

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 23 August 2011.

### PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)  
Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs Mrs A Barker  
A D Brown  
I Dalgarno  
Mrs C Hegley  
D J Hopkin  
K C Matthews  
B J Spurr

Cllrs R C Stay  
Mrs P E Turner MBE  
A M Turner  
M A G Versallion  
B Wells  
R D Wenham  
J N Young

Members in Attendance: Cllrs P N Aldis  
A R Bastable  
M C Blair  
D Bowater  
Mrs R J Drinkwater  
C C Gomm  
Mrs S A Goodchild

Cllrs D Jones  
D McVicar  
J Murray  
T Nicols  
B Saunders  
P Williams

Officers in Attendance Mr J Atkinson Head of Legal and Democratic Services  
Mr R Carr Chief Executive  
Ms D Clarke Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation)  
Mr A Fleming Acting Director of Sustainable Communities  
Mr R Fox Head of Development Plan  
Mrs S Gibson Interim Assistant Director, Learning and Strategic Commissioning  
Mrs S Hobbs Committee Services Officer  
Mrs J Ogley Director of Social Care, Health and Housing  
Mr J Unsworth Interim Assistant Chief Executive - Resources

E/11/35

### Minutes

### RESOLVED

**that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

E/11/36 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

None.

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

None.

E/11/37 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman congratulated 'A' level students on achieving a 98% pass rate across Central Bedfordshire.

The Chairman asked Councillor Mrs Turner to provide an update on South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) and also on the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board.

Councillor Mrs Turner advised Members that SEMLEP had submitted a proposal for an Enterprise Zone to the Government, which had been successful. The proposal was for Northampton Waterside involving the creation of 14,000 jobs and hundreds of new businesses in an area close to the town centre. The Partnership was in the process of securing a Chairman of the Board from the private sector.

Councillor Mrs Turner also advised that the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board had held its inaugural meeting. The terms of reference for the Board had been agreed subject to keeping them under review until further guidance had been received from the Government. In addition, the Board had been updated on the transition plans for HealthWatch.

E/11/38 **Petitions**

In accordance with the Scheme of Public Participation set out in Annex 2 of Part 4 of the Constitution, the Executive received the following petitions:-

**1. Petition against the merger and closure of Weatherfield Special School**

Councillor Murray presented a paper petition containing a total of 514 signatures on behalf of the lead petitioner, Mrs Sharratt, against the merger and closure of Weatherfield Special School. Councillor Murray explained the concerns of some parents of the children at Weatherfield School that the merger of Hillcrest Community Special School, Weatherfield Community Special School and Glenwood Community Special School would not meet the needs of the children.

The Executive Member for Children's Services thanked Councillor Murray for presenting the petition and advised that it would be taken into consideration when discussing the future of special schooling in the south of Central Bedfordshire (minute E/11/41 below refers).

## **2. Petition to Save All Our Libraries**

Mrs Grayston presented a paper and e-petition 'Save All Our Libraries' containing a total of 152 signatures on behalf of the lead petitioner, Mr Hopkins. Mrs Grayston gave her view that the libraries were a community service.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services thanked Mrs Grayston for presenting the petition and confirmed that Central Bedfordshire Council had no plans to close any libraries, but would be looking at ways in which to utilise the facilities as a community hub.

### **E/11/39 Public Participation**

No members of the public had registered to speak.

### **E/11/40 Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

#### **RESOLVED**

**that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 September 2011 to 31 August 2012 be noted.**

### **E/11/41 The Future of Special Schooling in the South of Central Bedfordshire**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that set out the responses to the statutory notices to merge Hillcrest Community Special School, Weatherfield Community Special School and Glenwood Community Special School to create a single area special school for pupils with complex educational needs, including Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) with additional needs, ages 3-19. The Executive Member reported that the Secretary of State had not made a decision regarding Weatherfield School's application for Academy Status.

The Executive Member explained that he took the views of the parents very seriously and referred to the petition (minute E/11/38 (1) above refers), but that he considered that the evidence indicated that the merger of the three schools would be in the best interests of the children.

