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# Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report (2010/11)

"challenging, influencing, making a difference"



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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 Bernard Carter, Corporate Scrutiny and Research Manager on **0300 300 4175** or [bernard.carter@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:bernard.carter@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

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## Foreword

### **Foreword by Councillor Nigel Young, Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Coordination Panel**

I am very pleased to introduce this Annual Report to full Council regarding the major issues that the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) have focused on during 2010/11.

The year started with a change in the structure of the OSCs, from 5 Committees to 4 and as OSC Chairmen we have all been keenly aware of the need to focus not just on the Council's priorities but also to contribute to the challenge of the Council's savings proposals. Much of our work this year has focused on the key aspects of efficiency and value for money whilst also seeking to provide the best possible services to our residents in Central Bedfordshire.

This annual report focuses on the contribution and outcomes that have resulted from the OSC meetings throughout the year. As Overview and Scrutiny Members it is our responsibility to strengthen accountability in the Council by challenging the Executive and engaging our residents and local stakeholders in the democratic process. Encouraging our local stakeholders to get involved in decision making and in OSC meetings is crucially important so that we can increase the level of debate and make policies more evidence based and responsive to our local communities.

This annual report shows how the involvement of OSCs can provide invaluable input to decision-making and provide a real challenge that has affected some proposals before they are presented to the Executive.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Members involved with Overview and Scrutiny over the year either as Committee Members or those who attended meetings to challenge reports or decisions and to those Members of the public or representatives from external organisations who attended to provide us with their views and helped us to reach our recommendations.



*Cllr Nigel Young*

Councillor Nigel Young  
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Co-  
ordination Panel

## 1. What is Overview & Scrutiny?

### Overview & Scrutiny – A Quick Explanation

Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) is part of the political process introduced in 2000 by the government to modernise the way local authorities conduct their business. It plays a vital role in the decision-making and policy development processes at the Council and is an innovative development in the democratic process because it gives an independent view.

Effectively, the Scrutiny process is like the Council having its own 'watchdog'. It is a process that 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.

### Overview & Scrutiny: 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

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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 also keen to provide the opportunity for local people to contribute and give views on service provision and policies and to be able to challenge decisions made by the Executive.

When working well, O&S can add value to the work of the Council by playing an important role in:-

- Supporting policy development;
- Raising the quality of debate;
- Improving decisions;

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- Teasing out complex issues;
- Engaging the local community and key stakeholders;
- Strengthening accountability;
- Developing new ideas; and
- Monitoring and improving performance.

## And Finally...

The importance of O&S within a local authority cannot be understated. Those involved with its work are uniquely placed to be **challenging, influencing, and making a difference** because they:-

- Are **independent** of the decision making process.
- Can set their **own agenda** according to the needs of the residents of Central Bedfordshire.
- Can be asked to investigate issues by the Council, providing independent and objective reviews, with strong, **evidence-based** conclusions and recommendations.

## 2. Overview and Scrutiny Structure 2009/10



### Overview & Scrutiny Coordination Panel

Chairman: Cllr N Young  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr J Jamieson



### Children's Services OSC

Chairman: Cllr J Street  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs D Gurney



### Customer and Central Services OSC

Chairman: Cllr J Jamieson  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr D Hopkin



### Social Care, Health and Housing OSC

Chairman: Cllr Miss A Sparrow  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr A Turner



### Sustainable Communities OSC

Chairman: Cllr N Young  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr A Bastable

Throughout 2010/2011 the O&S Structure consisted of 4 OSCs. Each was aligned to a directorate of the Council and the Customer and Central Services OSC was aligned to both the Customer and Shared Services directorate and the Office of the Chief Executive. Each of the Committees had scheduled 10 meetings.

There is also an Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel which meets on a quarterly basis and consists of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of each of the OSCs. In addition to the main Committees each of the OSCs appointed Task Forces to conduct in-depth investigations into matters within its terms of reference.

The following Task Forces have provided reports during 2010/11, there are further details on these Task Forces throughout the report:

Task Force Reviews	Parent Committee
Budget and Capital Budget Process	Customer and Central Services
Car Parking Fees and Charges	Sustainable Communities
Charging Policy for Care Services	Social Care, Health and Housing
Development Strategy	Sustainable Communities
Fairer Access to Care	Social Care, Health and Housing
Shared Services	Customer and Central Services
Youth Facilities	Children's Services

Full Membership details of these Committees for 2010/11 are included at **section 11** 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

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Church of England and Roman Catholic churches appointed to the Children's Services OSC.

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 priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan for 2009/11. The report will look at each of the priorities in turn and provide an overview of some of the outcomes achieved by the OSC whilst undertaking detailed reviews. The report will then set out some of the other major issues that have been considered in OSC meetings during 2010/11.



### 3. Supporting and Caring for an Ageing Population

***The Council wishes to see a Central Bedfordshire where services for Older People are delivered sensitively and effectively and where people are supported to exercise choice over their care and enjoy independent living. The Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee has contributed to the Transforming People's Lives debate by assisting officers in scoping the way forward towards meeting the challenges of the changing model of care for adult social services.***

#### **Charging Policy for Care Services**

In April 2010, the Social Care Health and Housing OSC commissioned a Task Force to review the Council's Charging Policy for Non-Residential Social Care Services. The Task Force reviewed best practice from elsewhere in order to provide recommendations to the Executive prior to the adoption of a charging policy for Central Bedfordshire.

This review was set in the context that the Local Government Association (LGA) had stated "central government funding, which accounts for a significant proportion of a Council's

budget, has not kept pace with the needs of an ageing population."

Consultation packs were issued by the Council and events and meetings were held regarding the review of charging for non-residential social care services. The Task Force considered the outcomes of these and benchmarking data from 15 other local authorities.

The review concluded that there were significant problems with the funding of adult social services nationally. The way social care was funded meant that social services authorities were not able to meet the increasing costs of care without significant changes to the way services were delivered. Whilst difficult choices had to be made the Task Force felt that their recommendations would help the Council to resolve these choices. The Task Force also requested that the policy ensured that:

- money was spent in the best way; and
- the Council offered new and innovative ways of service delivery and internal ways of working;

Once the policy had been implemented the Task Force recommended that the Council should communicate and inform all service users who were likely to be affected by changes and that staff be fully trained and supported both to give the right advice and to carry out the full assessment of needs required.

In conclusion the Task Force considered and agreed recommendations relating to the following:

- Introducing a £1.50 charge per journey for transport to day centres;

- decreasing the subsidy for meals on wheels so that meals cost £3.50 instead of £3.25 each;
- charging customers for the number of carer hours received, charging per carer where 2 carers are needed at the same time;
- support in principle to introduce charges for telecare system monitoring;
- backdating welfare benefits to the date of award;
- carrying out annual re-assessments of customer finances and contributions;
- charging full cost where the customer did not co-operate with the financial assessment process;
- not permitting payments to close relations as disability-related expenditure;
- reducing the threshold for disability related expenditure without receipts from £20 to £15;
- not charging for re-ablement services;
- direct payments would not be made until a customers' financial assessment was completed;
- not reducing the direct payments to voluntary carers following financial assessment.

The recommendations of the Task Force were received by the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC on 13 September 2010 and were recommended to the Executive for adoption. The Executive received these recommendations on 28 September 2010 and included them as laid out in the Executive report. The policy for charging for non-residential social care services was adopted for implementation with effect from 1 October 2010.

## Patient flows from acute hospitals

Following their discharge from an acute hospital some people have ongoing health and social care needs which require detailed assessment. Staff from Health and Social Services work together to plan and deliver a safe and timely discharge.

In March 2011, the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC received a report that analysed the patient flows from acute hospitals into Central Bedfordshire between June and December 2010 and highlighted the role of social care in managing these.

The Committee considered patient discharge information from 5 of the surrounding hospitals, Luton & Dunstable (L&D), Bedford, Stoke Mandeville, Lister and Addenbrookes. The host Council was responsible for patient discharges in their area. When Central Bedfordshire Council was established a service level agreement was put in place for Bedford to manage the discharges of Central Bedfordshire.

The Committee expressed concerns about the length of time patients had been left waiting to be discharged and hoped that this could be looked into in future. It was noted that there were designated posts in both the Lister and the L&D hospitals.

In conclusion the Committee considered and noted the following:

- the intention that the role of the current manager of Central Bedfordshire Social Care Hospital Team will include an overview of all discharges from hospitals within Central Bedfordshire;

- that the existing service level agreement with Bedford Borough for Bedford Hospital will be continued and that monitoring patient flow will be undertaken as part of the contract review;
- the intention to make arrangements to designate posts that will be linked with Milton Keynes, Stoke Mandeville and Addenbrookes Hospitals;
- the intention to strengthen closer alignment of Social Care services with health to facilitate expedient and effective discharges from hospital.

### Other work...

As well as the items detailed above the OSCs have considered other reports relating to supporting and caring for an ageing population. These reports included:

- Adult Social Care's annual performance assessment by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), in which the Council received a rating of adequate;
- an overview of the key issues in complaint handling for Adult Social Care for the period 2009/10;
- the annual report of Bedford and Central Bedfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board outlining the progress made during 2009 – 2010; and
- updates on the delivery of the 11 recovery areas detailed in phase 1 of the Adult Social Care Recovery Programme and proposals for assuring sustained improvement through Recovery Phase 2.

## 4. Educating, Protecting and Providing Opportunities for Children and Young People

*The Council wishes to see a Central Bedfordshire where children are better educated and their care and health is improving across the board. This priority involves improving educational attainment in areas of underperformance as well as working with partners to develop the Children's Trust and to develop a Children and Young People's Plan. The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee has focused several of its items this year on the Children and Young People's Plan and these priorities.*

### Child Poverty Strategy

The Child Poverty Strategy sets out how the Council aims to reduce child poverty and alleviate its effects in Central Bedfordshire. The strategy sets out 4 key objectives that set the framework with a number of underpinning immediate and longer term priorities:

- Objective 1: Maximise opportunities for families in poverty to access employment.

- Objective 2: Ensure families in poverty are accessing all available financial assistance.
- Objective 3: To improve life chances of children and families by intervening early to prevent poor outcomes and raising educational achievements and aspirations.
- Objective 4: Work with colleagues from all sectors and agencies to improve the environmental factors which exacerbate the effects of poverty, harnessing the resources of the third sector and services across the Council in order to achieve priorities,

The Children's Services OSC played a full role in developing the draft strategy, which began with a presentation from the Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Children's Services outlining current thinking, the national framework and supporting statistical evidence. The OSC also discussed proposals with the Headteacher of Beecroft Lower School who provided a brief summary of the services in place at Beecroft Lower School which had received an outstanding Ofsted result.

In addition the Committee reviewed a DVD produced by Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Councils regarding the impact of child poverty in the area. Members agreed that this DVD provided a telling insight into child poverty and recommended that all Members should have the opportunity to watch it before the Strategy was adopted.

In particular, Members commented on Objectives 3 and 4 and raised issues in relation to the needs of gypsy and travellers and the child poverty data provided from the HMRC. The Committee agreed the 4 key objectives that would set the framework for the Child Poverty Strategy as above.

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A revised draft strategy, taking account of the Committee's comments, was approved by the Council's Executive at its meeting in March 2011.

### Post-16 Transport Policy

The Council is required to have a Post 16 transport policy. For the 2009/10 and 2010/11 academic years Central Bedfordshire Council had adopted the previous policy of Bedfordshire County Council. Whilst Central Bedfordshire does not have a statutory responsibility to provide free home to school or college transport for 16-19 year old students it does have the statutory responsibility to consider how it will assist learners to access the appropriate post 16 provision.

As part of Central Bedfordshire Council's overall aim to make the most effective use of resources available and to ensure they are targeted where they are needed most, a review of the current scheme of subsidised transport for 16-19 students was undertaken.

The cost of providing Post 16 Transport in the financial year 2009/10 was £1.94m, of which the Council funded approximately £1.71m. It was estimated that the cost for the 2010/11 academic year would increase by 4% as more students access post 16 provision.

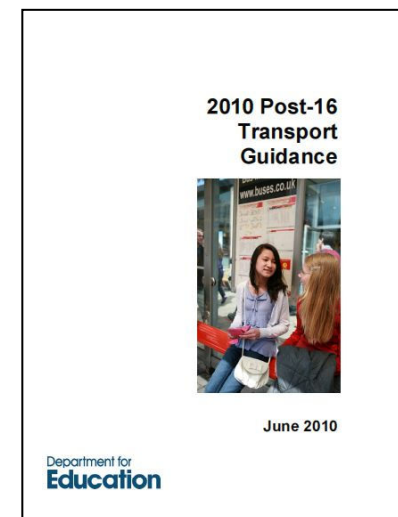
The Children's Services OSC received early proposals at their meeting on 19 October and in particular debated the proposal for the mileage criteria and the 15 miles radius between home and school or college.

Members expressed concern that this should be reconsidered as students in the rural areas within Central Bedfordshire and those on the border would not be able to attend colleges in Bedford under the 15 mile criteria. Members needed to be certain that students living anywhere in Central Bedfordshire had access to a college within the 15 mile radius. Members requested maps setting out what provision was available within Central Bedfordshire which led to recommending the 15 mile radius. Members also raised issues in relation to:

- low income criteria;
- proposals for the assessment of course content; and
- the safety of cycle routes in Central Bedfordshire.

Following the OSC meeting a public consultation was undertaken with the outcomes being fed back to the OSC in January 2011 before being submitted to the Executive in February 2011.

At their meeting on 25 January the Committee received a revised 16-19 Transport Policy that incorporated their previous suggestions. The report also provided further evidence to illustrate that students living anywhere in Central Bedfordshire had access to a college within a distance of 15 miles. The Committee endorsed the Post-16 Transport Policy, which was approved by the Executive at its meeting in March 2011.



## Other work...

The Children's Services OSC received several other items that related to this priority. These included:

- the draft priorities and consultation results regarding the new Children and Young People's Plan for 2011/12;
- the 2010 annual performance assessment provided by the OFSTED report and the "travelling in the right direction" statement for Central Bedfordshire Council;
- an overview of work relating to traded services with schools, which aimed to identify the true cost to the Council for providing certain discretionary traded services to Schools;
- the future provision of Bedfordshire Music Service and proposals for the future provision and management arrangements for the Music Service when the Service Level Agreement with Bedford Borough Council came to an end in March 2011; and
- the learning transformation in schools review.



## 5. Managing Growth Effectively

*The Council aims to ensure that growth in Central Bedfordshire is handled sensitively for the benefit of local people and that the quality of the local environment is maintained or improved. This priority includes giving residents a voice in shaping the future of Central Bedfordshire, maximising the proportion of affordable new homes that are available and encouraging and supporting opportunities for creating and facilitating sustainable living and tackling climate change. The Sustainable Communities OSC and its Development Strategy Task Force have received several items relating to this priority throughout the year.*

### Development Strategy Task Force

Overview and Scrutiny recognises the importance of engaging Members effectively in the process of managing growth and to assist this the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee established the Development Strategy Task Force in 2009 to consider all operational matters in relation to the local development framework, housing strategy and local transport policy.

A total of 6 meetings were held in 2010/11 considering items ranging from the Local Transport Plan 3, town centre strategies and masterplans, development plan documents and the Joint Core Strategy.

These Task Force meetings are not open to the public but they provide an opportunity to engage elected Members in discussion of detailed plans for Central Bedfordshire on behalf of their residents. Some meetings have also invited Town and Parish Council representatives to debate growth proposals before consultations are carried out or the Council approves a way forward. The recommendations of the Task Force are **always** presented to the Sustainable Communities OSC if they need to be ratified or further public discussion is required.

### Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD)

The Gypsy and Traveller DPD sets out the number of permanent pitches that the Council will allocate for gypsies and travellers in Central Bedfordshire up to the end of 2015. The DPD also sets out the numbers of transit pitches and pitches for Travelling Showpeople that the Council will allocate up to the end of 2015.

The Sustainable Communities OSC received several items in 2009/10 relating to this DPD prior to a full public consultation being carried out. The Development Strategy Task Force had also considered proposals on a number of occasions and undertaken discussion with some invited Town and Parish Council representatives.

At the meeting on 7 September 2010 the OSC received a report that requested their views on the appropriate allocation

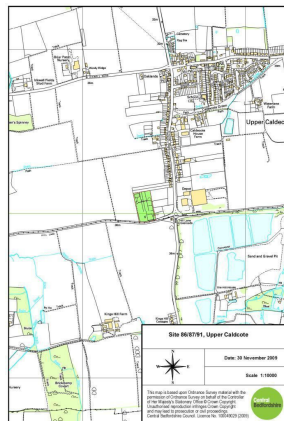
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of gypsy and traveller pitches in Central Bedfordshire in light of the Government's abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The OSC also received recommendations from the Development Strategy Task Force who had already discussed these proposals. The Task Force had recommended:

- the allocation of 26 permanent gypsy and traveller pitches in comparison to the 40 pitches identified in the RSS;
- the provision for 2 additional pitches for transit use; and
- the provision for 4 pitches for use by Travelling Showpeople.

Almost 60 members of the public attended the meeting of the OSC and 8 residents spoke regarding various recommended proposals. The Committee discussed the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) that had been carried out in 2007 and agreed that it provided a sound basis on which to determine an appropriate level of gypsy and traveller sites for the area up to 2015. Members of the OSC overwhelmingly supported a local pitch requirement figure from the end of 2010 to the end of 2015 of 9 and accepted a total pitch requirement figure of 26.

Members also gave their support to the allocation of 4 pitches for use by Travelling Showpeople separate to the permanent sites and in addition to the other 26 pitches proposed to be allocated. In relation to transit pitches for use by gypsies and travellers, Members expressed concern that access to private sites would not be available to everyone but gave



their support for the allocation of placing transit pitches on existing sites.

The meeting discussed in detail the proposed location of the additional sites and raised various objections and queries relating to the majority of sites. Members also queried the ownership of the land, the use of section 106 funding on some of the proposed sites and how the Council would address some of the concerns raised during the consultation in objection to the proposals.

The Committee agreed to recommend that 26 additional pitches be allocated up to the end of 2015, that transit pitches be allocated on existing sites and that 4 Travelling Showpeople pitches be allocated in Biggleswade. The Committee also recommended that no additional pitches be allocated at Hitchin Road, Henlow.

These recommendations were submitted to the Executive on 28 September who considered the numbers of gypsy and traveller sites that should be allocated and the location of these sites. The Executive concluded that 27 pitches, rather than the 26 proposed by the OSC, should be allocated. Whilst the Executive agreed with the majority of the proposed sites they did conclude that 3 fewer pitches should be allocated on the proposed site at Oak Tree Nursery and Magpie Farm, Upper Caldecote and the 4 remaining unallocated pitches would be allocated on Council landholdings to be determined at a future date. The Executive approved the DPD for consultation purposes.

1. that 27 additional permanent pitches...be allocated in Central Bedfordshire (North) up to the end of 2015 as summarised in the submitted report



2. that no additional pitches be allocated on the private site on land between Common Road and Myers Road, Potton
3. transit pitches to be provided on existing gypsy and traveller sites
4. 4 pitches allocated at Kennel Farm Holdings, Biggleswade for the use of Travelling Showpeople

*Executive*

The draft DPD was sent out to public consultation from December 2010 to February 2011. Following this consultation the draft DPD will be submitted to the Secretary of State and will be subject to a public examination in the autumn of 2011 prior to its adoption in January 2012 if determined to be 'sound'.

## Civil Parking Enforcement

At the Sustainable Communities OSC meeting on 22 June 2010 the Committee received a report they had requested in light of concerns relating to civil parking enforcement. This report enabled Members to inform the Executive of the problems they had in relation to parking enforcement and to discuss options for the future possible development of the service. These concerns included: -

- The high cost of civil enforcement officers compared to the level of income generated;
- Improper maintenance of car parks;
- High levels of commuter on-street parking in some areas due to the cost of train station car parks;
- Inappropriate and dangerous parking;
- Insufficient levels of enforcement undertaken by the police;

- Deficient traffic signs and lines;
- Inability to enforce disabled parking bays;
- Need for consistent parking charges;
- Mechanisms for Town and Parish Councils to manage their own car parking enforcement
- Use of consultants to develop a parking strategy.

In addition to the concerns that were raised by the Committee, Members also discussed the feasibility of automatic number plate recognition and the development of a new parking strategy. The Committee also noted that Central Bedfordshire Council had a unique challenge in relation to parking enforcement as there were various rural and urban areas throughout Central Bedfordshire that demanded a different enforcement approach.

The Committee resolved to recommend to the Executive various measures that needed to be taken into consideration during the development of a new parking strategy, which the Committee saw as a clear priority for the Council:

1. develop a common policy approach for civil parking enforcement across the whole of Central Bedfordshire and should consider the possibility of having a single paid car parking ticket that would allow you to park in any off street car park in adjacent local car parks;
2. investigate the possibility of delegating powers to local Town and Parish Councils to determine the method of civil parking enforcement in their areas;
3. investigate the feasibility of implementing traffic orders on all blue badge parking bays so that enforcement can be undertaken in an appropriate way;

4. the time for which a civil enforcement officer was required to observe a car as being illegally parked before they could serve a penalty charge notice should be reduced from 5 minutes to 1 minute;
5. provide a mixture of paid parking bays and parking that was open to free residential permit holders only.
6. request the Chief Constable to consider the use of enforcement powers by police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) to assist with keeping roads free from obstruction;
7. consider extending the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and CCTV enforcement in Central Bedfordshire where this was considered to be an appropriate parking enforcement solution

*Sustainable Communities OSC*

The Executive received these recommendations at their meeting on 17 August 2010 where it was agreed that these views and recommendations be noted and considered as part of the Transport Strategy review which the Committee would be involved with.

The Council is currently still planning to develop a parking strategy and these issues will be considered further in line with that review.

## **Dunstable Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan**

The Dunstable Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan sets out how the Council aims to ensure the continued and enhanced role of Dunstable town centre, particularly in relation to the planned housing growth and also contribute to an up-lift in perceptions around the town centre. The masterplan also guides future town centre growth and change by setting various principles for new development.

The Masterplan forms part of the evidence base for both the Luton and South Central Beds LDF Draft Core Strategy and Draft Site Allocations DPD and will eventually be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) after the adoption of the Core Strategy.

Prior to a full public consultation the Masterplan was considered by the Development Strategy Task Force on 30 July 2010. The Task Force raised various concerns with the Portfolio Holder to be considered prior to undertaking a public consultation but Members agreed to support the draft Masterplan as amended and recommend that a public consultation be undertaken.

Following the public consultation that was undertaken by the Portfolio Holder, the responses to the consultation, with proposals for taking the Masterplan forward, were submitted to the Sustainable Communities OSC on 14 December 2010. This meeting presented an opportunity for Members to consider the outcomes of the local consultation and to receive comments from 5 residents of the local area who attended the meeting to speak on behalf of themselves and others.

The Portfolio Holder was challenged by Members on various issues and the concerns that had been raised by residents. These issues included:

- the use of compulsory purchase orders;
- the importance of fully integrating all 4 quadrants of the town centre in the masterplan;
- the importance of fully integrating appropriate local transport proposals into the masterplan; and
- reflecting principles of 'shared surfaces' in the masterplan.

In addition to these areas Members also sought answers to the questions raised by Members of the public and asked officers to address the concerns that had been raised by some residents relating to communication and information relating to the compulsory purchase order process. Officers commented at the meeting that they would undertake further communication with residents in the area regarding the proposals. At its meeting in March 2011 the Executive agreed to use the masterplan as Interim Technical Guidance for Development Management purposes.

It is the view of the Committee that the Dunstable Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan should be endorsed.  
*Sustainable Communities OSC*



### Other work...

The Sustainable Communities OSC has considered a further range of items relating to the effective management of growth that have included:

- Local Transport Plan 3, a framework for investment in local transport from 2011 to 2026 including a transport vision, objectives, priorities and implementation plan together with the areas of intervention through which these will be achieved;
- the Luton and South Bedfordshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy Pre-Submission, which sought the views of Members on the Joint Core Strategy for Luton and the south of Central Bedfordshire including following the return of decision making on housing and planning to local Councils;
- a review of winter maintenance policies for Central Bedfordshire including salt gritting routes and a salt bin policy; and
- value for money aspects of the theatre and leisure facilities within Central Bedfordshire.

## 6. Creating Safer Communities

***Creating safer communities involves making sure that Central Bedfordshire is safe and that people feel safe. This priority involves working with partners to reduce crime and the fear of crime and also working with communities in priority estates to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered 3 key areas during 2010/11 in relation to making Central Bedfordshire a safer place.***

### **Community Safety Partnership Priorities: 2011/12**

On 18 January 2011 Members considered a report and presentation from officers on the outcomes of the Community Safety Strategic Assessment (CSSA). The CSSA sets out those issues that are considered to be a high risk for the area and those that should be identified as a priority. The Committee also invited Bedfordshire Police to answer questions from the Committee and the public.



The Committee raised concerns regarding the level of support available to reduce reoffending and the level of weekend support. It was suggested that offenders should be released on Mondays rather than Fridays wherever possible. The Committee resolved to write to the Secretary of State for Justice seeking a national approach to reducing reoffending and to minimise the likelihood of reoffending by releasing offenders on Fridays. The letter was also sent to the Members of Parliament for Central Bedfordshire. The letter was well received and was sent on to both the Prisons Minister and the Employment Minister seeking an agreement to the suggestions of the Committee.

The Committee decided to recommend to the Executive the approval of 3 strategic priorities on which the Community safety Partnership should focus during 2011/12.

“That the 3 Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment priorities identified for 2011/12, as set out below, be approved:

- a) Anti-social behaviour;
- b) Reduce reoffending;
- c) Domestic abuse.

*Sustainable Communities OSC*

The Committee stressed the importance of ensuring that partners continue to focus on those other areas of work, such as the fear of crime and working with children and vulnerable adults. The Committee received assurance that work on reducing all other areas would continue and that other types of offence, such as burglary would not be ignored. Bedfordshire Police also stressed that other types of crime would continue

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to be dealt with and the police service would continue to provide core services to the public.

The Executive received the strategic priorities at their meeting in March 2011. Executive resolved to approve the priorities and recommend that the Community Safety Partnership use these as their key strategic priorities for 2011/12.

## Review of CCTV across Central Bedfordshire

On 7 September 2010 the Sustainable Communities OSC considered Executive proposals for changing the operation of CCTV services. These proposals were aimed at increasing efficiency in the way that the service was delivered in order to save money. Various proposals were provided to the Committee with a full breakdown of the savings benefits and dis-benefits of each proposal and the level of savings that would result from each.

The Committee discussed concerns relating to an apparent downgrading of service provision. The Committee was told that any reduction in active monitoring and a reliance on recording would only be implemented at times of the day where this was considered acceptable. The Committee was assured that crime 'hotspots' would continue to be monitored.

Members recommended that the Executive adopt proposals that would deliver revenue savings of £95,000. The proposals would also integrate the CCTV service into 1 office at Dunstable providing a further anticipated year on year saving of £40k, subject to a one-off capital investment of £52k. The Council would also seek financial contributions from Bedfordshire Police and those Town Councils where cameras were located. Further research was to be undertaken to

consider the longer term future of CCTV in Central Bedfordshire after the implementation of these proposals if accepted by the Executive.

“RECOMMENDED to Executive:

1. that revenue savings of £95,000 are implemented to achieve a full year saving of 2011/12,
2. that cameras operating via the Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership be integrated into the Dunstable CCTV control room and the whole CCTV service operated as 1 from Dunstable.
3. that the Council seek a financial contribution from Bedfordshire Police and those Town Councils where cameras are located
4. that further research is undertaken to consider the longer term options for CCTV.”

*Sustainable Communities OSC*

The recommendations of the Committee were received by the Executive on 28 September 2010 and the Council has implemented proposals to achieve a full year saving of £95,000 in 2011/12.

## Visible Presence

On 7 September 2010 Members considered Executive proposals relating to changes to existing practices for providing a co-ordinated approach to undertaking statutory duties under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and associated legislation, across Central Bedfordshire. The proposed approach supported the Council's responsibilities under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act. The proposals were aimed at making the best



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use of existing resources and providing a more effective and efficient service, that provided value for money.

The Committee were asked to consider the proposals and present their views to the Portfolio Holder prior to them being adopted by the Council. Members agreed to recommend to the Executive the development of a visible approach to addressing local environmental issues beginning with changes to the Envirocrime Team (for example the adoption of a softer style of dress).

In relation to the proposals Members did express some concern that the adoption of a 'softer' style of dress would dilute the authority of officers. The Committee subsequently agreed to ask the Executive to consider an appropriate uniform that did not detract from the authority of these persons.

The Committee also requested that the Executive consider a suitable uniform for the visible presence team so that it enabled residents to clearly recognise the authority that these persons exercised on behalf of the Council.

"RECOMMENDED to Executive that the development of a visible presence approach to addressing local environmental issues in Central Bedfordshire using a phased introduction, beginning with the proposed changes to the Envirocrime Team, be approved."

*Sustainable Communities OSC*

In September 2010 the Executive resolved to adopt the proposed changes as recommended by the Committee.

## 7. Promoting Healthier Lifestyles

***The Council wishes to see a Central Bedfordshire where children are healthier and the gap between the healthiest communities and others is narrowing. This priority involves working in partnership with a range of partners, particularly NHS Bedfordshire, to ensure care services reflect the changing demographic profile of the area and that care services work effectively together.***

In order to carry out this role the Council's Social Care, Health and Housing OSC has reviewed various items relating to the promotion of healthier lifestyles in Central Bedfordshire. This role has also included being involved in regional meetings of the East of England Regional Health OSC Chairman's Forum and a Joint Health OSC (JHOSC) made up of members from Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough Councils.

### **Mental Health Strategy**

The JHOSC was set up in 2010 to review NHS Bedfordshire's consultation on proposals to cluster mental health services closer together in Bedfordshire and Luton, to enable more effective and joined up services in better and safer refurbished or new premises. The JHOSC was required as the NHS consultation on service reconfiguration/ redesign covered more than 1 local authority area.

NHS Bedfordshire was the lead commissioner and the JHOSC was requested to respond to the proposals in the formal Mental Health consultation. The committee received a wide range of evidence and considered the views of relevant NHS officers, commissioners and providers and the views of the 3 local authorities involved. The committee also focused on 3 principal areas:

1. the general principles underlying the proposals in the consultation;
2. the proposals specifically in the Central Bedfordshire and Luton area;
3. the proposals specifically in the Bedford Borough area.

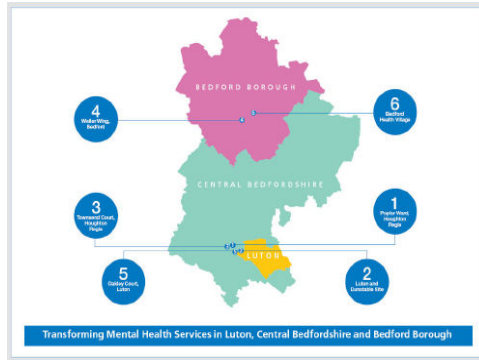
Overall, the JHOSC endorsed NHS Bedfordshire's proposals for the consultation process and the transformation plan. However, the Committee was concerned about the quality of the consultation questionnaire and the short time allowed for its members to make comments and suggestions on it. The JHOSC was also disappointed at the relatively low response rate to the consultation questionnaire, but applauded the efforts made to engage with the public, particularly service users, at face to face meetings.

1. "The proposal for a 60 day consultation period was agreeable;
2. the general principles underpinning the specific consultation proposals were supported;
3. the 7 specific consultation proposals were supported;
4. the consultation process was considered adequate in duration and content."

*Joint Health OSC*

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The Committee also provided a detailed response to the consultation proposals, which was submitted to NHS Bedfordshire. The Health OSCs of Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton also received a copy of the response and will receive a formal update on progress within 12 months.



## Urgent Care Strategy: Proposed NHS consultation

In September 2010 the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC received a presentation from NHS Bedfordshire and Horizon Healthcare in relation to the Urgent Care Strategy that was being developed to respond to the changing demand for urgent care facilities in the Borough. The aim of the strategy was to reduce hospital admissions, delayed hospital discharge and the number of hospital readmissions within 30 days, and to increase preventative care. This strategy was to be achieved through a more integrated, proactive approach.

The OSC was asked to consider the most appropriate approach for undertaking further consultation with service users. Members were also asked to consider the extent of their involvement in that consultation and whether it was felt necessary to establish a JHOSC to consider this matter.

The Committee felt that extensive local engagement of stakeholders was a more pragmatic approach than a full public consultation and therefore recommended this approach to NHS Bedfordshire and Horizon Healthcare. As a result of this recommendation the OSC agreed that they did not need to be consulted on the strategy and that a JHOSC was not required. The detailed consultation and feedback would be provided from stakeholders at the local level.

## Other work...

The Social Care Health and Housing OSC received other items relating to the promotion of healthier lifestyles. These items included:

- considering proposals for the redesign of the Integrated Diabetes Model of Care and the Integrated Chronic Obstructive Airways Disease (COPD) Model of Care;
- proposals published in the Equity and Excellence White Paper and an overview of the potential changes to the NHS and associated impact for Central Bedfordshire's residents including key changes to the move towards a National NHS Commissioning Board and GP Consortia and transferring some public health responsibilities to local Councils;
- an overview of the Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) National programme to improve quality and productivity in the NHS; and
- progress related to the transformation programme and development of support through personalisation in order to deliver against national milestones by April 2011.



## 8. Cross-Cutting Issues

***Complementary to the work O&S has undertaken during the year in helping to support delivery of the Council's 5 key priorities, the function has also played a significant part in reviewing strategically important issues that cut across the whole organisation and beyond. Much of this work has been undertaken by the Customer and Central Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee but all of the Committees have contributed to a variety of corporate issues. Detailed below are some of the key issues that have been considered by the Committees.***

### **Procurement and Commissioning Strategy**

At their meeting in June the Customer and Central Services OSC received a report and presentation from the Head of Procurement. The presentation provided Members with an update on the implementation of the Corporate Commissioning Strategy and a detailed 'snapshot', as at April 2010, of savings, contract spend, reviews and tenders, transactions, human resources and key performance indicators.

The Committee discussed the following issues:

- mechanisms for preventing off-contract purchases in order to achieve over £1m savings a year;
- the significant proportion of expenditure that was miscoded;
- the possibility of operating a recognition scheme for savings generated by employees;
- the importance of ensuring compliance with on-contract purchasing and correct coding;
- Members expressed some concern regarding the poor quality of service provided by some transport contractors; and
- the need to ensure the level of service set out within a contract was fully and clearly defined.

“RECOMMENDED to the Portfolio Holder:

1. that processes be implemented to ensure that Budget Holders strictly adhere to the Council's Corporate Commissioning and Procurement Strategy and not purchase off-contract except in exceptional circumstances;
2. that processes be implemented to ensure that all contracts are reviewed in sufficient time to ensure that the Council is not required to extend a contract as a result of time constraints incorporated within procurement rules

Customer and Central Services OSC

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The Committee resolved to record its support for the work being implemented with regard to the Council's Corporate Commissioning and Procurement Strategy. The Committee also recommended that the Portfolio Holder ensure budget holders did not purchase off-contract other than in exceptional circumstances. It was also recommended that processes were necessary to ensure contracts were reviewed in sufficient time to prevent extensions as a result of time constraints.

### Budget Process Task Force: Management of Capital Projects

A Budget Task Force was established by the former Corporate Resources OSC in February 2009 to assist officers in developing a budget setting process in Central Beds. The initial findings of this Task Force were reported in April 2010 at



which time the Committee agreed that the Task Force should remain in operation in order to review the management of the Council's capital projects.

The Task Force undertook a desk top review of relevant Council documentation such as the Constitution, Code of Financial Governance, Financial Procedure Rules and Capital Handbook, as well as the Councillors Guide to Local Government

Finance (produced by CIPFA). It also discussed the management of the capital programme and the key issues emerging with the Portfolio Holder, Finance, Governance & People and the Assistant Director, Finance.

The Task Force presented its recommendations to the Customer and Central Services OSC in October 2010 for

approval and recommendation to the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance & People. These recommendations related to the following:

- the management of Capital Projects;
- the business case for invest to save capital projects: a separate procedure should exist for invest to save capital projects;
- policy-led budgeting for capital schemes: the current system provides a wide range of latitude in assessing projects and is overly reliant on officer judgment and priorities; and
- capital allocation: before allocating Capital there should be a significantly more transparent process to determine available sources of third party funds and the extent of ring fencing.

In addition to their recommendations Members also specifically sought a comprehensive list of Council owned assets and a review of section 106 funding to assess the opportunity to increase this source of funding for the Council's Capital programme. Members also sought confirmation that work on asset disposal was proceeding.

“RESOLVED that a review of the Code of Financial Governance (and other related documents) by the Assistant Director Financial Services, as the Section 151 Officer, with regard to the management of capital projects, be deferred until the 2011/12 financial year.”

*Customer and Central Services OSC*

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Following the Executive meeting in November the Customer and Central Services OSC received a formal response from the Portfolio Holders for Finance, Governance and People; and Customer, Systems and Assets in respect of each of the Committees recommendations. The Committee noted the response and arising from the recommendations discussed the need to examine how efficiently the Code of Financial Governance (and other related documents) was working with regard to the capital programme process.

## Corporate Budget Strategy – Service reconfigurations and savings proposals

In November and December 2010 the Executive received reports from the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and People relating to the Council's corporate budget strategy. These reports outlined the Council's proposals for managing expenditure to address the expected funding reductions, which amounted to approximately £19.2million.

As a result of these Executive meetings all of the OSCs received the specific reconfigurations and savings proposals relating to their areas of responsibility. A series of initial reductions (33) to deliver £9.9million of efficiency savings were considered by the OSCs at their meetings in November. In addition the Customer and Central Services OSC also considered the financial robustness of the whole budget relating to aspects such as budget management; overheads; vacancies and administration costs.

### Examples of proposals considered in November 2010:

Cease the Mobile Library Service

Cease Support for provision of school crossing patrols

Remove the subsidy from LuDun

Remove CBC contribution to the Music Service

Service reductions in special educational needs services

As a result of the outcomes of the Coalition Government's Comprehensive Spending Review the Council was required to address a greater funding gap for Council services than had been expected. As a result the OSCs received supplementary savings proposals (27) amounting to £8.3million for 2011/12 at their meetings in December.

### Examples of proposals considered in December 2010:

Changes to employee terms and conditions

Transfer of provision of public conveniences

Close Sandy Leisure Centre

Remodel services for People with learning disabilities

Remodel services to young people including the youth service

In addition to the report presented by the Portfolio Holder some of the OSCs also received petitions relating to specific proposals and several Members of the public also attended to ask questions and challenge the Portfolio Holders in relation to proposals in the Council's budget.

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The recommendations of the OSCs were presented to the Executive throughout the process of setting the Council's budget and the response of the OSCs informed the final budget that was set in February 2011. As a result of consultation with the OSCs and further discussion between Members several changes were made by the Executive to the draft budget before its approval. These changes to the draft budget included:

- adjustments to the proposals covering overview and scrutiny;
- no reduction in school crossing patrols from 1 April 2011 but that contributions be sought from communities and partners during the course of the year, with a view to securing the patrols beyond 2011/12;
- the creation of a fund to facilitate the transfer of services to partners and communities and that the costs of Public Conveniences be a first charge on this fund during 2011/12; and

The Council budget was subsequently approved by full Council in February 2011 including those changes to proposals that had been recommended by the OSCs.

### Fees and Charges and RIO proposals

Alongside the development of the Council's budget for 2010/11 the Executive and the OSCs were also asked to consider in January 2011 a report relating to the fees and charges that the Council makes for some services that it delivers. The Council has a policy that all fees and charges will be reviewed and adjusted (where appropriate) annually. They are also reviewed on a more fundamental basis at least every 3 years against a set list of factors provided in guidance produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

The report set out proposed revised fees and charges rates to be effective from 1 April 2011.

The Executive approved a draft schedule of fees and charges in January 2011 for consultation with the OSCs and other interested parties. Each of the OSCs received a report at their meetings in January 2011 relating to the proposals within their area of responsibility. Recommendations were provided to the Executive to affect several of the increases in fees and charges.

Some of the fees and charges, which had been reviewed as part of this process included charges relating to adult social care, the music service, school transport and planning and building control.

In addition to this report the Executive and the OSCs were also asked to consider the outcomes of a Revenue Income Optimisation project (otherwise known as RIO). This project had fundamentally reviewed the Council's fees and charges in order to increase current and new sources of income. There were 14 individual business cases and some examples of these services were CCTV, highways, public parking, waste and registrars.

The OSCs raised several issues relating to the fees and charges and the RIO proposals and specifically sought assurance from officers that the fees and charges recovered the full costs associated with running a service. It was also recommended that the Customer and Central Services OSC set up a Task Force in 2011/12 to review the Council's fees and charges further. Specific recommendations were presented to the Executive relating to proposed amendments to the fees and charges.

“assurance be sought from officers that the service costs associated with fees and charges are being recovered in full and that, if this is not the case, the officers be requested to undertake further investigatory work with the aim of ensuring full cost recovery in the future.”

*Customer and Central Services OSC*

“that the Customer and Central Services OSC be formally requested to consider establishing a Task Force in 2011/12 to review the Council’s fees and charges and ensure that...such charges lead to full cost recovery.”

“the Portfolio Holder should adjust charges (in relation to pest control) for non-public health services with caution, to reduce as far as possible the net expenditure of £23,574.”

*Sustainable Communities OSC*

that the Executive considers using the Music Standards Fund grant in 2011/12, if received, to channel concessions to those users of the service on lower incomes.

*Children’s Services OSC*

In addition to these meetings a smaller Member Task Force was established by the Sustainable Communities OSC to consider specific proposals relating to car parking fees and charges. This Task Force discussed with the Portfolio Holder in detail the proposed increase to car parking fees and charges and asked officers to develop further proposals and options to reduce the proposed increase.

Following 2 meetings of the Task Force an amended set of fees and charges for car parking was proposed to the Executive that reduced the charge for short-term stays. The

Portfolio Holder was also asked to clarify the extent of users who purchased a 1 hour or 2 hour tickets and to consider the impact of the proposed charges to the level of income generated prior to any decision being taken.

The recommendations of this Task Force resulted in the Executive reducing the increase of the proposed level of fees and charges for car parking for 2011/12.

### Other work...

All of the OSCs have contributed to reports that cut across a range of issues in Central Bedfordshire but the Customer and Central Services OSC in particular has reviewed several cross-cutting issues of significance to the Council. These items included:

- the implementation of the Council’s ‘Your Space’ programme that delivered financial, customer service, work environment and technological benefits to the Council through measures such as reducing the number of offices down to 5 (from 18), delivering accommodation & ICT improvements for c1600 people, creating a single ICT network from 4 existing networks, and migrating 674 applications to the CBC network; developing a Treasury Management Strategy;
- information on the Council’s land and property portfolio, which inclusive of Council housing comprised individual properties with a total book value of over £1.5 billion;
- a review of shared services that had been undertaken in relation to the provision of the former Bedfordshire County Council services on a shared basis between Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council;
- the remodelling programme of Customer Services that provided key programmes of activity including, the

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creation of a single contact centre in Technology House, Bedford, customer access points, and the creation of community hubs; and

- a review of the complaints received for Quarter 4 (2009/10) and Quarter 1 (2010/11) relating to the Council.



## **9. Executive Call-in and Petitions**

***Overview and Scrutiny Committees have a statutory power under the Local Government Act (2000) 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.***

***There have been 2 call-ins to Overview and Scrutiny during 2010/11. The first concerned speed limits in Husborne Crawley and the second related to a proposed cycle track order in Leighton Buzzard.***

### **Speed limits at Husborne Crawley**

Councillor Mrs Fiona Chapman MBE called in a decision of the Traffic Management Meeting on 26 April 2010 following the receipt of a petition signed by 236 signatories. The petition requested that the current 40mph speed limit on roads in and around Husborne Crawley be reduced to 30mph and that a 20mph speed limit be introduced at the lower school. Whilst taking into consideration the concerns of the residents the Portfolio Holder decided not to reduce the speed limits.

Councillor Mrs Fiona Chapman MBE attended the Sustainable Communities on 18 May 2010 to call-in the decision on the grounds that she did not accept a lower speed limit would not be enforceable. It was also commented that the views of residents and the Parish Council needed to be taken into account more fully and a 40mph speed limit outside the school was too high for the safety of children. 3 public speakers also raised concerns about the decision not to reduce speed limits.

“That the current speed limit in Husborne Crawley be reduced from 40mph to 30mph with the exception of the area around the school in which the speed limit should be reduced from 40mph to 20mph.”

*Sustainable Communities OSC*

The Committee sought the views of Bedfordshire police who confirmed it was their view that 20mph speed limits should not be put into place without accompanied physical measures. Members discussed the issues at length and unanimously expressed concerns that the speed of vehicles travelling through Husborne Crawley needed to be reduced as soon as possible. The decision was referred back to the Portfolio Holder asking him to reduce speed limits.

The Council’s Traffic Management meeting considered this request from the Committee in July 2010 and whilst agreeing various measures to encourage drivers to stay within the current speed limit agreed not to reduce speed limits in the area.

A further request was subsequently received by the Executive in August 2010 to reconsider this decision in light of the comments of the OSC. In light of further comments from Bedfordshire Police the Executive agreed to reduce the speed

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limits as per the Scrutiny Committee's request. The Executive also agreed that a wider review of speed limits across Central Bedfordshire would be carried out to consider how to support and work with communities.

## Proposed Cycle Track Order: Saxons Close to Hockliffe Road Service Road, Leighton Buzzard

Councillor Ray Berry called in a decision of the Traffic Management Meeting on 6 July 2010 to approve signs and tactile paving in the area of the footpath from Saxons Close to Hockliffe Road Service Road in Leighton Buzzard. It was suggested that the use of this footpath by cyclists would create safety concerns.

The Sustainable Communities OSC considered the call-in at their meeting in September 2010. It was agreed to refer the decision back to the Portfolio Holder to request that he reconsider the suitability of the route of the cycle track due to the nature of the concerns raised by residents.

“that the order be made permanent on the advisory contra-flow cycle lane on Hockliffe Street with no amendments.”

*Traffic Management Meeting*

The Portfolio Holder met with officers and decided that the original decision should stand and that the cycle track order should proceed on that footpath as agreed.

## Petitions

The following petitions were received by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during 2010/11:

Issue	Received by
Keep Sandy Leisure Centre open	Sustainable Communities
Save the Music Service	Children's Services
Stop cuts to the sensory impairment for deaf and visually impaired children	Children's Services
Cessation of the Mobile Library Service	Sustainable Communities
Closure of Houghton Regis Leisure Centre	Sustainable Communities

Each of these petitions were discussed in detail at the relevant committee meeting and were taken into consideration when the Committee agreed its recommendations. In each case the petition was also referred to the appropriate Executive meeting for further consideration.



## 10. 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 on 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/performance/scrutiny/default.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 of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. If you would like to attend a meeting and speak please contact us in advance.

### Contact Us:



Telephone: 0300 300 8301



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## 11. Further Information and 2010/11 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/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>

### Customer and Central Services OSC

Councillors	<b>J G Jamieson (Chairman)</b>	
	<b>D Hopkin (Vice-Chairman)</b>	
	J A E Clarke	R W Johnstone
	P A Duckett	D Jones
	A Fahn	Ms J Nunn
	M Gibson	
Substitutes	<i>A R Bastable</i>	<i>P Snelling</i>
	<i>L Birt</i>	<i>N Young</i>
	<i>A D Brown</i>	
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### Children's Services OSC

Councillors	<b>J Street (Chairman)</b>	
	<b>Mrs D B Gurney (Vice-Chairman)</b>	
	Mrs A Barker	Dr R Egan
	P A Blaine	P Hollick
	D Bowater	K Janes
	N B Costin	A Shadbolt
Co-opted Voting Representatives	Ms Copley (Parent Governor)	
	Ms Image (Roman Catholic Diocese)	
	Mr Landman (Parent Governor)	
	Mr Reynolds (Church of England Diocese)	
	Mr Sear (Parent Governor)	
Substitutes	<i>I Dalgarno</i>	<i>Mrs M Mustoe</i>
	<i>Mrs S A Goodchild</i>	<i>A M Turner</i>
	<i>J G Jamieson</i>	
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## Social Care, Health and Housing OSC

Councillors	<b>Miss A Sparrow (Chairman)</b>
	<b>A M Turner (Vice-Chairman)</b>
	Mrs J Freeman                      Ms A M W Graham
	P Freeman                              J Kane
	Mrs R B Gammons              P Rawcliffe
	Mrs S A Goodchild
Substitutes	<i>R A Baker                      P Hollick</i>
	<i>Dr R Egan                      B J Spurr</i>
	<i>Mrs D B Gurney</i>
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## Sustainable Communities OSC

Councillors	<b>J N Young (Chairman)</b>
	<b>A R Bastable (Vice-Chairman)</b>
	D J Gale                              Mrs M Mustoe
	Mrs R B Gammons      P Snelling
	J Kane                                  P Williams
	Ms C Maudlin
Substitutes	<i>Mrs C F Chapman MBE              J G Jamieson</i>
	<i>M Gibson                                  A Shadbolt</i>
	<i>Ms A M W Graham</i>
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## Contact us...

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by telephone: 0300 300 8301

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