

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 10 October 2013.

PRESENT

Cllr D McVicar (Chairman)
Cllr A R Bastable (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs Ms A M W Graham
R W Johnstone
K C Matthews

Cllrs T Nicols
B Saunders

Members in Attendance:	Cllrs R D Berry A D Brown	Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development
	Mrs G Clarke I Dalgarno	Deputy Executive Members for Sustainable Communities - Services
	P A Duckett	Chairman of Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee
	C C Gomm B J Spurr	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services
	J N Young	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development
Officers in Attendance:	Mr M Coiffait Mrs J Dickinson Mr J Partridge Ms S Templeman Ms S Wileman	– Community Services Director – Head of Leisure Services – Scrutiny Policy Adviser – Senior Finance Manager – Service Development Manager

SCOSC/13/48 **Members' Interests**

There were no interests or political whip declared in relation to any agenda item.

SCOSC/13/49 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had agreed to vary the order of the agenda in order to facilitate the public items being considered first.

SCOSC/13/50 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 05 September 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SCOSC/13/51 **Petitions**

There were no petitions received.

SCOSC/13/52 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

There were no questions, statements or deputations received.

SCOSC/13/53 **Call-In**

There were no call-ins referred to the Committee.

SCOSC/13/54 **Requested Items**

There were no requested items.

SCOSC/13/55 **Executive Member Update**

The Committee received an update from the Executive Members for Sustainable Communities relating to the following:-

- The development of the Parking Strategy and specific restrictions in relation to parking on verges. The Executive Member explained the manner in which Traffic Management Orders would be imposed and accepted that there may be issues relating to the way that residents would perceive the parking restrictions and difficulty in managing the use of pavements for parking. The Committee noted the further opportunity they would have to discuss this item in December 2013.
- The successful opening of the Luton-Dunstable Busway, which had been well used in the first week.
- Changes in the timetable for developing the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan as a result of feedback from the public consultation and the outcomes of a recent inspection, which would be received by the Committee in early 2014.
- The Development Strategy, which was being drafted, would be considered by the Committee in early 2014.

During discussion the Committee agreed that the Council's representative on the Chilterns AONB Conservation Board needed to reaffirm that the Council presently had no position on the development of HS2. Forming a policy

decision on HS2 may be something that the Council should consider in the future.

SCOSC/13/56 Capital Budget Monitoring - Regeneration and Business Support

The Senior Finance Manager introduced the forecast capital expenditure and external funding as at the end of June 2013 for the Regeneration and Business Support Directorate. The Senior Finance Manager drew attention to the forecast underspend of £766k, which was due to several factors not in the control of the Council.

NOTED the report.

SCOSC/13/57 Revenue Budget Monitoring - Regeneration and Business Support

The Senior Finance Manager introduced the forecast revenue outturn as at the end of June 2013 for the Regeneration and Business Support Directorate. The Senior Finance Manager drew attention to the forecast outturn of £10,096k resulting in an overspend of £182k after the use of reserves, which had previously included savings relating to the Customer First programme. As a result of this change and changes to flood grant funding the directorate was presently projecting an underspend.

NOTED the report.

SCOSC/13/58 Capital Budget Monitoring - Community Services

The Senior Finance Manager introduced the forecast capital expenditure and external funding as at the end of June 2013 for the Community Services Directorate. The Senior Finance Manager drew attention to the forecast net variance of £2,597k.

NOTED the report.

SCOSC/13/59 Revenue Budget Monitoring - Community Services

The Senior Finance Manager introduced the forecast revenue outturn as at the end of June 2013 for the Community Services Directorate. The Senior Finance Manager drew attention to the forecast outturn of £36,308k resulting in an underspend of £117k after the use of reserves.

NOTED the report.

SCOSC/13/60 Performance Monitoring

The Director for Community Services introduced the quarter one performance report for the Regeneration and Business Support and Community Services Directorates. The attention of the Committee was drawn to those specific areas of performance detailed in the report including those issues where performance was rated as "red". The Director also highlighted that although a funding contribution of £5M towards the deliver of the Woodside Link had been

provided, a further £10M had been awarded to the Council subject to meeting certain conditions.

In light of the report and the further guidance provided the Committee discussed the following:-

- Whether the Director could confirm the location of 10 additional accommodation units for offenders in Central Bedfordshire. The Director was unable to confirm that location of these units but agreed to look into this and if possible to let Members know.
- Whether the Council could consider the re-provision of the mobile library service for users who were not eligible for Library Link. The Director confirmed the cost of the re-provision of this service would be considered over the next year.
- Whether there were any changes in the way that schools disposed of their waste. The Director agreed to look into this but requested that Councillors advised him of any specific schools they were interested in.
- The meaning of viability constraints on some development schemes. It was explained that in order for some schemes to be economically viable the developer would often consider the level of affordable housing included in the scheme. As a result the Council was presently reporting a drop in the number of affordable housing completions in order to ensure that some schemes were economically viable.
- Poor performance in relation to satisfaction with road and pavement maintenance. The Committee agreed that these issues should be considered in detail at a future meeting. The Executive Member suggested that this report be considered in January 2014.
- The decline in library usage, which may have resulted from the refurbishment of several libraries and previous reporting errors.

NOTED the report.

SCOSC/13/61 Work Programme 2013/14 and Executive Forward Plan

The Committee discussed the current work programme and the latest forward plan. In light of earlier discussions the Committee noted that the Gypsy and Traveller Area Assessment would be presented to the Committee at some time in the new year.

RESOLVED that the work programme be endorsed subject to the amendment detailed above.

SCOSC/13/62 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during Item 11 on the grounds that consideration of the item is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

SCOSC/13/63 Leisure Facilities Strategy and the Flitwick Leisure Centre Feasibility Study

In light of their discussion the Committee agreed the following comments:-

1. That the Committee felt the focus of the Council should be on developing new leisure facilities in the growth areas; and
2. That the Committee were unable to reach a conclusion on whether they felt the increase in membership numbers and the associated improvement in annual revenue performance was such that it would support the capital cost of prudential borrowing outlined.

RECOMMENDED that Executive be advised of comments of the Committee

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 1.05 p.m.)