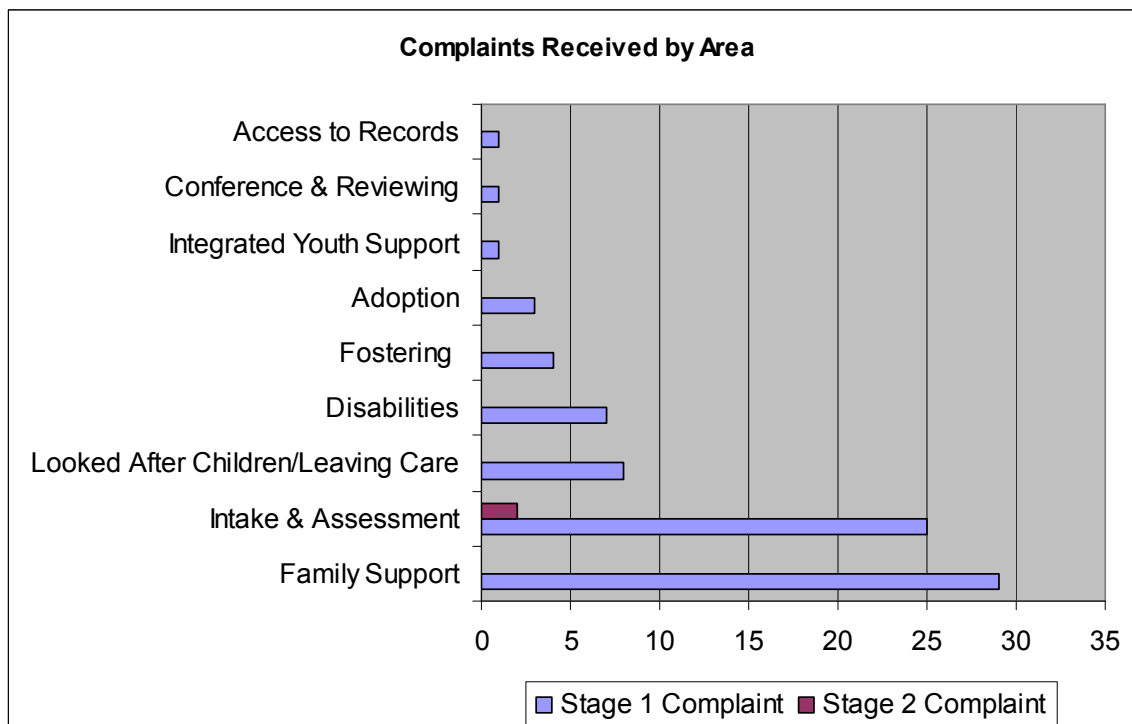
1.4.1 Two complaints received in the year, relating to Intake and Assessment, were progressed to stage 2 of the complaints procedure. One stage 1 case received in 2009/10 also progressed to stage 2 in 2010/11. No cases progressed to stage 3.

#### 1.5 Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) Complaints

1.5.1 One case relating to social care was referred to the Council as a premature case for the council to consider. It was responded to, not upheld and closed.

#### 1.6 Trends - Services Most Complained About

1.6.1 The area most complained about, receiving 29 of the 79 new complaints, was the Family Support Service. The main causes for complaint for this service were alleged poor communication or conduct of staff, e.g. attitude, failure to return calls or provide information; and failure to follow up on concerns e.g. not addressing child's behaviours, not providing a placement.



1.6.2 The Intake and Assessment Team received 25 of the 79 new complaints and the main causes for complaint were the quality of the assessment and investigation process and reports; and poor communication, conduct of staff.

1.6.3 Of the 3 cases that progressed to stage 2 investigation in the period 2 related to the Intake and Assessment Service. One related to the quality of an assessment and the other to how an investigation process was carried out. The third stage 2 was from a child and related to her views that the Looked After Children Service was taking too long to make decisions and not listening to her.

## **1.7 Outcomes from Concluded Complaints**

- 1.7.1 79 stage 1 complaints were concluded in the period. 10 were upheld. A further 36 were partly upheld. This meant a total of 46 (58%) of initial complaints were deemed to be well founded in full or in part.
- 1.7.2 Family Support and Intake and Assessment Services received 54 (68%) of the total 79 complaints received in the period and accounted for the majority of complaints with an upheld/partly upheld outcome, 29 (63%) of the 46 upheld/partly upheld cases.
- 1.7.3 Two stage 2 cases concluded in the period. A case relating to Looked After Children Service was not upheld and a case about the Intake and Assessment Service was partially upheld relating to the accuracy of a core assessment.
- 1.7.4 Whilst case specific remedies were put in place for individuals Section 4 details the wider actions and improvements resulting from complaints.

## **1.8 Compliments**

- 1.8.1 14 compliments were recorded relating to thanks for helpful, supportive, efficient, caring and timely social work intervention; the quality of social work in legal proceedings; professionals' positive comments about the focus of Central Bedfordshire on the needs of children.

- 1.8.2 The spread of compliments was:

- 5 Family Support
- 5 Intake & Assessment
- 4 Looked After Children and Leaving Care

Whilst Family Support and the Intake and Assessment Services received the most complaints they also received the most compliments.

## 2 PERFORMANCE IN COMPLAINTS HANDLING

- 2.1 The procedure allows for 10 working days to resolve a stage 1 complaint, up to 20 working days if the complaint is complex.

