

Full Council

Schedule	Thursday 25 January 2024, 6:30 PM — 10:00 PM GMT
Venue	Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford, SG17 5TQ
Description	To Chair and Members of the Council: - Cllr Gareth Mackey (Chairman) Cllr Sue Bell (Vice-Chair)

Agenda

Notes for Participants	1
1. Apologies for Absence	3
To receive apologies for absence.	
2. Minutes	4
To note that the minutes from the Full Council meeting on 23 November 2023 and the reconvened meeting on 17 January 2024.	
3. Members' Interests	36
To receive from Members any declarations of interest.	
4. Questions, Statements or Deputations	37
To receive any questions, statements or deputations from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Part 4G of the Constitution.	

5. Petitions	38
<p>To receive petitions from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Part 4G of the Constitution.</p> <p>- Request to build and deliver the Wixams GP Practice and Health Centre by December 2024 (2,015 signatures - only 177 of these signatures indicated that they lived in Central Bedfordshire, the majority of the signatories lived in Bedford)</p>	
<hr/>	
6. Chair's Announcements and Communications	39
<p>To receive any announcements from the Chair and any matters of communication.</p>	
<hr/>	
7. Leader's Announcements and Communications	40
<p>To receive any announcements from the Leader of the Council and any matters of communication.</p>	
<hr/>	
8. Recommendations from the Executive	41
<p>To consider the recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 9 January 2024 and answer questions asked under Rule No. 14.1</p>	
<hr/>	
8.1. Local Council Tax Support Scheme	42
<hr/>	
9. Recommendation from the General Purposes Committee	44
<p>To consider the recommendation from the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 14 December 2023 and answer questions asked under Rule No. 14.1</p>	
<hr/>	
9.1. Pay Policy Statement	45
<hr/>	

10. Calendar of Meetings 2024/25 58

To seek approval of the Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25.

11. Independent Remuneration Panel: Membership 65

To re-appointment of two existing Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) members and the appointment of two new IRP members.

12. Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and Service 70

To receive and consider a report from the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and Service.

13. Strategic Policy Debate 74

In accordance with Section 17 of the Council Procedure Rules, the Leader has identified flooding as the issue for the strategic debate.

14. Change of Membership on Committees 79

Notification is given under Part 4A (3.6.2) of the Council's Constitution that since the last meeting, the following changes to the membership of Committees as been made:

- Councillors Hamill, Neall, Owen, Roberts, Stephenson, Versallion and Whitaker have been appointed members of the Central Bedfordshire Police and Crime Advisory Panel. Cllrs Andrews, Leaman, McMahon and Tranter have been appointed as substitutes.
 - Councillors Bell, Brennan, S Goodchild, Hegley, Malone, Versallion and Woodfine have been appointed members of the SEND Sub-Committee. Cllrs Holland-Lindsay, Tranter, McMahon and Wightwick have been appointed as substitutes. To also note that one Church of England and one Roman Catholic Diocesan representative, two parent governor representatives, one representative of SNAP Parent/Carer Forum will be appointed as co-optees, subject to confirmation at the first meeting of the Sub-Committee.
-

15. Written Questions	80
<p>To answer written questions from Members of the Council under Part 4A, Rule No. 14.2 of the Council's Procedure Rules.</p>	
<hr/>	
16. Open Questions	83
<p>To answer Open Questions asked by Members of the Council under Part 4A, Rule No. 14.8 of the Council's Procedure Rules.</p>	
<hr/>	
17. Motions	84
<p>To consider Motions by Members of the Council under Part 4A, Rule No. 18 of the Council's Procedure Rules.</p>	
<hr/>	
17.1. Motion proposed by Cllr Stephenson - Health Hub	85
<hr/>	
17.2. Motion proposed by Councillor Clark - Lidlington Rail Bypass	87
<hr/>	
17.3. Motion proposed by Councillor Clark - Open Questions	89
<hr/>	
17.4. Motion proposed by Councillor Leaman - ICB	91
<hr/>	
17.5. Motion proposed by Councillor Jamieson - Highways Works	93
<hr/>	

Notes for Participants

Notes for participants

Please do not attend this meeting in person if you have tested positive for COVID-19 within the previous 5 days or if you feel generally unwell or have symptoms of a respiratory infection. Similarly, please do not attend if you have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Speaking at meetings

A member of the public who wishes to speak at this meeting can register online by completing the [register to speak](#) electronic form.

Please note this meeting is a hybrid meeting, if you wish to attend and speak at the meeting remotely you must register online at least two clear working days before the meeting and notify us if that you would like to speak via Teams.

Webcasts

This meeting will be filmed by the Council for live and/or subsequent broadcast online and can be viewed via the [Councils webcast library](#).

Any footage will be on the Council's website, a copy of it will also be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy. By joining the meeting, you are deemed to have consented to being filmed by the Council.

Hard copies of agendas

Hard copies of the papers for this meeting are not routinely made available to those in attendance. Should you require a copy of please download this from the Council website beforehand.

For any further information on this meeting contact:
committeemeetings@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes

To note that the minutes from the Full Council meeting on 23 November 2023 and the reconvened meeting on 17 January 2024.

At a meeting of **Full Council** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands on **Thursday 23 November 2023** at 6.30 p.m. and was reconvened on **Wednesday 17 January 2024** at 6.30 p.m. and closed at 10.34 p.m.

Present: G Mackey (Chair) 23rd & 17th
 S Bell (Vice-Chair) 23rd & 17th

Members:	Cllrs	I Adams	23 rd & 17 th	Cllrs	P How	17 th
		C Alderman	23 rd & 17 th		J Jamieson	23 rd & 17 th
		N Andrews	23 rd		C Leaman	23 rd & 17 th
		J Baker	23 rd & 17 th		M Liddiard	17 th
		D Bligh	23 rd & 17 th		V Malone	23 rd
		S Bongo	23 rd & 17 th		T McMahon	23 rd & 17 th
		M Brennan	23 rd		R Morris	23 rd
		A Brown	23 rd & 17 th		M Neall	23 rd & 17 th
		N Carnell	23 rd & 17 th		S Owen	23 rd & 17 th
		L Childs	23 rd & 17 th		R Pashby	23 rd & 17 th
		J Chillery	23 rd & 17 th		K Pughe	23 rd & 17 th
		S Clark	23 rd & 17 th		D Richardson	23 rd
		S Clinch	23 rd & 17 th		S Roberts	23 rd & 17 th
		K Collins	23 rd & 17 th		D Shelvey	23 rd & 17 th
		P Crawley	23 rd & 17 th		M Smith	23 rd & 17 th
		P Daniels	23 rd & 17 th		P Spicer	17 th
		G Fage	23 rd & 17 th		B Stephenson	23 rd & 17 th
		Y Farrell	23 rd & 17 th		G Summerfield	23 rd & 17 th
		S Ford	23 rd & 17 th		H Townsend	23 rd & 17 th
		A French	23 rd & 17 th		G Tranter	23 rd
		E Ghent	17 th		M Versallion	23 rd & 17 th
		R Goodchild	23 rd & 17 th		M Walsh	23 rd & 17 th
		S Goodchild	23 rd & 17 th		S Watkins	17 th
		J Gurney	23 rd & 17 th		R Wenham	23 rd
		K Gurney	23 rd & 17 th		H Whitaker	23 rd & 17 th
		P Hamill	23 rd & 17 th		H Wightwick	17 th
		R Hares	23 rd & 17 th		K Woodfine	23 rd
		V Harvey	23 rd & 17 th		T Wye	23 rd & 17 th
		C Hegley	23 rd & 17 th		N Young	23 rd & 17 th
		E Holland-Lindsay	23 rd & 17 th		A Zerny	23 rd & 17 th

Apologies:	E Ghent	23 rd	N Andrews	17 th
	P How	23 rd	V Malone	17 th
	M Liddiard	23 rd	R Morris	17 th
	P Spicer	23 rd	D Richardson	17 th
	S Watkins	23 rd	G Tranter	17 th
	H Wightwick	23 rd	R Wenham	17 th
			K Woodfine	17 th

Virtual: M Brennan 17th

Absent: G Purser 23rd & 17th

Officers in Attendance:	Ms L Carver	Director of Place and Communities	23 rd & 17 th
	Mr M Coiffait	Chief Executive	23 rd
	Ms R Davies	Interim Monitoring Officer	17 th
	Mr P Fraser	Assistant Director Education	17 th
	Ms V Head	Director of Public Health	17 th
	Mrs S Hobbs	Committee Services Manager	23 rd & 17 th
	Mr C Martin	Senior Committee Services Officer	17 th
	Mr S Mitchelmore	Assistant Director Adult Social Care	17 th
	Ms SJ Pizzie	Capital Programme Director	23 rd
	Ms M Presland	Committee Services Officer	23 rd
	Mr A Sharp	Director of Social Care, Health & Housing	23 rd
	Ms C Shoheit	Assistant Director Public Health	23 rd
	Mr B Singh	Monitoring Officer	23 rd
	Ms C Smith	Committee Services Officer	23 rd
	Ms N Taylor	Deputy Monitoring Officer	17 th
	Mr C Warboys	Director of Resources	23 rd & 17 th

1. Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 28 September 2023 be approved as a correct record.

Upon being put to the vote 54 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against and 2 Members abstained from voting.

2. Members' Interests

Councillor Whitaker declared an interest as she knew the public speaker who spoke in favour of her motion on XL Bully Dogs, set out at Agenda item 17.10.

Councillor Holland-Lindsay declared an interest in Agenda item 17.6, motion proposed by Councillor Pashby on the Climate and Ecology Bill as the organisation she worked for was a signatory to the Bill and she had also undertaken some work on it within her working life.

3. Questions, Statements or Deputations

Organ Donation

Mr Tarsem, Chair of Organ Donation Committee, Bedfordshire Hospital Trust, spoke about how organ donation saved and improved the quality of lives. A severe shortage of donor organs meant that this transformation was denied to many, last year in this country over 400 people died waiting for a transplant. For this reason, the Bedfordshire Hospitals Trust was working with Central Bedfordshire Council to encourage citizens to sign up to the organ donation register and to make their loved ones aware of their decision. The shortage of donors was particularly marked in ethnic minority groups and a major push was required across all communities, but particularly to support and educate ethnic minority groups about the importance of organ donation in saving lives.

The Executive Member for Health and Community Liaison thanked the member of public for highlighting the importance of organ donation particularly for the ethnic minority groups. She explained that she would take this issue to the Health and Wellbeing Board to highlight the importance with stakeholders and look at how best to publicise awareness of organ donation.

XL Bully Dogs

Mr Watts, spoke on behalf of Ms Robinson, on the motion proposed by Councillor Whitaker on XL Bully Dogs. Ms Robinson had multiple years of experience in the canine industry and specialised in reactivity and aggression. Mr Watts highlighted the current Breed Specification Legislation where dogs had been seized under this legislation that had never caused harm or fear to anyone. The Legislation did not consider the individual dogs based on temperament, suitable environment nor education and training of the dog and dog handler. Banning breeds would drive breeding underground due to the lack of enforcement and punishment. There was a lack of owner education meaning irresponsible handling and lack of regulated professionals. He proposed that licensing of all breeders, theory education, practical training and handling for all dog owners be mandated and designed based on the breed. There should be environmental health officers specifically trained in the canine industry. Also there should be mandatory public liability insurance for all dog owners.

The Executive Member for Health and Community Liaison confirmed that the Council's Licensing Team worked hard to maintain animal welfare and investigate any unethical breeding practices. It was important that the public reported any animal welfare concerns so these could be investigated. The XL Bully Dog policy implemented by Government would have to be enforced by the Police. If the motion from Councillor Whitaker was approved, she would work with officers to lobby the Government.

4. Petitions

No petitions had been submitted.

5. Chair's Announcements and Communication

The Chair requested that Group Leaders come to an agreement about the increased number of motions and written questions being received. It was becoming difficult to debate the number of motions being received and meetings were becoming cumbersome so before Members submit their motions to really consider if it is necessary or could it be dealt with in a different way.

The Chair wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

6. Leader's Announcements and Communication

The Leader commented as follows:

- It was essential that Councillors behave with dignity, respect, and tact to each other and to members of the public and officers. There would be no tolerance over any breach of the Code of Conduct.
- The new teaching block at Swallowfield Primary School, Woburn Sands had opened which was symbolic of the Council's desire to move from 3-tier to 2-tier.
- The steel framework of the new teaching block at Sandy Secondary School had recently been installed. This would also include a Specialist Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) block.
- The steel framework was just emerging for the new Houghton Regis Community and Leisure Centre which would be a fantastic facility when completed.
- The portfolio for environmental, waste and libraries would move from the Executive Member for Highways and Waste to the Executive Member for Planning and Development. The relevant Executive Member titles would be updated to reflect this.
- There would be Member briefing session on the Local Plan.
- A working group was being set up to look at how young people could interact with the Council.
- A new Strategic Plan was being developed. Public engagement was undertaken in August and the Executive were pulling together the areas that were important to residents. The draft Strategic Plan would be submitted to Executive in January and Full Council in February for approval. He would also ensure Group Leaders had an opportunity to feed into the process.
- The Executive were currently undertaking the 2024/25 budget process to ensure that a balanced budget would be achieved when approved in February 2024. There would be a Joint Budget Overview and Scrutiny Task Force in December. The public consultation would commence also in December. The Executive was available to respond to any Member queries on the budget. It was very likely that the Council Tax would have to rise by the full amount. The Executive was committed to retaining frontline services.

7. Recommendations from the Executive

a) Local Plan Review

Full Council considered a recommendation from the Executive meeting held on 10 October 2023 sought approval of the Local Development Scheme.

Following debate, the recommendation was put to the vote.

RESOLVED

that the Local Development Scheme, Appendix A to the Executive report, be approved for undertaking the Local Plan update.

Upon being put to the vote 42 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 13 Members abstained from voting.

b) Fees and Charges – January 2024 Changes

Full Council considered a recommendation from the Executive meeting held on 10 October 2023 that recommended the revised fees and charges from January 2024 for approval.

In presenting the recommendation, the Executive Member for Finance moved the following amendment which was duly seconded:

“This council notes that:

1. In November 2020, the (then) Conservative Administration introduced a policy that set the annual increase for Fees & Charges at the September CPI rate of inflation or 2%, whichever is higher.
2. Under this Conservative policy, the Fees & Charges for parking charges (detailed in appendix D, page 11) should increase by 6.7% (forecast at the time the report was published).
3. Members have consistently expressed an interest in encouraging shoppers to visit town centres for longer periods of time.
4. The Council currently offers a one week parking ticket for £17.50, which is considerably out of sync with the £7 day and £1.50 hourly rates.
5. The most popular current parking options are the one and two hour bands.

And as such, this Council agrees to make the following changes to the parking charges set out on page 11 of appendix D (Executive Oct 2023, item 11):

1. Abolish the 50p for half hour band, to encourage shoppers to remain in town centres for longer.
2. Reduce the £1.50 for one hour rate to £1.
3. Reduce the £2 for two hour rate to £1.80.

4. Freeze the £4 for five hour rate.
5. Increase the £7 for one day rate to £8.
6. Abolish the weekly rate.

The outcome of these changes is set out in the table on the next page. The Council also notes that the Council's deputy section 151 officer has confirmed the overall impact of the above change should be cost neutral to the Council based upon the assumptions used.

Finally, the Council agrees to review all parking charges in conjunction with Town Council Partnership Committees and report back no later than July 2024, with an examination of how parking schemes can be used to promote trade within the town.

Length of stay	Current charge	Proposed as per Tory policy	Proposed as per amendment	Price per hour
Up to 1 hour	£1.5	£1.6	£1.0	£1.00
Up to 2 hours	£2.0	£2.1	£1.8	£0.90
Up to 3 hours	£2.5	£2.7	£2.5	£0.83
Up to 5 hours	£4.0	£4.2	£4.0	£0.80
All day	£7.0	£7.4	£8.0	£0.80

In summary Full Council agrees the following:

1. Changing the parking charges set out on page 11 of appendix D (Executive Oct 2023, item 11); and
2. Amending Recommendation 1 (with regards to the Recommendation from the Executive) within 8.2 of the Full Council agenda relating to the Fees & Charges changes. So that it reads;

RECOMMENDED to Full Council

1. ***That the pricing schedule and the inflationary rate be applied (of actual September 2023 CPI) for January 2024 Fees & Charges (Appendices C to K to the report), be approved as amended at Full Council on 23rd November 2023, with a further review of all parking charges in conjunction with Town Council Partnership Committees, and this be reported back to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee no later than July 2024, with an examination of how parking schemes can be used to promote trade within the town.***

Full Council was adjourned for 5 minutes to allow Members to read the proposed amendment.

Following debate, the amended recommendation as follows was put to the vote:

“This Council agrees to make the following changes to the parking charges set out on page 11 of appendix D (Executive Oct 2023, item 11):

1. Abolish the 50p for half hour band, to encourage shoppers to remain in town centres for longer.
2. Reduce the £1.50 for one hour rate to £1.
3. Reduce the £2 for two hour rate to £1.80.
4. Freeze the £4 for five hour rate.
5. Increase the £7 for one day rate to £8.
6. Abolish the weekly rate.”

Upon being put to the vote 43 Members voted in favour, 1 Member was against and 11 Members abstained from voting. The amendment was **CARRIED**.

Councillor Wenham withdrew his proposed amendment.

Following debate, the substantive recommendation was put to the vote.

RESOLVED

1. **that the pricing schedule and the inflationary rate be applied (of actual September 2023 CPI) for January 2024 Fees & Charges (Appendices C to K to the report), be approved as amended above, with a further review of all parking charges in conjunction with Town Council Partnership Committees, and this be reported back to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee no later than July 2024, with an examination of how parking schemes can be used to promote trade within the town; and**
2. **that the Fees & Charges analysis (Appendices A & B to the report) be noted.**

Upon being put to the vote 45 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 10 Members abstained from voting.

8. Recommendation from the General Purposes Committee

a) Recommended Changes to the Constitution – Appeals Panel

Full Council considered recommendation from the General Purposes Committee held on 23 November 2023 that sought approval of the proposed changes to Part 2, Article 8 of the Constitution in relation to the Appeals Panel.

Following debate, the recommendations were put to the vote.

RESOLVED

1. **that the revised amendment to the Constitution, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved; and**
2. **that the increase in the number of Members on the Appeals Panel to 20, no substitutes, in accordance with Appendix B to the report, be approved.**

Upon being put to the vote 55 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 0 Members abstained from voting.

9. Treasury Management Outturn Report 2023/24

Full Council considered a report that provided a review of the Treasury Management activities for the six-month period ending 30 September 2023 in compliance with the relevant codes of practice adopted by the Council.

NOTED

the satisfactory performance on treasury management and prudential indicators for the six-month period ending 30 September 2023.

10. Outside Bodies Update – East West Main Line Partnership

Councillor Chillery, as the Council's representative on the East West Main Line Partnership provided an update.

In response to questions, the Leader explained that the Council would have an opportunity to respond to East West Rail once the consultation had been launched on the detailed route. Their business plan, when completed, would include the development along the line including where houses would be built, this would also form part of the consultation. Councillor Chillery had been appointed as the Council's representative on the Partnership as she was the best person for the job and welcomed that this was the first time an update had been provided at Full Council.

NOTED

the update on the East West Main Line Partnership.

11. Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and Service

Full Council received the latest news bulletin from the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and Councillor R Goodchild provided an update on the activities that had recently taken place.

In response to a question, Councillor R Goodchild confirmed that the Fire and Rescue Service was doing well in addressing the deficiencies set out in the His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services' report and was showing progress on every aspect.

NOTED

the update from the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

12. Strategic Policy Update

Full Council held a strategy policy debate on Health Services. The key focus of the debate was for Full Council to consider what steps Central Bedfordshire Council could take, working closely with partners to ensure its residents had access to the health services they needed, wherever they needed them and how the Council could support its residents to live healthy lives.

The suggestions arising from the debate would be taken on board by the Leader and the Executive Member for Health and Community Liaison.

13. Change of Membership on Committees

NOTED

the following change to the membership of Committees:

- **Councillor Alderman had replaced Councillor Wightwick on the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- **Councillor Young and Councillor Stephenson had swapped roles on the Development Management Committee, making Councillor Young the member and Councillor Stephenson the substitute on the committee.**

14. Written Questions

- 1) Councillor Fage asked the Executive Member for Highways to confirm what new strategic measures had been adopted as a result of the strategic debate held at Full Council on 20 July 2023.

The Executive Member for Highways had worked with officers since the strategic debate to bring forward improvements where possible. He had highlighted the improvements that had been made to Fix My Street and how the Council was addressing potholes in preparation for the winter at Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Ward Members had been involved in the production of the Highways Annual Plan to ensure they had an early input. The Annual Plan needed to be data led and backed up with the knowledge and insight from ward Members to shape the priorities as resources were being used where most needed. He would continue working with officers to make improvements.

As the supplementary question did not arise from the above response the Chair disallowed it.

- 2) Councillor Holland-Lindsay asked the Executive Member for Health and Community Liaison if she would encourage the BLMK ICB to implement flexible commissioning arrangements to allow dentists to deliver community outreach and prevention services.

The Executive Member for Health and Community Liaison advised that the ICB's priority was to stabilise existing dental contracts and to improve access to dental services. Funding would be provided to dentists who were in areas where the NHS opportunity had deteriorated and the ICB would encourage practices to take part in an 18 month pilot where they provide services or out of hours services and taking a preventative approach to promote good oral health, particularly in children. She requested that the Chair of Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a working group to tackle some of the wider health problems.

There was no supplementary question.

- 3) Councillor Woodfine asked the Executive Member for Planning and Waste if the Council would work more efficiently with housing developers to expedite the adoption of newly built estates.

The Executive Member for Planning and Waste explained that the Council did not have the powers to force developers to put estate roads up for adoption at the planning stage. The Council worked with developers to ensure that the estate roads were designed to adoption standard so when they were put forward, they met the necessary design standards and took into account the Highways Act. Planning Law did not allow conditions to be put on planning permissions to require the roads to be put forward for adoption.

In response to a supplementary question, the Executive Member for Planning and Waste explained that there were some roads that were 20 years old that had not yet been adopted. Going back 20 years ago the roads might not have been built to today's standards. Once the road had been adopted by the Council, if there were any issues with the road then the Council would be responsible for maintaining it.

- 4) Councillor Brennan asked the Executive Member for Finance what the money was being spent on from the sale of Watling House.

The Executive Member for Finance explained that capital expenditure was made up of grants, borrowing and capital receipts. Once Watling House was sold the money from the sale would become a capital receipt and go into the capital programme. The capital programme had funded many things in Dunstable over the last few years and would continue to do so.

In response to a supplementary question, the Executive Member for Finance informed Members that £25m had been spent on the health hub, £12.9m on the library and leisure centre, £1m contribution to the busway and 103 affordable homes in the last five years in Dunstable. The capital receipt offset the funding that had already been borrowed to help with the above schemes.

- 5) Councillor Alderman asked the Executive Member for Finance what steps could be taken to encourage and mediate a culture of respect and tolerance within the Council and would he support the introduction of publishing a record of upheld complaints.

The Executive Member for Finance explained that the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) was looking into the Standards process after Christmas. Decisions on complaints that had already been upheld were already published on the website.

In response to a supplementary question, the Executive Member for Finance would investigate where the complaints were published on the website and would feed that information back to the CRWG.

- 6) Councillor Owen asked the Leader if non-working group Members could still attend, have access to the minutes from the CRWG, make better use of Full Council meetings and look at reverting to a committee system.

The Leader would liaise with the Chair of the CRWG, Cllr Baker. Working Groups had a small membership so that recommendations could be formed relatively quickly and passed to the parent Committee. Once a recommendation was being heard by the parent Committee, this was the opportunity for other Members to contribute. Detailed notes from the CRWG were taken which then formed the recommendations to the General Purposes Committee. The Full Council Procedure Rules were also being considered by the CRWG.

There was no supplementary question.

- 7) Councillor Gurney asked the Executive Member for Sustainability and Climate Resilience if the Council would conduct a full review of Dunstable's Air Quality Action Plan.

The Executive Member for Sustainability and Climate Resilience confirmed that the Council was concerned about the environment and there would be a full review of Dunstable's Air Quality Action Plan during the lifetime of the Council.

There was no supplementary question.

- 8) Councillor Jamieson asked the Executive Member for Highways when the work would commence on the pelican crossing in Westoning.

The Executive Member for Highways explained that highways schemes needed to be prioritised based data and resources. The pelican crossing at Westoning was part of a programme of works to upgrade outdated traffic signal technology.

Due to the change in Contractor the Highways Asset Team was currently reviewing the previous design and pricing for the work which has caused some delay. Once this review had been undertaken the programme of works would be confirmed.

In response to a supplementary question, the Executive Member for Highways reiterated that all schemes were considered on a priority data and resources basis. Members could email the Highways Enquiry inbox if they wished for an update on any scheme.

- 9) Councillor Leaman asked the Executive Member for Health and Community Liaison for an update on discussions with the ICB on health provision in Leighton Buzzard and if any services delivered as a result of the ICB's business plan would be with new funding or whether it would be delivered via a re-configuration of current services within the town.

The Executive Member for Health and Community Liaison explained that no decision had been made on the additional provision in Leighton Buzzard so was unable to confirm if additional funding was needed.

There was no supplementary question.

- 10) Councillor S Goodchild asked the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children why the Council had decided to delay the opening of Bidwell West Primary School despite months of reassurances that the school was on track to open in September 2025.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children explained that Bidwell West was an ongoing planning commitment but was being reprofiled to align with the demand for new places. Birth rates and growth rates had slowed down which meant there was less children in the area than anticipated 6-12 months ago.

The funding for 2025/26 and 2026/27 had been reprofiled and would come back at a later date. This project came under the new schools' place statutory planning function and so the future consultation on this specific project was not anticipated. However, where required, such as a new plan for Shefford and Stotfold for the transition to 2-tier, the Council would follow the Council's established 2-stage informal and formal consultation process.

In response to a supplementary question, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children confirmed that she had been liaising with Councillor S Goodchild on this issue and over the decline in the number of children. She had offered her a briefing with officers to go through the data that sits behind the decision, including the routes and the traffic issues as well.

- 11) Councillor Stephenson asked the Executive Member for Planning and Waste to explain the assessment conducted and its conclusions which justify residents having to prove that they live in Central Bedfordshire when using the tidy tips, if this will shorten the queues at the tidy tips and reduce costs.

The Executive Member for Planning and Waste explained that the admittance policy for tidy tips was part of the Household Waste Recycling Centre Policy that was approved by the Executive on 13 April 2021. The Council was having to pay for waste being dropped off by residents living in other authorities, in particular those living in Luton and Letchworth using Thorn Turn tidy tip as their tidy tips were closed midweek. Also, residents in the Aylesbury Vale area used the Leighton Buzzard tidy tip. An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed to ensure that no residents were excluded from accessing the sites due to producing evidence of living in Central Bedfordshire. There was a wide range of accepted proof of residency that could be used as well as flexibility for those who relied on others to dispose of their waste at a tidy tip. The Policy would be monitored including the waste tonnage that was being disposed of and how the system works in practice to inform any future improvements.

In response to a supplementary question, the Executive Member for Planning and Waste agreed to provide an update to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on how this was progressing.

- 12) Councillor Roberts asked the Executive Member for Sustainability and Climate Resilience to write to the bus companies for a meeting to see what could be done to ensure residents in Leighton Linlade could access health facilities.

The Executive Member for Sustainability and Climate Resilience confirmed that there were no direct bus services from Leighton Linlade to hospitals, but it was possible to get to hospitals by changing busses during the journey. This provision was not available in the north of Central Bedfordshire. She agreed to write to the bus companies as requested, in conjunction with Cllr Roberts. The Public Transport team continued to engage with local bus providers and develop service enhancements where they could.

There was no supplementary question.

Due to the time and the number of open questions and motions still to be considered the Chairman moved a motion to adjourn the meeting immediately and a new date and time be set with Group Leaders, in consultation with the Chief Executive. This was duly seconded.

Following debate the motion was put to the vote.

Upon being put to the vote 51 Members voted in favour, 2 Members were against, and 2 Members abstained from voting. The motion to adjourn the meeting was **CARRIED**.

As the Monitoring Officer was due to leave Central Bedfordshire Council at the end of the year, if the readjourned meeting did not take place before then, the Monitoring Officer took the opportunity to extend his thanks to Members and Members wished him all the best for the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

The meeting reconvened on Wednesday 17 January 2024 at 6.30 p.m.

15. Members' Interests

Councillor Whitaker declared an interest as she knew the public speaker who spoke at the meeting on 23 November 2024 in favour of her motion on XL Bully Dogs, now set out at Agenda item 4.10.

Councillor Holland-Lindsay declared an interest in Agenda item 4.6, motion proposed by Councillor Pashby on the Climate and Ecology Bill, as the organisation she worked for was a signatory to the Bill and she had also undertaken some work on it within her working life.

Councillor Harvey declared that she was a member of South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth.

Councillor Versallion declared an interest in Agenda item 4.2, motion proposed by Councillor Childs, as he farmed sheep.

Councillor Hares declared an interest in Agenda item 4.2, motion proposed by Councillor Childs, as she lived on a farm.

Councillor Watkins declared an interest in Agenda item 4.2, motion proposed by Councillor Childs, as his brother-in-law owned a butcher's.

Councillor S Goodchild declared an interest in Agenda item 4.4, her own motion, as she lived adjacent to Bedford Road.

16. Open Questions

- 1) Councillor Roberts asked the Leader for an update on the progress towards a new health facility in Leighton Buzzard.

The Leader explained that the Council were waiting for the NHS in their local form to respond to the Council regarding all future health hubs. A meeting had taken place in December 2023 and the Council was waiting a response from them following that meeting. The Council continued to push for health hubs, but the NHS was not receiving any funding from the Government to enable them to be delivered.

In response to a supplementary question, the Leader agreed to meet with Councillor Roberts outside of the meeting to discuss this issue further.

- 2) Councillor Clark asked the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children what had happened to the £25m that was contained within the budget for the Cranfield and Marston Moretaine cluster for the Schools for the Future Programme that would enable it to convert as planned rather than delaying it until 2026.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children had provided reassurances regarding the Cranfield and Marston Moretaine cluster and officers were moving towards entering into the procurement process. The process for this cluster was not being paused but slowed down and spread out over a longer period. Discussions had taken place with Bedford Borough Council as they were moving forward quicker than Central Bedfordshire Council with the conversion from 3 tier to 2 tier.

In response to a supplementary question, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children confirmed that funding was in the proposed Medium Term Financial Plan for the conversion to take place in 2025/26.

- 3) Councillor Hegley's question related to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities summit that took place on 6 December 2023 and that the Chairs of Governors had not been invited to attend.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children agreed that it would have been good to have as many people in attendance as possible but the capacity for the venue had been reached with 120 Headteachers attending. Similar events would be held throughout the year to enable as many stakeholders as possible to attend.

- 4) Councillor Shelvey asked the Leader to confirm that if the budget proposal put forward by the Independent Group in February 2023 had been approved then the current budget would have been a further £5.8m overspent.

The Leader explained that when putting forward their proposal last year they had not been aware that there were no plans behind the cross-cutting proposals being put forward at the time and this was only discovered once they had taken over the administration. The proposals that were being put forward as part of the 2024/25 budget would have detailed plans sitting behind the cross-cutting proposals.

There was no supplementary question.

- 5) Councillor Harvey asked the Executive Member for Finance for detailed financial reports on the overspend since June 2023 on educational transport and the details on freezing recruitment to vacant posts unless they were essential.

The Executive Member for Finance felt that there had been more transparency than ever before with the quarterly monitoring reports and the draft budget reports being released earlier than they used to be. The £6.1m overspend in education transport was already there when the new administration took over. Briefings for Members on education transport were taking place.

The restriction on recruitment came about as the Council was spending £1.8m of its reserves each month. The Chief Executive was reviewing all decisions to be taken on recruitment which was an operational matter.

In response to a supplementary question, the Executive Member for Finance explained that if there were any concerns about the lack of information in the briefings then this should be raised with the relevant Executive Member. The figures for the educational transport appeared in the quarter 2 monitoring report.

- 6) Councillor Brown asked the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children when the proposal for the Schools for the Future programme for Shefford and Stotfold would be considered by Full Council following the motion proposed by Councillor Jamieson and approved that any amendments to the Capital Programme would be considered by Full Council.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children explained that the draft capital budget for 2024/25 had been published and included plans for the 3-tier to 2-tier transition. This was due to be discussed at the Full Council meeting in February.

In response to a supplementary question, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children explained that Campton Lower School was an Academy and was part of a multi-academy trust who was responsible for maintaining the school. There was no data to support the need for an additional school in that area that would not result in the closure of another school and the Council wanted to keep as many schools open as possible. The Council was working with schools within the Shefford and Stotfold cluster to come up with a model that worked for the 3-tier to 2-tier transition.

- 7) Councillor Roberts asked the Leader why big announcements made by the Council came via press releases and all Member emails rather than being considered at Executive or Full Council.

The Leader felt that the new administration was being open and transparent when providing information when a decision was taken. If there was any decision announced that Councillor Roberts wanted more detail on, he was happy to discuss this further with him.

In response to a supplementary question, the Leader confirmed that he would always speak to Group Leaders when a major decision was due to be made.

- 8) Councillor S Goodchild asked the Executive Member for Highways about the installation of the proposed tiger crossing on Windsor Drive.

The Executive Member for Highways agreed to confirm the date with Councillor S Goodchild outside of the meeting.

There was no supplementary question.

As this was a continuation of the Full Council meeting on 23 November 2023 the Chairman moved a motion to suspend Council Procedure Rule 2 to allow the meeting to continue and not enter the closure process. The motion was duly seconded.

Upon being put to the vote 46 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 6 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **CARRIED**.

17. Motions

- 1) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Whitaker and was duly seconded:

“This Council gives people of any age who are care experienced special status to have their needs considered as part of any changes to Central Bedfordshire services or spending decisions. This is already required by the Equality Act 2010 for other groups who face potential discriminations because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. This would support our care experienced residents, and clearly state the Council’s commitment to fairness and opportunity for all.”

Following debate the motion was put to the vote.

Upon being put to the vote 52 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 2 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 2) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Childs and was duly seconded:

“Given this council declared the planet faces a Climate Crisis, I call on this Council to consider the Plant Based Treaty, which calls for world leaders and governments to take action to halt the global degradation of critical ecosystems caused by animal agriculture by promoting a shift to healthier, sustainable plant-based diets.

This action will help reduce farming-associated methane emissions*, reduce water usage and pollution, reduce deforestation and increase biodiversity.

