

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 10 January 2012.

### PRESENT

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

Executive Members:	Cllrs	Mrs C Hegley K C Matthews B J Spurr	Cllrs	R C Stay Mrs P E Turner MBE M A G Versallion
Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	Mrs A Barker A D Brown I Dalgarno D J Hopkin	Cllrs	A M Turner B Wells R D Wenham J N Young
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	P N Aldis A R Bastable M C Blair Mrs R J Drinkwater P A Duckett C C Gomm Mrs S A Goodchild	Cllrs	R W Johnstone D Jones I A MacKilligan D McVicar J Murray T Nicols P Williams
Officers in Attendance		Mr G Alderson Mr J Atkinson  Mr R Carr Ms D Clarke  Mrs S Hobbs Mrs J Ogley  Mrs C Parry  Mrs S Tyler  Mr C Warboys		Director of Sustainable Communities Head of Legal and Democratic Services Chief Executive Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation) Committee Services Officer Director of Social Care, Health and Housing Assistant Director (Acting), Children's Services Operations Head Child Poverty and Early Intervention & Prevention Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer

E/11/104 **Minutes**

**RESOLVED**

**that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to:**

- **minute E/11/96 'Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2015/16' amending the reference in paragraph three from 'changing facilities' to 'toilet facilities'.**

E/11/105 **Members' Interests**

**(a) Personal Interests:-**

Councillor Mrs Goodchild declared a personal interest in Agenda item 11 'Review of Fairer Charging: Phase 2 Telecare Charging' as a member of her family received the Telecare Service. She was present during this item.

Councillor Murray declared a personal interest in Agenda item 14 'Delegation of Powers to Provide and Operate the Markets in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard' as he was a Member of Dunstable Town Council and the Dunstable Joint Committee. He was present during this item.

Councillor Bowater declared a personal interest in Agenda item 14 'Delegation of Powers to Provide and Operate the Markets in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard' as he was a Member of Leighton Linlade Town Council and the Leighton Linlade Partnership Committee. He was present during this item.

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

Councillor Mrs Hegley declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 14 'Delegation of Powers to Provide and Operate the Markets in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard' as her partner rented space at one of the markets. She was absent during this item.

Councillor Wenham declared a personal interest in Agenda item 15 'Metal Theft Prevention' as his company provided software in relation to this item. He was absent during this item.

E/11/106 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Leader commented that 2012 would be another challenging year financially and that the Council would be looking at delivering better services for less money.

The Leader invited the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing to provide an update on recent grant awards.

The Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing advised that the Council had been successful in securing the following grants:

- £55,000 - Warm Homes Health People
- £15,000 - Social Work Practice Pioneer Project; and
- £20,000 – to help deliver efficiency savings for care delivery costs.

The Leader commented that the Automatic Number Plate Recognition vehicles were now patrolling throughout Central Bedfordshire.

E/11/107

## **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 'Don't Close the Children Centres in Central Bedfordshire'**

Mr Hopkins presented an e-petition and paper petition, containing a total of 313 signatures urging the Council not to close Children Centres in Central Bedfordshire. Mr Hopkins explained the value of the services provided at the Children's Centres and the signatories would not like to see any of the Centres close.

The Executive Member for Children's Services thanked Mr Hopkins for presenting the petition and agreed with Mr Hopkins and explained that he would take the petition into consideration when discussing agenda item 8 'Children Centres: Delivery in Central Bedfordshire'.

### **2. Petition for a Diamond Jubilee Leisure Path, Shillington**

Mrs Webster presented a paper petition, containing a total of 93 signatures in support of a Leisure Path in Shillington between Hanscombe End Road through to Hillfoot Road and Bury Road through to Upton End Road.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services thanked Mrs Webster for presenting the petition and advised that he would include this request alongside other requests for highways maintenance work.

E/11/108 **Public Participation**

The following statement was received in accordance with the Public Participation Scheme:

**1. Mr D Landman**

Mr Landman spoke to Agenda item 8 'Children Centres: Delivery in Central Bedfordshire'. Mr Landman advised Members that he was a parent governor co-optee on the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, but would be speaking in a personal capacity.

Mr Landman contended that the consultation could have been dealt with differently. He explained that he was in support of the petition 'Don't Close the Children Centres in Central Bedfordshire' as the Centres provided an invaluable service to the community.

