

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

**This meeting
may be filmed.***



**Central
Bedfordshire**

please ask for Rebecca Preen
direct line 0300 300 4193
date 26 November 2015

NOTICE OF MEETING

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date & Time

Thursday, 10 December 2015 10.00 a.m.

Venue at

Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

Cllrs D McVicar (Chairman), B Saunders (Vice-Chairman), D Bowater, F Firth,
C C Gomm, Ms A M W Graham, J Kane, K C Matthews and R Morris

[Named Substitutes:

P Hollick, R W Johnstone, T Nicols, D Shelvey and I Shingler]

All other Members of the Council - on request

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

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AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and notification of substitute members

2. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members any declarations of interest and of any political whip in relation to any agenda item.

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

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

4. **Minutes**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 29 October 2015 and to note actions taken since that meeting.

5. **Petitions**

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

6. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

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

7. **Call-In**

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

8. **Requested Items**

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

REPORTS

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
9	Executive Members Updates	* Verbal
	To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Community Services and the Executive Member for Regeneration.	
10	5 Year Plan Performance Monitoring	* To follow
	To review and comment upon performance management arrangements pertaining to the 5-year plan and to scrutinise and provide guidance on the key performance indicators that should be applied to monitor the delivery of the five year plan.	
11	Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring Report	* 11 - 18
	To receive a report on the relevant Budget Monitoring Information.	
12	Work Programme 2015/16 and Executive Forward Plan	* 19 - 22
	Members of the Committee will receive information regarding the Work Programme 2015/16 and Executive Forward Plan.	

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 29 October 2015.

PRESENT

Cllr D McVicar (Chairman)
Cllr B Saunders (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs F Firth
Ms A M W Graham

Cllrs J Kane
K C Matthews

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs D Bowater
C C Gomm
R Morris

Substitutes: Cllrs R W Johnstone
T Nicols
D Shelvey

Members in Attendance: Cllrs A D Brown Deputy Executive
Member for Community
Services
J Chatterley
E Ghent
C Hegley Executive Member for
Social Care and Housing
Chairman of Social Care,
Health & Housing
Overview & Scrutiny
Committee
P Hollick Leader of the Council
and Chairman of the
Executive
J G Jamieson Executive Member for
Community Services
B J Spurr Deputy Executive
Member for Community
Services
B Wells Executive Member for
Corporate Resources
R D Wenham Executive Member for
Regeneration
J N Young

Officers in Attendance: Mr M Coiffait – Director of Community Services
Mr J Cushing – Head of Investment
Mr D Galvin – Head of Financial Performance
Mrs R Preen – Scrutiny Policy Adviser

Public

5

SCOSC/15/27 Members' Interests

Cllr Kane as a Member of Dunstable Town Council.

SCOSC/15/28 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

A letter had been received from the Mayor of Dunstable Town Council objecting to the proposed rise in car parking charges in Dunstable.

SCOSC/15/29 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 August 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to being amended to reflect that Anglian Water liaise with the Chairman of the Council's Development Management Committee.

SCOSC/15/30 Petitions

None.

SCOSC/15/31 Questions, Statements or Deputations

The Chairman confirmed that two members of the public had registered to speak at the commencement of Item 10.

SCOSC/15/32 Call-In

None.

SCOSC/15/33 Requested Items

None.

SCOSC/15/34 Executive Members Updates

The Executive Member for Community Services updated the Committee on a recent presentation delivered by Ringway Jacobs on the new highways contract that would benefit Members and the public. The Committee were also advised of the replacement of play equipment in Shefford following a recent arson attack.

The Executive Member for Regeneration updated the Committee on housing completions , many of which were within the Help to Buy scheme and would be of particular benefit to young families and first time buyers. The Committee were also advised the revised Development Strategy was progressing and would be presented to Scrutiny in due course.

A Member queried whether the Council had delivered the required amount of homes given the approval of recent planning applications. The Executive Member confirmed that although numbers were progressing in line with expectations they were still not wholly adequate due to the absence of a 5 year land supply.

SCOSC/15/35 2016 Fees & Charges

The Chairman invited two speakers to address the Committee in relation to proposed increases to car parking charges in Dunstable. The speakers raised issues that in summary related to the following:-

- A perception that an increase in parking charges would discourage footfall in Dunstable and detrimentally impact the market, the image of the area and vacancy rates.
- The absence of standardisation of charges and consultation with the Town Council.
- The likelihood of proposals stalling progress in relation to the regeneration of Dunstable.
- Whether the charges could be staggered and implemented over a longer period of time to minimise the impact on residents, shoppers and the town.

In response the Director for Community Services stated he considered it appropriate to levy the charges from 01 January 2016 as there had been no increase in car parking charges for the past 4 years.

The introduction of new technology during the summer of 2016, paid for out of capital investment and recovered from parking fees, would make the charges more economical for users.

Members discussed the proposals and raised specific concerns in relation to the proposals to raise car parking fees and charges in Dunstable, which in summary related to the following:-

- Whether it was appropriate to increase fees for a loyal customer base, the low paid and the elderly. It was suggested that an increase in charges would not necessarily translate into an increase in revenue and may negatively affect Council income streams.
- The existing local trade and footfall in the town was fragile and could be worsened by increasing the charges.
- Increased charges could lead to the dispersal of cars to free or residential parking areas.
- Whether the increased charges should be deferred until the pay on exit technology was in place.
- That benchmarking data was not reflective of Dunstable.
- That a business case should be produced to justify the rise in car parking charges that took account of the rationale behind 0% increases for other charges within the Directorate.

In response the Director advised the Committee that car parking charges alone would not impact growth or customer behaviour. Those charges with a 0% increase were subject to policy decisions or had been recently increased, therefore it was not appropriate to increase them further.

In response to a request from Members the Head of Financial Performance and support agreed to include additional information regards income generation and quantitative data in future reports. It was also confirmed that the indicated decrease in income was due to a VAT increase which the Council had not previously been subject to.

The Committee discussed alternative charges to those proposed, with the figures relating to the disparity in revenue provided by the Directorate. It was confirmed that if there was a decrease in charges then it would be necessary to mitigate the loss of revenue from within the overall budget.

RECOMMENDED:-

- 1. That car parking charges in Dunstable, currently at 50 pence for up to two hours, be subject to an increase to no more than £1 from 1 January 2016 and that there would be no further increase once the new pay on exit technology was in place.**
- 2. That the Committee support the overall proposed Fees and Charges, recommending flexibility for the Directorate to reconsider areas with a 0% or very low increase, thus mitigating the impact of lower car parking charges than those proposed in Dunstable, offsetting the loss in revenue.**

SCOSC/15/36 Superfast Broadband

The Executive Member for Improvement and Corporate Services introduced a report which outlined the progress which had been made during phase one of the project, the benefits which had been realised and publicity proposals to encourage more take up of Superfast Broadband across Central Bedfordshire.

In response to queries the Executive Member confirmed those rural areas which would be included during phase two of the project, with the data also available on the Council's website. It was also confirmed that the chosen operating model for the programme would help future proof the infrastructure and provide stable broadband coverage. A letter of agreement in principal to provide funding had been received from SEMLEP which provided some assurity of the funding for the scheme.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee support the continued investment in Superfast Broadband in phase 2 of the project.

SCOSC/15/37 Q4 2014-15 and Q1 2015-16 Performance Reports

The Director for Community Services delivered a report to the Committee, detailing areas of underspend, overspend and outstanding debt for the Council during Quarter 4 2014/15 and Quarter 1 2015/16.

In response to queries the Executive Member for Community Services agreed to provide the Committee with data relating to crime figures.

NOTED the report.

SCOSC/15/38 Work Programme 2015/16 and Executive Forward Plan

RECOMMENDED that the Sustainable Communities OSC Work Programme be agreed subject to the addition of the following items:-

- 1. Passenger Transport Strategy in January 2016.**
- 2. Parking Strategy in January 2016.**
- 3. Planning Enforcement Review Findings in January 2016.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.30 p.m.)

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Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee December 2015

Budget Monitoring

Q2 – September 2015/16

Revenue –Community Services

Key points to note (see full reports for details):

- The 2015/16 forecast outturn is to underspend by £1,125K
- The Year to Date spend is underspent by £870K
- September outstanding debt (over 61 days is) £769K

Revenue -Community Services

Division	Approved Budget	Forecast outturn for year	Forecast variance for year (-under) / over spend	Forecast variance after use of earmarked reserves (-under) / over spend
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Community Services Director	396	396	0	0
Highways & Transportation	11,565	11,171	(394)	(406)
Environmental Services	24,632	25,073	441	(719)
Community Services	36,593	36,640	47	(1,125)

Capital - Community Services

Forecast variance for the year £3,551K underspend

Directorate	Full Year		
	BUDGET	FORECAST	VARIANCE
	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
	£000	£000	£000
Enviromental Services	14,278	6,033	(8,245)
Libraries	148	148	0
Leisure	10,637	9,039	(1,598)
Transport	26,376	19,860	(6,516)
Community Services	51,439	35,080	(16,359)

Revenue – Regeneration and Business

Key points to note (see full reports for details):

- The 2015/16 forecast outturn is to underspend by £90k
- The Year to Date spend is under spent by £479K
- September outstanding debt (over 61 days is) £1,467K

Revenue – Regeneration and Business

Division	Approved Budget	Forecast outturn for year	Forecast variance for year (-under) / over spend	Forecast variance after use of earmarked reserves (-under) / over spend
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Director	463	421	-42	-42
Business and Investment	934	971	37	(39)
Planning	3,417	3,481	64	(9)
Regeneration & Business Support	4,814	4,873	59	(90)

Capital - Regeneration

Forecast to over spend by £322K in year

Overspend £802k on Broadband – which is acceleration of 2016/17 spend to 2015/16.

Underspend £400k on Market Towns Programme and Development Site Promotion

Directorate	Full Year		
	BUDGET	FORECAST	VARIANCE
	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Regeneration	1,341	1,663	322

Meeting: Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 10 December 2015

Subject: Work Programme 2015 – 2016 & Executive Forward Plan

Report of: Chief Executive

Summary: The report provides Members with details of the currently drafted Committee work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.

Contact Officer: Rebecca Preen, Scrutiny Officer

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The work programme of the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee will contribute indirectly to all 5 Council priorities. Whilst there are no direct implications arising from this report the implications of proposals will be details in full in each report submitted to the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

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

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

1. Attached is the currently drafted work programme for the Committee.
2. The Committee is now requested to consider the work programme attached and amend or add to it as necessary.

Overview and Scrutiny Task Forces

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

Executive Forward Plan

4. Listed below are those items relating specifically to this Committee's terms of reference contained in the latest version of the Executive's Forward Plan to ensure Members are fully aware of the key issues Executive Members will be taking decisions upon in the coming months. The full Executive Forward Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at the link at the end of this report.

Ref	Issue	Indicative Exec Meeting date
1.	Adoption of the Planning Obligations Strategy	12 January 2016
2.	Environmental Enhancement Strategy	9 February 2016
3.	Housing Strategy for Central Bedfordshire	9 February 2016
4.	Passenger Transport Strategy	5 April 2016
5.	Waste Transfer Station Operational Contract Award	5 April 2016
Non Key Decisions		
6.	Community Safety Partnership Priorities 2016 - 2017	9 February 2016

Conclusion

- 5 Members are requested to consider and agree the attached work programme, subject to any further amendments/additions they may wish to make and highlight those items within it where they may wish to establish a Task Force to assist the Committee in its work. This will allow officers to plan accordingly but will not preclude further items being added during the course of the year if Members so wish and capacity exists.

Appendix – Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.

Background reports:

Executive Forward Plan (can be viewed at any time on the Council's website) at the following [link:- http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=577&RD=0](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=577&RD=0)

Appendix A – SC OSC Work Programme 2015/16

OSC Date	Report Title	Description
14 January 2016	Draft Capital Programme 2016/17-2019/20	To receive a report on the Draft Capital Programme 2016/17-2019/20
14 January 2016	Draft Budget and MTFP 2016/17	To receive a report on the Draft Budget and MTFP 2016/17
14 January 2016	Draft Budget for the Housing Revenue Account	To receive a report on the Draft Budget for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Service)
14 January 2016	Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities 2016/17	To receive a report regarding the CSPP and provide input and recommendations with regards to delivery of the plan
14 January 2016	Parking Strategy	To receive a report regarding the Council's Parking Strategy
14 January 2016	Drainage Bylaws	To receive a report regarding new drainage bylaws
14 January 2016	Passenger Transport provision	To receive information regarding changes to the passenger transport provision and the impact upon residents
14 January 2016	Planning Enforcement Review	To receive a report regarding a recent Planning Enforcement Review and provide recommendations in light of the findings.
17 March 2016	Housing Strategy	To receive a report on the Council's Housing Strategy
17 March 2016	South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership	To receive a presentation as previously requested by Members

17 March 2016	Environmental Enhancement Strategy	To comment on the approach and scope of the strategy and to provide input as to how the body of evidence is best utilised by the Council.
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