The timescale for Stage 2 complaints is 25 up to 65 working days.

- 2.2 79 stage 1 cases were responded to. 59 out of the 79 (75%) were completed in 20 working days or less:

<b>Timescale for Responding to Complaints</b>				
<b>Working Days to Respond</b>	<b>0 - 10</b>	<b>11 -20</b>	<b>21 - 30</b>	<b>30+</b>
<b>Number of Cases</b>	35	24	15	5

- 2.3 Of the 5 cases that took the longest to resolve:

- 1 case was subject to a conciliation meeting with the complainants following the initial response to the complaint
- 1 case was delayed but the complainant was sent a holding letter advising of the need for further time to respond
- 3 cases were delayed due to the capacity of the manager dealing with the case

- 2.4 2 Stage 2 complaints concluded.

- 1 case concluded in 37 working days.
- 1 case took a total of 83 working days to conclude. The investigation reports were sent to the complainant within 49 working days. The complainant wanted to meet a senior manager to hear the department's response to the investigation. The availability of senior managers meant the meeting date took place beyond the 65 working day timescale.

### 3 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY MONITORING

#### 3.1 Monitoring

- 3.1.1 The purpose of capturing data is to monitor access to the complaints procedure; to ensure services are appropriate for all service user groups; and to check whether any issues relating to discrimination have been raised. Customer Relations record data about the **service user** for complaints. In complaints the service user can also be a parent who is engaged with social care services where the complaint issue has no direct impact on the child. A service user may make more than one complaint over the period reported on.
- 3.1.2 There are some ‘unknowns’ in the returns as data is collected at the first point of contact in a complaint. Cases received in writing are researched in the client database for information – if the data is not available via this route it is recorded as ‘unknown’. Appendix A provides more detailed findings.
- 3.1.3 The ‘RESPOND’ system used for Children’s Services complaints has the facility to capture the service user’s gender, age, ethnicity and whether the service user describes themselves as having a disability or not.
- 3.1.4 79 new complaints were registered. 3472 people accessed children’s social care in the period.

#### 3.2 Accessibility to Complaints

##### 3.2.1 Receipt Method for Complaints

By having a range of contact options for complainants to make their complaints the Council aims to meet the needs of its service users in accessing the complaints procedure. People can make complaints in person; face to face or via telephone (including a direct line to Customer Relations), in writing; via email, letter, or complaint form. A complaint form specifically designed for young people is also available.

79 new complaints were received:

49% by letter	4% by complaint form	1% personal visit
28% by telephone	18% by email	

##### 3.2.2 Young People

Children’s Services Social Care delivers services to address the needs of children and young people. The majority of the 79 complaints made about the service were from adults complaining about their interactions and experience or on behalf of children. However, 6 young people raised complaints in their own right about issues affecting them. Young people making complaints are offered the support of an independent advocate. 4 young people used an advocate to support them through the complaints process.

#### 3.3 Gender

- 3.3.1 In order to make comparisons data gathered for new complaint cases received in 2010/11 has been considered alongside the provisional data on the gender of people who were referred to children’s social care throughout the year.
- 3.3.2 For complaints we recorded the gender of the child in most cases.

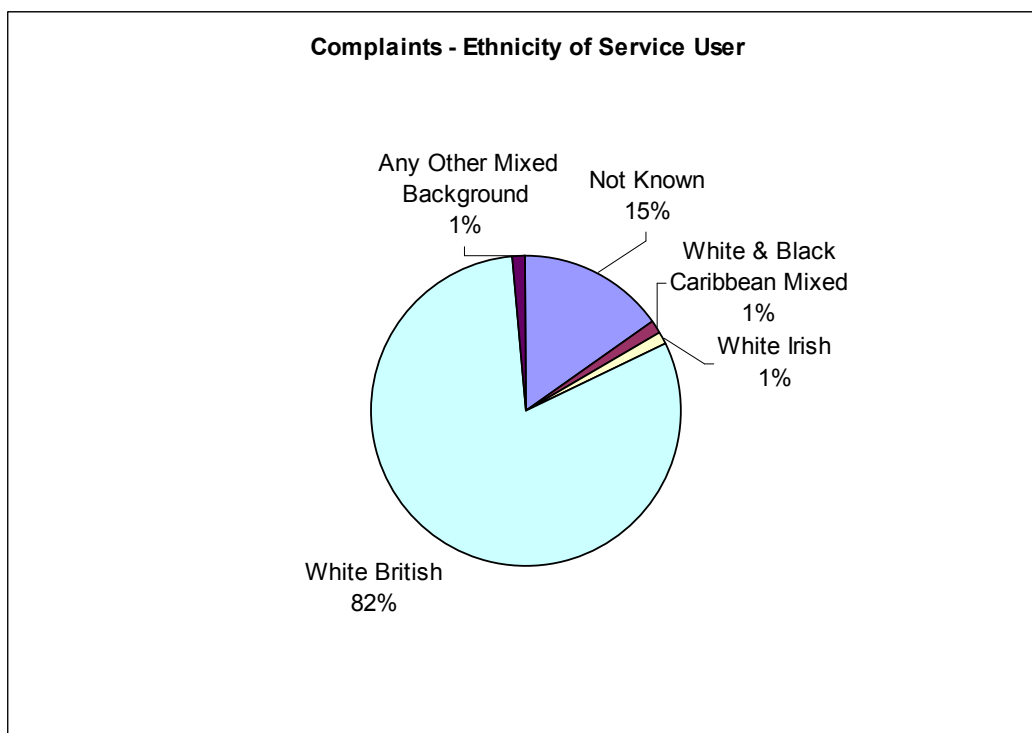
Where a complaint is made by an adult about their own experience of intervention where the issue did not directly impact on the child the adult's gender was recorded. This gives us the gender of complainants affected by complaints.

	Male	Female	Not known
Service user affected by complaints	47%	49%	4%
People accessing the service	52%	47%	1%

3.3.3 Research into gender usually indicates that girls are more likely than boys to articulate issues that affect them. The data reflects this thinking.

3.3.4 Service users of both genders are represented in the complaints procedure and there appears to be no significant difference in the issues they raise.

### 3.4 Ethnicity



3.4.1 82 % of service users affected by new complaints were recorded as 'White British'. The issues covered a broad range of complaints. 80% of people accessing social care services in the period were described as White. People with a minority ethnic background were also represented in complaints.

3.4.2 The issues raised by service users with minority ethnic backgrounds were also raised by those with the majority ethnic background in complaints.

With 15% of cases with 'unknown' ethnicity it is possible that complainants with other ethnic backgrounds were also represented in complaints.



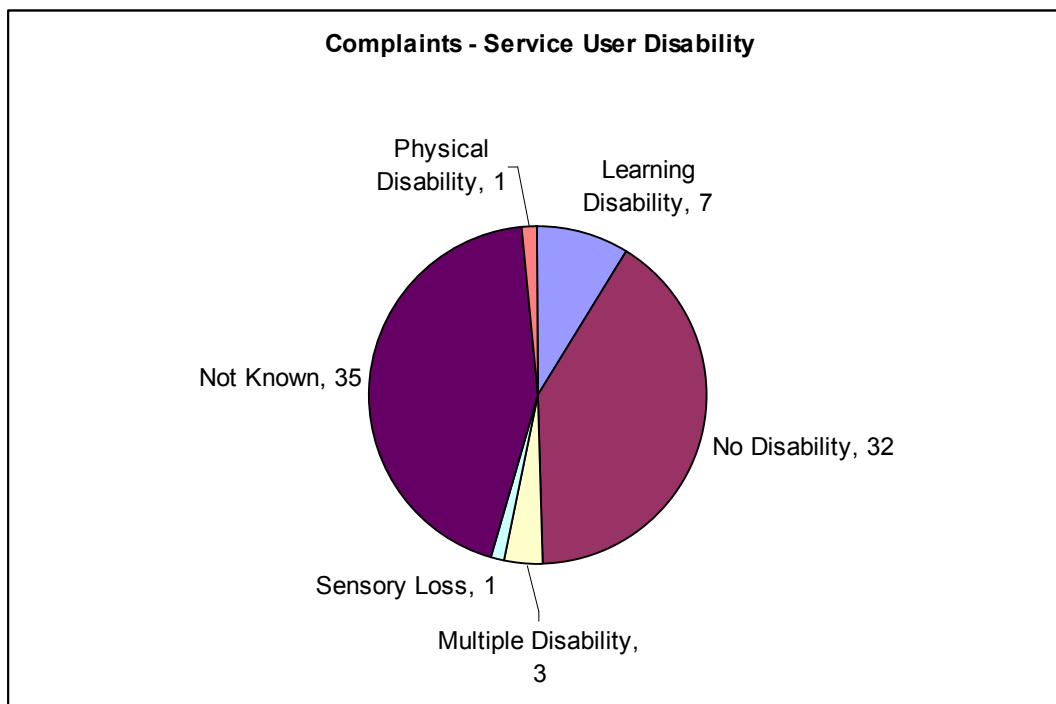
### 3.5 Age

#### 3.5.1 Of the 79 new Stage 1 complaints;

68 affected people under the age of 18  
6 affected people 19 – 64  
5 cases age unknown

This meant that people of all ages were able to access the complaints procedure either directly or through a representative. The majority of complaints affected children and young people but were made by adults and crossed all services.

### 3.6 Disability



3.6.1 35 complaints were recorded as 'not known' in relation to disability.

3.6.2 In 32 cases service users were not described as having any disability.

3.6.3 The figures demonstrate that people with disabilities were represented in the complaints procedure. The issues of complaint reflected similar issues to those where the service user had no disability with the exception of concerns about support in transition from children's to adult services.

## 4 SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS RESULTING FROM CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

Where a service agreed with (upheld/partly upheld) a complaint, as well as putting in place case specific remedies, they considered what they could do to improve the service. The service improvements are detailed below:

<b>4.1 Intake and Assessment</b>	
<b>Top 2 issues found in agreed complaints : Assessments: explanation of process, quality, timeliness and Conduct of Staff</b>	
<b>YOU SAID</b>	<b>THE SERVICE DID:</b>
Complaint about disagreement over the assessment findings.	Teams and assessing partners were reminded in writing that completed assessments must be shared with those people being assessed (unless this would put children at risk). If there is disagreement about the findings the assessment should be amended, or where the assessors do not agree, a note made on file showing the areas of disagreement.
Inadequate communication between social services and family throughout the child protection investigation.	An information leaflet for parents explaining the process for child protection enquiries will be developed.
Customer left waiting in reception without being seen for an unreasonable length of time	Manager put into immediate effect a new procedure for the team. If a customer without an appointment waits longer than 45 minutes to see a worker a manager will be interrupted to help them.
Communication fell short when only verbal information was provided in the heat of the moment so the family did not retain what was said which left them unclear about the plans for the child.	Managers agreed that where it will be helpful, information will be given to parents/carers in writing to ensure they have something to refer back to and are not reliant on retaining verbal information.
Complaints about the Core Assessment process	<p>The Deputy Team Leader communicated to team members a reminder of the importance of explaining the reason for visits and the process of assessment to children, young people and their families; good communication; and appropriate endings.</p> <p>Brief Initial Assessments in order to progress the case to a core assessment with family agreement, or due to child protection, will be sent to parents.</p> <p>A communication was sent to all team members to remind them of the importance of recognising strengths and highlighting positives as well as areas for development in assessments.</p>

<b>4.2 Family Support</b>	
<b>Top 2 issues found in agreed complaints: Quality of support/ case management Communication- not getting information</b>	
<b>YOU SAID</b>	<b>THE SERVICE DID:</b>
Minutes were not provided.	System put in place to ensure minutes are sent to parents. Staff reminded of the importance of the timeliness of providing meeting minutes.
Phone calls not returned	Managers raised with staff the importance of both ensuring all contacts are recorded and the importance of good communication.

<b>4.3 Adoption (Shared Service with Bedford Borough Council)</b>	
<b>Main issues found in agreed complaints : Delay in Funding and Assessment Process</b>	
<b>YOU SAID</b>	<b>THE SERVICE DID:</b>
There were delays in funding for a top up of a grant to provide improvements to accommodation.	Established a process for dealing with these issues with colleagues in Legal Services, Bedford Borough Council and in relation to the Disabled Facilities Grant. Established principals on how we deal with these cases in the future and learnt that we need to establish early on which authority is legally responsible.
The council discriminated against an applicant on the grounds of race and turned their application down.	Whilst the complaint was not upheld, the service considered if improvements could be made. In the future where there are a disproportionate number of families with a particular ethnic link, compared to children waiting, the service will seek to explore an applicants' abilities to meet the identity needs of other children. In addition all prospective adopters who have attended an information evening and request an initial interview will be offered a face to face meeting.

<b>4.4 Looked After Children</b>	
<b>Main issues found in agreed complaints: Contact and Payments</b>	
<b>YOU SAID</b>	<b>THE SERVICE DID:</b>
There were delays in setting up contact arrangements	Contact arrangements are to be reviewed regularly as part of case supervision
Pre-agreed board payment not provided due to a change in social worker	Any financial matters at the time of transfer between social workers are to be written clearly in the case transfer summary.

<b>4.5 Children with Disability</b>	
<b>Main issue in agreed complaints : Support with transition from children's to adult services</b>	
<b>YOU SAID</b>	<b>THE SERVICE DID:</b>
Transition planning for young people moving from children's to adult services fell short, including delays in finding alternative accommodation.	Senior Transition Officer post put in place from 1st June 2010. The post, joint funded between children and adult services, will ensure that the transformation programmes in both adults and children's services are reflected in future provision and practice including making relevant links with housing to plan for the transition of young people. Senior Transition Officer to attend the Housing group meetings regularly to raise the issues identified thus far in the transition of young people requiring accommodation in adulthood.

<b>4.6 Access to Records (1 Complaint)</b>	
<b>YOU SAID</b>	<b>THE SERVICE DID:</b>
Confidential information about a third party was provided to a young person following an access to records request	Prior to release files will be checked by another officer, the entire process is to be documented so a robust audit trail is in place, a different colour folder is to be used for the information to be disclosed and the information to be withheld so they are clearly visible and will ensure the correct file is handed to the client.

## Appendix A

### Additional Data on Equality & Diversity of Complainants

#### 1 Accessibility to Complaints

- 1.1 The majority of people preferred to put their complaints in writing.

Adults complaining preferred to write letters to tell us about their complaints. This was the same last year.

6 young people made their own complaints. 4 used advocates who sent the complaint in by letter. 1 young person telephoned the service with her complaint and 1 young person emailed the complaint to the service.

- 1.2 The Central Bedfordshire's Children in Care Council. (CiCC) have been developing an information pack for looked after children. Two members met with the customer relations manager to agree how the information on complaints and compliments should be presented in the packs. This will include a freepost form for giving feedback.
- 1.3 The outcome from consultation with young people in the previous period was that they wanted improved electronic access to information. The Council regularly tweet and post messages on the council's facebook page about how to make a complaint, compliment or comment about the council. The council currently has 249 followers on facebook and 438 followers on twitter, however the Council's facebook page in particular is monitored by a local group with over 4,000 followers and they regularly repost Council messages on their own site so the reach is much wider than the council's direct followers.

The CiCC are considering how to develop specific web pages to meet the needs of looked after children. Customer Relations will maintain a link with the Council to consider how to meet the needs of young people for complaints information in any future web presence.

#### 2 Gender

- 2.1 The two areas that received the highest number of stage 1 complaints, Family Support and Intake & Assessment, affected both male and female service users equally and the same complaint issues were raised in both services.
- 2.2 The areas of Fostering and Adoption saw 5 complaints that affected female service users compared to 2 affecting male service users. The issues affecting males related to alleged conduct of a carer and poor communication about professional concerns. Complaints relating to females were about alleged poor attitude of staff, delay in permanency, lack of support and alleged discrimination in decision making.
- 2.3 Complaints affecting male service users more than female related to Looked After Children and Leaving Care Services, where 5 out of the 8 cases affected males. Males were affected by alleged poor communication, failure to pay allowances, lack of support to find suitable housing, contact arrangements, missed appointment and inappropriate action taken. Females raised the same issues as males in 2 of the cases. In 1 case the issues related to historical issues about alleged delays in the case including taking action to address concerns about a placement.

- 2.4 Of the 6 complaints made directly by young people, 4 were made by male service users and 2 by female service users.

Males complained about alleged poor transition from children's to adult services; not getting enough information from the social worker (2 cases, brothers); lack of support to find housing.

One females alleged lack of support to find housing and also queried the level of care leaver's grant. In the other case the complaints related to alleged delays in the case including taking action to address concerns about a placement.

### **3 Ethnicity**

- 3.1 The 2 service users with mixed ethnic backgrounds complained about the Looked After Children and Leaving Care Service. 1 case related to the failed appointment of a social worker and the other to alleged lack of support to find suitable housing.
- 3.2 The service user with a 'White Irish' background complained about the actions of a foster carer.
- 3.3 The service user with 'Any other Mixed Background' complained that the Family Support Service failed to respond to requests for support.

### **4 Age**

- 4.1 The 6 complaints affecting people 19 – 64 years of age related to;
- care leavers both unhappy with the level of support to find housing, and one disagreed over a leaving care grant about lack of support; the adoption assessment process; Family Support; poor communication (2), and unprofessional behaviour
- 4.2 Complaints made by young people themselves related to:
- Leaving Care (2) support for housing and financial grant;  
Family Support (2) poor communication from social worker;  
Looked After Children (1) alleged delays in the case including taking action to address concerns about a placement;  
Children with Disabilities (1) poor planning and support in transition from children's to adults services.
- 4.3 The 2 youngest service users who made their own complaints did so via an advocate. A complaint from a young person with a disability was made via an advocate. The older a young person was the more likely they were to raise concerns without the need for an advocate.
- 4.4 In 7 complaints service users were described as having a learning disability. The issue of placements and plans not meeting the needs of the service user and communication featured in the complaints:
- 3 cases related to Children with Disability Services, complaints alleged poor communication; not risk assessing a resource fully; and a care plan not meeting the needs of the service user.

2 complaints related to Fostering Services' attitude of staff in a meeting; 1 complaint to Family Support Service about failure to follow up on concerns and poor customer care; and 1 complaint about the Family and Adolescent Team related to the quality of a placement and poor communication.

Where complaints were upheld case specific remedies were put in place.

- 4.5 3 Service users were described as having multiple disabilities in complaints about the Children with Disabilities Service. Complaints related to poor support in transition from children's to adult services; delay providing care and equipment not meeting the needs of the child. Complaints about care and transition were upheld and Section 4 details the service actions to improve.
- 4.6 A complaint where the service user was described as having a sensory loss disability related to the Family Support Service failing to advise of a meeting.
- 4.7 The 1 complaint where the service user was described as having a physical disability related to the Intake and Assessment Service poor tone of letter.

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**Meeting:** Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 29 November 2011  
**Subject:** Work Programme 2011 – 2012 & Executive Forward Plan  
**Report of:** Chief Executive  
**Summary:** The report provides Members with details of the currently drafted Committee work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.

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**Contact Officer:** Bernard Carter, Corporate Scrutiny & Research Manager  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Council

#### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Council Priorities:**

The work programme of the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee will contribute indirectly to all 5 Council priorities.

**Financial:**

n/a

**Legal:**

n/a

**Risk Management:**

n/a

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

n/a

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

n/a

**Community Safety:**

n/a

**Sustainability:**

n/a

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

1. **that the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
  - (a) **considers and approves the work programme attached, subject to any further amendments it may wish to make;**
  - (b) **considers the Executive Forward Plan; and**
  - (c) **considers whether it wishes to add any further items to the work programme and/or establish any Task Forces to assist it in reviewing specific items.**

**Work Programme**

1. Attached at Appendix A is the currently drafted work programme for the Committee.
2. Also attached at Appendix B is the latest version of the Executive's Forward Plan so that Overview & Scrutiny Members are fully aware of the key issues Executive Members will be taking decisions upon in the coming months. Those items relating specifically to this Committee's terms of reference are shaded in light grey.
3. The Committee is now requested to consider the work programme attached and amend or add to it as necessary. This will allow officers to plan accordingly but will not preclude further items being added during the course of the year if Members so wish and capacity exists.

**Task Forces**

4. In addition to consideration of the work programme, Members may also wish to consider how each item will be reviewed i.e. by the Committee itself (over one or a number of Committee meetings) or by establishing a Member Task Force to review an item in greater depth and report back its findings.

**Conclusion**

5. Members are requested to consider and agree the attached work programme, subject to any further amendments/additions they may wish to make and highlight those items within it where they may wish to establish a Task Force to assist the Committee in its work.

## Work Programme for Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2011 - 2012

Ref	Indicative OSC Meeting Date	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Comment
1.	29 November 2011	Adoption and Fostering Processes	To receive a presentation regarding the Council's adoption and fostering processes.	
		Children's Centres	To consider a draft report regarding Children's Centres	
		The Future of Special Schooling in the South of Central Bedfordshire	To receive a verbal update regarding alternative proposals for special schooling in the south of Central Bedfordshire	
		Customer Feedback Annual Report	To consider the Council's annual report regarding Children's Services complaints and compliments	
2.	15 December 2011	Medium Term Objectives	To consider the Council's draft Medium Term Objectives relating to Children's Services.	
		Draft Budget 2012/13	To consider the Children's Services draft Budget for 2012/13.	

Ref	Indicative OSC Meeting Date	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Comment
		Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring	To consider the directorate's capital & revenue budget monitoring information for the second quarter of 2011/12	
		Children & Young People's Plan	To consider the half year monitoring report of the Children & Young People's Plan	
		Disabled Children's Services	To consider the outcomes from the review of disabled children's services in Central Bedfordshire	
3.	17 January 2012	Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring	To consider performance monitoring information for the second quarter of 2011/12	
		Alternative Future Provision of the Pupil Referral Unit	To consider a report regarding alternative future provision of the Pupil Referral Unit	
		Education Vision	To receive a presentation regarding a refresh of the Education Vision	
		Children's Health	To receive a presentation regarding children's health	

Ref	Indicative OSC Meeting Date	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Comment
4.	28 February 2012	All Age Skills Strategy	To consider the draft All Age Skills Strategy	Invite extended to Members of Sustainable Communities OSC to attend.
5.	17 April 2012	Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring	To consider the directorate's capital & revenue budget monitoring information for the third quarter of 2011/12	
		Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring	To consider performance monitoring information for the third quarter of 2011/12	
6.	22 May 2012			

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**Central Bedfordshire Council  
Forward Plan of Key Decisions  
1 December 2011 to 30 November 2012**

- 1) During the period from **1 December 2011 to 30 November 2012**, Central Bedfordshire Council plans to make key decisions on the issues set out below. “Key decisions” relate to those decisions of the Executive which are likely:
- to result in the incurring of expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant (namely £200,000 or above per annum) having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
  - to be significant in terms of their effects on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the area of Central Bedfordshire.
- 2) The Forward Plan is a general guide to the key decisions to be determined by the Executive and will be updated on a monthly basis. Key decisions will be taken by the Executive as a whole. The Members of the Executive are:

Cllr James Jamieson	Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Executive
Cllr Maurice Jones	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Cllr Mark Versallion	Executive Member for Children’s Services
Cllr Mrs Carole Hegley	Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing
Cllr Ken Matthews	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development
Cllr Brian Spurr	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services
Cllr Mrs Tricia Turner MBE	Executive Member for Economic Partnerships
Cllr Richard Stay	Executive Member for External Affairs

- 3) Those items identified for decision more than one month in advance may change in forthcoming Plans. Each new Plan supersedes the previous Plan. Any person who wishes to make representations to the Executive about the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made should do so to the officer whose telephone number and e-mail address are shown in the Forward Plan. Any correspondence should be sent to the contact officer at the relevant address as shown below. General questions about the Plan such as specific dates, should be addressed to the Committee Services Manager, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ.
- 4) The agendas for meetings of the Executive will be published as follows:

Meeting Date	Publication of Agenda
15 March 2011	03 March 2011
05 April 2011	24 March 2011
31 May 2011	19 May 2011
12 July 2011	30 June 2011
23 August 2011	11 August 2011
4 October 2011	22 September 2011
15 November 2011	3 November 2011
6 December 2011	24 November 2011
10 January 2012	22 December 2011
14 February 2012	2 February 2012
27 March 2012	15 March 2012
15 May 2012	3 May 2012



# Central Bedfordshire Council

## Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 December 2011 to 30 November 2012

### Key Decisions

Date of Publication: 15 November 2011

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
1.	Draft Budget 2012/13 and Medium Term Financial Plan -	To consider the draft budget for 2012/13 and the Medium Term Financial Plan including fees and charges and the capital programme.	6 December 2011		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 05/11/2011 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer Email: <a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6147
2.	Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring -	To consider the quarter 2 budget monitoring report.	6 December 2011		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 05/11/11 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer Email: <a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
3.	Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2012/13 and Self-Financing HRA Business Plan -	To consider the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 2012/13.	6 December 2011		Report	Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 05/11/11 to Contact Officer: Tony Keaveney, Assistant Director Housing Services and/or Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer Email: <a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6147 and/or <a href="mailto:tony.keaveney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">tony.keaveney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5213
4.	Future of Special Schooling in the South of Central Bedfordshire -	To consider the alternative arrangement for Area Special Schools in light of the decision by the Department for Education to award Academy Status to Weatherfield Special School.	6 December 2011	Statutory Notices.	Report	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 05/11/2011 to Contact Officer: Pete Dudley, Assistant Director Learning and Strategic Commissioning Email: <a href="mailto:pete.dudley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">pete.dudley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4203

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
5.	2011 Annual Assessment of Children's Services -	Response to Ofsted Annual Assessment and agreement to the improvement strategy.	6 December 2011		Report	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 05/11/11 to Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Head of Learning Email: <a href="mailto:sylvia.gibson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">sylvia.gibson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5522
6.	Extension of the Household Waste Recycling Centres Management Contract -	To consider the extension of the household waste recycling centres management contract with Viridor.	6 December 2011		Report	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services Comments by 05/11/11 to Contact Officer: John Atkinson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services Email: Tracey Harris, Head of Waste Services <a href="mailto:tracey.harris2@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">tracey.harris2@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6464 or <a href="mailto:john.atkinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">john.atkinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6255

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
7.	Harmonisation of the Housing Needs Service in Central Bedfordshire -	To approve the harmonisation of the Housing Needs Service in Central Bedfordshire.	10 January 2012		Report	Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: Mary Goodson, Policy Advisor Email: <a href="mailto:mary.goodson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">mary.goodson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5515
8.	Fairer Charging - Phase 2 -	To receive an update on phase 2 fairer charging and to make a decision on the introduction of weekly charge for Telecare Services.	10 January 2012	Current Telecare users (individual letter and survey); Stakeholder Groups and Public (email and web-based survey) 15 August 2011 – 4 November 2011.	Report Consultation document containing proposals Analysis of consultation responses	Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: Tim Hoyle, Head of Business Systems Email: <a href="mailto:tim.hoyle@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">tim.hoyle@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6065
9.	ICT Framework Document -	To approve the ICT Framework document.	10 January 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/12/2011 to Contact Officer: Clive Jones, Chief ICT Officer Email: <a href="mailto:clive.jones@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">clive.jones@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4168

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
10.	Outcome of the Review of Children's Centres -	To consider the outcome of the review of children's centres.	10 January 2012		Report	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 09/12/2011 to Contact Officer: Catherine Parry, Assistant Director (Acting), Children's Services Operations Email: <a href="mailto:catherine.parry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">catherine.parry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6441
11.	Treasury Management Policy and the Treasury Management Strategy -	To recommend to Council the adoption of the Treasury Management Policy and Treasury Management Strategy.	10 January 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer Email: <a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6147
12.	Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid for Central Bedfordshire -	To approve the Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid for Central Bedfordshire.	10 January 2012	Stakeholder consultees.	Report	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: Paul Cook, Head of Transport Strategy Email: <a href="mailto:paul.cook@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">paul.cook@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6999

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
13.	Review of Traded Services for Schools -	To consider the review of traded services for schools.	10 January 2012		Report	Executive Member for Children's Services, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: John Unsworth, Interim Assistant Chief Executive (Resources) Email: <a href="mailto:john.unsworth@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">john.unsworth@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5875
14.	Award of the Housing Responsive Maintenance and Void Repairs Contract -	To award the housing responsive maintenance and void repairs contract.	14 February 2012		Report	Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: Basil Quinn, Housing Asset Manager Performance Email: <a href="mailto:basil.quinn@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">basil.quinn@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5118

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
15.	Budget 2012/13 -	To recommend to Council the proposed budget for 2012/13.	14 February 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 13/01/12 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer Email: <a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6147
16.	Housing Revenue Account Budget 2012/13 -	To recommend to Council the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2012/13 for approval.	14 February 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing Comments by 13/01/12 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer and/or Tony Keaveney, Assistant Director Housing Services Email: <a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6147 and/or <a href="mailto:tony.keaveney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">tony.keaveney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5213

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
17.	Localism Bill -	To consider the Localism Bill and the delivery through the Community Strategy.	14 February 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 13/01/12 to Contact Officer: Peter Fraser, Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement Email: <a href="mailto:peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6740
18.	Corporate Asset Management Plan -	To approve the Corporate Asset Management Plan.	14 February 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 13/01/12 to Contact Officer: Ian Brown, Interim Chief Assets Officer Email: <a href="mailto:ian.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">ian.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5711
19.	Review of Central Bedfordshire Council Library Service -	Approval is sought to: A: agree the Central Bedfordshire vision for the Libraries Service; and B: agree a sustainable model of future Library Service provision.	27 March 2012	Throughout May - July 2011 a series of focus groups and workshops with service users and partners and stakeholders. From October 2011 – January 2012 a formal consultation on the vision and potential service delivery models.	Emerging vision, core service offer and aspiration Libraries Service Review Report Outcomes from consultation process Equality Impact Assessment	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Kate McFarlane, Head of Community Regeneration & Adult Skills Email: <a href="mailto:kate.mcfarlane@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">kate.mcfarlane@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5858



Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
20.	Community Safety Partnership Priorities and the Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2012-2013 -	To adopt the Community Safety Partnership Priorities and the Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2012-2013.	27 March 2012	Strategic Assessment & Partnership Plan will be considered at the Community Safety Partnership Executive meeting in November/December, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Local Strategic Partnership.	Strategic Assessment Priorities & Community Safety Partnership Plan 2012-2013	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Jeanette Keyte, Community Safety Manager Email: <a href="mailto:jeanette.keyte@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">jeanette.keyte@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5232
21.	Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2012-2013, Age Restricted Sales Plan 2012-2013 and the Health and Safety (as a Regulator) Service Plan 2012-2013 -	To approve the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2012-2013, Age Restricted Sales Plan 2012-2013 and the Health and Safety (as a Regulator) Service Plan 2012-2013.	27 March 2012		Central Bedfordshire Enforcement Policy; FSA Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement; Food Law Code of Practice (England); HSE Section 18 Standard on Enforcement	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Susan Childerhouse, Head of Public Protection (North) Email: <a href="mailto:susan.childerhouse@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">susan.childerhouse@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4394

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
22.	Leighton Buzzard Town Centre Planning and Development Briefs -	To endorse the planning document for two sites as Interim Technical Guidance for Development Management Purposes.	27 March 2012	Statutory consultation procedure to be carried out in Autumn 2011.	Leighton Buzzard Town Centre sites Planning and Development Briefs	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Liz Wade, Assistant Director Economic Growth and Regeneration Email: <a href="mailto:liz.wade@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">liz.wade@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6288
23.	Brewers Hill Road Sites, Dunstable Regeneration -	To adopt the plans for the Brewers Hill Road sites as a Supplementary Planning Document or endorsement as Interim technical guidance for Development Management Purposes.	27 March 2012	Statutory consultation procedure to be carried out in November/December 2011 via exhibitions, meetings and questionnaires.	Brewers Hill Road sites, Dunstable Development Brief	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Peter Burt, MRICS, Head of Property Assets or Andy Lewis, Major Projects Officer Email: <a href="mailto:peter.burt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">peter.burt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5281 or <a href="mailto:andy.lewis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">andy.lewis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5526

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
24.	Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring -	To consider quarter 3 budget monitoring report.	27 March 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer Email: <a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6147
25.	Alternative Future Provision of the Pupil Referral Unit -	To consider an alternative provision free school - Pupil Referral Unit	27 March 2012		Report	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Pete Dudley, Assistant Director Learning and Strategic Commissioning Email: <a href="mailto:pete.dudley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">pete.dudley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4203
26.	Local Lettings Policy to Rural Exception Sites in Central Bedfordshire -	To agree the Local Lettings Policy to allocate affordable housing to Rural Exception Sites in Central Bedfordshire.	27 March 2012		Report	Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Hamid Khan, Head of Housing Needs Email: <a href="mailto:hamid.khan@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">hamid.khan@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5369

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
27.	All Age Skills Strategy and the Skills Role of the Local Authority -	Approval is sought to agree the All Age Skills Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and to agree on the future role of the local authority in the skills agenda.	27 March 2012	<p>The draft All Age Skills Strategy was created following a series of workshops, focus groups and interviews with partners, stakeholders and individuals, during June and July 2011. From early August to late October 2011, a formal 13 week consultation on the draft strategy was held. A follow up stakeholder workshop was held in mid October.</p> <p>Across November and December 2011, a series of one to one meetings, structured interviews and workshops will be held internally to establish the existing skills role of the local authority and to seek views on the potential future role. In January 2012 external stakeholders will be consulted with, again through workshops and interviews to examine Central Bedfordshire wide skills governance arrangements.</p>	<p>All Age Skill Strategy All Age Skills Strategy Consultation Report Report on the future role of the local authority in the skills agenda, with options analysis and implementation plan for the preferred option Equality Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development Comments by 26/02/11 to Contact Officer: Kate McFarlane, Head of Community Regeneration &amp; Adult Skills Email: <a href="mailto:kate.mcfarlane@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">kate.mcfarlane@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5858</p>

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
28.	Outcome of Statutory Consultation on Special Schools in the South of Central Bedfordshire -	To consider the outcome of the Statutory Consultation on the Special Schools in the south of Central Bedfordshire.	27 March 2012		Report	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Catherine Parry, Assistant Director (Acting), Children's Services Operations Email: <a href="mailto:catherine.parry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">catherine.parry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6441
29.	Development Strategy -	The Development Strategy will set out the broad approach to new development across Central Bedfordshire to 2031, including new housing and employment targets and new large-scale development sites. The Executive will be requested to consider and agree the Central Bedfordshire Development Strategy for the purposes of Publication and subsequent Submission to the Secretary of State.)	13 November 2012	Consultation expected in May/June 2012, Member consideration through Development Strategy Task Force/Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel.	Draft Development Strategy (Pre-Submission version) Sustainability Appraisal Report of consultation and other technical/evidence reports	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development Comments by 12/10/12 to Contact Officer: Richard Fox, Head of Development Planning and Housing Strategy Email: <a href="mailto:richard.fox@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">richard.fox@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4105

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
<b>NON KEY DECISIONS</b>						
30.	Outcome of the Disability Review Children's Services -	A review of the non schools provision for disabled children is on going during September to December 2011. There may be need for structural changes which would form the content of an Executive report.	10 January 2012		Report	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: Catherine Parry, Assistant Director (Acting), Children's Services Operations Email: <a href="mailto:catherine.parry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">catherine.parry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6441
31.	Quarter 2 Performance Report -	To receive quarter 2 performance report.	10 January 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: <a href="mailto:elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5517

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
32.	Quarter 3 Performance Report -	To receive quarter 3 performance report.	27 March 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: <a href="mailto:elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5517
33.	Quarter 4 Performance Report -	To receive quarter 4 performance report.	3 July 2012		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 02/06/12 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: <a href="mailto:elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5517

Postal address for Contact Officers: Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ

**Central Bedfordshire Council  
Forward Plan of Decisions on Key Issues**

For the Municipal Year 2011/12 the Forward Plan will be published on the fifteenth day of each month or, where the fifteenth day is not a working day, the working day immediately proceeding the fifteenth day, or in February 2012 when the plan will be published on the fourteenth day:

<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Period of Plan</b>
15.04.11	1 May 2011 – 30 April 2012
13.05.11	1 June 2011 – 31 May 2012
15.06.11	1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012
15.07.11	1 August 2011 – 31 July 2012
15.08.11	1 September 2011 – 31 August 2012
15.09.11	1 October 2011 – 30 September 2012
14.10.11	1 November 2011 – 31 October 2012
15.11.11	1 December 2011 – 30 November 2012
15.12.11	1 January 2012 – 31 December 2012
13.01.12	1 February 2012 – 31 January 2013
14.02.12	1 March 2012 – 28 February 2013
15.03.12	1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013