The Executive Member for Children's Services thanked Mr Landman for his comments and pointed out that the provision used to support Children Centres was due to rise to £2,851,018 in 2012/13. Agenda item 8 'Children Centres: Delivery in Central Bedfordshire' proposed that none of the 22 Children's Centres should close.

E/11/109 **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

**RESOLVED**

**that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2012 be noted.**

E/11/110 **Children Centres: Delivery in Central Bedfordshire**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that outlined proposals for the reconfiguration of Central Bedfordshire Children Centres to take effect from March 2012.

Members noted that the proposal for the award of contract(s) to deliver Children Centres was tabled at the meeting.

Three options had been considered and following consultation with the public and the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the preferred option was option one, to reconfigure all existing Centres into 9 clusters, with an enhancement of resources available in the areas of greatest need.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Children's Services confirmed that Children Centres were provided with taxi tokens with which to assist those parents who struggled to access the Centres. He confirmed that the Centres in Dunstable and Houghton Regis, which had been open the longest, were beginning to show a positive impact.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council is compliant with statutory guidance and legislation. Also to ensure that there was a successful transition from the Children Centres contracts ceasing in March 2012 and new tenders and providers being in place by April 2012.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the proposals for the delivery of Children Centres in Central Bedfordshire as set out in the report be approved and that this approach remain in operation until such a time as the provision or contracts require a review; and**
- 2. that the proposal for the delivery of Children Centres as set out in the exempt papers at Agenda item 18 be approved.**

E/11/111

**Review of Services to Disabled Children, Young People and their Families**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that set out the outcome of a review of Children's Services to disabled children, young people and their families living in Central Bedfordshire.

Reason for decision: To ensure the Council is compliant with statutory guidance and legislation. Also to ensure services are delivered in the most effective and efficient way, provide value for money and put services on a long term sustainable footing.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the implementation of the proposals, as set out in the report, to deliver services to disabled children be approved, by:**
  - (a) approving that a "hub and spoke" model be adopted for the delivery of services; and**
  - (b) approving the closure of the "Poppies" by March 2013 at the latest and that the support to families arising from individual assessments be delivered within the proposed revised model as part of the "hub and spoke" delivery.**

E/11/112

**Harmonisation of Housing Needs Services across Central Bedfordshire**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that proposed the harmonisation of Housing Needs Services across Central Bedfordshire, with the Council operating an in-house service from April 2012.

Members acknowledged the good service provided by Aragon Housing Association.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to discharge its statutory functions to all homeless households and to those households in housing need.

**RESOLVED**

**that the harmonisation of the Housing Needs Service across Central Bedfordshire, as a single and coherent “in house” service from 1 April 2012 be approved.**

E/11/113

**Review of Fairer Charging: Phase 2 Telecare Charging**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that proposed the introduction of charges for Council provided Telecare Services. A full consultation process had been carried out, including benchmarking work with other authorities. This had suggested that a charge of £4.00 for Telecare would not be unreasonable.

Members noted that where a customer had a low income or could not afford the charge, then the implications for the customer would be evaluated and all options explored.

Reason for decision: To ensure the continued delivery of Telecare Services to customers on a financially sustainable basis.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that a charge of £4.00 per week be levied on customers who receive Telecare Services, along with the concessions as set out in the report; and**
- 2. that the document “Charging for Non-Residential Social Care Services” attached at Appendix F to the report be updated to reflect this decision.**

E/11/114

**Treasury Management Strategy**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided a summary of the proposed changes to the Treasury Management Policy and the Treasury Management Strategy. Due to the greater risk and uncertainty in investment markets, CIPFA had revised both the Treasury Management Code of Practice and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities in November 2011.

The Executive Member tabled an amendment to Appendix B, the Treasury Management Strategy 2011-2016.

Members noted that there would be a new financing system for the Housing Revenue Account whereby the Government would be transferring an allocation of the national debt liability to the Council. The Council would then be able to keep all of the rental income from its own housing stock.

Reason for decision: To put an effective treasury management framework in place for the Council.

