

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 4 October 2011.

### PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)  
Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs Mrs C Hegley  
K C Matthews  
B J Spurr

Cllrs Mrs P E Turner MBE  
M A G Versallion

Deputy Executive Members Cllrs Mrs A Barker  
A D Brown  
I Dalgarno  
A M Turner

Cllrs B Wells  
R D Wenham  
J N Young

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs D J Hopkin  
R C Stay

Members in Attendance: Cllrs P N Aldis  
M C Blair  
D Bowater

Cllrs D McVicar  
A Shadbolt

|                        |               |   |
|------------------------|---------------|---|
| Officers in Attendance | Mr J Atkinson | Head of Legal and Democratic Services                     |
|                        | Mr R Carr     | Chief Executive   |
|                        | Ms D Clarke   | Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation) |
|                        | Mr A Fleming  | Acting Director of Sustainable Communities                |
|                        | Mr R Fox      | Head of Development Plan                                  |
|                        | Mrs E Grant   | Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services    |
|                        | Mr T Keaveney | Assistant Director Housing Services                       |
|                        | Mr J Unsworth | Interim Assistant Chief Executive - Resources             |
|                        | Mr C Warboys  | Chief Finance Officer                                     |

E/11/60

### Minutes

### RESOLVED

**that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 August 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

E/11/61 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

None.

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

None.

E/11/62 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed:

- the announcement that the public inquiry for the A5-M1 link road would commence next year. This meant, that subject to a successful outcome, that construction on the link road could be brought forward to start in 2014; and
- the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of the Adoption Service which had found the service to be Good with Outstanding features.

The Chairman referred to the initial proposals published by the Boundary Commission for England following the review of Parliamentary constituencies. These proposals would be considered by the General Purposes Committee on 6 October 2011.

E/11/63 **Petitions**

In accordance with the Scheme of Public Participation set out in Annex 2 of Part 4 of the Constitution, the Executive received the following petition:-

**1. Petition regarding the Allocation of Homes at the Old Warden Rural Exception Scheme**

Mr Purcell presented a paper petition, containing a total of 102 signatures, on behalf of Old Warden Parish Council and the residents of Old Warden regarding the allocation of homes in the Rural Exception Scheme. Mr Purcell explained the background and the concerns of the community about the allocation of homes.

The Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing thanked Mr Purcell for presenting the petition and advised that 86 applications had been received for the 5 affordable properties offered for rent at the scheme. The applicants had to demonstrate a qualifying local connection to Old Warden; this resulted in some 16 potential applications prior to assessment against housing need criteria. Final allocations for the properties would be released by 7 October 2011. The Council proposed to look again at affordable housing need in Old Warden given the level of demand.

The Executive Member explained that the Council was developing a Local Lettings Policy for rural exception sites and would be consulting with parish councils in Central Bedfordshire to re-evaluate the requirement, if appropriate, to distinguish between the three categories of local connection as currently defined in the Council's Section 106 Agreements. Consultation would seek views on defining priority for the local connection qualification for people in need of affordable housing and would commence by 7 October 2011.

Councillor Mrs Turner as ward Member for Old Warden acknowledged the petition and the strength of feeling about this issue locally. She welcomed the Council's decision to look again at the local need in Old Warden and the development of a Local Lettings Policy.

**E/11/64 Public Participation**

No members of the public had registered to speak.

**E/11/65 Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

**RESOLVED**

**that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 October 2011 to 30 September 2012 be noted.**

**E/11/66 A New Plan-making Programme for Central Bedfordshire**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development outlining the scope and timetable for the production of future development plans for the Central Bedfordshire area. This included specific reference to a new “Development Strategy” document and a Gypsy and Traveller Plan. These documents would, as necessary, refresh, update and roll forward the existing planning policy framework in Central Bedfordshire.

The Executive Member moved an additional recommendation as follows:

“that the submission draft Gypsy and Traveller Document for the north of Central Bedfordshire, together with the underlying evidence base, be endorsed for development management purposes.”

A single planning framework for Central Bedfordshire would take between 2-3 years to develop and would take on board the important planning policy work already undertaken for the area. It was anticipated that the cost of producing new plans would be in the region of £300,000 per year. This would include costs for the development of the Strategy, public inspection and the publication of the document.

The Government was currently consulting on the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Council's draft response to this consultation would be circulated to Members for comments to enable the Council to respond to the consultation by 17 October 2011.

Reason for decision: To set the scope and timetable for future plan-making in Central Bedfordshire.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. to support the preparation of the following plans:**
  - **Development Strategy**
  - **Gypsy and Traveller Plan**
  - **Site Allocations Plan and/or Neighbourhood Plans as appropriate;**
- 2. that the programme of plan-making, attached at Appendix A to the submitted report, will formally represent the Local Development Scheme for Central Bedfordshire;**
- 3. that, in respect of the northern part of Central Bedfordshire:**
  - (a) the programme of plan-making for formal submission to the Secretary of State be approved, and following approval, brings the programme into effect;**
  - (b) the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development, be authorised to make any minor changes to the programme of plan-making, both prior to formal submission and in response to any comments made by the Secretary of State;**
- 4. that, in respect of the southern part of Central Bedfordshire, the Executive recommends to the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee that it agrees the programme of plan-making for formal submission to the Secretary of State and, following approval, brings the programme into effect; and**
- 5. that the submission draft Gypsy and Traveller Document for the north of Central Bedfordshire, together with the underlying evidence base, be endorsed for development management purposes.**

E/11/67

## **Allowances for Foster Parents**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services detailing the proposed payment of allowances for foster parents. The Executive Member acknowledged the outstanding work of foster parents.

Members were presented with three options that might be used to determine fostering allowances. The Corporate Parenting Panel and the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee were recommending that the Executive adopt option one, to continue with the current system of basing allowances on the annually published Fostering Network recommended rates, at or above its recommended rate.

Reason for decision: To meet the requirements of the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the proposals for determining fostering and, subject to means testing, Adoption order, Residence Order and Special Guardianship Order allowances, as set out in the submitted report, be approved;**
- 2. that the comments of foster carers arising from the annual consultation and the deliberations of the Corporate Parenting Panel be discussed annually; and**
- 3. to delegate to the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services, the ability to make minor variations to the policy.**

E/11/68

#### **Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that set out the policy for financial support for transition to adulthood for care leavers.

The Executive Member amended recommendation one as follows:

"that the policy for financial support for transition to adulthood for care leavers, as set out in Appendix A, is agreed"

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to discharge its statutory requirement to support young people from the age of 16 onwards transition to independent living.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the policy for financial support for transition to adulthood for care leavers, as set out in Appendix A to the submitted report, be approved; and**
- 2. that any minor amendments required as a result of the annual consultation with care leavers, the Children in Care Council and the Corporate Parenting Panel be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services.**

E/11/69

### **Central Bedfordshire Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Economic Partnerships that outlined the background to the establishment of a Central Bedfordshire Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board. The report set out the purpose of the Board and the proposed Terms of Reference and how the Board would engage with stakeholders.

Reason for decision: The Health and Wellbeing Boards will allow local authorities to take a strategic approach with key stakeholders to promote integration across public health, health, adult social care, children's services including safeguarding, and the wider local authority agenda.

#### **RESOLVED**

**that the work being undertaken to develop a Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board be noted.**

E/11/70

### **Quarter 1 Performance Report**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that reported on the 2011/12 quarter 1 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council's key performance indicator set.

The Deputy Leader responded to questions. In particular a query was raised about the Council's approach to issuing invoices, including invoices not being issued to the town and parish councils for the cost of the elections in May 2011. The Deputy Leader advised the relevant non-Executive Member that a written response would be provided.

Members commented on the Government's announcement that £250m would be available to help English councils keep or restore weekly bin collections. The Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services advised Members that no further details had been received and the Council would not be taking any action until the implications of this announcement were known.

Reason for decision: To ensure a rigorous approach to performance management across Central Bedfordshire Council.

#### **RESOLVED**

**that the improved overall performance made against the set of indicators, as set out in the submitted report, be noted.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 10.24 a.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated .....