

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL** held in the Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 24 November 2011.

PRESENT

Cllr P Hollick (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs R B Gammons (Vice-Chairman)

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

Apologies for Absence

Cllrs	R D Berry	Cllrs	K Janes	Cllrs	B Wells
	D J Hopkin		T Nicols		P Williams

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Officers:	Mr G Alderson	—	Director of Sustainable Communities
	Mr J Atkinson	—	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
	Miss H Bell	—	Committee Services Officer
	Mr R Carr	—	Chief Executive
	Mrs J Ogley	—	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
	Mrs C Parry	—	Assistant Director (Acting), Children's Services Operations
	Ms M Peaston	—	Committee Services Manager
	Mr C Warboys	—	Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer

C/11/43 **Prayers**

Prayers were taken by Reverend Martin Hathaway.

C/11/44 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

C/11/45 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

There were no declarations made.

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

Councillors Mrs J Lawrence and R Stay declared an interest in Agenda Item No 18, Members' Allowances Scheme 2011/12 & 2012/13. The declarations were recorded under that item.

C/11/46 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman commented on a number of matters:

- Everton Lower School, a Council maintained school, had received "Outstanding" in their recent Ofsted inspection.
- Elayne Clifford had been awarded a Local Policing Commander's Certificate of Merit in recognition of her work as an Emergency Duty Social Worker.
- Workforce planning, which is a statutory function in Children's Services, had been assessed and received high praise compared with the workforce planning of other Councils.

The Chairman also commented on events which had taken place or were planned, to which he had been invited, among these, it was particularly noted that Dunstable had been chosen as a town to take part in the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay on 9 July 2012.

C/11/47 **Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications**

The Leader summarised feedback received from the recent Residents' Survey.

C/11/48 **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 a question relating to the cost of awarded contracts.

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

- (b) Mr Clarke asked a question about compensation payments.

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

- (c) Mr Clarke made a statement on recommendations set out under Agenda Item No 10, Recommendations from the Constitution Advisory Group and requested that some specific changes proposed be rejected and others supported.

- (d) Mr Clarke made a statement on recommendations set out under Agenda Item No 18, Recommendations from the Constitution Advisory Group.

C/11/49 **Petitions**

No petitions had been received.

C/11/50 **Recommendations from the Executive**

Economic Development Plan

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 15 November 2011, seeking adoption of the Economic Development Plan.

RESOLVED

that the Economic Development Plan, as set out in the Executive report of 15 November 2011, be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

Capital Programme Review

The Council considered a report of the meeting of the Executive held on 15 November 2011, seeking approval of the revised Capital Programme for 2011/12.

RESOLVED

that the revised Capital Programme for 2011/12 be approved as set out in the report of the Executive of 15 November 2011.

C/11/51

Recommendations from General Purposes Committee

Boundary Commission for England – Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries Review

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 6 October 2011 seeking approval and adoption of alternative proposals for the Parliamentary Boundary as set out in Appendix A, which was circulated separately from the agenda.

RESOLVED

that the alternative proposals for those Parliamentary boundaries as they affect the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Sub- Region of the Eastern Region, as revised by officers in consultation with the Chairman of General Purposes Committee, be approved and adopted and then submitted to the Boundary Commission for England for consideration, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

C/11/52

Recommendations from Constitution Advisory Group

The Council considered recommendations from the meeting of the Constitution Advisory Group held on 31 October 2011.

The Council took into account the representations made under the Public Participation Scheme.

Further to discussion an amendment to Appendix C was moved and seconded based on a revised Appendix C which was tabled at the meeting.

RESOLVED

to adopt the changes to the Constitution set out in Appendices A, B, revised Appendix C, and D-H inclusive, with the following effects:

- A. changes to provide for a process for petitions relating to the budget;**
- B. changes to provide for a timeframe of 3 minutes for public participation for all purposes and all meetings, by amending “5 minutes” where stated, to “3 minutes”;**
- C. changes to suggest a notice period of 2 clear working days for questions from the public at public meetings to enable questions to be answered at the meeting, with questions not previously notified being answered either at the meeting or afterwards, in writing;**
- D. changes to remove the provision for members of the public to speak twice on the same matter;**
- E. changes to replace the existing list of key plans, policies and strategies in the Council’s Policy Framework;**
- F. changes to provide for a Council budget setting meeting;**
- G. changes to a specified threshold sum and other minor drafting amendments;**
- H. changes to reflect legislative provisions governing Council Members’ attendance and speaking at quasi judicial Committees and Sub-Committees.**

C/11/53

Report of the Police Authority

A report of the meeting of the Bedfordshire Police Authority held on 10 September 2011 was submitted.

Councillor Hollick, representative of the Police Authority, answered questions on issues in the report.

RESOLVED

that the report of the Bedfordshire Police Authority be noted.

C/11/54 **Report of the Fire Authority**

The Council considered a report of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority detailing information from its meeting held on 7 September 2011.

RESOLVED

that the report of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority be noted.

C/11/55 **Written Questions**

A written question had been submitted under Rule 12.2 by Councillor Aldis as follows:

“At the last meeting of the Council I asked a question about land for allotments in Sandy. What hope can the Executive Member offer to the present and future allotment holders in Sandy of having a plot on which to “grow their own” in the near future? Can he give indication of the progress that is being made in securing land for allotments and the timescales that he sees as being realistic and meaningful?”

The following reply was received:

“Central Bedfordshire Council is well aware of the lack of allotments in Sandy and is working with Sandy Town Council to address the Town Council’s need to meet its statutory duty. Finding a site has proved difficult and several options have been looked at but dismissed.

I can confirm that Officers have located a potential site on land east of the A1. Discussions need to reach a conclusion with the Council’s tenant before any further progress can be made as his consent and the amendment of his tenancy are required.

An exact timescale is not available at this stage of the negotiations and residents are asked to be patient. This is a priority matter for Central Bedfordshire Council and we are keeping the Town Council and Allotment Association Members aware of progress”.

C/11/56

Open Questions

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

1. Councillor Murray asked about the progress of a claim that had been submitted to the Council from a member of the public.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources advised that the claim was being addressed.

2. Councillor Duckett asked a question about the economic benefits of the Luton Busway Scheme to Central Bedfordshire.

The Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Strategic Planning & Economic Development explained the benefits, including the impact on jobs and new homes in Central Bedfordshire.

3. Councillor Shadbolt asked for an update on the Automatic Number Plate Recognition Scheme (ANPR).

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services advised that the Auto Number Plate Recognition scheme had been launched and that there were three ANPR vehicles working throughout Central Bedfordshire.

4. Councillor McVicar invited the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities to join him in commending the Council on the opening of Creasey Park football facility which had been assisted by the appropriate application of Section 106 monies.

5. Councillor Murray asked a question about the status of schooling in Dunstable.

The Executive Member for Children's Services clarified the number of schools that had applied for academy status and the associated implications. He indicated that he would meet with Councillors from Dunstable and Houghton Regis to discuss the matter further.

6. Councillor Egan asked questions about implications for low paid workers as a result of a reduction in mileage allowances.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources indicated that he would check the information on which the questions were based and would endeavour to provide a written reply.

7. Councillor Egan sought assurance that problems incurred by a developer who had left a playground in poor condition would be rectified.

The Executive member for Social Care, Health and Housing advised that she was awaiting the outcome of a meeting to discuss resolution of the issue and would now also liaise with the Executive Member for

Sustainable Communities-Strategic Planning and Economic Development.

8. Councillor Zerny asked a question about the job role and performance of the Executive Member for Economic Partnerships and the Executive Member for External Affairs.

The Leader advised that he had included an outline of these roles in his address to the Council meeting on 21 July 2011 and commented on the performance of the Executive Members.

9. Councillor Goodchild asked if Central Bedfordshire Council would be supporting a new initiative organised by Daybreak television show and the Salvation Army, "Donate a Coat".

The Executive Member for Social Care, Health & Housing indicated that she would seek further information on the initiative and that she would be minded to support and encourage support from others.

10. Councillor Sparrow asked what effect the public services strike might have on Central Bedfordshire schools.

The Executive Member for Children's Services advised that the exact number of school closures was unknown at this time. Data would be collated for submission to the Department for Education as required two days before the strike.

11. Councillor Duckett asked a question about the approach to the deployment of Section 106 monies in relation to traffic management.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services confirmed that Councillors would be consulted on the use of Section 106 monies.

12. Councillor Aldis asked a question about the planning consultation process with regard to the installation of a temporary building in Sandy.

The Executive Member for Planning clarified the consultation process which he had no reason to doubt had been followed appropriately.

13. Councillor Clarke asked a question about whether monies available through the Growing Places Fund, allocated to Local Enterprise Partnerships, would benefit Central Bedfordshire.

The Executive Member for Economic Partnerships advised that in excess of £13 million had been allocated to the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) and that this Council would be seeking to take advantage of the opportunities this presented.

14. Councillor Murray asked a question about car parking policies in Central Bedfordshire.

The Executive Member for Sustainable-Communities Strategic Planning and Economic Development clarified the car parking policy in Central Bedfordshire.

C/11/57 **Motions (if any)**

No motions had been received under Procedure Rule No 16.

C/11/58 **Calendar of meetings**

The Council considered a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources seeking approval of the calendar of meetings for the Municipal Year 2012/13.

RESOLVED

that the calendar of meetings for the period May 2012 – June 2013 as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved.

C/11/59 **Membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel**

The Council considered a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources which sought an increase in the size of the membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel from three to four and the re-appointment of Mrs B Heley, an existing Panel member. The Executive Member for Corporate Resources moved an amendment to the recommendation by adding at the end the words:

“and that the quorum for any meeting of the Panel will be three”.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the size of the Independent Remuneration Panel membership be increased from three to four members, that the persons appointed to serve for the period ending 31 March 2016 and that the quorum for any meeting of the Panel be three;**
- 2. that Mrs B Heley be offered a further appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel for the period ending 31 March 2015;**
- 3. that the appointment process to fill vacancies on the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in Paragraph 10 of the report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources be approved.**

C/11/60 **Members Allowances**

The Executive Member for External Affairs and the Chairman of General Purposes Committee each declared a personal interest in this item by reason of their specific allowances being discussed and left the meeting for the duration of the discussion on this particular aspect of the debate.

The Council considered the report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources setting out recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for the Members Allowances Scheme for 2011/12 and 2012/13 following its meetings held on 3 August, 20 October and 2 November 2011.

In relation to recommendation 1 an amendment was moved, seconded and upon being put to the vote, was declared carried.

The amendment provided for the addition of the words“save that in the case of the Executive Members without Portfolio, each will receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of £10,654.72 (which is 34% of the recommended SRA for the Leader) with effect from 19 May 2011”.

RESOLVED

1. **that the Scheme of Members' Allowances for Central Bedfordshire for the financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13 be amended, in accordance with the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in the report and also to provide that the Executive Members without Portfolio each will receive an SRA of £10,654.72 (which is 34% of the recommended SRA for the Leader) with effect from 19 May 2011;**
2. **that the concerns of the Independent Remuneration Panel regarding consultation and the publication of its recommendations be noted.**

C/11/61 **Variation of the Scheme of Executive Functions Delegated to Officers**

The Council noted a variation to the scheme of Executive Functions delegated to officers authorised by the Leader, as follows:

Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services – Publication of Statutory Notices for alterations to schools maintained by the Council.

C/11/62 **Variation of the arrangements for the discharge of Executive Functions**

The Council noted a variation of arrangements for the discharge of Executive functions delegated by the Leader, as follows:

Executive Member for Children's Services – determination of proposals to alter the upper or lower age of pupils in schools.

C/11/63 **Change of Membership on a Committee**

The Council noted that since the last meeting, under Part B5 2.6.1 of the Council's Constitution, the Leader had made the following change to membership of a Committee.

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Bowater had replaced Councillor Shadbolt.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 9.20 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated