

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 12 September 2013.

PRESENT

Cllr Ms C Maudlin (Chairman)
Cllr D Bowater (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs	P N Aldis	Cllrs	Ms A M W Graham	Cllrs	J A G Saunders
	Mrs A Barker		Mrs D B Gurney		A Shadbolt
	A R Bastable		C Hegley		N J Sheppard
	R D Berry		P Hollick		I Shingler
	L Birt		D J Hopkin		M A Smith
	A D Brown		J G Jamieson		Miss A Sparrow
	Mrs C F Chapman MBE		R W Johnstone		B J Spurr
	N B Costin		D Jones		R C Stay
	I Dalgarno		M R Jones		A M Turner
	A L Dodwell		D J Lawrence		Mrs P E Turner MBE
	Mrs R J Drinkwater		Mrs J G Lawrence		M A G Versallion
	P A Duckett		K C Matthews		N Warren
	Dr R Egan		D McVicar		B Wells
	Mrs R B Gammons		J Murray		T Woodward
	C C Gomm		Mrs M Mustoe		J N Young
	Mrs S A Goodchild		R B Pepworth		A Zerny

Apologies for Absence

Cllrs	M C Blair	Cllrs	K Janes	Cllrs	R D Wenham
	Mrs S Clark		T Nicols		P Williams
	Mrs G Clarke		B Saunders		

Officers:	Mr J Atkinson	–	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
	Miss H Bell	–	Committee Services Officer
	Mr R Carr	–	Chief Executive
	Ms D Clarke	–	Director of Improvement and Corporate Services
	Mr M Coiffait	–	Community Services Director
	Mr A Fleming	–	Service Director - Business Services
	Mrs J Ogle	–	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
	Ms M Peaston	–	Committee Services Manager

C/13/30

PRAYERS

Prayers were taken by Father Richard Moroney, St Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Biggleswade.

C/13/31 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

C/13/32 **Members' Interests**

None were declared.

C/13/33 **Questions, Statements and Deputations**

No questions, statements or deputations were received.

C/13/34 **Petitions**

No petitions were received.

C/13/35 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Council stood in silent tribute to the memory of Councillor Denise Green who had died recently.

The Chairman advised Members that Agenda item No 14, additional report, relating to the Secretary of State's decision on the planning appeal for a Gypsy and Traveller Site at Mile Tree Road, Heath & Reach, Leighton Buzzard had been withdrawn. Councillor Young, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development would provide an update under Agenda Item No 8, in his Executive Member presentation.

The Chairman also advised that she intended to vary the order of business at the meeting and take Item 12 before item 13 'Open Questions'.

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- The Chairman had written a letter on behalf of residents, Councillors and Officers to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on the occasion of the birth of their son. A letter of response had been received expressing gratitude and best wishes.
- Over 200 people had taken part in the Broom Quarry Sponsored stroll and had so far raised £3600 for the Chairman's charity.
- The Chairman's Civic reception would be held on 23 October 2013 and would be combined with the 'You Make a Difference Awards'.

The Chairman invited Councillor Maurice Jones to say a few words to John Atkinson, Head of Legal Services who would be leaving Central Bedfordshire Council in November.

Councillor Jones reflected upon his time spent working with John Atkinson, thanked him for his services in his role as Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer and expressed best wishes on behalf of the Council.

John Atkinson responded with his thanks and best wishes to the Council.

C/13/36

Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications

The Leader reported upon:

- The successful GCSE results across Central Bedfordshire. Students achieving 5 A*-C grades in Maths and English had risen by 58.6%, the number achieving 5 A*-C grades had increased to 82.3%
- Economic activity in Central Bedfordshire, further to the news that 'Prologis' had announced its intention to invest in Dunstable which would create approximately 500 jobs, along with the news that Center Parcs had started to recruit, and the opening of the Luton Busway
- The official opening of Chiltern School.

C/13/37

Executive Member Presentations

Councillor Mrs Turner, Executive Member for Partnerships, focused her presentation on the work of the Central Bedfordshire Together Board and The Health and Wellbeing Board. Both the Central Together Board and Health and Wellbeing Board involved partnership working. She outlined some of the long term strategies that both of the Boards were working towards.

Councillor Mrs Turner responded to questions.

Councillor Young, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities-Strategic Planning and Economic Development reported on recent developments within his portfolio area including:

- the Development Management Committee had granted permission for 5,150 homes land to the northern edge of Houghton Regis North
- on going negotiations to secure monies for the A5/M1 Link Road
- work on the A1 roundabout at South Biggleswade, which was progressing

- planning permission for Homebase, Biggleswade to relocate to new premises in order for development of a new retail park to commence had been granted by the Development Management Committee
- the Luton and Dunstable Busway was due to open on 25 September 2013
- the Department for Transport had awarded £5m for the Woodside Link road whilst the Planning Inquiry decision regarding its national significance was anticipated on 8 October 2013.

Councillor Young provided Council with an update on the current position regarding the Gypsy and Traveller site at Mile Tree Road, Heath & Reach. The Secretary of State had supported the Inspector's decision to grant temporary planning permission for 6 pitches at Mile Tree Road.

The Inspector had made criticisms about Central Bedfordshire's site provision plans as follows:

- Flawed assumptions in the 2013 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) and therefore an underestimation of need for a variety of reasons; and
- The lack of evidence to explain the decision making process that resulted in the shortlist of 7 sites from a long list of 32 sites (at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

The Council had been advised that the Secretary of State's decision could be challenged and would consider the position with the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan in the light of developments.