**RECOMMENDED**

***to Council that the Treasury Management Policy and the Treasury Management Strategy be approved, as amended.***

E/11/115 **ICT Framework**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that proposed an operating framework for the ICT Service for the period January 2012 to April 2016. The framework defined the future shape of the ICT service required to meet the future demands of the Council.

Reason for decision: To provide a clear understanding of the ICT service operating framework required to meet the needs of the Council.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the ICT Framework document attached at Appendix A to the report be approved for the period January 2012 to April 2016; and**
- 2. that the ICT Framework be reviewed by the Member responsible for ICT on an annual basis.**

E/11/116 **Delegation of Powers to Provide and Operate the Markets in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that proposed to delegate powers for the operation of the markets in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard to the respective Town Councils. The markets were currently operated by Wendy Fair Markets Limited until the contract expired on 31 May 2012.

Members acknowledged that the intention was to delegate the powers for the operation of the markets to the Town Councils. Dunstable and Leighton Linslade Town Councils had agreed that they would ring fence a proportion of the proceeds from operating the markets to support business development in the towns through the relevant Town Centre Partnership Committees.

The revised draft specification for the operation of Leighton-Linslade market contained paragraph 37 which implied the continuation of the delegation after six years.

The Executive Member and Deputy Executive Member for Corporate Resources responded to questions from Members regarding the value of the markets and the impact that the proposed delegation would have on neighbouring towns and villages. The Executive agreed to remove paragraph 37 from the draft specification for the operation of Leighton-Linslade market.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the powers to operate the markets could be delegated to the relevant Town Council to allow for the provision of the markets to continue into the future.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. that from the 1 June 2012, for the period of five years until 1 June 2017, the powers to provide and operate a market by virtue of the Food Act 1984 and the Animal Act 1981, and the powers devolved from the market charter in respect of the operation of Dunstable Market, be delegated to Dunstable Town Council. Such delegation is made to operate the market in accordance with the specification and business plan to be approved by the Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement;**
- 2. that from the 1 June 2012, for the period of six years until 1 June 2018, the powers to provide and operate a market by virtue of the Food Act 1984 and the Animal Act 1981, and the powers devolved from the market charter in respect of the operation of Leighton Buzzard Market, be delegated to Leighton Linslade Town Council. Such delegation is made to operate the market in accordance with the specification and business plan to be approved by the Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement, subject to the removal of paragraph 37 of the specification on page 70 of the supplement 'Continuation after 6 years'; and**
- 3. that the power to deal further with all and any issues that arise in relation to the provision and operation of markets within Central Bedfordshire, including but not limited to, the ability to delegate and end the delegation of powers, be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services, as Lead Officer for Localism and Community Engagement, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources.**

E/11/117

### **Metal Theft Prevention**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services that informed Members of the Private Members Bill coming before Parliament in January 2012 and sought support for the registration of Scrap Metal Dealers.



The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services moved the following additional recommendation, which was duly seconded:-

“recommend to Council that the Local Government Association be asked to develop a national scheme for the licensing of scrap metal dealers to which Central Bedfordshire Council, among others, could subscribe.”

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to introduce a licensing scheme for scrap metal dealers to help reduce the increase in metal thefts by giving public bodies increased powers to take action against scrap metal dealers handling any stolen metal.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. to support the contents of the Private Members Metal Theft (Prevention) Bill introduced by Graham Jones MP;**
- 2. to request that the Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council contacts local MP's and ask that they support this bill at it's second reading in the House of Commons on 20 January 2012; and**
- 3. that if national action is not forthcoming on this issue Central Bedfordshire Council should explore the introduction of a local licensing scheme with as many neighbouring authorities as were willing.**

### **RECOMMENDED**

***to Council that the Local Government Association be asked to develop a national scheme for the licensing of scrap metal dealers to which Central Bedfordshire Council, among others, could subscribe.***

E/11/118

### **Quarter 2 Performance Report**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the quarter 2 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council's key performance indicator set. The overall performance demonstrated that the Council's services continued to be supported by strong management decisions and appropriate actions were being taken where necessary.

Reason for decision: To ensure a rigorous approach to performance management across Central Bedfordshire Council.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the strong overall performance made against this set of indicators be noted; and**
- 2. to request Officers to further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators.**

E/11/119 **Children Centres: Delivery in Central Bedfordshire**

See minute E/11/110 for details.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 12.02 p.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated .....