

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL** held in the Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 22 September 2011.

### PRESENT

Cllr P Hollick (Chairman)

Cllrs	P N Aldis	Cllrs	Mrs D B Gurney	Cllrs	A Shadbolt
	Mrs A Barker		Mrs C Hegley		N J Sheppard
	A R Bastable		D J Hopkin		I Shingler
	R D Berry		J G Jamieson		M A Smith
	M C Blair		R W Johnstone		Miss A Sparrow
	D Bowater		D Jones		B J Spurr
	A D Brown		M R Jones		R C Stay
	Mrs C F Chapman MBE		D J Lawrence		A M Turner
	Mrs S Clark		Mrs J G Lawrence		Mrs P E Turner MBE
	J A E Clarke		I A MacKilligan		M A G Versallion
	N B Costin		K C Matthews		P F Vickers
	A L Dodwell		D McVicar		N Warren
	Mrs R J Drinkwater		J Murray		R D Wenham
	P A Duckett		Mrs M Mustoe		P Williams
	Dr R Egan		R B Pepworth		J N Young
	Mrs S A Goodchild		B Saunders		A Zerny
	Mrs D B Green		J A G Saunders		

### Apologies for Absence

Cllrs	L Birt	Cllrs	C C Gomm	Cllrs	T Nicols
	I Dalgarno		K Janes		B Wells
	Mrs R B Gammons		Ms C Maudlin		

Officers:	Miss H Bell	–	Committee Services Officer
	Mr R Carr	–	Chief Executive
	Ms D Clarke	–	Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation)
	Mr A Fleming	–	Acting Director of Sustainable Communities
	Mrs J Ogle	–	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
	Ms M Peaston	–	Committee Services Manager
	Mr J Unsworth	–	Interim Assistant Chief Executive - Resources

C/11/32

### Prayers

Prayers were taken by Reverend John Harper.

C/11/33 **Minutes**

that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to an amendment to Minute No C/11/29 'Changes to Membership of Committees', resolution (2) to read Councillor Miss Ann Sparrow and not Councillor Mrs Ann Sparrow.

An amended copy of Membership of the Committees circulated with the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2011 is attached to these minutes.

C/11/34 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

There were no declarations made.

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

There were no declarations made.

C/11/35 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman commented on the following matters:

- he reminded Councillors about the protocols for the use of the microphones.
- he reported that Government had changed the date for the first Police and Crime Commissioner elections from May 2012 to November 2012.
- he commended all staff involved with the recent police led operation at Greenacres Caravan Park, Leighton Buzzard.
- he indicated that the Roads Minister had today announced the reopening of the Public Inquiry into the proposed link road between the A5 and the M1 which was a welcome step.
- he announced that the Ofsted inspection of the Children's Adoption service had found the service to be Good with Outstanding features and commended the work which had given rise to this outcome.

The Chairman also reported that :

- Inspiring Music concerts had now started for the Autumn term
- the Anglia In Bloom Gold award had been awarded to Dunstable and the Silver award to Leighton Buzzard. Glenwood Special School had been presented with a medal in the category of Special Schools Gardens.

The Chairman invited Councillor Mrs P E Turner to provide an update on the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Councillor Mrs P E Turner advised that the proposals for the Health and Wellbeing Boards were contained within the NHS White Paper. She indicated that Central Bedfordshire Council was playing a full part in the preparatory work in advance of the statutory requirement to establish a Board which would be effective from 2013.

C/11/36

### **Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications**

The Leader of the Council joined the Chairman in commending those employees who had been involved with the recent operation at Greenacres Caravan Park, Leighton Buzzard.

The Leader advised a consultation had started recently about a proposal to create a new Parish and establish a community council to serve the area of Fairfield, which currently lies within the Parish of Stotfold. This followed receipt of a valid petition asking the Council to undertake a Governance Review of the area of Fairfield. The first stage of the consultation began on 8 August and would run until 7 November 2011.

The Leader acknowledged that the Boundary Commission For England's review of the Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries in England had led to proposals which were of concern from a Central Bedfordshire perspective.

C/11/37

### **Questions, Statements and Deputations**

Questions and statements were put by a member of the public under the Public Participation provisions set out at Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

- (a) Mr Clarke asked whether the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel would be accepted.

The Leader advised that recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel would be considered by Council at the appropriate time.

- (b) Mr Clarke asked for full descriptions of the roles on the Executive held by Cllrs Mrs Turner and Stay and how it was intended to monitor and judge their performance.

The Leader advised that an outline of the role and structure of Executive was set out in his address to the Council meeting held on 21 July 2011.

- (c) Mr Clarke asked what proportion of staff had agreed to a 2% salary cut and whether the predicted savings would be achieved.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member - Corporate Resources advised that negotiations would not conclude until the end of September, therefore the figures were unknown at present. It was anticipated that the predicted savings would be close to budget.

- (d) Mr Clarke asked for comment upon accusations of bullying allegedly made by employees.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member - Corporate Resources advised that the Chief Executive would ensure any specific alleged incidents of bullying were fully investigated.

- (e) Mr Clarke questioned the amount the Council was paying to outside consultants and companies.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member - Corporate Resources advised that payments shown in accounts to outside consultants and external companies included for example carers, AMEY and other third party services and that payments to actual consultants were not excessive.

C/11/38 **Petitions**

No petitions had been received.

C/11/39 **Recommendations from the Executive**

The Council considered a recommendation from the Executive's meeting held on 23 August 2011 seeking approval of the ICT Infrastructure Capital Scheme for ICT Stability.

**RESOLVED**

**that an increase to the existing ICT Infrastructure Capital Scheme of £559k as proposed in the Business Case at Appendix A to the report be approved.**

C/11/40 **Written Questions**

No written questions had been received from Members of the Council under Rule No 12.2.

C/11/41 **Open Questions**

The Chairman presided over Open Questions asked of Executive Members and Deputy Executive Members under Procedure rule 12.7.

1. Councillor Egan asked questions about the provision of housing and sought assurance that local residents would benefit from future development.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Strategic Planning & Economic Development commented on the Choice Base Letting Scheme and Shared Ownership.

2. Councillor Goodchild asked about the implications of the recent operation at Greenacres Caravan Park, Leighton Buzzard.

The Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing advised that any cost had not yet been determined but that the alleged victims had been returned to their home authorities.

3. Councillor Aldis commented on the current office moves and asked what schemes were in place for staff who were unable to travel to a different work location and the cost savings associated with the office moves.

The Leader of the Council reiterated the necessity for office moves to achieve efficiency savings. Compensation payments were in place for where staff were required to travel longer distances due to a change in their main place of work.

4. Councillor Smith asked a question about numbers of staff who had not accepted new contracts of employment and what contingencies had been put in place to ensure services would not be affected.

The Leader of the Council advised that exact numbers would not be known until after 1 October and that managers had contingency plans in place. The Leader would endeavour to update members of the Council in due course.

5. Councillor Williams asked how many petitions had been submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council and how many had been successfully resolved.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member - Corporate Resources indicated that he would provide a written reply.

6. Councillor Aldis asked for the Authority's view on separating recycled items and the steps being taken to reduce levels of contamination.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities advised of the campaign for Real Recycling and would invite the Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities to provide a written answer.

7. Councillor Egan sought assurances that the views of local people would be taken into account in future development plans following on from the announcement about the A5 – M1 link road.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development advised that all applications for development would be considered at the appropriate time by the Development Management Committee and that no preconceived decisions had been made.

8. Councillor Murray asked a question about claims of staff bullying and harassment as referred to in recent press publications.

The Leader advised that no specific allegations had been made and that he was satisfied that policies and procedures to respond to any allegations were in place.

9. Councillor Murray asked a question about whether there was a move to two tier education in Dunstable.

The Executive Member for Children's Services advised that 5 schools in Dunstable and Houghton Regis had applied for a variation to age range intake which would be similar to a two tier system.

10. Councillor Smith sought clarification that the New Homes Bonus Scheme would support necessary infrastructure.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that funding from the scheme would be spent appropriately.

11. Councillor Williams asked a question regarding illegal encampments in Central Bedfordshire.

The Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities- Strategic Planning and Economic Development commented that robust safeguards were in place.

12. Councillor Zerny asked a question about the consultation underway about the future of Children's Centres.

The Executive Member for Children's Services explained the consultation and the reasons for it.

13. Councillor Aldis asked a question about allotment land in Sandy.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources advised that negotiations with the landowner were ongoing and at present a timescale for concluding the negotiations was unknown.

14. Councillor Egan asked a question about a recent Customer Services Survey.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Services clarified the methodology and personnel used to conduct the survey.

15. Councillor Murray asked a question about the provision of CCTV in places where incidents had been recorded.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities indicated that he would provide a written response.

C/11/42 **Motions (if any)**

No motions had been received under Procedure Rule No 16.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 7.15 p.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated .....