

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



please ask for Sandra Hobbs
direct line 0300 300 5257
date 30 May 2013

NOTICE OF MEETING

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Date & Time

Thursday, 13 June 2013 6.30 p.m.

Venue at

Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

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

AGENDA

Prayers

The Reverend Dr Frank Coleman, Vicar of Northill, Old Warden and Caldecote will take prayers.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence to be received.

2. **Minutes**

To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 April 2013.

(Attached pages 5 to 28)

3. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members any declarations of interest.

4. **Questions, Statements and Deputations**

To receive any questions, statements and 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.

5. **Petitions**

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

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

The Chairman to announce any matters of communication.

7. **Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications**

The Leader of the Council to announce any matters of communication.

8. **Executive Member Presentations**

To receive reports from up to two Executive Members on recent matters of interest and ask questions on matters contained in the reports.

9. **Recommendation from General Purposes Committee**

To consider a recommendation from the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 16 May 2013 and answer questions asked under Rule No. 13.1.

(a) Capital Programme Management

(Attached pages 29 to 38)

10. **Report from the Chairman of the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel**

To receive and consider the report from the Chairman of the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel and answer questions asked under Rule No. 13.1.

11. **Report of the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority**

To receive and consider the reports of the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and answer questions asked under Rule No. 13.1.

(Attached pages 39 to 40)

12. **Motions (if any)**

To consider motions by Members of the Council under Rule No. 17 in the order received.

13. **Written Questions**

To answer written questions from Members of the Council under Rule No. 13.2.

14. **Open Questions**

To answer Open Questions asked by Members of the Council under Rule No. 13.7.

15. **Annual Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

To receive the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

(Attached pages 41 to 66)

16. **Audit Committee Activity - Biannual Report**

To receive a report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee on the Committee's activities.

(Attached pages 67 to 72)

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 18 April 2013.

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs A Barker (Chairman)
Cllr Ms C Maudlin (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs	P N Aldis	Cllrs	Mrs S A Goodchild	Cllrs	B Saunders
	A R Bastable		Ms A M W Graham		J A G Saunders
	R D Berry		Mrs D B Green		N J Sheppard
	L Birt		Mrs D B Gurney		I Shingler
	M C Blair		C Hegley		M A Smith
	D Bowater		P Hollick		Miss A Sparrow
	A D Brown		D J Hopkin		B J Spurr
	Mrs C F Chapman MBE		J G Jamieson		R C Stay
	Mrs S Clark		D Jones		A M Turner
	Mrs G Clarke		M R Jones		Mrs P E Turner MBE
	N B Costin		D J Lawrence		M A G Versallion
	I Dalgarno		Mrs J G Lawrence		N Warren
	A L Dodwell		K C Matthews		B Wells
	Mrs R J Drinkwater		D McVicar		R D Wenham
	P A Duckett		J Murray		P Williams
	Dr R Egan		Mrs M Mustoe		J N Young
	Mrs R B Gammons		T Nicols		A Zerny
	C C Gomm		R B Pepworth		

Apologies for Absence

Cllrs	K Janes	Cllrs	A Shadbolt
	R W Johnstone		T Woodward

Officers:	Mr T Saunders	–	Assistant Director, Planning
	Mr T Keaveney	–	Assistant Director Housing Services
	Mr J Atkinson	–	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
	Mr R Carr	–	Chief Executive
	Ms D Clarke	–	Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation)
	Mrs E Grant	–	Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services
	Ms M Peaston	–	Committee Services Manager
	Ms C Harding	–	Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity)
	Mrs S Hobbs	–	Committee Services Officer
	Mr C Warboys	–	Chief Finance Officer

PRAYERS

Prayers were taken by the Chairman's Chaplain, Reverend Dean Henley, Rector for Campton, Clophill and Haynes and Assistant Rural Dean for Ampthill and Shefford Deanery.

C/13/1 **Election of Chairman (only if the current Chairman and Vice-Chairman are absent)**

As the Chairman of the Council was present, this item was withdrawn.

C/13/2 **Election of Chairman 2013/14**

The Chairman invited nominations for the office of Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2013/14. Councillor Caroline Maudlin was duly proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED

that Councillor Maudlin be elected to the office of Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2013/14.

Councillor Maudlin then read out and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The newly-elected Chairman thanked Councillor Mrs Barker, the out-going Chairman, for her work during 2012/13, especially in support of the East Anglian Air Ambulance Service which had been her nominated Chairman's Charity. Councillor Mrs Barker was presented with a certificate in recognition of her year in office. Councillor Mrs Barker then placed on record her thanks to the Chairman's Personal Assistant and also to the new Chairman, Councillor Maudlin, who had supported her as the Vice-Chairman of the Council in 2012/13.

C/13/3 **Election of Vice-Chairman 2013/14**

The Chairman invited nominations for the office of Vice-Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2013/14. Councillor David Bowater was duly proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED

that Councillor Bowater be elected to the office of Vice-Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2013/14.

Councillor Bowater then read out and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

C/13/4 Minutes**RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

C/13/5 Members' Interests

None were declared.

C/13/6 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

Council stood in silent tribute to the memory of Jim Tomlin, an employee in the Revenues and Benefits Team, who had died suddenly on 21 February.

C/13/7 Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications

The Leader thanked the out-going Chairman, Councillor Mrs Barker, for her services in the role of Chairman in 2012/13. He also congratulated Councillors Maudlin and Bowater on their election to the roles of Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively.

C/13/8 Questions, Statements and Deputations

The Chairman indicated that, due to the public interest in Agenda item 10 (a) Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, she was willing to take questions and statements regarding this item only. The Chairman invited 18 speakers in turn to address the Council. Members of the public raised comments and concerns, which in summary included the following:-

- site 58 – this site would pose a health and safety risk for the gypsies and travellers living there and would dominate the villages of Gamlingay and Potton. There was concern that there would be only one field between the existing site and the new proposed site which could possibly lead to an unauthorised encampment between the two
- site 76 – there was concern that the vehicle access to the site was inadequate. In this context, reference was made to fast-moving traffic on Stotfold Road as confirmed by a traffic survey commissioned by the Fairfield Park Residents Association and to the Department for Transport's guidance on setting local speed limits
- site 78 – four pitches should be allocated at this site
- site 92 – this was an existing site within the Green Belt and directly adjacent to the A5. This site was well run and the proposed extension was welcomed

- site 16 – there was concern that residents at this proposed site would need to cross the A6 dual carriageway to access services and facilities. Heavy traffic used Faldo Road as it was the only access to Barton Industrial Estate, Faldo Farm and Water Mill Shopping Village. The proposed site was within the Green Belt and the Council would need to indicate the special circumstances for development in this area. The site was currently being used for crops and was good agricultural land. There had been occasions when the field had flooded which could possibly put the gypsies' and travellers' health at risk. Residents in the area had commissioned their own noise and ecological surveys. The site was very close to site 116 at Pulloxhill, suggesting that both sites would dominate the area
- sites 55 and 82 – it was highlighted that English Heritage had objected to this proposed site. There was concern that the movement of fairground equipment generated a high volume of noise from the site, which could be problematic as it was next to a mobile home park.
- concerns about aspects of the process by which the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee had concluded that seven sites should be put forward for final consideration
- concerns that residents adjacent to the proposed sites had not been consulted

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development thanked the speakers and responded to the concerns about the sites in the order they had been raised, and including the following points:

- councils were required by the Housing Act 2004 to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers alongside the settled population. The Council was also required by the Act to develop a strategy that addressed any unmet need identified
- Members had received all relevant documentation, had been provided with an opportunity to visit all the proposed sites and considered representations at the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee before recommending the proposed sites to the Executive
- residents had been given the opportunity to speak at the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive meetings as well as at this Council meeting
- the proposed Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, if approved by Council, would be published to allow for formal consultation between May – June 2013 during which interested parties would have the opportunity to submit representations. All representations would then be considered before submitting the document, along with all representations received during the consultation period, to the Secretary of State in October 2013. The Secretary of State would then appoint an independent Planning Inspector who would hold an examination in public to determine whether the document was 'sound' and legally compliant

- the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services had been working with officers to reduce the speed limits in residential areas throughout Central Bedfordshire and there would be opportunity to consider reducing the speed limits on relevant roads, where appropriate, at certain proposed sites
- there was an existing Gypsy and Traveller site in Dunstable off the A5 which was a very busy road, especially on occasions when the M1 had been closed, and there had not been any problems for the gypsies and travellers living at this site
- site 82 – there would be an archaeological investigation on this site before submission of the Plan
- it was acknowledged that noise and visual intrusion at the finally approved sites would need to be mitigated
- consultation had been carried out with neighbouring authorities and tenant farmers
- the Homes and Communities Agency had allocated £60m for Traveller Pitch Funding as part of the Affordable Homes Programme to support local authorities. Unfortunately, Central Bedfordshire Council had not received this funding, but the Government had confirmed that further funding may become available as a result of slippage over the course of the programme
- if the Council did not have a Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, addressing unauthorised gypsy and traveller encampments would be compromised
- the Council was able to make an alteration to the defined Green Belt boundary to meet a specific, identified need for a traveller site, but it should do so only through the plan-making process and not in response to a planning application. If land was removed from the Green Belt in this way, it would be specifically allocated in the development plan as a traveller site only
- the Planning Inspector appointed to consider Bedford Borough Council's Plan had recently instructed the Borough Council to allocate additional pitches, as insufficient pitches had been allocated in the Plan
- the Council had a duty of care for all residents in Central Bedfordshire
- clarity was being sought on the impact the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan would have on the Neighbourhood Plan process.

The Chairman thanked the public for putting forward their views and concerns. She indicated that under the next item on the agenda, the Council would debate the recommendations from the Executive on the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan.

C/13/9

Recommendations from the Executive

(a) Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 18 March 2013 seeking approval of the draft Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan for publication and submission to the Secretary of State.

Councillor Mrs D Gurney moved an amendment to recommendation 1, which was duly seconded by Councillor A Zerny:-

“that the draft Pre-Submission Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, be approved for the purposes of Publication and Submission to the Secretary of State, subject to the removal of site 58 from the Plan on the grounds that it is not fit for purpose.”

On a vote by show of hands, this amendment was lost.

Councillor I Shingler moved an amendment to recommendation 1, which was duly seconded by Councillor J Murray:-

“that the draft Pre-Submission Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, be approved for the purposes of Publication and Submission to the Secretary of State, subject to the removal of site 16 from the Plan on the grounds that it is not fit for purpose.”

On a vote by show of hands, this amendment was lost.

In response to questions from Members the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development commented that many of the questions had been answered during the previous agenda item ‘Questions, Statements and Deputations’. He reiterated that if the Council did not have a Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, Central Bedfordshire would be at risk of unauthorised gypsy and traveller encampments. The Council had a statutory obligation to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers alongside the settled population. The Planning Inspector would investigate the soundness of each proposed site and indicate whether the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan was ‘sound’. The Statutory Consultation would take place in May – June 2013, during which interested parties would have the opportunity to submit representations.

In accordance with paragraph 21.5 of Part B5 of the Council’s Constitution ‘Full Council Procedure Rules’, a recorded vote was requested.

Those in favour of the recommendation from the Executive were: Councillors Bastable, Berry, Blair, Bowater, Brown, Mrs Chapman MBE, Mrs S Clark, Costin, Dalgarno, Dodwell, Mrs Drinkwater, Duckett, Mrs Gammons, Gomm, Mrs Green, Mrs Hegley, Hollick, Hopkin, Jamieson, M Jones, Matthews, Maudlin, McVicar, Mrs Mustoe, Nicols, Sheppard, Miss Sparrow, Spurr, Stay, A Turner, Mrs P Turner MBE, Versallion, Warren, Wells, Wenham, Williams and Young.

Those against the recommendation from the Executive were: Councillors Birt, Dr Egan, Ms Graham, Mrs Gurney, D Lawrence, Mrs Lawrence, Murray, Pepworth, Shingler, Smith and Zerny.

Councillors Aldis, Mrs G Clarke, Mrs Goodchild, D Jones and B Saunders abstained from voting.

The vote was carried and the recommendation was approved, as set out below.

RESOLVED

1. **that the draft Pre-Submission Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan be approved for the purposes of Publication and Submission to the Secretary of State; and**
2. **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 amendments to the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan:**
 - (i) **prior to Publication;**
 - (ii) **after Publication but before Submission; and**
 - (iii) **during the Examination process.**

At the conclusion of this item, the Chairman adjourned the meeting from 9.10 p.m. to 9.15 p.m. enabling those members of the public who did not wish to remain, to leave the meeting.

(b) Commissioning New School Places for Implementation from September 2014

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 18 March 2013 that the externally funded rolling Capital Programme for New School Places 2014/15 be approved.

RESOLVED

that the externally funded rolling Capital Programme for New School Places to 2014/15, as set out in Appendix A to the Executive report, be approved, noting the amendments to the Council's approved Capital Programme which will be required beyond 2014/15.

(c) Options for Resolving Current Delays in Academy Conversions caused by Disputed Liabilities for Pension Payments

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 18 March 2013 to set aside £600,000 from contingency to meet the Council's liability for pension payments.

RESOLVED

that there is no provision in the Council's Revenue Budget for 2012/13 to cover the costs of making this commitment and accordingly agrees to set aside £600,000 from contingency to meet the Council's liability.

C/13/10

Recommendations from the General Purposes Committee

(a) Open Questions at Council – Special Provision for Leaders of Minority Groups

The Council considered a recommendation from the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 28 January 2013 that the Chairman of the Council be requested to provide an opportunity for Minority Group Leaders to ask one Open Question each before other Council Members put their Open Questions at meetings of Council.

RESOLVED

that the Chairman of the Council be requested to henceforth provide for the Minority Group Leaders to ask one Open Question each before other Council Members put Open Questions at meetings of Council.

(b) Houghton Regis Town Centre Management Committee: Amended Terms of Reference

The Council considered a recommendation from the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 14 March 2013 that set out revised terms of reference for the Houghton Regis Town Centre Management Committee and for the Committee to become the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee.

RESOLVED

that the revised Terms of Reference for the Houghton Regis Town Centre Management Committee, as set out in Appendix A in the Council Agenda, be approved and adopted and the Committee become the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee.

(c) Business at Council Meetings

The Council considered a recommendation from the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 14 March 2013 to amend the Constitution to include the provision for up to two motions on notice at the budget setting meeting of the Council and up to two motions on notice at the annual meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Constitution be amended, as set out in Appendix A in the Council Agenda, to include provision for up to two motions on notice at the budget setting meeting of the Council and up to two motions on notice at the annual meeting of the Council subject in both cases to the matter being significant or time critical and to the Chairman's agreement, after consultation with the Monitoring Officer, being secured at least 7 clear working**

days in advance of the meeting to include the motions in the business of the meeting; and

- 2. that paragraph 15.1 of Part B5 of the Constitution be amended, as set out in Appendix B in the Council Agenda, to remove the provision for ward presentations at the budget setting meeting of the Council.**

C/13/11

Appointment of Members, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to Committees and Other Council Bodies 2013/14

The Council considered a report from the Leader of the Council outlining the requirements for Member appointments to committees and other Council bodies, including taking account of political proportionality.

As a supplement to the report, Members received the nominations for membership of Committees and for Chairmanships and Vice-Chairmanships of Committees for 2013/14 from the Group Leaders. These were proposed en bloc and were duly seconded, subject to:

- Individual consideration being given to the chairmanship of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee as there were two nominations for this position. Councillors Mrs Barker and Pepworth were nominated. Both nominations were put to the vote and Councillor Mrs Barker was elected to be the Chairman of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2013/14; and
- Councillor N Costin was elected Vice-Chairman of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2013/14.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Council confirms for the municipal year 2013/14:**
 - (a) the structure, size and terms of reference of the committees, sub-committees and joint committees set out in sections D1, E2 and J2 of the Council's constitution; and**
 - (b) the allocation of seats and substitutes to these and other bodies, as listed in Appendix A in the revised report, in accordance with the political balance rules where they apply.**
- 2. that the appointment of individual Members and substitutes to committees and other bodies be approved in accordance with nominations to be submitted by the political groups, as set out in Appendix B to the revised report and attached as Appendix A to these minutes;**

3. that the appointment of the Members to the Central Bedfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board, including at least one member of the Council nominated by the Leader, be approved, as set out in Appendix C to the revised report and attached at Appendix B to these minutes;
4. that the appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of committees for the municipal year 2013/14 be approved in accordance with nominations as set out in Appendix D to the revised report, subject to the Chairman of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee being Councillor Mrs Barker, and set out at Appendix C to these minutes;
5. to note that the following persons have been appointed to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee as co-opted members with voting rights on education matters for the period June 2011 to the Annual Meeting in May 2015:
 - (a) Mrs Frances Image, Roman Catholic Diocesan representative
 - (b) Mr Jon Reynolds, Church of England Diocesan representative
 - (c) Stephen Court, School Parent Governor representative
 - (d) Heather Copley, School Parent Governor representative
 - (e) Douglas Landman, School Parent Governor representative.

C/13/12

Composition of the Executive and Scheme of Delegation of Executive Functions

The Council received a report from the Leader of the Council setting out the composition of the Executive for 2013/14, including the names of the Councillors appointed to the Executive. The report also confirmed that no amendments were proposed to the Scheme of Delegation of Executive Functions beyond those previously approved by the Leader of the Council.

The Leader advised the Council that Councillors Mrs Hegley and A Turner would together lead on Public Health issues.

RESOLVED

- (a) the composition of the Executive and allocation of portfolios, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (b) the scheme of delegation of Executive functions, set out at Part C3 of the Constitution, be noted;
- (c) that Councillor M Versallion continue to be the Lead Member for Children's Services.

C/13/13

Appointments to Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel and Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Council considered a report from the Monitoring Officer on appointments to the Police and Crime Panel and the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

RESOLVED

1. to note that appointments were made for the first time to the police and Crime Panel at the annual meeting of Council on 14 June 2012;
2. that the membership of the Police and Crime Panel was currently:
 - Councillor Mrs F Chapman, MBE
 - Councillor Ms A Graham
 - Councillor P Hollick
 - Councillor B Spurr
3. that the appointments would be made to the Police and Crime Panel next at the Council's Annual Meeting in 2015, and every four years thereafter;
4. to note that at the Council's meeting on 19 May 2011 five Members were appointed to serve on the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority for a period of four years until May 2015 as set out below:
 - Councillor Mrs R Drinkwater
 - Councillor D McVicar
 - Councillor J Saunders
 - Councillor A Shadbolt
 - Councillor P Williams.

C/13/14

Leader of the Council's Annual Report

The Leader presented his annual report looking back over the previous year and the outlining policy priorities for the forthcoming year.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 9.45 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated

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Appendix A

NOMINATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES 2013/14

PROPORTIONAL BODIES	
A1. 'Ordinary' Committees	Councillors
<p>Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee (9 members + 6 substitutes)</p>	<p>Cllr Mrs Angela Barker (C) Cllr Lewis Birt (C) Cllr Mrs Fiona Chapman MBE (C) Cllr Paul Duckett (C) Cllr Dr Rita Egan (iLD) Cllr Julian Murray (I) Cllr Brian Saunders (C) Cllr Miss Ann Sparrow (C) Cllr Tim Woodward (C) Subs: Cllr Mrs Rita Drinkwater (C) Cllr Charles Gomm (C) Cllr Roy Johnstone (C) Cllr Mrs Marion Mustoe (C) Cllr Ian Shingler (I)</p>
<p>Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee (10 members + 5 substitutes)</p>	<p>Cllr Mrs Angela Barker (C) Cllr Ray Berry (C) Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr Mrs Gill Clarke (C) Cllr Norman Costin (C) Cllr Mrs Rita Drinkwater (C) Cllr Mrs Doreen Gurney (C) Cllr Peter Hollick (C) Cllr David Jones (LD) Cllr Roger Pepworth (La) Subs: Cllr Mrs Susan Goodchild (LD) Cllr Ken Janes (C) Cllr Brian Saunders (C) Cllr Alan Shadbolt (C) Cllr Naomi Sheppard (C)</p>

<p>Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee (9 members + 6 substitutes)</p>	<p>Cllr Ray Berry (C) Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr Mrs Gill Clarke (C) Cllr Mrs Rita Drinkwater (C) Cllr Paul Duckett (C) Cllr Mrs Susan Goodchild (LD) Cllr Mrs Doreen Gurney (C) Cllr Naomi Sheppard (C) Cllr Mark Smith (I) Subs: Cllr Nigel Aldis (LD) Cllr Mrs Ruth Gammons (C) Cllr Charles Gomm (C) Cllr Ms Alison Graham (I) Cllr Ken Janes (C) Cllr Miss Ann Sparrow (C)</p>
<p>Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee (9 members + 6 substitutes)</p>	<p>Cllr Alan Bastable (C) Cllr Mrs Ruth Gammons (C) Cllr Ms Alison Graham (I) Cllr Roy Johnstone (C) Cllr Ken Matthews (C) Cllr David McVicar (C) Cllr Tom Nicols (C) Cllr Brian Saunders (C) Cllr Peter Williams (LD) Subs: Cllr Ray Berry (C) Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr Mrs Fiona Chapman MBE (C) Cllr David Jones (LD) Cllr Alan Shadbolt (C) Cllr Mark Smith (I)</p>
<p>Audit (7 members + 4 substitutes)</p>	<p>Cllr Ray Berry (C) Cllr Mike Blair (C) Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr Norman Costin (C) Cllr Mrs Denise Green (C) Cllr David Lawrence (C) Cllr Adam Zerny (I) Subs: Cllr Mrs Jane Lawrence (C) Cllr Alan Shadbolt (C) Cllr Mark Smith (I) Cllr Nigel Warren (C)</p>