Members referred to the successful merger of Sunnyside Special Community School and Hitchmead Foundation Special Schools, which was now called the Ivel Valley Special School.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to discharge its duty to secure special school provision in an efficient way which meets the needs of children and young people with complex needs.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. to merge Hillcrest Community Special School, Weatherfield Community Special School and Glenwood Community Special School to create a single area special school for pupils with complex needs aged 3-19, with an implementation date of 1 April 2012; and**
- 2. that in the event that the Secretary of State approves the application of the Governing Body of Weatherfield School that the school should become an Academy, the Executive agrees that Hillcrest and Glenwood schools be supported to merge to become an Area Special School from 1 April 2012.**

E/11/42

#### **Post 16 Transport Policy**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services setting out the proposed Post 16 Transport Policy for Central Bedfordshire. The Executive Member responded to questions from the non-Executive Members and advised that written information would be provided to a particular non-Executive Member confirming the projected savings for 2012/13.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations and adopts a fair, equitable and transparent policy to support the most vulnerable students to access post 16 education. The decision would also enable the Council to adopt a Post 16 Transport Policy that would be implemented within the available resources.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. to adopt the Post 16 Transport Policy attached at Appendix A to the submitted report with effect from 1 September 2012; and**
- 2. to authorise the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services, after consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services, to approve any subsequent minor variations to the Post 16 Transport Policy.**

E/11/43

#### **Home Care Provision to Four Extra Care Sheltered Housing Schemes**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health & Housing setting out the progress made on changing the provider who delivers home care to four extra care sheltered housing schemes across Central Bedfordshire. Members noted that the exempt Appendix B to the submitted report contained the financial details relating to the proposed awarding of the contracts.

Reason for decision: This would enable the Council to deliver efficiencies, to meet the SCHH6 target and enable greater capacity within the Council's reablement teams.

## **RESOLVED**

**that the award of contracts for the Home Care Provision to four Extra Care Sheltered Housing Schemes as set out in the exempt part B of the submitted report, be approved.\***

\*(Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)

E/11/44

### **Award of the Contract for the 24/7 Community Alarm and Emergency Out of Hours Call Handling Service 2011 - 2016**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health & Housing that set out the details for the proposed award of the contract for the 24/7 Community Alarm & Emergency Out of Hours Call Handling Service 2011 – 2016. Members noted that the exempt Appendix B to the submitted report contained the financial details relating to the proposed awarding of the contract.

Reason for decision: The contract would provide improved value for money for the Council at a time of financial constraint, and also deliver good quality customer care for our residents, with the standard of service being equal to, if not higher than, the service already provided by the Council.

## **RESOLVED**

**that the award of a contract for the 24/7 Community Alarm and Emergency Out of Hours Call Handling Service 2011 – 2016 as set out in the exempt Appendix B to the submitted report, be approved.\***

\*(Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)

E/11/45

### **Community Engagement Strategy - Refresh**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that introduced the annual refresh of the Community Engagement Strategy for approval. The report set out the performance achieved against the year 1 actions of the 2010 – 2013 delivery plan. Members were advised that the Strategy would be revised again once the Localism Bill and emerging legislation contained within it were better understood.

The Deputy Executive Member for Corporate Resources confirmed that he would ensure that all ward Members were informed at an early stage of key activities in their wards.

The Executive agreed that section 8 'Individual Councillor budgets' in Appendix C to the submitted report be removed from the plan as these areas were no longer being taken forward.

Reason for decision: To ensure the Strategy was aligned with the latest national policy and local aspirations and was applied consistently across the Council.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the performance against the actions in the first year of the delivery plan be noted;**
- 2. that the annual refresh of the Community Engagement Strategy be endorsed;**
- 3. that the proposed policy statements be agreed to ensure the principles of the Strategy are applied consistently across the Council; and**
- 4. that a policy position statement and action plan, regarding implementation of the Localism Bill in Central Bedfordshire, is developed once the detail of the emerging legislation it contains is better understood.**

E/11/46

#### **ICT Infrastructure Capital Scheme for ICT Stability**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources on the proposed variation to the ICT Infrastructure Capital Scheme to fund the work required to stabilise and secure the operation of the Council's current ICT systems.

The Deputy Executive Member for Corporate Resources responded to questions from non-Executive and Executive Members regarding the capital and revenue costs involved in providing a fit for purpose ICT infrastructure, including to enable opportunities for future improvements.

Reason for decision: To enable Officers to swiftly allocate sufficient funding to progress the successful delivery of a fit for purpose ICT Infrastructure.

#### ***RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL***

***to approve an increase to the existing ICT Infrastructure Capital Scheme of £559k as proposed in the Business Case attached at Appendix A.***

E/11/47

#### **Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan 2012/13 to 2015/16**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the proposed medium term financial planning framework for 2012/13 through to 2015/16.

Members noted that a Budget Communication and Engagement Plan was being developed and would be submitted to the Executive at their meeting on 15 November 2011.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to put in place a framework to meet the financial challenges faced by Central Bedfordshire Council over the medium term.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the overall financial outlook and the impact on this authority be noted;**
- 2. that the proposed framework for preparation of the Medium Term Financial Plan be endorsed; and**
- 3. that the timetable for the consultation process be endorsed.**

E/11/48 **Revenue Budget - Quarter 1 Monitor**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided Members with information on the Quarter 1 Revenue Budget Management position.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning.

**RESOLVED**

**In view of the Revenue Budget forecast position being an overspend of £0.582M (0.3% of net spend), to request Officers to identify ways to improve the forecast financial outturn to achieve a balanced revenue budget.**

E/11/49 **Capital Budget - Quarter 1 Monitor**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided Members with information on the quarter 1 Capital Budget Management position. The Deputy Leader confirmed that a review of the Capital Programme was underway.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial and asset management and planning.

**RESOLVED**

**to note that the Capital spend to date, excluding HRA, is £13.448M which is £3.6M gross below budget (year to year) and in view of this, that a detailed review of the Capital Programme would be reported to the Executive on 15 November 2011.**

E/11/50

## **Luton and southern Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy - Guidance for Development Management**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development proposing the endorsement of the joint Core Strategy submitted for public examination in March 2011 and its accompanying evidence as interim guidance for development management purposes. This would help in the determination of planning applications until a new Core Strategy covering southern Central Bedfordshire was adopted.

Members noted that recommendation 3 should have referred to agenda item 8 and not agenda item 10 of the Joint Committee meeting held on 29 July 2011. This amendment also referred to paragraph 17 in the submitted report.

The Executive acknowledged the importance of adopting the proposed course of action to enable the Council to defend robustly decisions it might take on possible planning applications.

Reason for decision: To help deliver the Council's preferred approach to managing development in the southern part of Central Bedfordshire.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the Luton and southern Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy submitted on 8 March 2011, together with the underlying evidence set out in Appendix A to the submitted report, be endorsed as guidance for development management purposes;**
- 2. that the changes to the Core Strategy put forward at the Joint Committee on 29 July 2011 set out in items 9, 10, 11 and 12 of that agenda also be endorsed as guidance for development management purposes;**
- 3. that the updated transport evidence base which underpins the joint Core Strategy set out in item 8 of the Joint Committee agenda and the need for some updates to technical studies which continue to be part of the evidence base which informs the joint Core strategy as set out in item 7 of that agenda, be noted; and**
- 4. that the principle of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Caddington and Slip End, led by the local communities, be endorsed and supported.**



E/11/51 **Members' ICT Equipment**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources proposing a new Members' allowance scheme for the provision of Members' ICT Equipment. It was noted that the new scheme would be implemented with immediate effect, with all Members being migrated to the new arrangements by 31 December 2011.

Reason for decision: To enable Members to select the appropriate ICT equipment and support they require while delivering efficiencies and improving value for money for the residents of Central Bedfordshire.

**RESOLVED**

1. **that the Members' Allowances proposals for ICT equipment set out in paragraphs 22 and 23 of the submitted report be approved;**
2. **that the new scheme be implemented with immediate effect, with all Members migrated to the new arrangements by 31 December 2011;**
3. **that the Member ICT Equipment Policy be amended to reflect the new allowance scheme; and**
4. **that Part K of the Constitution be amended to reflect the new provisions.**

E/11/52 **Development of a Leisure Facilities Strategy for Central Bedfordshire**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services that proposed the adoption of a strategic approach for leisure facilities, entitled "Central Bedfordshire approach to Leisure Facilities". Members noted that the financial and business details of the contracts were contained within the exempt part of the agenda.