C/13/38

Recommendations from the Executive

(i) Community Engagement Strategy 2013-2016

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 25 June 2013 which set out the proposed Community Engagement Strategy (CES 2013-2016). Members were advised that the Strategy had been amended as it would be dated from June 2013 to the end of May 2016 and that activity relating to vulnerable and minority groups had been rewritten to include gypsies and travellers.

RESOLVED

that the final draft of the Community Engagement Strategy 2013-2016 be approved, as amended and that the supporting policy documents be adopted.

(ii) East West Rail

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 25 June 2013 outlining the benefits and implications of a new East West rail route and the contribution required to support the project, following discussions with the Network Rail, the Department for Transport and the East West Rail consortium.

RESOLVED

that the Council's contribution to the East West Rail Western Section project of an estimated £5.180 million be included in future updates of the Capital Programme.

C/13/39 **Motions**

Notice had been received from Councillor Stay of a Motion under Procedure Rule No 17 as follows:

“Central Bedfordshire Council, as a local Registration Authority for births, deaths and marriages, views with dismay proposals to introduce birth certificates stamped with the EU logo.

The UK is a sovereign nation; it has the power and the authority to issue birth certificates, driving licences and passports. This authority believes that these key documents should display the UK flag, not the 12-star logo of the EU, which has no place on UK personal identity papers.

The Leader of the Council is requested to write to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Europe expressing this authority's opposition to the proposed introduction of EU birth certificates.”

The motion having duly been seconded by Councillor Mrs Gammons was debated and voted upon.

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED

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The Leader of the Council is requested to write to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Europe expressing this authority's opposition to the proposed introduction of EU birth certificates.

Notice had been received from Councillor Young of a Motion under Procedure Rule No 17 as follows:

“The Council believes that substantial improvements need to be made to the part of the A1 running through Central Bedfordshire and south-east of Bedford Borough (A421 area), and to that end RESOLVES to request the Executive to take all steps necessary to secure Government support for such improvements and their priority in the programme of A1 improvements.”

The Motion having been duly seconded was debated and voted upon.

The Motion was carried.

RESOLVED

The Council believes that substantial improvements need to be made to the part of the A1 running through Central Bedfordshire and south-east of Bedford Borough (A421 area), and to that end RESOLVES to request the Executive to take all steps necessary to secure Government support for such improvements and their priority in the programme of A1 improvements.

C/13/40 Written Questions

No written questions had been received.

C/13/41 Treasury Management Outturn Report

The Council received and considered a report of the Deputy Leader, Executive Member for Corporate Resources which provided a review of the Treasury Management activities for the year ended 31 March 2013.

RESOLVED

that the Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators performance for the year ended 31 March 2013 be noted.

C/13/42 Secretary of State's decision on the planning appeal for Gypsy and Traveller site at Mile Tree Road, Heath & Reach, Leighton Buzzard

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development had provided an update of the current position on the Secretary of State's decision on the planning appeal for a Gypsy and Traveller site at Mile Tree Road, Heath & Reach in his presentation under agenda item No 8 (Minute C/13/37 refers), therefore the item was withdrawn.

C/13/43 Open Questions

The Chairman invited the Minority Group Leaders to ask a question each prior to the consideration of questions that had been placed in the Open Questions receptacle.

1. Councillor Murray sought assurance about the economic benefits of the Luton Bus way.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development referred to the planned investment and development in Dunstable and how this would be supported by the Busway.

2. Councillor Aldis asked a question about the current position following a decision to implement parking restriction schemes in Sandy.

The Deputy Member for Sustainable Communities explained that several Traffic Orders had been made but some had not been processed due to financial costs. He confirmed that he would investigate this issue further.

3. Councillor Barker asked a question about the inclusion of Looked After Children in free swimming lessons during the summer holidays.

The Deputy Member for Sustainable Communities confirmed that free swimming lessons throughout the summer holiday had been made available for children, including Looked After Children, between the ages of 11-18 and that there was an ongoing swimming scheme for Looked After Children.

4. Councillor Berry invited the Executive Member for Children's Services to comment upon the opening of the Greenleas School.

The Executive Member for Children's Services commented on the success of the new Greenleas School.

5. Councillor Dalgarno asked a question about a speculative planning application made in his ward which did not fall within the Local Development Framework.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development advised it would be considered in accordance with relevant policies of the Local Development Framework.

6. Councillor Matthews asked the Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities to provide an update on the current Metal Theft Legislation in respect of Central Bedfordshire.

The Deputy Member for Sustainable Communities advised that there would be 2 types of licences available, a Site Licence or Collectors'

Licence, the administration of which would help minimise the theft of metal.

7. Councillor Aldis asked a question about plans to reduce waste arising from plastic water bottles, including by encouraging residents to drink tap water.

The Deputy Member for Sustainable Communities commented that whilst the Council employed Waste Officers this specific suggestion was not within the remit of this Council.

8. Councillor Murray asked a question about the installation of new desks at Watling House.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources undertook to provide a written answer.

9. Councillor Murray asked what connection Central Bedfordshire Council has with Bromford.

The Executive Member for advised that the Council has a contract with Bromford which provides support services to vulnerable people.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 8.45 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated