

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

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The logo for Central Bedfordshire, featuring the text "Central Bedfordshire" in white on a black circular background.

**please ask for** Rebecca Preen  
**direct line** 0300 300 4193  
**date** 08 November 2018

## **NOTICE OF MEETING**

### **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date & Time

**Thursday, 22 November 2018 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, Cllr M Liddiard and K C Matthews

[Named Substitutes:

R D Berry, G Perham, I Shingler, M A G Versallion and N Warren]

All other Members of the Council - on request

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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 Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 September 2018 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 Part 4G 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 Part 4G of the Constitution.

7. **Call-In**

To consider any decision of the Executive referred to this Committee for review in accordance with Part 4D of the Constitution.

## 8. Requested Items

To consider any items referred to the Committee at the request of a Member in accordance with Part 4D of the Constitution.

### REPORTS

- | Item | Subject  |
|------|--|
| 9    | <b>Executive Members Updates</b><br><br>To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Community Services and the Executive Member for Regeneration.   |
| 10   | <b>Waste Incinerator</b><br><br>To consider information in relation to a decision made by the Environment Agency with regards to a waste incinerator permit granted to Covanta and any implications to the Central Bedfordshire area.        |
| 11   | <b>Leisure Management Contracts</b><br><br>Members will receive an update on the leisure management contracts and performance.   |
| 12   | <b>Gypsy and Traveller Responsiveness</b><br><br>The report and presentation seeks support from the Committee for proposals for additional Council resources to support the response to Gypsy and Traveller matters in Central Bedfordshire. |
| 13   | <b>Work Programme 2018-19 and Executive Forward Plan</b><br><br>The report provides Members with details of the currently drafted Committee work programme and the latest 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, 13 September 2018.

### PRESENT

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

Cllrs D Bowater  
F Firth  
Ms A M W Graham

Cllrs K C Matthews

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs C C Gomm  
J Kane  
Cllr M Liddiard

Substitutes: Cllrs G Perham, substitute for J Kane  
M A G Versallion, substitute for M Liddiard

Members in Attendance: Cllrs I Dalgarno Executive Member for  
Community Services  
Chairman of Children's  
Services Overview and  
Scrutiny Committee  
K Ferguson  
Mrs S A Goodchild  
B Wells Deputy Executive  
Member for Community  
Services  
J N Young Executive Member for  
Regeneration

Officers in Attendance: Mr S Barratt – Community Safety Operations  
Manager  
Mr M Coiffait – Director of Community Services  
Ms C Frost-Bryant – Head of Strategic Growth  
Mr P Keates – Head of Development and  
Regulation  
Steve Lakin – Principal Highways Officer  
Mrs R Preen – Scrutiny Policy Advisor

Public 5

### SCOSC/18/95 Members' Interests

None.

#### SCOSC/18/96 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman advised the Committee that item 11 would be moved to the beginning of the agenda in order to facilitate the public speakers who were in attendance.

#### SCOSC/18/97 **Minutes**

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12 July 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

#### SCOSC/18/98 **Petitions**

None.

#### SCOSC/18/99 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

The Committee were advised that one written statement had been submitted and that two members of the public had registered to speak at the commencement of Item 11.

#### SCOSC/18/100 **Call-In**

None.

#### SCOSC/18/101 **Requested Items**

None.

#### SCOSC/18/102 **Executive Members Updates**

The Executive Member for Regeneration delivered a presentation which outlined progress to date in relation to phase one of the Dunstable High Street regeneration project and anticipated works for phase two. A detailed report on phase two would be delivered to the Committee at a future meeting. Members were appraised of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, with the preferred route corridor announced on 12 September 2018 following an extensive consultation. In response to a Member query the Head of Strategic Growth advised of the progress to date in relation to the Local Plan. Currently there was no timetable for examination of the Plan by the Planning Inspector. The Council was continuing to work closely with all neighbouring authorities, demonstrating its commitment to its duty to cooperate.

The Executive Member for Community Services provided an update on works to Dunstable leisure centre which were progressing well and within the expected timescales. Dunstable library would operate reduced opening hours due to their move to a new site in December 2018.

#### SCOSC/18/103 **Parking Management Strategy**

The Director for Community Services delivered a presentation which set out the policies required in order to create a new parking strategy for Central Bedfordshire. There was a need to consider the landscape of towns and villages within the region and the impact of the increase in car use and ownership. Following the outcome of a public consultation there was a requirement to revisit school travel plans in order that parking around schools could be managed more effectively. There was also a requirement to provide bespoke solutions for verge parking as there were differing needs in each area. It was vital that the Council took a proactive approach to the issue, that stakeholder expectations were managed and that timelines for delivery were clear.

In light of the presentation Members discussed the following in summary:-

- The importance of supporting residents where parking was particularly challenging and the use of an area based, flexible approach where the design of a town or village did not facilitate major changes in the delivery of future parking solutions.
- The need for greater partnership working with the police to address instances of footway parking and obstructions.
- The need for additional lorry parks to address the issue of lay-by parking and effluence and waste being deposited in residential areas.
- The need for a joined-up approach with planners to mitigate parking around schools and the importance of any concerns in this regard being reported so that they could be addressed in a timely manner.
- That timelines for delivery be made available via the Minutes of the meeting.
- The importance of progressing the implementation of those residential parking zones (RPZ) that had already been agreed.
- That need to give consideration be given to one way systems where appropriate.

**RECOMMENDED that the Committee support the next steps as set out within the presentation.**

#### SCOSC/18/104 **Unauthorised Encampments**

The Chairman invited two public speakers, Mrs P Mitchell and Mr M Gibson to address the Committee, who raised the following points in summary:-

- Examples of inappropriate development on greenbelt land and a subsequent lack of enforcement. The speaker requested that the Committee receive details of instances of non-enforcement on greenbelt land.
- A specific example of hardstanding created on a Traveller encampment however works continued with no enforcement action taken.
- The Committee ought to request a table of unauthorised encampments within Central Bedfordshire, specifically referencing sites at Kingswood, Tilsworth.
- The lack of improvement in the Council's approach to planning enforcement despite a report in 2015.
- The importance of addressing challenges at a particular site in Billington.
- The timeline for the recruitment of additional enforcement officers.

- Whether the Committee would support the implementation of a cross directional steering group comprising officers of the Council, community experts and appropriate partners and that any such group should report to the Executive.

The Executive Member for Community Services delivered a report which outlined the differences between unauthorised Traveller encampments and breaches of planning enforcement regulations. Members were advised of the legal obligations faced by the local authority and the need to support all residents, including those from the Gypsy and Traveller community. Council leaders met regularly with local MP's in order to discuss changes in legislation to try and address the problems faced by unauthorised encampments and the Executive had supported the formation of a coordinated group to work with Gypsy and Traveller community, recognising the need for joined up approach.

The Chairman advised the Committee that a written statement had been received referencing Appendix B of the report and requesting that a similar court injunction as applied in Marston Moretaine be obtained in order to address instances of unauthorised encampments in Dunstable and Houghton Regis. In response the Executive Member provided details of the differences in approach to challenges faced in Marston Moretaine and the agreed methodology in relation to the court injunction, highlighting that there was still a need to undertake more work within Dunstable and Houghton Regis before a similar injunction could be applied for.

In light of the report Members discussed the following in summary:-

- The differences between unauthorised encampments and breaches to planning conditions on established sites.
- The enforcement process did not favour rapid action and often involved the planning inspector or the courts, with members of the public often reticent to provide the courts with the required evidence in order to progress a case.
- The need to consider temporary stopping sites within the region and the disparity of facilities across the country in relation to Gypsy and Traveller provision.
- The changes in the Government definition of the ethnicity of Gypsies and Travellers and the associated number of pitches local Councils were required to make provision for as a result.
- That there were no specific sites identified within the Local Plan and that having demonstrated the ability to meet the 5-year land supply there were no plans to allocate sites at this stage. Instead sites would arise as a result of windfall development. In response to a Member query the Executive Member confirmed that a specific application refused for six pitches would not be treated as a windfall site and that any development on that specific land would continue to be refused with enforcement action taken as appropriate.
- Concerns that the process involved in reporting instances of unauthorised encampments was laborious and did not meet the needs of local residents.
- The need to appropriately assess areas experiencing instances of unauthorised development, the associated impact on crime and the need to prioritise as necessary.

- That the Customer Services team would be working closely with the directorate in order to alleviate pressures on front line staff in relation to call volumes received by the Council regarding unauthorised encampments.
- That local MP's were lobbying Government in order to make trespass a criminal rather than civil offence, thus increasing the powers of the police.
- The need to carefully consider all equalities implications in relation to a protected ethnic group.

**RECOMMENDED:-**

1. That the Committee support the directorate's continued efforts to address unauthorised encampments within Central Bedfordshire.
2. That the Executive continue to work closely with local MP's in order to bring about changes in Government legislation and increase the powers of the local authority and the police.
3. That the Committee include an item in its future work programme encompassing a wider report on unauthorised development and planning enforcement.

**SCOSC/18/10 Work Programme 2018/19 and Executive Forward Plan**

**AGREED the Committee Work Programme subject to the addition of reports as follows:-: -**

- **Planning enforcement and unauthorised development, to include:-**
  - i. The consideration of a Gypsy and Traveller steering group including as permanent members at least two informed residents and that Ward Members be made aware of the timings of meetings and invited where appropriate.
  - ii. That ownership of sites be verified.
  - iii. That occupants of sites be verified.
  - iv. Include the rationale behind a decision not to remove unoccupied and unauthorised caravans at Kingswood, Tilsworth.
  - v. To provide the total numbers of authorised and unauthorised developments.
  - vi. The timeline for planning enforcement action be included.

**The Committee determined that all future relevant reports presented to the Committee ought to detail all instances of planning enforcement or unauthorised development within Central Bedfordshire and not just those cases relating to the Gypsy and Traveller community.**

- **An update on the Billington Gypsy and Traveller site.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 1.35 p.m.)

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## Central Bedfordshire Council

**Sustainable Communities Overview and  
Scrutiny Committee**

**24 November 2018**

### **Leisure Management Contracts**

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**Report of:**

Cllr Ian Dalgarno  
[ian.dalgarno@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ian.dalgarno@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

**Responsible Director(s):** Marcel Coiffait

[marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

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### **Purpose of this report**

1. To provide an update on the leisure management contracts and performance.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to:

1. **Note the current leisure management contracts arrangements and performance.**

## Background

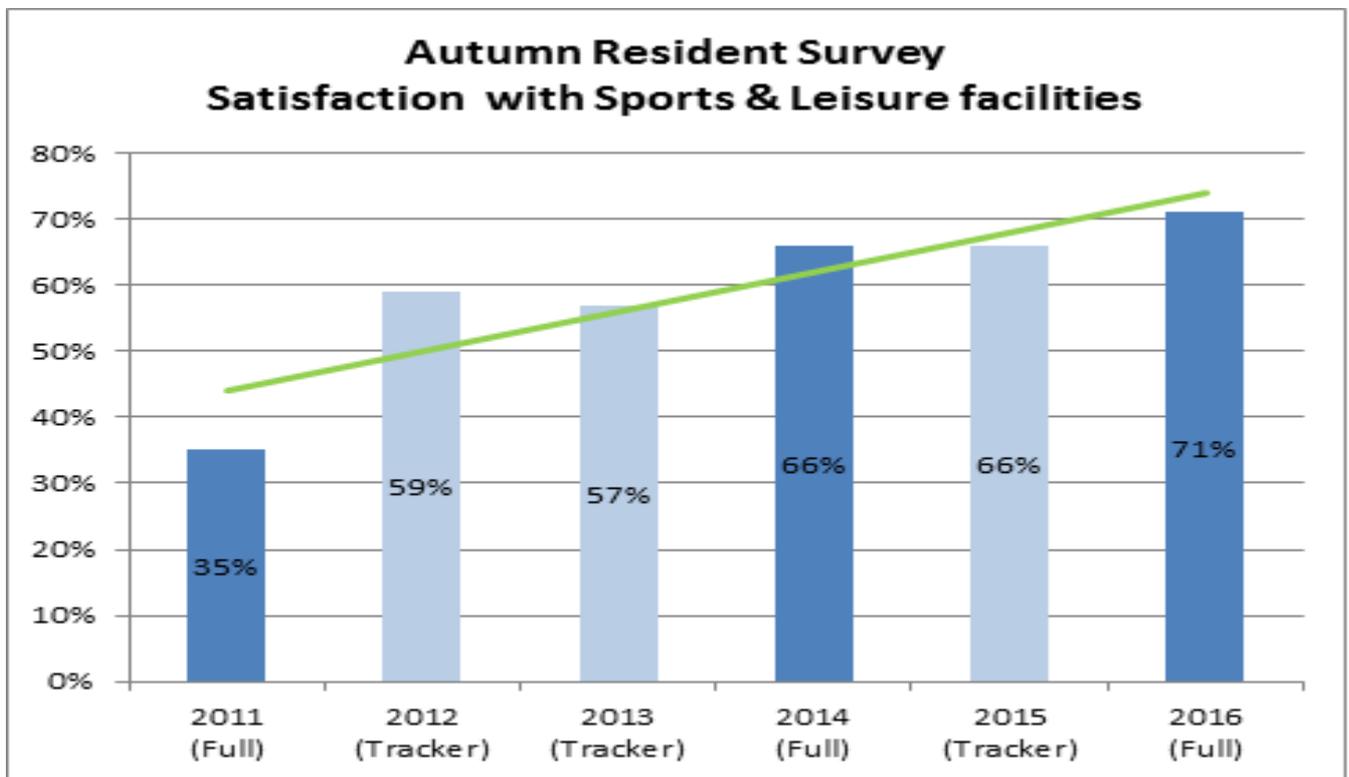
2. The Council has six leisure centres and The Grove Theatre managed and operated under two separate leisure management contracts by Stevenage Leisure Limited.
3. The 'north' leisure management contract, commenced 1 April 2014 and includes Flitwick Leisure Centre, Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre in Biggleswade, Sandy Sports and Community Centre and Houghton Regis Leisure Centre. The contract is for a period of 7 years with an option to extend for a further 7 years.
4. The 'south' leisure management contract commenced 1 September 2018 and includes Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre, Leighton Buzzard, The Grove Theatre, Dunstable and the new Dunstable Centre (leisure centre, library, day care and citizen's advice) opening in February/March 2019. The contract is for a period of 7 years 7 months with an option to extend for a further 7 years.
5. Both leisure contract specifications are outcomes focussed and have a number of key performance indicators related to the Council's objectives, and to the conditions of grants secured by the Council for £3m from Sport England's Strategic Facilities Fund for Flitwick Leisure Centre and The Dunstable Centre.
6. The 'south' contract specification also reflects recommendations of a review of The Grove Theatre, undertaken in consultation with Arts Council England over the summer and autumn of 2017. As a result, new commercial and artistic targets have been set to focus the new operator on developing new audiences, increasing secondary spend, and in supporting a more strategic approach to the provision of a joined up arts and culture offer for children and young people.

## Leisure Facilities Strategy

7. The Council's Leisure Facilities Strategy adopted in February 2013 assessed the requirements for indoor sports and leisure centre facilities across Central Bedfordshire in relation to the planned housing growth. The Strategy directs investment across the leisure estate and has resulted in over £40m of Council investment since its adoption, and significant developer (Section 106) contributions and external partnership investment. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered implementation of the Strategy on 10 October 2013.
8. The Strategy will be reviewed and updated in 2019 when detailed research and consultation will be carried out to determine the indoor leisure facilities needed to serve residents for the next ten years and beyond. The review will model any new and changing demands for leisure facilities using the population growth forecast in the Local Plan Submission and will set policy requirements which will guide new or improved facility provision.
9. The leisure strategy directs where investment can have the most impact in meeting demand and expectations of customers. Key investment approved to date includes;

- A new Flitwick Leisure Centre, opened February 2016
- Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre, refurbishment of the café and health and fitness suite 2013/14
- Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre, new sports hall and reception 2013/4
- Houghton Regis Leisure Centre, refurbished changing rooms, July 2017, and at the same time SLL invested in a new studio and health and fitness suite.
- A new leisure centre and library in Dunstable, providing accommodation for adult day care and citizen's advice services. Opening in February/March 2019
- Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre, swimming pool changing rooms refurbishment 2018/9

10. The Council's residents survey results have shown an improvement in satisfaction with the Council's leisure and sports facilities.



### Leisure Contract monitoring and performance

11. The Leisure Contracts include specifications and a range of performance standards and reporting requirements that the operator shall meet during the contract period for each facility and the services delivered. The specification also includes the requirement to carry out industry standard quality assessments and national benchmarking.
12. A key performance indicator of the leisure management contract is to promote wellbeing by encouraging uptake in sport and physical activity and is measured by participation.

13. Participation targets specifically for Flitwick Leisure Centre and The Dunstable Centre are agreed with Sport England as part of the Strategic Facilities Grant conditions and are included in the contracts with the leisure operator.
14. Participation targets for the first 5 years of operation and performance at Flitwick Leisure Centre are set out below. The centre opened on 29 February 2016.

	2015/6	2016/17	2017/8	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Target	-	496,453	551,434	578,198	578,831	581,612
Actual	304,706	600,564	634,612	297,215 (April - Sept)		
Variance	-	+295,858	+83,178			

15. Participation targets at The Dunstable Centre for the first five years of operation are set out below.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Target	676,301	739,540	784,308	815,190	842,276

16. For the remaining leisure centres, participation is set out below for the last 3 years, and for the first 6 months of 2018/9.

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 (April- Sept)
Saxon	310,446	310,932	368,524	197,565
Sandy	105,008	105,812	108,743	43,312
Houghton Regis	126,628	133,491	189,637	104,720
Tiddenfoot	338,380	404,799	485,604	302,810

17. Other key indicators are included in the contract specification to support broader objectives of the Council. The operator is required to work in partnership with the Council, and provide space for community activities to support these objectives. The Council's Active Lifestyles Team work across departments to develop initiatives which help people who are less likely to be physically active to become more active, including for example adults and children with disabilities, children who are looked after by the local authority, and adults with a mental health diagnosis. Activities include, swimming, walking football, multi- sports, health walks and seated exercise.

These activities, delivered from the Council's leisure centre sites in the north contract, engaged the following numbers of adults and children.

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Community Activity Programme	3,024	4,149	5,037

18. An Active Lifestyle Referral Programme, managed by the Council's Active Lifestyles Team, supports patients through lifestyle change for up to 12 months. Referrals are made by GP's for patients recovering from a cardiac event and cancer treatment and patients are supported in 7 stages throughout the year. An additional pilot service operating from Dunstable Leisure Centre increased participation in 2016/17. The scheme continued in 2017/18 from Houghton Regis Leisure Centre. A development of this service is a programme for patients with a mental health diagnosis referred from East London Foundation Trust to incorporate exercise into recovery pathways. A pilot started in November 2018 at Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre with roll out being planned in 2019. The chart below sets out participation in the programme to date.

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	18/19 April - Oct
Active lifestyle referral	324	493	381	314

19. A further a partnership with Circle MSK, commissioned by the Clinical Commissioning Group and funded by Public Health will deliver a falls prevention service which will provide a formal pathway into strength and balance classes for adults who are aged 65years+. Three leisure centres will be part of the pilot starting in January 2019 including Flitwick Leisure Centre, Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre and Houghton Regis Leisure Centre
20. In addition at The Dunstable Centre, a broader set of objectives have been agreed with Sport England as part of the investment and are included in the leisure management contract. A specific set of measures will be developed and progress recorded and reported as part of the leisure contract management monitoring.
- Supporting public health objectives to improve health outcomes in Dunstable, particularly the reduction of excess weight and obesity within the leisure centre catchment area.
  - Supporting cross-departmental Council objectives to improve outcomes for young people and their families, particularly those requiring early intervention by Children's Services
  - Positively impact on the regeneration of Dunstable town centre
  - Increasing community engagement through the creation of a centralised hub for 'healthy lifestyles'
  - Have a positive impact on the self-esteem and mental wellbeing of leisure centre users.

## The Grove Theatre, Dunstable

21. The Grove Theatre is a mid scale 780 seated, 1100 standing receiving house, opened in 2007. As an important public venue, The Grove Theatre has a crucial place making role, promoting the town as a destination for high quality arts and entertainment, and supporting economic development by being an active player in the business community, drawing in footfall from across its catchment and across Central Bedfordshire. Audience numbers are set out below since 2015/16.

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 (April- Sept)
The Grove Theatre	110,364	105,001	120,342	55,261

22. In the development of a broader strategic offer for arts and culture, the Council is developing relationships with Arts Council England and Royal Opera House Bridge. The Grove Theatre will play a central part in how broader programming across a range of Council venues can create a cohesive cultural offer, attract new audiences, and add value to the Council's corporate objectives.
23. Subsequently, the new contract is more ambitious for the theatre, focusing more on the need to make the theatre financially sustainable by developing its cultural role as a regional theatre, understand its catchment, widen and develop its audience base, diversify its programme for families and children and increase secondary spend.
24. As a result, the cost of the new leisure management contract to the Council will decline throughout the contract period. The Grove Theatre will also be expected to apply for Arts Council England's quality National Portfolio Organisation status within 5 years. It has already started to widen its network, and work in partnership to support the Council's music service and leisure and library service and is supporting a number of initiatives including the development of a Local Cultural Education Partnership and a stronger schools outreach programme.
25. A recent example includes a partnership with Arts Council England commissioned by the Council's Inspiring Music service and Orchestras Live, involving the City of London Sinfonia, to help children access orchestral music and to take up playing a musical instrument. 'The Wish', included workshops for 8 schools culminating in a large-scale, interactive live music collaboration at The Grove Theatre, engaging over 1000 primary school students.

## Sandy Sports and Community Centre

26. The contracted leisure facilities in Sandy are an important part of the Council's Leisure Strategy. The facilities are at Sandy Secondary School where access to the sports hall, squash courts, studios, theatre, netball courts, dining areas and athletics track are available to the community outside of school hours. The facilities also include a separate health and fitness suite available throughout the day.

27. A community use agreement is in place to enable the public to access the school's sports and community facilities, and this allows the Council's leisure operator to hire these facilities directly to the local community.
28. The Council is considering options to help put the centre on a more sustainable financial footing, whilst limiting any impact on access and customer satisfaction. The aim is to help secure the provision in the medium term pending the leisure strategy review which will model the new and changing demands for leisure facilities and will set policy requirements which will guide new or improved facility provision.

### **Council Priorities**

29. The leisure facilities and provision of universal leisure services contribute to each the Council's priorities;
  - Enhancing Central Bedfordshire
  - Great resident services
  - Improving education and skills
  - Protecting the vulnerable; improving wellbeing
  - Creating stronger communities
  - A more efficient and responsive Council.

### **Corporate Implications**

#### **Legal Implications**

30. There are no direct or immediate legal implications arising from this report.

#### **Financial and Risk Implications**

31. There are a number of financial and risk implications related to leisure management contracts.
32. Council priorities; the six leisure centres and The Grove theatre in Dunstable operated under contract are significant contributors to the Council's leisure and cultural infrastructure helping deliver Great Universal Services, the promotion of Health and Wellbeing, as well as supporting town centre regeneration and transformation in Adult Social Care in Dunstable specifically.
33. Reputational risks; Investment delivered in the leisure estate and underway at The Dunstable Centre ensures the Council's facilities meet demand and customer expectations in high quality facilities. The Council's investment at Houghton Regis Leisure Centre, Flitwick Leisure Centre and Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre where there has been a significant increase in participation demonstrates this well. A refresh of

the Leisure Facilities Strategy in 2019 will guide any further investment to meet demands from future population growth.

34. Risk to customer satisfaction: Day to day operations are the responsibility of the leisure operator including; availability of the facilities, health and safety, customer service, planned building maintenance, reactive repairs, and planned and reactive cleaning, all of which are key to ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction. At Sandy Sports and Leisure Centre where the options to reduce operating costs are being considered, the aim is to have as little impact on the leisure offer and customer satisfaction as possible.
35. Financial risks. A significant proportion of the Council's capital investment in its leisure stock has been to 'invest to save' using any improvement in income generated at a facility through its operation to help cover the cost of borrowing. The decision made by Executive Committee on 6 December 2016 to procure a new leisure management contract aimed to secure best value from the redevelopment at The Dunstable Centre, and for services at The Grove Theatre and Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the options for the redevelopment of Dunstable Leisure Centre on 22 January 2015 and recommended to Executive the inclusion of a budget in the Council's capital programme to undertake a comprehensive redevelopment of the leisure centre to create a new facility.
36. The recent investment and procurement decisions have resulted in a position where both leisure management contracts are now income generating for the Council over the respective contract periods, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-2023 to be considered by Council in February 2019. The financial performance of each of the leisure centres is regularly monitored. At Sandy Sports and Leisure Centre options to reduce operating costs are being considered. This is because the financial performance of the facility has been worsening over the past few years.
37. The financial implications of the leisure management contract are included in the Medium Term Financial Plan, set out below.

	19/20 000's	20/21 000's	21/22 000's	22/23 000's	Total 000's
Leisure Management Contract North	(62)	-	-	-	(62)
Leisure Management Contract South	(830)	(540)	(251)	(194)	(1,815)

38. The development of The Dunstable Centre is on track and whilst it is expected the investment will deliver a significant increase in participation over the contract period there are risks associated with overall performance including those related to Sport England's strategic facilities grant conditions and the significant contribution leisure contract income makes to the MTFP. Subsequently, two full time equivalent posts are included in the MTFP from April 2019 to support leisure contract management as set out below.

	19/20 000's	20/21 000's	21/22 000's	22/23 000's	Total 000's
Leisure Management Contract South	80	-	-	-	80

### Public Health

39. Leisure facilities are key community health resources which provide safe civic space for people to take part in healthy and active lifestyles which support the Council's Health and Wellbeing objectives. The leisure management contracts ensure access to the leisure centre estate for customers to engage in regular physical activity to help prevent ill health, generate long term improvements in overall levels of health and wellbeing and thereby reducing the costs to society, particularly for the NHS and social care.

### Equalities Implications

40. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The leisure facilities and the management contracts support the duty via the building design and access, programming and concessionary pricing schedules.

### Conclusion

41. The leisure management contracts aim for the all the facilities to provide opportunities for our communities to make positive lifestyle choices and to participate in a varied range of leisure and cultural activities. The Council expects the operator to support the Five Year Plan and key national and local strategic policy, and to be able to demonstrate that investment and action is making a difference to people's lives; to be able to demonstrate the impact leisure, and cultural services is having on local individual and communities.

42. The Council's leisure estate has been the subject of significant capital investment since the Leisure Strategy was adopted in 2013. This investment, along with procurement decisions have enabled the authority to improve levels of participation in sport and physical activity, support the Council's broader public health objectives, as well as make a positive contribution to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. A refresh of the Leisure Strategy in 2019 will model any new and changing demands for leisure facilities using the population growth forecast in the Local Plan Submission and will set policy requirements which will guide new or improved facility investment.

**Appendices - None**

**Background Papers – None**

**Report author: Jill Dickinson**

**Assistant Director Leisure, Libraries and Countryside Services**

**[Jill.dickinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jill.dickinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**

## Central Bedfordshire Council

**Sustainable Communities Overview and  
Scrutiny Committee**

**22 November 2018**

### **Gypsy and Traveller Responsiveness**

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**Report of:** Cllr Ian Dalgarno,  
([ian.dalgarno@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ian.dalgarno@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**Responsible Director(s):** Marcel Coiffait,  
([marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**This report relates to a decision that is Key**

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### **Purpose of this presentation**

1. The purpose of the presentation is to seek support from the committee for proposals for additional Council resources to support our response to Gypsy and Traveller matters in Central Bedfordshire.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to:

1. **Consider and discuss the information provided in the presentation**
2. **Support the recommendations set out in the presentation and recommends to Executive that the necessary funding should be included in the Council's current MTFP.**

### **Issues**

The presentation sets out the proposed approach and the required resources for consideration.

## **Council Priorities**

2. Developing the Councils response to Gypsy and Traveller matters supports the following priorities:
  - a. Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – the approach set out in the presentation will enable the Council to take a more proactive stance on a range of G&T issues that impact on the physical environment and will work towards developing improved community cohesion.
  - b. A more efficient and responsive Council – the approach will enable improved join up and will seek to drive out a more efficient response to dealing with Gypsy and Traveller matters in Central Bedfordshire by setting clear policy and procedure that will facilitate more efficient working and budget management.

## **Corporate Implications**

### **Legal Implications**

3. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

### **Financial and Risk Implications**

4. The G&T Unit will be funded from Community Safety reserve of £500k for two years and future funding will be managed through the MTFP process.
5. A capital Business Case and Project Initiation Document is being developed for the TSS. The capital funding, estimated at £450k, has been included as part of the current MTFP process.
6. Gypsy and Traveller issues are a key concern for communities in Central Bedfordshire and the Council is a key stakeholder in responding to them. The Council has responsibilities around planning applications, enforcement (planning breaches and unauthorised encampments), vulnerability, social care and community safety. There is significant risk to the Council reputationally if it fails to respond effectively to G&T matters. The work on Billington and ongoing concerns being raised from Parish Councils, residents and MP about the Councils failure to effectively manage future supply of G&T sites and breaches of planning permission reflect the challenge for the Council.
7. The costs of managing the level of outstanding breaches of permissions is not fully understood although it is anticipated that costs will be picked up through existing budgets in planning to address the breaches to the level required may need additional financial support. Discussions are underway with planning as to what, if any, financial support may be required. If it is, reserve funding will need to be identified and costs identified in the Executive report.

## **Equalities Implications**

8. Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
9. The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to treat someone less favourably because of a range of protected characteristics, including race, nationality or ethnic or national origins. The following of a nomadic lifestyle is lawful and is recognised and protected through legislation. Romany gypsies and Irish Travellers have been granted protection under the previous Race Relations Acts. The Public Sector Equality Duty places a duty on the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.
10. Gypsies and Travellers can sometimes find themselves in a cycle of 'enforced' nomadism, being continually moved on by the authorities because of the shortage of authorised sites. As a result, Gypsies and Travellers are often more disadvantaged than any other ethnic group in terms of access to healthcare and education. The lack of authorised public sites and the difficulties associated with getting planning permission for private sites, has meant that Gypsies and Travellers have set up home on land belonging to others or on their own land without permission.

## **Conclusion and next Steps**

11. The presentation sets out some of the key challenges facing the Council needs to address regarding Gypsy and Traveller issues and sets out a recommended approach to support the work needed.
12. The next steps will involve:
  - a. Completing Project Implementation Document and Business Case for TSS for approval and prioritization.
  - b. Identifying suitable land for TSS
  - c. Complete job descriptions for evaluation and begin recruitment process
  - d. Subject to sign off initiate the TSS Project

**Appendices**

**None**

**Background Papers**

None

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# Gypsy and Traveller Responsiveness

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny  
November 2018

# Council responsibilities

Plan for future accommodation needs for Gypsy and Travellers

Enforcement of planning and licensing breaches

Health and welfare

Community safety

Equality Duty to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and foster good relations and foster good relations

# Gypsy and Travellers in Central Bedfordshire

## Sites:

38 permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites

9 Travelling Showpeople sites

2 Council owned Gypsy and Traveller sites

The majority are well run and integrate well with the local community with very few issues reported

Some sites are more complex, pose more challenges and need more input

# Billington - challenges

Breaches of planning permissions

Absence of licensing

Sub-letting of caravans

Unsafe infrastructure (sewage, clean water and electricity)

Anti social behavior, and crime including previous reports of modern day slavery

Local community concerns and impact

# Billington – what we've done

Stakeholder groups for residents and Parish Council – established and working well

Significantly improved information and intelligence about plots, owners and interested parties

Reduced fly-tipping

Abatement notices on some unsafe caravans

Provided alternative accommodation for some tenants

Regular visits and engagement with residents

Begun enforcement work:

- PCNs issued

- Personal Circumstance Questionnaires

- Drafting Enforcement Notices

# Unauthorised Encampments (UAEs)- what we've done

Dedicated, full time Unauthorised Encampment Officer

Prevention work (e.g. barriers, ditches etc.) at 15 sites

Injunction – 11 individuals prohibited from setting up UAEs in our area and parcels of land protected from UAEs

Lobby Government with MPs to strengthen legislation

Reduced UAEs

Jan- Sept. 2017- 95 UAEs (54 on CBC land)

Jan -Sept. 2018- 70 UAE's (25 on CBC land)

26% reduction in encampments to date (46% reduction on CBC land)

# Opportunities

- Use our learning from Billington to inform our approach to working with other sites.
- Continued development of our UAE response by using Temporary Stopping Sites
- Develop a more cohesive approach to our Gypsy and Traveller work using existing and new resources

# Temporary Stopping Sites (TSS)

Site for travellers to stay for a short period (normally 28 days)