Members also considered a proposal for the extension of the leisure facilities management contracts in the north of Central Bedfordshire until 31 March 2013 and the letting of a one-year contract for the management of the Houghton Regis Leisure Centre from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. Members agreed to defer consideration of the Leisure Centre Contracts (minute E/11/55 below refers), as this item contained information about the financial or business affairs of the Council.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to formally agree a document that would set out the agreed approach to the future provision of leisure facilities that will be used to support and justify leisure facility requirements in planning obligation (s.106) negotiations with developers, and for inclusion within a community infrastructure levy, once developed.

**RESOLVED**

**that the development of a Leisure Facilities Strategy setting out Central Bedfordshire Council's approach to Leisure Facilities be agreed.**

E/11/53

## **Proposed Dunstable Enterprise Centre (Incuba Project)**

### **Note:**

The Chief Executive declared a personal and prejudicial interest in minute E/11/53 'Proposed Dunstable Enterprise Centre (Incuba Project)' as he was a governor at Central Bedfordshire College. The Chief Executive withdrew from the meeting for the duration of this item.

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that proposed the establishment of a new exemplar business incubation facility to support regeneration and future employment needs in the Dunstable area. The Council, through the inclusion of the land asset at the old Fire Station site (on Brewers Hill Road, Dunstable) would enable Central Bedfordshire College, with the benefit of European funding, to develop facilities for the provision of a new enterprise centre providing support for starting up and growing businesses with an additional focus on developing a low carbon technology centre and training opportunities within this sector.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources moved an additional recommendation as follows:

“that approval of the above recommendation is made conditional upon the Central Bedfordshire College entering into the lease for the Skills Building at Kingsland and its completion including payment of rent to date from 1 November 2010.”

Reason for decision: To allow the Council to support the project which would enable the delivery of a new exemplar Enterprise facility to stimulate the local economy, deliver jobs and training and support the developing low carbon sector. It would also bring externally secured funding and help stimulate new business growth and enterprise within the Dunstable and Houghton Regis area.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. to dispose of the land outlined on the plan attached at Appendix A to the submitted report to Central Bedfordshire College on a 125 year lease to aid the use of money provided by European Regional Development Fund for regeneration and local business support; and**
- 2. that approval of the above recommendation is made conditional upon Central Bedfordshire College entering into the lease for the skills building at Kingsland and its completion, including payment of rent to date from 1 November 2010.**

The Chief Executive rejoined the meeting.

E/11/54 **Annual Report of Bedford and Central Bedfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that set out the fourth annual report of the Adult Safeguarding Board, covering the second year of operations of the two unitary councils for Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations to safeguard vulnerable adults.

**RESOLVED**

**that the Annual Report of Bedford and Central Bedfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board attached at Appendix A to the submitted report be noted.**

E/11/55 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**RESOLVED**

**that in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 7 and 12 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

E/11/56 **Extension of Leisure Facilities Management Contracts in north Central Bedfordshire and Tendering of Houghton Regis Leisure Centre Contract**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services proposing the extension of the leisure management contracts for the north of Central Bedfordshire for one year and tendering for a new one-year contract for the management of services at Houghton Regis Leisure Centre, to allow time for the Council to consider and adopt a strategic approach for leisure facilities, including future requirements, for Central Bedfordshire.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to develop a strategic approach for leisure facilities across Central Bedfordshire.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the proposal to extend the contract with Stevenage Leisure Limited for the operation of the leisure facilities in the north of the area until 31 March 2013 be approved;**

2. that the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules be waived in this instance to allow the contract to be extended on the grounds that a change of supplier would cause disproportionate technical difficulties, dis-economies of scale or significant disruption to Council services; and
3. that the proposal to seek a one-year contract for the management of the Houghton Regis Leisure Centre from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 be approved.

E/11/57 **Award of the Contract for the 24/7 Community Alarm and Emergency Out of Hours Call Handling Service 2011 - 2016**

See minute E/11/44 above for details.

E/11/58 **ICT Infrastructure Capital Scheme for ICT Stability**

See minute E/11/46 above for details.

E/11/59 **Central Bedfordshire College Incuba European Regional Development Fund**

See minute E/11/53 above for details.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 12.13 p.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated .....