

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 25 March 2010

PRESENT

Cllr J N Young (Chairman)
Cllr A R Bastable (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs D J Gale
Mrs R B Gammons
J Kane
Ms C Maudlin

Cllrs Mrs M Mustoe
P Snelling
P Williams

Members in Attendance: Cllrs P N Aldis
R A Baker
L Birt
P A Blaine
D Bowater
P A Duckett
Ms A M W Graham
J G Jamieson
D Jones
S F Male
K C Matthews
D McVicar
T Nicols
A Shadbolt
J Street
Mrs C Turner
B Wells,

Officers in Attendance: Mrs M Clampitt Democratic Services Officer
Mr B Finlayson BEaR Project Manager
Mr A Fleming BEaR Project Director, Sustainable Communities
Mr B Jackson Assistant Director Highways
Mr J Partridge Overview & Scrutiny Officer

SCOSC/09/37 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman thanked the Development Strategy Task Force for a very detailed report and the considerable amount of work which had been carried out between September 2009 and March 2010.

The Chairman drew the Committee's careful attention to the update report of the Task Force. The areas reviewed were as follows:

- the Planning Obligation Strategy Supplementary Planning Document
- the Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire
- the Site Allocations Development Plan Document
- the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document – it was noted that a consultation would be carried out prior to Executive and Council approval of a draft submission Development Plan Document after which a further public consultation would take place. Officers would be confirming the dates (which had been affected by the Easter holidays).
- the Local Transport Plan.

The Chairman extended a personal vote of thanks to the Task Force Chairman and panel.

SCOSC/09/38 **Members' Interest**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

There were no personal interests declared.

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

There were no personal and prejudicial interests declared.

(c) **Any Political Whip in relation to items on the agenda:-**

There was no political whip declared in relation to any items on the agenda.

SCOSC/09/39 **Petitions**

The Chairman confirmed that no petitions had been received.

SCOSC/09/40 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

The Chairman confirmed that a member of the public wished to ask questions in relation to item 8. His questions would be asked prior to consideration of the item.

SCOSC/09/41 Call-in

The Chairman confirmed that no items had been called-in.

SCOSC/09/42 Requested Items

The Chairman confirmed that no agenda items had been requested.

SCOSC/09/43 Road Traffic Accident

The Committee received and considered the report of the Director of Sustainable Communities which advised on progress relating to national 2010 casualty reduction targets.

The Assistant Director for Highways informed the Committee that in 2000, the Department of Transport (DfT) had set casualty reduction targets to be achieved by 2010. The targets were set against a base-line average for casualties that had occurred between 1984 and 1998 and by 2010 local authorities were expected to achieve:

- A 40% reduction in the number of people Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) in road accidents;
- A 50% reduction in the number of Children Killed or Seriously Injured (Child KSI) in road accidents; and
- A 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate; expressed as the number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kilometres.

It was noted that Bedfordshire was considered in its geographical totality and had been on course to meet targets for 2010. However, when the numbers of accidents were broken down into the three Unitary authorities (Bedford Borough, Luton Borough and Central Bedfordshire councils), Central Bedfordshire had experienced an increase of 8% in the numbers of Killed and Seriously Injured casualties.

The DfT was currently consulting on new casualty reduction targets for the next ten year period up to 2020. The Committee noted that these targets had not yet been finalised. The proposed targets were as follows:

- A 33% reduction in those killed;
- A 33% reduction in those seriously injured;
- 50% reduction in Child Killed and Seriously Injured casualties &
- 50% reduction in Pedestrian and Cyclist Killed and Seriously Injured (*set against the average casualty rate achieved from 2004 – 2008 inclusive*).

The Assistant Director for Highways confirmed the Council was aiming to address the current casualty reduction targets and the increase in the numbers of incidents in Central Bedfordshire through the production of a Casualty Reduction Action Plan, which had three broad categories:

- Education – changing behaviours. Past education schemes such as ‘Tufty the safety squirrel’ were no longer used but alternatives were in use. There were schemes identified in the action plan which targeted car drivers, motorcyclists and children and young people.
- Engineering Measures – understanding the type of accident and contributing factors and then assessing what could be done to prevent repetition.
- Camera Enforcement – involving police speed enforcement. It was noted that all fines were sent to the Treasury and not the local Police or Council.

Members suggested options to try and help raise awareness:-

- The importance of local ward Councillors and Town and Parish Councillors providing feedback to the Council on accidents that occur in their area so as problems can be addressed.
- Working with the Parish Councils and making them aware of what was happening in their areas and to deliver education schemes in partnership. It was agreed that the Integrated street design presentation would be offered again to Town and Parish Councils.
- Contacting Insurance companies for details of accidents which had occurred within Central Bedfordshire. It was acknowledged that a number of people would not report an accident if no one was injured. There was the possibility that this information would not be available due to data protection but Officers indicated that they would try this approach.

RESOLVED

that the Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles be asked to ensure preventative measures for reducing road traffic accidents be prioritised in the Casualty Reduction Action Plan for 2010 / 2011, particularly measures relating to street design, engineering and education.

SCOSC/09/44 Central Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling (BEaR) Project - Business Case Approval

Prior to consideration of this agenda item the Chairman reminded the Committee that there was an exempt Appendix A and if any discussion of these pages was to occur the meeting would be taken into closed session with the Press and the Public being asked to leave the Chamber as the information was exempt from publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Prior to consideration of the item the Committee received representations made under the Public Participation Scheme as set out in Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

A presentation was made to the Committee highlighting the options available to the authority following the withdrawal of Luton Borough Council and Bedford Borough Council from the Project. Also included was an overview of the financial appraisal undertaken for the Project which provided a direct comparison of the costs associated with taking the Project forward or continuing to landfill waste. A copy of the presentation is attached to these Minutes at Appendix A.

Following a lengthy and detailed question and answer session, the Committee were satisfied with the answers provided by the Assistant Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities & Healthier Lifestyles and the BEaR Project Officers and endorsed the recommendations which would be considered by the Executive at their meeting to be held on 6 April 2010.

RECOMMENDED TO THE EXECUTIVE:

- (a) that the recommendations (a) to (f) contained in the Executive report of the Director of Sustainable Communities be endorsed; and**
- (b) that the scope of the Project and the additional infrastructure elements as follows be endorsed:**
 - (i) Kitchen Waste Treatment Solution, treat food waste collected across Central Bedfordshire Council area;**
 - (ii) Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) refurbish three existing HWRC sites and relocate fourth to new location;**
 - (iii) Waste Transfer Station, for Central Bedfordshire Council to improve haulage efficiencies;**
 - (iv) Highways Depot, delivery vehicle parking, storage and maintenance.**

SCOSC/09/45 Appendix A - Affordability Position (EXEMPT)

The exempt Appendix A – Affordability Position had not been subject of discussion at the meeting.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 1.10 p.m.)

Chairman: _____

Date: _____