Managed sites - toilets, water, waste collection

Located in non-residential areas

Good access and egress

Access to core services

Occupants pay rent and deposit

Travellers sign a Licence to Occupy which is supported by police  
S.62 powers

# Gypsy and Traveller Unit

Creation of a single dedicated team with two new permanent posts to increase capacity for engagement and enforcement

Unit activities to include:

- manage both enforcement (UAEs and regulatory breaches) and engagement approaches ensuring a consistent and agreed approach by the Council.
- Provide a central hub for broader issues and act as the central point of contact on G&T matters for the Council, public and G&T community.
- Manage Temporary Stopping Sites, improving access by the G&T community to Council services by working across the Council and partner organisations.
- support the development of collaborative working between the Council and the G&T community.
- develop networks with specialist G&T organisations (nationally & locally) to inform and develop best practice in Central Bedfordshire.
- develop specialist legal networks to ensure enforcement is successful

# Next steps

- Executive approval
- Recruitment and transition
- Temporary Stopping Site feasibility

## Central Bedfordshire Council

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22 November 2018

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## Work Programme & Executive Forward Plan

Advising Officer: Rebecca Preen Scrutiny Policy Adviser  
rebecca.preen@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

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### Purpose of this report

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

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider and approve the work programme attached, subject to any further amendments it may wish to make;
2. Consider the Executive Forward Plan; and
3. Consider whether it wishes to suggest any further items for the work programme and/or establish any enquiries to assist it in reviewing specific items.

### Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

1. During 2016/17 Members have been invited to share their experiences of the overview and scrutiny process and make suggestions to the Overview and Scrutiny Coordination Panel (OSCP) on future ways of working. This feedback was subsequently considered by the OSCP who resolved to encourage the OSCs to apply the following principles for ways of working:-
  - a. activity be led by the OSCs and residents as well as the Executive Forward Plan;
  - b. more policy development activity be undertaken through the exploration of proposals and principles at the earliest opportunity of commencement of strategy development;
  - c. shorter more focused agendas through prioritisation of items that add value and enable outcomes; and
  - d. create more time for Members outside of formal meetings in addition to providing more opportunity to brief Members informally on some topics.
2. In addition, the OSCP agreed that given the current experience with regard quarterly performance and budget reports a trial should be

undertaken whereby these reports will only be received by the Corporate Resources OSC from April onwards. This trial will enable Members to determine whether this approach provides greater focus on these aspects of scrutiny. All Members will be able to request an item to be added to the agenda of any the OSCs on aspects of budget or performance. The Corporate Resources OSC will also be able to refer matters to the relevant OSC for a 'deep-dive' of any topic if there is a particular concern.

3. The Committee is requested to consider the work programme and the indicated outcomes at **appendix 1** and to amend or add to it as necessary.
4. In considering which items should be added to the work programme Members are encouraged to minimise duplication, focus on those items that have been requested by residents and the committee and to focus on those items where Members can add value.
5. The work programme aims to provide a balance of those items on which the Executive would be grateful for a steer in addition to those items that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) wishes to proactively scrutinise.

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Task Forces**

6. 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**

7. Listed below are those items relating specifically to this Committee's terms of reference contained in the latest version of the Executive Forward Plan. The full Executive Forward Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at the link at the end of this report.

Item	Indicative Exec Meeting date
East West Rail Western Section (Phase 2) Transport and Works Act Order	4 December 2018
Home to School Travel Assistance Policies Review	4 December 2018
Biggleswade Skate Park	4 December 2018
Gypsy and Traveller Responsiveness	4 December 2018
Community Safety Partnership Priorities 2019-2022	5 February 2019
Decision Making Arrangements for Removing BT Payphones in Central Bedfordshire	5 February 2019
Flitwick Station Area Regeneration	5 February 2019
Parking Management Strategy	5 February 2019
A6-M1 Link Road and Land North of Luton	2 April 2019

Non Key Decisions	Indicative Exec Meeting date
Housing Enabling Strategy	5 February 2019

### **Corporate Implications**

8. 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.

### **Conclusion and next Steps**

9. Members are requested to consider and agree the attached work programme, subject to any further amendment/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.

### **Appendices**

**Appendix A:** Sustainable Communities OSC work programme.

### **Background Papers**

Executive Forward Plan (can be viewed at any time on the Council's website) at the following link:-

<http://centralbeds.moderngov.co.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPIId=577&RD=0>

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## Appendix A – SC OSC Work Programme 2018/19

OSC Date	Report Title	Outcomes we are seeking to achieve
Thursday, 24 January 2019	Community Safety Priorities	Text to be agreed
Thursday, 24 January 2019	Planning enforcement and unauthorised development	To receive a report as requested at a previous meeting
TBC	Parking Management Strategy	Text to be agreed
TBC	Anti social behaviour	To consider a strategy to enable a faster response to ASB in rural areas

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