<p>Development Management Committee (18 members + 10 substitutes)</p>	<p>Cllr Nigel Aldis (LD) Cllr Alan Bastable (C) Cllr Ray Berry (C) Cllr Mike Blair (C) Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr Tony Brown (C) Cllr Mrs Fiona Chapman MBE (C) Cllr Mrs Sue Clark (C) Cllr Ian Dalgarno (C) Cllr Ken Janes (C) Cllr David Jones (LD) Cllr Ms Caroline Maudlin (C) Cllr Ken Matthews (C) Cllr Tom Nicols (C) Cllr Alan Shadbolt (C) Cllr Ian Shingler (I) Cllr Brian Spurr (C) Cllr Nigel Young (C) Subs: Cllr Lewis Birt (C) Cllr Mrs Rita Drinkwater (C) Cllr Mrs Ruth Gammons (C) Cllr Charles Gomm (C) Cllr Mrs Doreen Gurney (C) Cllr Roy Johnstone (C) Cllr Julian Murray (I) Cllr Brian Saunders (C) Cllr Nigel Warren (C) Cllr Peter Williams (LD)</p>
<p>General Purposes (12 members + 7 substitutes)</p>	<p>Cllr Nigel Aldis (LD) Cllr Mrs Fiona Chapman MBE (C) Cllr Amanda Dodwell (C) Cllr Peter Hollick (C) Cllr James Jamieson (C) Cllr Maurice Jones (C) Cllr David Lawrence (C) Cllr Mrs Jane Lawrence (C) Cllr Julian Murray (I) Cllr Brian Saunders (C) Cllr Richard Stay (C) Cllr Nigel Warren (C) Subs: Cllr Ken Janes (C) Cllr David Jones (LD) Cllr Ken Matthews (C) Cllr Alan Shadbolt (C) Cllr Mark Versallion (C) Cllr Nigel Young (C) Cllr Ian Shingler (I)</p>

<p>Licensing (12 members + 7 substitutes)</p>	<p>Cllr Mrs Angela Barker (C) Cllr Ray Berry (C) Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr Ian Dalgarno (C) Cllr Charles Gomm (C) Cllr Mrs Denise Green (C) Cllr Ken Janes (C) Cllr Mrs Marion Mustoe (C) Cllr Roger Pepworth (La) Cllr Alan Shadbolt (C) Cllr Ian Shingler (I) Cllr Nigel Warren (C) Subs: Cllr Lewis Birt (C) Cllr Mrs Jane Lawrence (C) Cllr Ms Caroline Maudlin (C) Cllr David McVicar (C) Cllr Julian Murray (I) Cllr Nigel Young (C)</p>
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A2. Joint Committee	Councillors
Wixams Joint Development Control (9 members + 6) substitutes)	Cllr Nigel Aldis (LD) Cllr Mrs Angela Barker (C) Cllr Alan Bastable (C) Cllr Mike Blair (C) Cllr Paul Duckett (C) Cllr James Jamieson (C) Cllr Ken Matthews (C) Cllr Mark Smith (I) Cllr Andrew Turner (C) Subs: Cllr Mrs Fiona Chapman MBE (C) Cllr Mrs Sue Clark (C) Cllr Charles Gomm (C) Cllr David Jones (LD) Cllr Brian Spurr (C) Vacancy (I)
A3. Other Council Bodies	Councillors
Appeals Panel (9 members + 6 substitutes)	Cllr Lewis Birt (C) Cllr Mrs Fiona Chapman MBE (C) Cllr Ian Dalgarno (C) Cllr Mrs Rita Drinkwater (C) Cllr Dr Rita Egan (iLD) Cllr David Jones (LD) Cllr Ken Matthews (C) Cllr Julian Murray (I) Cllr Nigel Young (C) Subs: Cllr Nigel Aldis (LD) Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr Paul Duckett (C) Cllr Brian Spurr (C) Cllr Adam Zerny (I)
Corporate Parenting Panel (8 members + 5 substitutes)	Cllr Mrs Angela Barker (C) Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr Norman Costin (C) Cllr Amanda Dodwell (C) Cllr Mrs Susan Goodchild (LD) Cllr Naomi Sheppard (C) Cllr Mark Versallion (C) Cllr Budge Wells (C) Subs: Cllr Nigel Aldis (LD) Cllr Mrs Gill Clarke (C) Cllr Mrs Doreen Gurney (C) Cllr Ken Janes (C) Cllr Andrew Turner (C)

<p>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) (5 members + 3 substitutes)</p>	<p>Cllr Mrs Angela Barker (C) Cllr Mrs Rita Drinkwater (C) Cllr Charles Gomm (C) Cllr Mrs Doreen Gurney (C) Cllr Roger Pepworth (La) Subs: Cllr Mark Versallion (C) Cllr Nigel Warren (C)</p>
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<p>B. NON-PROPORTIONAL BODIES</p>	
<p>B1. Other Committees and Sub-Committees</p>	<p>Councillors</p>
<p>Licensing Sub-Committee (3 members drawn from the pool of the Licensing Committee)</p>	<p>Cllr Mrs Angela Barker (C) Cllr Ray Berry (C) Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr Ian Dalgarno (C) Cllr Charles Gomm (C) Cllr Mrs Denise Green (C) Cllr Ken Janes (C) Cllr Mrs Marion Mustoe (C) Cllr Roger Pepworth (La) Cllr Alan Shadbolt (C) Cllr Ian Shingler (I) Cllr Nigel Warren (C)</p>
<p>B2. Joint Committees</p>	<p>Councillors</p>
<p>Dunstable Joint Committee (5 members)</p>	<p>Cllr Mrs Carole Hegley (C) Cllr Peter Hollick (C) Cllr David McVicar (C) Cllr Miss Ann Sparrow (C) Cllr Nigel Young (C)</p>
<p>Houghton Regis Partnership Committee (4 members)</p>	<p>Cllr Dr Rita Egan (iLD) Cllr Mrs Susan Goodchild (LD) Cllr David Jones (LD) Cllr Peter Williams (LD)</p>
<p>Leighton-Linslade Partnership Committee (5 members)</p>	<p>Cllr David Bowater (C) Cllr David Hopkin (C) Cllr Alan Shadbolt (C) Cllr Brian Spurr (C) Cllr Nigel Warren (C)</p>

<p>Biggleswade Joint Committee (4 members + 2 subs)</p>	<p>Cllr Maurice Jones (C) Cllr David Lawrence (C) Cllr Mrs Jane Lawrence (C) Cllr Tim Woodward (C) Subs: Cllr James Jamieson Cllr Mrs Tricia Turner, MBE (C)</p>
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<p>B3. Other Panels and Informal Bodies</p>	<p>Councillors</p>
<p>Joint Adoption Panel (1 member)</p>	<p>Cllr Mrs Angela Barker (C)</p>
<p>Fostering Panel (1 member)</p>	<p>Cllr Amanda Dodwell (C)</p>
<p>Fostering Permanence Panel (1 member)</p>	<p>Cllr Amanda Dodwell (C)</p>

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Appendix B

Health and Wellbeing Board Nominations and Membership

(Not required to be politically proportionate.)

At its meeting on 21 March 2013 the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board offered its advice as to the membership of the Board after 1 April 2013, as follows:

- The Chairman of the Board would be a Councillor;
- The Vice-Chairman of the Board would be a representative from Health;
- There should be three representatives from the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group;
- There should be one representative from the NHS Commissioning Board Area for Hertfordshire & South Midlands.
- In addition to the Directors provided for statutorily, the Board should include the Chief Executive and Community Services Director.

In view of this advice, the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board is proposed as follows:

<p>Nominations (at least one) by the Leader of the Council for appointment to the Central Bedfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board, in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act, s194.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Mrs P Turner MBE, Executive Member for Partnerships • Cllr C Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing • Cllr M Versallion, Executive Member for Children’s Service
<p>Members of the Board who are officers of Central Bedfordshire Council, statutorily required by reason of their office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Adult Social Services, Central Bedfordshire Council (Julie Ogley) • Director of Children’s Services, Central Bedfordshire Council (Edwina Grant) • Director of Public Health, Central Bedfordshire Council (Muriel Scott)
<p>Representative from Healthwatch, statutorily required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruth Featherstone, Chairman of Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire
<p>Representatives from the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Rooke, Chief Operating Officer

Group, statutorily required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Paul Hassan, Chief Clinical Officer• Dr Judy Baxter, Clinical Director
Such other persons, or representatives of such other persons, as the Council thinks appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Richard Carr, Chief Executive, Central Bedfordshire Council• Chris Ford, Finance Director, Hertfordshire & South Midlands Area Team, NHS England• Marcel Coiffait, Community Services Director, Central Bedfordshire Council (non-voting observer)

Appendix C

**NOMINATIONS FOR CHAIRMANSHIP / VICE-CHAIRMANSHIP OF
STANDING COMMITTEES 2013/14**

Committee	Chairman	Vice-Chairman
Customer and Central Services Overview & Scrutiny	Cllr Paul Duckett	Cllr Miss Ann Sparrow
Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny	Cllr Mrs Angela Barker	Cllr Norman Costin
Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny	Cllr Mrs Rita Drinkwater	Cllr Naomi Sheppard
Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny	Cllr David McVicar	Cllr Alan Bastable
Audit	Cllr Mike Blair	Cllr David Bowater
Development Management	Cllr Ken Matthews	Cllr Alan Shadbolt
General Purposes	Cllr Peter Hollick	Cllr Richard Stay
Licensing	Cllr Mrs Marion Mustoe	Cllr Ken Janes
Central Bedfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board	Cllr Mrs Tricia Turner, MBE	To be appointed by the Board at its first meeting

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<p>Recommendation to Council on 13 June 2013</p>	<p>From: General Purposes Committee on 16 May 2013</p>	<p>Item 9</p>
	<p>Capital Programme Management</p>	
<p>1.</p>	<p>Council is asked to approve the following recommendation:-</p>	
	<p>that the Constitution be amended by including the proposed capital programme related revisions to the Code of Financial Governance in Part I2, section 4.10 of the Constitution and to the Executive Functions in Part C3, section 3 of the Constitution as set out in Appendices A and B respectively.</p>	
	<p>Background</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources which sought Members' views on a number of proposed amendments to the Constitution with regard to the management of the Council's Capital Programme. The meeting noted that the aim of the amendments was to simplify the approval of capital schemes in order that the Capital Programme could operate more efficiently.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>The Committee was reminded that on 28 January 2013 it had recommended to Council that the Constitution be amended to allow the inclusion of specific reserve list items, which had been previously agreed by Council, within the Capital Programme. That recommendation had subsequently been approved at Council on 21 February 2013. The further changes now proposed to the Constitution simplified the classification of capital schemes but, with the exception of schemes that were fully funded from external sources, maintained the existing approval requirements. If the revisions were approved, corporate project approval and management documentation would be revised to reflect the amendments.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>The revisions proposed to the capital programme governance related to clauses in the Code of Financial Governance in Part I2, section 4.10 of the Constitution and in the Executive Functions in Part C3, section 3 of the Constitution as set out in Appendices A and B to this report.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources spoke in favour of the proposed revisions. A Member then raised a query regarding the proposed delegation of authority to the relevant Executive Member who, subject to conditions, could include schemes within the Capital Programme that were fully externally funded and where the gross expenditure was less than £500,000. In response the Legal and Democratic Services Officer and the Head of Financial</p>	

	Control explained that any such decisions would be recorded and the approved schemes would be disclosed in public reports monitoring the delivery of the Capital Programme.	
Appendices	Appendix A	Tracked Changes Between the Existing and Proposed Code of Financial Governance (Part I2 of the Constitution).
	Appendix B	Tracked Changes Between the Existing and Proposed Functions Delegated to all Executive Members and Individual Portfolio Holders (Part C3 of the Constitution).

APPENDIX A

I2 CODE OF FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

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4.10	Capital Programme:	Formatted Table
4.10.1	Investment in capital assets shapes future service delivery and creates future financial commitments. The Capital Programme is a <u>four</u> -year programme, <u>including the current budget year</u> , of estimated capital expenditure and associated funding. The Full Council will approve a Capital Programme each year, recognising that approving initial estimates is the first stage in the process of progressing a proposed scheme to implementation. Estimates produced at this stage will be liable to change.	Deleted: three
4.10.2	The Executive will receive budgetary proposals for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme and will submit a proposed programme to the Full Council for approval. The programme will include all capital schemes including those proposed to be financed from revenue resources or external funding sources.	
4.10.3	Capital Schemes will be grouped into <u>three</u> main categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rolling Programmes; Capital Schemes (<u>gross expenditure budget £60,000 and above</u>); Minor Capital Schemes (<u>gross expenditure budget, £59,999 and below</u>). 	Deleted: four Deleted: Major Deleted: over Deleted: 50 Deleted: Whole Life Cost
4.10.4	Outline Business Case All categories of capital projects will require an Outline Business Case in order to be considered for inclusion in the proposed Capital Programme. An Outline Business Case will normally have best estimates of capital and revenue costs, timescales, and deliverables. Outline Business Cases will be approved by the relevant <u>Executive Member</u> in consultation with the relevant Director, the <u>Executive Member Corporate Resources</u> and the Chief Finance Officer.	Deleted: <#>Intermediate Capital Schemes (between £60,000 - £500,000 Whole Life Cost)¶ Deleted: under Deleted: Whole Life Cost Deleted: Portfolio Holder Deleted: Portfolio Holder Finance, Governance and People

4.10.5 Detailed Business Case

A Detailed Business Case will have fully validated costs (including ongoing revenue costs), timescales, deliverables and where necessary an exit strategy. The process for approving capital schemes for subsequent implementation will be different according to their category and is explained in paragraphs 4.10.6 to 4.10.11, below.

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4.10.6 Rolling Programmes

Rolling programmes in the Council's Capital programme are largely concentrated on infrastructure and asset improvement and maintenance.

After a Rolling Programme has been approved by the Council for inclusion in the Capital Programme, a single Detailed Business Case will be produced for the whole programme before it proceeds. The detailed Business Case should be updated annually.

The Detailed Business Case and release of capital expenditure will be approved by the relevant Executive Member in consultation with the relevant Director, the Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Chief Finance Officer.

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4.10.7 Capital Schemes (gross expenditure budget £60,000 and above)

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After a Capital Scheme has been approved by the Council for inclusion in the Capital Programme, a Detailed Business Case will be produced for the scheme. Executive approval to implement will be required for schemes with a gross expenditure budget exceeding £499,999. Schemes with a gross expenditure budget above £59,999 but below £500,000 can proceed with the approval of the relevant Executive Member in consultation with the relevant Director, Executive member for Corporate Resources and the Chief Finance Officer.

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For Capital Schemes, some further costs may need to be incurred to take a project up to Detailed Business Case stage. The relevant Executive Member in consultation with the relevant Director, the Executive Member Corporate Resources and the Chief Finance Officer can authorise expenditure up to a level of 10% (not to exceed £60,000) of the approved gross expenditure budget at this stage to enable a Detailed Business Case to be produced. The revenue budget of the applicable directorate will meet these costs if ultimately the scheme does not proceed for any reason.

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4.10.8 Minor Capital Schemes (gross expenditure budget £59,999 and below)

A Detailed Business Case is not required for these schemes and Minor Capital Schemes in this range can proceed with the approval of the relevant Executive Member in consultation with the relevant Director, Executive Member for Corporate Services and the Chief Finance Officer.

4.10.9 In year, the Executive may approve expenditure on Capital Schemes that have not previously been included in the Capital Programme, but which were included in the Reserve list approved by Council when setting the Capital Programme or are schemes with gross expenditure budgets exceeding £499,999 which are to be funded in full from external sources. Approval is subject to the production of Outline and Detailed Business Cases and confirmation that the revenue cost of such schemes can be accommodated from within the approved revenue budget for the Capital Programme in the relevant financial year, as confirmed by the Chief Finance Officer and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources.

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4.10.10 In year, the Executive may approve expenditure on new Capital Schemes estimated to cost less than £500,000 net of external funding that have not previously been included in the Capital Programme, subject to the production of Outline and Detailed Business Cases. New Capital Schemes estimated to cost more than £500,000 net of external funding must be approved by Full Council if not previously included on the Reserve List.

4.10.11 Schemes that are fully externally funded and where the gross expenditure budget is less than £500,000 can be included in the Capital Programme with the approval of the relevant Executive Member in consultation with the relevant Director, Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Chief Finance Officer subject to the production of Outline and Detailed Business Cases.

4.10.12 Variations from the Detailed Business Case

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Where there are variations in the net costs of capital schemes compared with the provision in the Detailed Business Case, additional costs will be approved in accordance with the following conditions:-

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Existing Scheme - net capital budget - Additional Costs	Approval Powers
Up to <u>10% of the approved net scheme budget subject to a maximum value of £25k</u>	Relevant Executive Member and relevant Director <u>and Chief Finance Officer</u>
Up to <u>25% of the approved net scheme budget subject to a maximum of £100,000</u>	Executive
<u>Over 25% of the approved net scheme budget or over £100,000</u>	Council

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Where additional costs are agreed, the relevant Executive Member in consultation with the relevant Director will seek compensatory savings.

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4.10.13 The Chief Finance Officer will report to the Executive on the monitoring of the approved Capital Programme, including: expenditure and income to date; projected expenditure and income and approved variations.

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APPENDIX B

C3 EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

3. Functions delegated to all Executive Members and individual portfolio holders

Responsibility	Functions	Qualifications (if any)
The relevant Executive Member	To authorise savings or expenditure between £200,001 and £500,000 inclusive (revenue per annum, capital gross expenditure or total contract value)	In consultation with the relevant Director or Assistant Chief Executive, the Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Chief Finance Officer and subject to compliance with Paragraph 19 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
The Executive Member for Corporate Resources	To authorise savings or expenditure between £200,001 and £500,000 inclusive (revenue per annum or capital gross expenditure or total contract value)	In consultation with the relevant Executive Member and Monitoring Officer

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BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

REPORT OF BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY FROM ITS MEETING ON 20 MARCH 2013 TO CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) held a meeting on 20 March 2013 at Dunstable Community Fire Station. The major issues discussed at the meeting are summarised below:

1. SPRINKLERS

The Chairman and Vice Chairman advised that, at the LGA Fire Conference held on 12/13 March, the topic of sprinklers had been discussed.

Councillor Peter Williams advised that Central Bedfordshire Council had developed a Design Guide for planning applications and it had been suggested that this should include reference to the installation of sprinklers. Councillor Williams advised that he would be willing to discuss this matter further with Members to further the provision of sprinklers on Council agendas.

CFO Fuller suggested including a reference to sprinklers in the narrative report to the constituent Councils in order to raise awareness, highlight the lifesaving impact of sprinklers, and urge planners to manage the position in all new residential and commercial development.

2. POLICY AND CHALLENGE GROUPS

Members received the draft Minutes of the latest meetings of the Corporate Services, Service Delivery and Human Resources Policy and Challenge Groups.

In addition to each Group agreeing performance indicators for 2013/14, a number of policies relating to health and safety, and equality and diversity had been approved.

The Fire and Rescue Authority also approved a Treasury Management Strategy Statement; Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Annual Investment Strategy; and Treasury Management Practices.

3. AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Members received the draft Minutes of the latest meetings of the Audit and Standards Committee noting that the Committee had agreed Audit Plans for 2013/14.

The Committee had also considered the outcome of the Fire and Rescue Authority's 2012/13 Review of Effectiveness conducted on 30 January 2013; the outcome of individual reviews undertaken by this Committee and the Fire and Rescue Authority's Policy and Challenge Groups; and a record of Members' attendance at meetings to date.

In the light of this, Members had considered performance objectives for 2013/14 and recommended an Action Plan for 2013/14, which the Fire and Rescue Authority agreed. One of the proposals was that, from 2013/14, the record of Members' attendance at meetings should include the reason for any tendered apology.

The Chairman supported this proposal advising that he was to write to each of the constituent Councils advising that attendance at meetings, etc., was expected as it had been included in the calculation of the Members' Allowances Scheme.

4. LOCALISM ACT: PAY POLICY STATEMENT FOR 2013

On 19 February 2013, Members had agreed an annual pay policy statement for the financial year 2013/14.

In a letter dated 20 February 2013 to Leaders of Local Authorities in England and Chairs of Fire and Rescue Authorities, Eric Pickles had subsequently issued supplementary guidance for 2013 /14 as follows:

- Pay policy statements to be easily accessible from a simple search of the authority's website;
- A meeting of Members to vote on salary packages of £100,000 or more;
- A meeting of Members to vote on severance packages over £100,000; and
- Where Councils have directly elected mayors, to have regard to any proposals before the statement is considered and approved.

To ensure the pay policy statement was clear on these matters, the pay policy statement had been updated and was agreed by Members.

**COUNCILLOR DAVID McVICAR
CHAIRMAN OF BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

Meeting: Central Bedfordshire Council
Date: 13 June 2013
Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report (2012/13)
Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel
Summary: This report presents a summary of the activities undertaken by Overview & Scrutiny in the municipal year 2012/13.

Contact Officer: Jonathon Partridge, Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Manager
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The activities of the overview and scrutiny function, its committees and task forces contribute directly to the achievement of all five council priorities.

Financial:

Not applicable.

Legal:

Not applicable.

Risk Management:

Not applicable.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

Not applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

Not applicable.

Public health and wellbeing:

Not applicable.

Community Safety:

Not applicable.

Sustainability:

Not applicable.

Procurement:

Not applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny

This report relates to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during the municipal year 2012/13.

RECOMMENDATION:

that the Council notes the contents of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for the municipal year 2012/13.

1. Part D1 (paragraph 6.1.2) of the Council's constitution requires that the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel (OSCP) report annually to full Council on the workings of the overview and scrutiny function.
2. Attached as an Appendix is said report, which has been approved by the OSCP for presentation to full Council.
3. The report reflects the outcomes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees pertaining to the Medium Term Plan priorities during the 2012/13 municipal year.
4. Council is asked to note the contents of the Annual Report.

Appendices:

Appendix – Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report (2012/13)

Background Papers: none

NOT PROTECTED

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Appendix

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report (2012/13)



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If you have any comments on this report, or would like to see any of the papers that are referred to, please contact Jonathon Partridge, Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Manager on **0300 300 4634** or jonathon.partridge@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Foreword

Foreword by Councillor David McVicar, Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel

I am very pleased to introduce this Annual Report to full Council that reflects the issues discussed and the accomplishments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) during 2012/13. In June 2012 the Council approved its Medium Term Plan and the priorities on which it will focus for 2012 to 2016. This report reflects on the value the overview and scrutiny process has added during the year and specifically the input it has provided to the Council's priorities.

Throughout 2012/13 the OSCs have engaged in several major pieces of work and in particular some items with a significant amount of public interest. The significant amount of engagement and input from residents in relation to the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan is an example of the way that OSCs can encourage engagement and provide a forum for Members to discuss issues in public. This engagement in OSCs provides us with an opportunity to ensure that our recommendations are informed by the views of our residents and the evidence we receive. The OSCs will continue to encourage public engagement in their meetings during 2013/14 to provide an opportunity for the public to be involved.

The OSCs have also concluded their work as one of fifteen 'scrutiny development areas', leading nationally on the most effective means of undertaking scrutiny in relation to health and social care matters. The Council's input to a national best practice document and the outcomes of this review will support all of the OSCs during this year in building relationships, undertaking proactive scrutiny and being more outcome focused. This was a unique opportunity to work with the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Department of Health and we must ensure that the outcomes of this programme are imbedded in our own OSC structure.

During 2013 the final report of the enquiry into Mid-Staffordshire NHS Trust (the Francis Report) has been published. The enquiry made several recommendations relating to local authority health scrutiny and emphasised the role that health scrutiny can play in holding NHS Trusts to account and undertaking robust challenge of health service providers. During 2013/14 it will be important for our OSCs to be mindful of these recommendations and develop our approaches so that we can provide a robust challenge.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended or contributed to overview and scrutiny over the year. Input from Members, the public, officers and representatives of organisations have all been invaluable in assisting our approach to challenging proposals and reaching our conclusions.

Cllr David McVicar

Councillor David McVicar
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel

1. What is Overview & Scrutiny?

A Quick Explanation

The Scrutiny process is like the Council having its own 'watchdog'. It provides a chance to get a second opinion on key decisions made by the Council's Executive. It can also be used to inform and review any of the Council's plans, policies or strategies or question existing practices of the Council or any other public services causing concern.

Overview & Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) make recommendations and scrutinise the policies, decisions and performance of the Executive. The Executive in turn consults with and responds to Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommendations.

A More Detailed Look

OSCs have 2 main roles: to help develop new policies and to hold the Executive and its partners to account. They therefore monitor decisions taken by Executive Members and examine the provision of services supplied by Council directorates, contractors and external agencies within the Central Bedfordshire area.

O&S is therefore a common sense approach to informing and reviewing decisions and policies, and considering whether they are right for the area. Not only does it provide a means to review the Council's own achievements against its priorities but it also enables reviews to be carried out in relation to services provided by other public organisations on issues causing public concern. It does all this with a view to involving local people.

The O&S process also provides the opportunity for Members to examine the various functions of the Council, to ask questions about why decisions have been made, to consider whether service improvements can be put in place and make recommendations to this effect. It can also provide the opportunity for Members to champion issues of local concern to residents and to participate in the development of new policy.

O&S Members decide the areas they wish to review and invite those who they believe can help with their investigations to give "evidence". The public attending are welcome to participate in asking questions of those making submissions.

The Committees' work falls into a number of broad areas:-

- **In-Depth Reviews:** Each Committee can undertake detailed, evidence-based assessments of Council services, plans, policies or issues, which affect the lives of local people. At the end of each review the Committee produces a report making recommendations to the Executive and other partner agencies as to how things could be improved. During the course of a review Members speak to the Executive, Council Officers and external witnesses to assist them in their information gathering. This type of review is normally conducted by a Task Force on behalf of a particular committee.
- **Light-Touch Reviews:** In addition to conducting in-depth reviews, Committees often want to conduct a quick, one-off review of a topic. Typically a Committee will ask Executive Members, Council Officers or external agencies to come and speak to them about a service or issue before making recommendations to the Executive.

- Scrutiny of the Council's Performance and budget: A core role of each Committee's work involves the detailed examination of key performance indicators and the action plans flowing from Council policies and strategies to ensure the Council is meeting, or exceeding, its targets and objectives. The Committees also monitor the Council's budgets on a regular basis to ensure sound financial management.
- Call-in: Each OSC is charged with ensuring that the decisions taken by the Executive are appropriate and within the Council's policy framework. If the Chairman, 2 members of the Committee or 3 Members of Council feel that a decision should be reviewed they can 'call the decision in' after it has been made to prevent the decision taking immediate effect (an individual member can also call in a decision if it has particular significance for that Member's ward). They can then interview the Executive Member or Council Officers and make recommendations to the decision-maker suggesting improvements to the decision.

The Committees conduct their work at regular Committee meetings or alternatively, they can appoint time-limited Task Forces (small, informal Member groups) to undertake work on their behalf. This usually happens when there is a need to review a topic in greater depth.

How Overview & Scrutiny complements the work of the Council

Whilst the Council's O&S arrangements have been set up to provide an independent process for informing and reviewing Council decisions and policies, 'scrutiny' is not intended to be a confrontational or divisive process. It is not a process that questions every decision the Council makes for example. If it was, clearly this would be counter-productive to Council business and the subsequent delays would win little thanks from our community.

Instead, all those involved in O&S are aware that its purpose is to complement and add value to the work of the Council.

How Overview & Scrutiny Adds Value

Central Bedfordshire Council is not only committed to making best use of its resources to meet local needs and priorities, but it is also committed to making sure the decisions made by the Council are the right decisions for Central Bedfordshire and that the process for doing this is seen as an open one. The Council is keen to provide the opportunity for local people to contribute and give views on service provision and policies and be able to challenge decisions made by the Executive.

When working well, O&S can add value to the work of the Council by importantly:-

- Supporting policy development;
- Raising the quality of debate;
- Improving decisions;
- Teasing out complex issues;
- Engaging the local community and key stakeholders;
- Strengthening accountability;
- Developing new ideas; and
- Monitoring and improving performance.

2. What Overview and Scrutiny Committees does Central Bedfordshire have?



Throughout 2012/13 the O&S Structure consisted of 4 OSCs. Each of the Committees had scheduled between 8 and 10 meetings. There is also an Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel consisting of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the OSCs, which meets on an adhoc basis.

In addition to the main Committees the following task forces were established during 2012/13 and are presently still underway. Further details on their outcomes will be published once they have been completed:-

Task Force Reviews	Parent Committee
Changes in Housing	Social Care, Health and Housing
Review of Hospital Discharge	Social Care, Health and Housing
Joint Health OSC: Healthier Together Review	Social Care, Health and Housing

Full Membership details of the OSCs for 2012/13 are included at **section 12** of this report. In addition to the elected Members appointed to the OSCs, there have also been 3 parent governors and 2 diocesan representatives of the Church of England and Roman Catholic churches appointed to the Children's Services OSC. A representative of Central Bedfordshire Healthwatch also attends meetings of the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC as an observer.

The remainder of this Annual Report is organised into sections that set out how the work of the OSCs has addressed each of the Council's Medium Term Plan priorities. The report will look at each of the priorities in turn and provide an overview of some of the outcomes achieved by the OSCs.

3. Enhancing your local community – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow

The Council wishes to see an increase in the satisfaction of residents who find Central Bedfordshire a nice place to live year on year and we will continue our programme of enhancements to the area. This priority involves developing our Economic Development Plan to ensure current employment rates remains 5% higher than the national average. Through our planning policies the Council will ensure the availability of high quality, appropriate housing for our residents. The Council will continue working with Bedfordshire Police to deliver our Community Safety Partnership priorities.

Draft Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire

At its meetings in May and June 2012 the Sustainable Communities OSC considered the draft Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire. The Committee also considered a requested item from a Member in connection with this item. This Strategy sets out the level of need for development such as housing, employment land and retail and provides a strategy for accommodating this new development, including the allocations of large scale new sites. In addition to questions from seven public speakers the Committee challenged the draft Strategy and raised specific concerns that included:-

- The numbers of homes and jobs that were proposed in the draft Development Strategy and concerns that the provision of 1,700 additional homes through windfall applications and identification in neighbourhood plans was unachievable. It was proposed that the Council develop a contingency plan in case there was a shortfall in the number of homes that came forward for development.
- The importance of making the evidence base for the Strategy available prior to a full public consultation and making it clear the extent to which the evidence had informed the final draft proposals.
- The strategic nature of several transport routes included in the draft Strategy and the importance of promoting the delivery of infrastructure before new housing and ensuring that developments did not have a negative impact on current residential areas.
- The need to ensure that the Development Strategy, and subsequently the Council's Design Guide, identify appropriate housing densities throughout Central Bedfordshire whilst also being mindful of the level of land-take.

Detailed comments from Members and the public were provided to the Executive Member to be taken into consideration prior to a 6-week public consultation. A written response was also provided to members of the public on some specific concerns that could not be answered at the meeting.

The consultation on the draft Development Strategy commenced in June 2012 and the responses will be submitted to the Secretary of State in June 2013 with the intention of adoption by the Council in February 2014.

Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan

At its meetings in January and February 2013 the Sustainable Communities OSC considered the draft Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire that set out proposals for pitches to be allocated up to 2031.

In January 2013 the Sustainable Communities OSC discussed a report regarding the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). In addition to the views of Members the meeting provided the opportunity for over 100 residents to attend and 12 residents to present their views regarding a 'long-list' of potential sites. A detailed Q&A was undertaken and detailed views provided to the Executive Member. As a result of the Committee's discussion a partial refresh of the GTAA was commissioned to consider some of the concerns that had been raised regarding the evidence base for the number of pitches that were considered to be required. The Committee also endorsed an additional, non-statutory, consultation to enable residents to send their views to be considered by the next meeting of the committee.

In February 2013 the Sustainable Communities OSC considered a further report and presentations that detailed the outcomes of the refresh of the GTAA as well as the outcomes of the site score assessment of the long-list of potential sites. The meeting received a summary of over 3,000 representations from residents as well as verbal statements from 33 of the 200 plus residents that attended. This significant level of engagement in the OSC meetings helped Members consider the suitability of the sites that were proposed for development and resulted in the OSC choosing not to recommend several sites to the Executive for further consideration. The draft Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, including those sites proposed by the OSC, was approved by Council for public consultation and will subsequently be considered by an independent inspector.

Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plan

At its meeting on 26 July 2012 the Sustainable Communities OSC received a report that updated Members on the implementation of the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plan. The report also proposed how the Council could continue to demonstrate its commitment to tackling climate change and become more energy efficient.

In response to the issues raised by Members the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Economic Development commented that the Council would insist on white energy efficient lighting in new homes. It was also commented that the Council would not delay the completion of new homes if Anglian Water stated that they could provide water to those homes, the Council would encourage Anglian Water to provide surface water storage solutions in the region to alleviate concerns of water stress.

As a result of their consideration the Committee raised several recommendations that:-

- Informed the delivery of the Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plan during 2012/13.
- Required officers to develop further evidence prior to considering whether the Council should sign up to the LGA's Climate Local Initiative.
- Asked the Executive Member to consider whether an appropriate level of capital funding had been made available to support the delivery of the three key aims of the Climate Change Strategy, in particular the reduction of the Council's own carbon footprint by 35% before 2015 and 60% before 2020, which the Committee considered to be unrealistic.

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- Requested further reports detailing the programmes that the Sustainable Communities directorate aims to progress in order to deliver a 35% reduction by 2015 and 60% reduction by 2020 in the Council's carbon footprint.
- Sought detailed discussions to be undertaken between the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Economic Development and the Executive Member for Children's Services as to whether an appropriate budget had been allocated for adaptations in schools in order to reduce the Council's carbon footprint.

The Committee received a further report at their meeting in December 2012 at which they raised further questions regarding the Council's schemes and provided feedback on potential initiatives.

Other items...

The Sustainable Communities OSC received several other items that related to this priority, which included:-

- Community Safety Plan and Priorities (2013/14)
- Development Brief for Land at Biggleswade Rd, Potton,
- The Statement of Community Involvement
- Masterplan for Land at Steppingley Rd and Froghall Rd, Flitwick

4. Improved educational attainment

The Council wishes to see all Central Bedfordshire schools drive improvement. To achieve this goal, the Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014, was adopted with all schools, governors and young people embracing the challenging targets that the Council and its partners aim to achieve.

Consultation on proposed changes to council admissions arrangements

At its meeting on 11 December 2012, the Children's Services OSC received a report that outlined details of the commencement of consultation on proposed Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in schools which, if adopted, would form the basis for the development of commissioning options for New School Places in Central Bedfordshire. Members of the Committee discussed the contents of the report in detail and raised several issues including the following:

- Concern over the description of principle 9 regarding Special Educational Needs provision, which seemed to suggest provision in mainstream schools only.
- Whilst Members were generally supportive of the principles outlined within the report, there was some concern over the difficulty in executing them in practice in a consistent and compatible manner.

The Committee was content to endorse for consultation the nine policy principles outlined within the report subject to the amendment of principle 9 to ensure place planning at Special Schools was also captured. In the meeting the Assistant Director confirmed that to imply that special schools were excluded was not the intention and would therefore revise the description to ensure place planning at Special Schools was also captured explicitly.

The Council's Executive approved changes to the admissions criteria in response to the feedback from the consultation on the proposals. This work ironed out inconsistencies in the then current arrangements and recognised the complexity of the local admissions system in which every academy was its own admissions authority.

The new arrangements preserve admissions pathways between schools in pyramids or clusters but from now on remove 'medical needs' as an admissions criterion (because schools cope well and no longer use this in practice). They also iron out differences between admissions arrangements for schools with early years provisions on site so the criteria now apply consistently across schools.

Youth Service Provision

At its meeting on 16 October 2012, the Children's Services OSC received a report which provided the Committee with an update of commissioned Youth Support Services and outlined proposals for meeting the new national requirements captured within 'Positive for Youth'. The report was supplemented by a presentation from the Head of Children's Services Commissioning and representatives of the Youth Parliament, which provided the Committee with an insight into the work of Youth Support Services and the Youth Parliament in the context of emerging national policy. At the end of the presentation members of the Youth Parliament were allowed the opportunity to ask questions of the Committee and

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Executive Member present, which centred on raising awareness of the Youth Parliament and encouraging volunteering.

Members of the Committee raised particular concerns on a lack of sufficient detail regarding the activities, locations, participation rates, targeted services and outcomes relating to commissioned youth services to enable the Committee to adequately scrutinise proposed changes. The Committee was concerned to ensure the service was reaching the most vulnerable and sought clarity regarding how the service had already changed and how it would change further under new proposals;

In light of these concerns the Committee requested that a more detailed briefing be provided to Members as soon as possible, which took place on 7 November 2012. At the briefing the Executive Member was also requested to arrange a presentation on the work of the Youth Commissioning Service at a full Council meeting, to give all Members the opportunity to learn about the outcome based approach.

Other items...

The Children's Services OSC received several other items that related to this priority, including:-

- Commissioning new school places
- Regular performance updates on the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Consultation on policy principles for pupil place planning in schools

5. Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable

The Council wishes to see a Central Bedfordshire where services improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities, where accommodation and care strategies for older people provide a wider range of support services and where we continue a commitment to protect the young and old in our safeguarding activities. The Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee has supported the improvement of health and wellbeing by focusing on the needs of the population to ensure that appropriate services are delivered. The Children's Services OSC has provided a clear focus on children's safeguarding activities, reviewing adoptions services and Ofsted action plans to ensure that the services the Council delivers are effective.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Central Bedfordshire

At its meeting on 22 October, 2012 the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC considered the outcomes of public consultation and the nine priorities contained in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWBS) that emphasised the importance of improved outcomes for those who are vulnerable, early intervention and prevention and improving mental health.

In response to the issues highlighted in the report the Committee discussed several issues in detail that were submitted as a response to the consultation. This response highlighted several concerns that included:-

- The need for an effective mechanism for reporting on progress and delivery in light of many of the indicators being delivered in partnership and the difficulty this created for determining outcomes.
- The need to emphasise the role of parents in taking responsibility for and supporting the three cross-cutting priorities.
- The need to share data between GPs and schools in relation to the height and weight of pupils so as to support the reduction of childhood obesity.
- The need to stress the importance of identifying future need so that appropriate services could be provided in the future.
- The need to take into account the importance of managing the transition between childhood and adulthood. The strategy also needed to provide a definition of the ages related to both adulthood and childhood.

As a result of this report the OSC agreed that an item be received at a future meeting of the Committee providing feedback on village care schemes and the comments of the Committee were submitted to the Health and Wellbeing Board as part of the formal consultation. The Committee also used this item to frame further discussions regarding the suitability of proposals and the extent to which they would support improved health and wellbeing.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

At its meeting on 18 June 2012 the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC received a report that presented the executive summary of the re-freshed Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Central Bedfordshire. The OSC considered the executive summary of the JSNA, and particularly how it might influence the future work programme of the OSC. The

Committee also received a presentation from the Assistant Director for Public Health that drew attention to the transition of responsibilities for public health to the Council; a focus on early intervention and prevention.

Following detailed discussion by those in attendance the OSC received further reports on the implications of social isolation and loneliness on a persons mental health and the prevalence of problem drug users. The OSC also requested that officers not lose sight of the critical importance of a cross-cutting approach and improving education attainment as a means of improving health outcomes.

In addition to the specific items that the Committee added to their work programme the discussion of the JSNA enabled the Committee to ensure that all of the items considered at future meetings addressed the needs of local residents.

Ofsted Inspection Outcomes

On several occasions during 2012-13 the Children's Services OSC has received the outcomes of Ofsted Inspections and post-inspection action plans. These related specifically to the following:-

- Safeguarding and Looked After Children Post-Inspection Plan
- Attainment at Key Stage 2 and Ofsted Inspection Outcomes
- Outcomes of Ofsted Fostering Service Inspection
- Progress report on the Implementation of the Post-Inspection Ofsted Action Plan.

The presentation of these reports enabled the Committee to develop an understanding of the Ofsted Framework for inspections and to consider and challenge performance and overall effectiveness. The Committee has discussed in detail the content of these reports and questioned specific feedback that has been provided and the manner in which the Council intends to address concerns.

The Committee has commented upon and endorsed several action plans that the Council has put in place to coordinate activity to ensure improvements. Progress reports have also been received on the implementation of inspection plans to monitor progress of previously completed inspections. Presentation at OSC has enabled Members to challenge performance and provide assurance that action plans are being implemented effectively.

Safeguarding Board Annual Reports

To monitor progress in relation to the safeguarding of both children and adults the Children's Services and Social Care Health and Housing OSCs have received the annual reports of the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board and the Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board.

These annual reports set out the activity of the respective Boards, the interventions carried out to secure safety and where necessary manage circumstances in a safe and effective manner. The production of these reports is a statutory requirement and they provided the OSCs with an opportunity to recognise achievements and challenge progress against business plans over the previous 12 months. Members were also able to contribute to the learning points and business plans that had been set out for the next 12 months
To monitor progress in relation to the safeguarding of both children and adults the Children's Services and Social Care Health and Housing OSCs have received the annual reports of the

Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board and the Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board.

The Children's Services OSC received a presentation from the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children Board to which the Committee challenged:-

- Whether organisations were "taking their eye off the ball", which it was clarified was a national issue, locally Central Bedfordshire had achieved continuing operational effectiveness.
- The importance of effective partnerships during a period of considerable change, which the Board was currently actively engaged in.
- The plans that were in place to ensure the wide dissemination of the report in light of the recommendations of the national Professor Munroe review.

The Social Care, Health and Housing OSC received a presentation from the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Manager. The Committee raised queries relating to the types of abuse that were visible in Central Bedfordshire and queried problems relating to provider forums, which it was informed did not relate to Central Bedfordshire.

These annual reports set out the activity of the respective Boards, the interventions carried out to secure safety and where necessary manage circumstances in a safe and effective manner. The production of these reports is a statutory requirement and they provided the OSCs with an opportunity to recognise achievements and challenge progress against business plans over the previous 12 months. Members were also able to contribute to the learning points and business plans that had been set out for the next 12 months

Other items...

As well as the items detailed above the OSCs have considered other reports relating to this priority, including:

- Annual reports for Adoption Service, Fostering Service and private fostering provision and regular updates on the Fostering and Adoption Service.
- Tenancy Strategy
- Private Sector Housing Renewals Policy
- Local welfare provision
- Fee levels and Standard and Quality of Dementia Care

6. Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport

The Council aims to ensure completion of a series of infrastructure projects and set out aspirations for further significant transport improvements.

Consultation on the development of the approach to parking

At its meeting on 12 June 2012 the Sustainable Communities OSC received a report that set out the research and consultation that had been undertaken on the Council's approach to parking and the changes that were planned to the document as a result. In response to the report the Committee raised several concerns that included:-

The use of verge/footway parking and not permitting parking on grass verges

- Concerns relating to the displacement of HGVs into villages if parking hours were restricted in lay-bys overnight. There were also concerns relating to the level of enforcement that the Council would be able to undertake overnight.
- Concerns that the Highways Agency was responsible for several roads throughout the Central Bedfordshire area and parking standards relating to HGVs needed to be managed in a consistent manner.
- The need to ensure that blue badge holders did not incorrectly receive a penalty charge notice (PCN).
- Whether it should be permissible to allow an illegally parked vehicle to accrue 5 or more unpaid PCNs before it was clamped and removed. The Council was legally required to permit an illegally parked vehicle to accrue 3 unpaid PCNs before it could be clamped and removed.

The Committee also discussed the minimum suggested parking standards for residential schemes. As a result of discussion Members requested that the Council's Design Guide reinforce the need for garages to be a minimum 3.3 metre width and that restrictions be put in place to prevent residents from converting the use of a garage to another function. The Committee agreed 7 recommendations to the Executive. The Executive resolved that the Parking Strategy be endorsed including the recommendations from the OSC, with the exception of the recommendation that parking on grass verges not be permitted.

7. Great Universal Services – bins, leisure and libraries

The Council wishes to see a Central Bedfordshire that fully delivers our BEaR project, including the renovation and rebuilding of all Household Waste Recycling Centres by 2016 and maintaining a high rate of recycling. The Council will ensure the number of adults in Central Bedfordshire taking part in sport and physical activity remains above the national average and will maintain satisfaction of adults with the library service and increase the usage of libraries by 20%

Customer First

At its meeting on 23 October 2012 the Corporate Resources OSC received a presentation from the Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation) providing an update on progress regarding the Customer First programme.

The Committee endorsed proposals regarding the closure of Ampthill and Shefford customer service centres and recommended that the implementation of the recommendation regarding the Leighton Buzzard customer service centre be postponed. The Committee also proposed that a further consultation with Members and other relevant stakeholders be undertaken.

The Committee received a further report at its meeting on 18 December, which detailed the outcome of further consultation regarding the reduction in opening days of Leighton Buzzard Customer Services Centre. Members commented on the constructive nature of the further consultation, which had provided Ward Members with the necessary information upon which to endorse the proposal to close the Centre for two days a week.

Leisure Facilities Strategy

At its meeting on 13 December 2013, the Sustainable Communities OSC received a report from the Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services that set out the methodology and key findings of an audit and assessment of leisure facilities in Central Bedfordshire and the emerging preferred options. The Strategy was to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and provide a strategic direction for leisure facilities in Central Bedfordshire. The Committee also heard from three members of the public who had registered to speak and raised issues in relation to the Houghton Regis Leisure Centre.

Members reflected that progress in relation to the strategy had been slow to date and urged the Executive to submit further financial information so that they could comment in more detail. In light of comments at the meeting the Committee also urged the Executive to reopen Houghton Regis Swimming Pool with immediate effect with due consideration to financial implications. The Committee received a subsequent report at their meeting on 17 January 2013 at which they endorsed the Leisure Facilities Capital Programme, which included work to develop a business case to re-open the swimming pool. Executive adopted the Leisure Facilities Strategy in light of the Committee's comments with further work being commissioned in relation to Houghton Regis Swimming Pool.

Other items...

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees have considered several other items relating to this priority and include the Capital Programme and Asset Disposal List.

8. Value for Money

The Council wishes to see a Central Bedfordshire where council payments remain the same for all Central Beds residents. Residents will see an improvement in the value for money delivered and we will continue to work on making efficiency savings, limiting impact on existing services by exploring different ways of providing services.

Council Tax Support

At its meeting on 11 September 2012, The Corporate Resources OSC received details of the draft policy on localised Council Tax support. Members of the Committee raised a number of concerns including:

- The financial impact the draft scheme would have on Town and Parish Councils..
- The financial impact the introduction of the draft scheme would have on Central Bedfordshire Council and the difficult decisions the Council would have to make regarding management of the funding shortfall of circa £2.5M per annum.
- The flexibility available to the Council to amend Council Tax discounts and exemptions according to local circumstances.
- The protection of groups such as pensioners and other vulnerable people (lone parents with children under 5, carers, those with disabilities and those in receipt of war widows or war disablement pensions), who would be exempt from any contribution.
- The ability of other working age benefit claimants to make a 25% contribution to Council Tax from an already very low income base.

Whilst the Committee supported the four principles upon which the draft policy was based and acknowledged the difficult financial and moral position the Council found itself in, it nonetheless expressed considerable concern about the detrimental impact it would have on working age benefit claimants not designated as vulnerable (and therefore protected from the need to make a contribution) such as those persons in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment & Support Allowance (Work Component). It was Members opinion that these people, who were perhaps least able to make a contribution, would suffer considerable hardship as a result of the introduction of the draft scheme.

The Committee recommended that a clear statement of concern be forwarded to the Executive regarding the detrimental impact the draft Council Tax Support Scheme would have on those persons in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment & Support Allowance (Work Component). The Committee also asked that the Executive considered exempting temporarily, until such time as the recession ends, those persons referred to from having to make any contribution at all, with the subsequent funding shortfall being met from the identification of efficiencies as part of the budget setting process, increases in fees and charges generally or as a last resort, by increasing Council Tax.

Mindful of the need to support vulnerable groups, the Executive recommended approval of the Council Tax Support Scheme but agreed that a report on the impact of the scheme should be presented to the OSC during the Summer to consider its implications.

9. CfPS Programme - Health and Social Care Scrutiny

Health scrutiny is an integral part of holding health services to account and an effective health scrutiny approach is important to ensure that health and wellbeing are kept under review. In July 2012 the Council was appointed as one of 14 Scrutiny Development Areas (SDAs) involved in a national programme supported by the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Department of Health. The aim of the programme was to support the production of a publication to support effective scrutiny of health and social care issues.

In discussion with Members and other health partners the Council agreed three principle aims for the Council's involvement in the SDA programme, these were:-

1. to strengthen the role of the Social Care Health and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee (SCHHOSC) as a "critical friend";
2. to develop a more strategic, outcome focused and evidence based approach to health scrutiny; and
3. to develop arrangements that reflects complex local circumstances and will support joint working with other neighbouring authority health scrutiny committees.

In undertaking the programme the Council arranged two events attended by a wide range of officers and partners from health and social care services including Bedford and Luton and Dunstable Hospitals, the Older People's Reference Group, SEPT (service provider) and Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG).

The first event improved understanding of the health reforms and enhanced relationships with health providers. Members discussed how the reforms affected Central Bedfordshire and particularly how the role of O&S might need to change to reflect the health landscape. Invitees contributed to three group discussions; how can scrutiny improve outcomes? what are the key issues O&S should focus on?; and how can O&S ensure positive and proactive relationships? The second enabled attendees to discuss the best approaches for health scrutiny locally and how to demonstrate improved outcomes and develop responsive services.

The principal outcome of the programme was the input that the Council was able to provide to the Centre for Public Scrutiny to feed into its publication "Spanning the System – broader horizons for council scrutiny"¹. This provides best practice for Councils relating to relationship-building, proactive scrutiny, being more outcome focused and scrutiny in multi-tier areas. In particular the programme has enabled the Council to develop a toolkit for scrutinising the work of Clinical Commissioning Groups. The principles that have been developed as a result of the programme will be developed throughout 2013/14 to encourage excellent health and social care scrutiny and to achieve the following:-

- more effective communication and relationships;
- make better use of patient experience and engagement; and
- undertake more effective collaborative and joint working.

¹ http://cfps.org.uk/domains/cfps.org.uk/local/media/downloads/L13_19_CfPSspanning_the_system_web.pdf

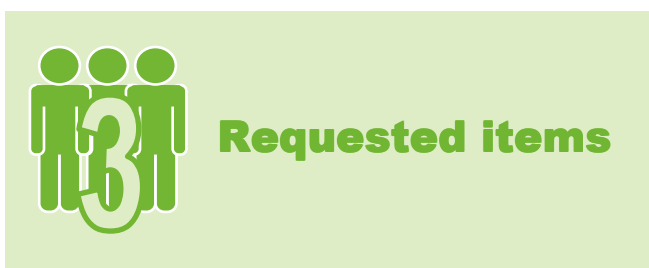
10. Call-ins, Petitions and further involvement

Overview and Scrutiny Committees have a statutory power to review Executive decisions that have been made but not yet implemented. Any decision of the Executive, an individual Member of the Executive or a committee of the Executive or a key decision made by an officer under delegated authority is subject to call-in. The Constitution also provides opportunities for elected Members or members of the public to get involved in meetings by requesting an item or submitting questions, statements or deputations.



Questions, Statements or Deputations

There were a total of 66 questions raised at meetings of the OSCs this year (60 more than 2011/12). Nearly all of these were raised at the Sustainable Communities OSC, 45 relating to the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan and 7 relating to the draft Development Strategy. Other questions were raised in relation to Biggleswade Hospital and other individual development briefs. There were also three statements submitted to the Sustainable Communities OSC relating to the Cranfield Development Brief. This is a significant increase from 2011/12 and represents a significant amount of engagement in the Council's overview and scrutiny process. There were almost 400 residents in attendance at meetings of the OSC this year.



Requested Items

There were a total of three items requested by Members during 2012/13 (2 more than last year) as follows:-

- Closure of Biggleswade Hospital: At the meeting on 18 June 2012 the Social Care Health and Housing OSC received a request from Cllr Maudlin in relation to concerns that had been raised by residents relating to the numbers of admissions at Biggleswade Hospital. Discussion provided an opportunity to clarify that no decision had been taken in relation to the future of Biggleswade Hospital whilst making others aware of concerns regarding that lack of communication. The item was subsequently added to the work programme of

the Committee so that it could be considered in more detail. This item will be considered in 2013/14.

- Carbon Management Plan and the Climate Change Strategy: At its meetings on 26 July and 13 December 2012 the Sustainable Communities OSC received a request from Cllr Aldis to review the Council's performance in relation to the Carbon Management Plan and how it planned to demonstrate commitment to tackling climate change. The outcomes of this item are set out in detail in chapter 3.
- Draft Development Strategy and infrastructure requirements in the proposed urban extension north of Luton: At the meeting on 18 October 2012 the Sustainable Communities OSC received a request from Cllr Nicols for which a response had been prepared by the Executive Member. The issue was considered in greater detail during the meeting and a response to these issues detailed by the Executive Members and the Head of Development Planning and Housing Strategy. Further details on this item are set out in chapter 3.

Call ins and Petitions

Once call-in was received in 2012/13 by the Sustainable Communities OSC relating to a decision of a Traffic Management Meeting on Poynters Road. The decision was called-in by Cllr Young in order to clarify the Executive Member's decision. Following discussion by the Committee the decision was referred back to the Executive Member to be reconsidered with alternative recommendations seeking more timely implementation of a 7.5 tonne weight limit following remedial works.

One petition was received in 2012/13 by the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC relating to the threat of closure of Biggleswade Hospital. This petition had been previously considered by a meeting of Full Council but referred to the OSC to provide an opportunity for residents to raise their views. As a result of this item the Clinical Commissioning Group and SEPT had an opportunity to explain the current situation in public and residents had an opportunity to raise their concerns directly with the service provider, specifically in relation to poor communication. Further items will be considered in 2013/14 relating to Biggleswade Hospital when the outcomes of a Joint Community Bed Review are known.

11. How to Get Involved

The residents of Central Bedfordshire are Overview and Scrutiny's most useful resource for finding out what the key issues are. Residents, community groups, local businesses and others that live or work in the area can make valuable contributions to much of the work Overview and Scrutiny does.

The work programme of Overview and Scrutiny can be flexible, so if there is an issue that you would like to see tackled or if you would just like to find out more about Overview and Scrutiny at Central Bedfordshire Council please contact the Overview and Scrutiny team.

Details regarding forthcoming meetings, including copies of the reports and a list of future meeting dates can be obtained from the Overview and Scrutiny website at the following link:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/committees-and-decision-making/overview-and-scrutiny.aspx>

All OSC meetings are open to the public and a list of future meeting dates is available from the above website. Residents are also welcome to come and speak and provide their views at meetings. If you would like to attend a meeting and speak please contact us in advance.

Contact Us:



Telephone: 0300 300 8301



Post: Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Manager
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands
Shefford
Bedfordshire
SG17 5TQ

12. Further Information and 2012/13 Membership:

Agenda papers, reports and the Minutes of the meetings of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) can be viewed on the Central Bedfordshire Council Website at the link provided below or on request from the officers whose contact details are provided below:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

Corporate Resources OSC		
Councillors	P Duckett (Chairman)	
	Miss A Sparrow (Vice-Chairman)	
	L Birt	R W Johnstone
	Mrs R Drinkwater	J Murray
	Dr R Egan	Mrs M Mustoe
	C C Gomm	
Substitutes	Mrs C F Chapman MBE	B Saunders
	D Jones	M Smith

Children's Services OSC		
Councillors	Mrs D B Gurney (Chairman)	
	N B Costin (Vice-Chairman)	
	Mrs A Barker	K Janes
	R Berry	D Jones
	D Bowater	R B Pepworth
	P Hollick	
Co-opted Voting Representatives	Ms Copley (Parent Governor)	
	Mr Court (Parent Governor)	
	Ms Image (Roman Catholic Diocese)	
	Mr Landman (Parent Governor)	
	Mr Reynolds (Church of England Diocese)	
Substitutes	Mrs R Drinkwater	A Shadbolt
	Mrs S A Goodchild	N J Sheppard
	B Saunders	

Social Care, Health and Housing OSC

Councillors	Mrs R Drinkwater (Chairman)	
	N Sheppard (Vice-Chairman)	
	D Bowater	Mrs D B Gurney
	P Duckett	P Hollick
	Mrs R B Gammons	M A Smith
	Mrs S A Goodchild	
Substitutes	P N Aldis	C C Gomm
	R Berry	A M W Graham
	Mrs G Clarke	R W Johnstone

Sustainable Communities OSC

Councillors	D McVicar (Chairman)	
	A R Bastable (Vice-Chairman)	
	Mrs C F Chapman MBE	Ms C Maudlin
	Mrs R B Gammons	B Saunders
	Ms A M W Graham	P Williams
	K Matthews	
Substitutes	D Bowater	T Nicols
	Dr R Egan	A Shadbolt
	R W Johnstone	I Shingler

Contact us...

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Write to Corporate Scrutiny and Research Manager, Central Bedfordshire
Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17
5TQ

Meeting: Council
Date: 13 June 2013
Subject: Audit Committee Activity – Annual Report
Report of: Chairman of the Audit Committee
Summary: This report to Council summarises the activities of the Audit Committee, as required under the Audit Committee’s Terms of Reference.

Contact Officer: Kathy Riches, Head of Internal Audit and Risk
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

An effective Audit Committee is an integral part of the internal control and governance arrangements of the Council. As such it supports all the Council’s priorities.

Financial:

1. None directly from this report.

Legal:

2. None directly from this report.

Risk Management:

3. One of the purposes of the Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment and therefore supports the overall risk management framework.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. None directly from this report.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. None directly from this report.

Public Health:

6. None directly from this report.

Community Safety:

7. None directly from this report.

Sustainability:

8. None directly from this report.

Procurement:

9. None directly from this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. that the Council notes the work activity of the Audit Committee.**

Background

10. Paragraph 6.2.2 of the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference requires a report to be made by the Chairman of the Audit Committee to Council on the Committee's activities twice a year. This report covers the Committee's activity during 2012/13.
11. The Audit Committee has met formally on four occasions since the start of the financial year. During the year, Cllr Costin, who has previously acted as a substitute, became a full member of the Committee.
12. As a result of the Government's decision to externalise the Audit Practice, Ernst and Young were appointed as the Council's external auditors with effect from 1 November 2012. However, the audit of the 2011/12 Statement of Accounts was undertaken by the Audit Commission.

Internal Audit Activity

13. The Committee, at its meeting in April, considered and approved the Internal Audit Strategy and the Annual Plan for 2012/13. This strategy is a high level statement of how the Council meets the requirements of the Account and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended 2011), which require that the Council maintains an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and its system of internal control, in accordance with proper audit practices.
14. The Annual Audit Plan for 2012/13 was produced using a risk based approach, as required by the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government. A three year Strategic Plan was produced during 2009/10 following a detailed Audit Needs Assessment and 2012/13 was the final year of this plan. In January 2013, the Committee received and endorsed a report outlining the approach to the development of a strategic plan to cover the next three years.
15. The Committee also noted and endorsed the Internal Audit Charter, designed to assist managers, employees, members and contractors understand how Internal Audit interacts with the Council when carrying out its work.

16. At its meeting in June 2012 the Committee considered the Internal Audit Annual Report 2011/12, prepared by the Head of Internal Audit and Risk, which presented an opinion on the effectiveness of Central Bedfordshire Council's internal control environment and summarised the internal audit activity upon which that opinion was based. The report concluded that, overall, the key controls in place continued to be adequate and effective such that reasonable assurance could be placed on the operation of the Council's function.
17. Regular internal audit progress reports have been received, setting out progress against the delivery of the Internal Audit Plan. The progress reports have included Internal Audit opinions given for individual reviews. Where appropriate, officers have been requested to attend the Committee to enable the members to probe further into issues of concern and seek assurance that appropriate management action is being taken.
18. To further strengthen its role in monitoring the internal control environment, the Committee has received regular reports monitoring the progress made against the implementation of high risk recommendations arising from Internal Audit inspections.
19. The Account and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended 2011) require that there is an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit. During 2011/12, this review was undertaken by the Chief Finance Officer. The scope of the review covered compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom 2006 and the Committee was given assurance that Internal Audit has continued to comply with the Code.

Activity relating to Financial Reporting

20. The draft 2011/12 Statement of Accounts was considered in June and the contents noted, prior to their submission for audit to the Audit Commission. The 2011/12 final Statement of Accounts was formally approved by the Committee on 24 September, following the audit.
21. The Committee has monitored the work of the Council's external auditors. The Audit Commission presented regular reports to the Committee in relation to the 2011/12 External Audit opinion, and on the delivery of their work in relation to the Certification of Grant Claims and Returns. Since their appointment as external auditors in November, Ernst and Young have also updated the Committee on their audit activity.
22. The Audit Commission's Annual Governance Report was also received by the Committee in September 2012. This report summarised the key findings from their audit, and provided the Committee the opportunity to consider the issues arising. The report indicated that the accounts would receive an unqualified opinion and this was confirmed in the Annual Audit Letter presented to the Audit Committee in January 2013, which also confirmed that the Council had made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness – Value for Money - in its use of resources.

Local Code of Corporate Governance/Annual Governance Statement

23. The Committee considered the draft Annual Governance Statement at its meeting in April, and approved it as a basis for further input prior to submission to the Leader and Chief Executive. This statement is intended to demonstrate how the Council has achieved the principles contained in the Code of Corporate Governance. The final Annual Governance Statement was presented to the Committee alongside the 2011/12 Statement of Accounts in September 2012.

Risk Management Activity

24. The Committee considered and approved the Corporate Risk Management Strategy at its meeting in April. The Committee has received and considered regular risk management summary reports during the year, enabling it to discharge its responsibilities in this area.

Anti Fraud and Corruption Activity

25. Details of the outcomes of special investigations undertaken by Internal Audit have regularly been reported to the Committee, along with progress made in the investigation of queries arising as a result of the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching exercise.

The Future of Local Public Audit.

26. The Committee has continued to consider the implications of the decision made by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to disband the Audit Commission. In April, the Committee received an update from the Audit Commission on the Government's response to the consultation on the future of Local Public Audit and the externalisation of the Audit Practice. The Committee has been pleased to note the seamless transition so far between the Audit Commission and Ernst & Young. This is thanks in part to the transfer and retention of former Commission staff familiar with the Authority's financial systems; to the work of Finance and Internal Audit officers in providing effective liaison with the new auditors; and to Ernst & Young themselves, who have provided clear guidance on their approach and methods.

Other Matters of Interest

27. The Committee has been updated throughout the year by finance staff, and both the internal and external auditors on other matters relevant to the role of the Committee. These matters include: the Audit Commission and Local Government Association's report on Managing workforce Costs, the Audit Commission report on joining up health and social care, CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance, CIPFA guidance notes, the Local Government Finance bill, HRA Self Financing, the Localism Act, and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Where appropriate, the Committee has sought responses from officers on key issues for the Council identified from these updates. During a year of significant change in matters requiring scrutiny by the Audit Committee, such guidance has proved invaluable, and the respective officers are to be thanked for their various contributions.

Conclusion

28. Through its work the Audit Committee has:
- provided independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and associated control environment
 - provided independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and
 - has overseen the financial reporting process.
29. In discharging its role, the Committee has been supported by Internal Audit and Risk, the external auditors, and Finance staff.

Appendices: None

Background Papers: None

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands, Bedfordshire

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