Note the treaty calls for “a shift to plant-based” eating; it is not asking people to completely exclude meat, poultry, fish, eggs or dairy but to choose more plant-based way of eating. You can read the detail here: [The Plant Based Treaty | Eat Plants, Plant Trees](https://plantbasedtreaty.org)
<https://plantbasedtreaty.org>

The Plant Based Treaty has three core principles:

- 1) Relinquish – no land use change, ecosystem degradation or deforestation for ANIMAL agriculture
- 2) Redirect – an active transition away from animal-based food systems to plant-based systems
- 3) Restore – actively restoring key ecosystems, particularly restoring forests and rewilding landscapes.

The health advantages of shifting towards a plant-based diet are well known, and will ease pressure on the NHS as the population can benefit from :

1. Improved Heart Health
2. Reduced risk of Cancer
3. Reduced risk of diabetes

Shifting to a more plant-based diet would put food systems at the heart of combating the climate crisis and would actively reverse damage done to planetary functions, ecosystem services and biodiversity. Even if we ended the use of fossil fuels today, emissions from the food system alone would send global temperature rises above 1.5C, the target of the Paris Agreement so please consider carefully.

* Methane is short-lived gas but traps far more heat than carbon dioxide.

Therefore I am asking that:

1. Central Bedfordshire Council explores further ways of promoting a shift to plant-based diets as part of its Sustainability Plan refresh.

This could include ideas such as:

- a. Having one day each week eg. Meat Free Monday in the Council Canteen and other Establishments during which people are encouraged to choose a Plant Based Meal,
- b. Reaching out to schools to consider a day each week where plant-based menus are promoted (eg Meat Free Monday) given the success of our Eco Schools shows Young People care about the impacts of climate change and may consider having one day a week meat free, and

- c. Work with members and officers to identify other opportunities to promote the benefits of plant-based eating.”

During debate a request was made for a recorded vote under Council Procedure Rule 22.5.1 and was supported by more than 10 Members.

Following debate the motion was put to a recorded vote:

Councillors Bell, Bligh, Bongo, Carnell, Childs, Chillery, Clinch, Farrell, Ford, French, R Goodchild, S Goodchild, J Gurney, Hares, Harvey, Holland-Lindsay, Leaman, McMahon, Neall, Owen, Pashby, Pughe, Roberts, Smith, Summerfield, Townsend, Walsh, Whitaker, Wightwick, Wye and Zerny voted for the motion.

Councillors Adams, Brown, Clark, Collins, Crawley, Daniels, Fage, Ghent, Hegley, Jamieson, Liddiard, Mackey, Shelvey, Spicer, Stephenson and Young voted against the motion.

Councillors Alderman, Baker, K Gurney, Hamill, How, Versallion and Watkins abstained from voting.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 3) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Roberts and was duly seconded:

“This Council notes:

- Bedford Borough Hospital’s Organ Donation Committee has raised concerns about health inequalities faced by ethnic minority patients who wait an exceptionally long time for suitable matches. Other local hospitals have also raised previous concerns.
- The Hospital’s Organ Donation Committee is asking for local Councils to support their work in helping to encourage awareness and education of organ donation so important conversations can be had about these decisions – especially among ethnic minority groups.

The Council Resolves:

- Recognise the life changing/saving potential of Organ Donation and support the work of our local hospitals Organ Donation committees.
- That the Council calls upon all Members, officers and the Executive to help, where possible and appropriate, the Organ Donation Committees work and assist with raising awareness and distribution of education material – particularly among ethnic minorities communities.

· The Council also recognises that ethnic minorities also face similar issues with regard to blood donors. The Council also calls upon all members, officers and the Executive to help assist where possible, raising awareness of blood donation among ethnic minority groups.”

During debate a request was made to put the motion to the vote under Council Procedure Rule 19.1.10. which was duly seconded.

Upon being put to the vote 50 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 4 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **CARRIED**.

Upon putting the motion to the vote, the decision was unanimous. The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 4) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor S Goodchild and was duly seconded:

“That this Council notes the many concerns of residents and stakeholders about the safety of the Bedford Road, Houghton Regis.

Further notes that this has been raised on numerous occasions by Councillors, residents and by the local MP with Central Bedfordshire Council.

Expresses concern that the road is used by many pedestrians including children and families.

Calls on the Executive Member for Highways and Waste and the Director of Place and Communities to convene an urgent meeting with both councillors representing Houghton Regis West and East wards and local stakeholders including the Houghton Regis Town Council.

Further calls on the Council to develop a clear action plan and timeline for improving the safety of the Bedford Road.”

Following the debate the motion was put to the vote.

Upon being put to the vote 51 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 2 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 5) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Owen and was duly seconded:

“That this Council

in the light of

1. The demand from thousands of Leighton Buzzard and Linslade residents in the 2023 Survey carried out by the surgery PPGs for a Health Hub or Urgent Treatment Centre (“UTC”) located in the centre of the town,

- delivering decentralised hospital services, and for a fourth GP surgery located amidst the new eastern Leighton Buzzard housing developments (in the absence of these facilities Leighton-Linslade residents are spending £1 million per annum travelling to surrounding hospitals, and the three existing GP surgeries are under immense daily pressure adversely impacting their services to patients).
2. The recent public petition to CBC from Biggleswade residents also calling for a Health Hub or UTC also to deliver decentralised hospital services.
 3. The absence of a Financial Plan, over a period of 6 years, to underpin this Council's Integrated Healthcare Hub ("IHH") programme.
 4. The failure of this Council's Health & Wellbeing Board to either review its IHH programme which is moribund or to progress that programme.
 5. The refusal of the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board ("ICB") to participate in, plan, fund or deliver either the IHH programme (in which it is supposedly a partner) or to engage with the calls for action from the tens of thousands of Leighton-Linslade residents who have packed-out two public meetings, responded thunderously to a huge public Survey, and are contributing hundreds of millions of pounds in taxes annually to the ICB budget and receiving no accountability (the ICB is instead pursuing a minimal-cost limited-services eastern Leighton Buzzard health facility totally dependent on first selling some limited- space land and with no proffered implementation date).
 6. The failure of the local MP Andrew Selous or the Minister for Health Neil O'Brien MP to persuade or influence BLMK to meet residents demands despite repeated calls to do so from the Leighton-Linslade surgery PPGs and Leighton-Linslade Town Council (e.g. PPGs' online meeting with the Minister 19.7.2023).
 7. The failure of NHS England and ICB to respond to the Minister's request that they review flexibility between their capital and revenue budgets to resource the improvements that the town's residents and Town Council are asking for.
 8. An online Survey of nearly 1,000 respondents in Leighton Buzzard run by this Motion's author showing a 9:1 majority (with a +/- 4% confidence limit) calling for CBC to defer spending on the proposed new Eggington Leisure Centre in favour of spending on a Health Hub/Urgent Treatment Centre in Leighton Buzzard as a higher priority. The town already has Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre, which whilst not being readily accessible for all residents and in need of refresh spending will suffice whilst the priority need for a Health Hub is met.
 9. A lack of action to date at the CBC Executive in response to what is the top service priority of Leighton-Linslade residents, along with this Motion's author not being allowed to raise these matters at the most recent Executive meeting.
 10. The need for action to identify suitable centrally-placed space in Leighton Buzzard to accommodate additional Primary Care Network ("PCN") staff [note: this is a secondary issue to that of the Health Hub/Urgent Treatment Centre and 4th Surgery].
 11. The action taken by the Bedford Borough Council Executive ("BBC") at its meeting on 18 October (Minute 32) to commit substantial finances to facilitate the development of the Health estate in their Borough area (i.e. for

new Health Hubs and new GP surgeries) precisely because, to quote their Report, “leaving the delivery of new and improved health care estate to the ICB has not led to delivery at the pace that is required to meet the needs of Bedford Borough residents.

-
- a) Supports the Leighton-Linslade residents, patients and PPGs in their fight for a centrally-located Health Hub/UTC and 4th GP surgery, and other CBC wards who are also pressing for improved local health facilities.
 - b) Requests the Leader to
 1. Press BLMK ICB to revise their plans in order to provide a centrally-located Health Hub/UTC and 4th GP surgery in Leighton-Linslade.
 2. Ask the Minister of Health to renew his pressure on NHS England to use flexibility between their revenue and capital budgets to plan for the early provision of a Health Hub/UTC and 4th GP surgery Leighton Buzzard and similar health facilities in Biggleswade.
 3. Commission an officer report to the Executive that uses the BBC Executive Health paper (18.10.2023) as an example starting-point for a wide-ranging strategic review of Health service provision in the CBC area looking particularly at the Health estate issues that are the focus of the BBC Executive discussion and decision.
 4. Defer the planned spending on a new Eggington Leisure Centre in favour of early financial provision for a new Health Hub/UTC in Leighton-Linslade and, if possible, Biggleswade, Houghton Regis and Flitwick.
 5. Engage with the CBC Health & Wellbeing Board to review its IHH programme, and create an accompanying financial plan, and in so doing specifically encourage input from affected Ward members and Ward surgery PPGs (since the current H&WBB is so officer-heavy) possibly at a special meeting or Workshop.
 6. Participate in an urgent tripartite meeting between this Council, Leighton-Linslade Town Council and the Leighton-Linslade PCN Director to discuss the possibility of identifying Leighton Buzzard High Street “pop-up” additional premises for PCN staff to operate in and how those temporary premises might be funded.”

As the motion fell within the remit of the Executive due to the financial implications, the motion would be referred to the Executive, as set out in Section 18.6.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, to allow a report to be submitted to the Executive setting out the implications and appropriate risks associated with the proposal in the motion.

A motion was proposed that under Council Procedure Rule 18.6.3 that the above motion be debated prior to it being referred to the Executive, this was duly seconded.

Upon being put to the vote 13 Members voted in favour, 28 Members were against, and 10 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **LOST**.

Councillor Owen's motion was referred to the Executive without debate. It was noted that Councillor Leaman had submitted an amendment. The Chairman asked the Executive to take this amendment on board when considering it.

- 6) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Pashby and was duly seconded:

"The Climate and Ecology Bill (a private members Bill) has been introduced in the UK Parliament on four occasions since 2020, including most recently in the House of Commons 10 May 2023. The Bill is backed by **[180]** cross-party MPs and Peers, **[237]** local authorities, alongside the support of eminent scientists, and Wildlife Trusts.

The Climate and Ecology Bill would require the UK Government to develop and achieve a new environmental strategy, which would include:

1. Delivering a joined-up environmental plan, as the crises in climate and nature are deeply intertwined, and require a plan that considers both together;
2. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with 1.5°C to ensure emissions are reduced in line with the best chance of meeting the UK's Paris Agreement obligations;
3. Not only halting, but also reversing the decline in nature, setting nature measurably on the path to recovery by 2030;
4. Taking responsibility for our overseas footprint, both emissions and ecological;
5. Prioritising nature in decision-making, and ending fossil fuel production and imports as rapidly as possible;
6. Providing for re-training for those people currently working in fossil fuel industries; and
7. Giving the British people a say in finding a fair way forward via a temporary, independent and representative *Climate & Nature Assembly*, as part of creating consensus and ensuring that no one and no community is left behind.

Every additional council adding its support makes a difference.

I therefore propose that Central Bedfordshire Council resolves to:

1. Support the Climate and Ecology Bill;
2. Inform local residents and inform local press/media of this decision;

3. That the Leader of the Council writes to **each of the Bedfordshire MPs** to inform them (on the assumption that) this motion has been passed, and urge them to sign up to support the CE Bill.”

Following the debate the motion was put to the vote.

Upon being put to the vote 35 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 16 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 7) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Alderman and was duly seconded:

“With an aim to empower Young People (YP) to have a voice at Full Council, see their concerns and ideas taken seriously, enhance their political autonomy and improve their trust in the political process, this council will set up a working group to investigate ways to achieve the above aims, and to explore the following points:

- a. Facilitate quarterly meetings for YP within the Youth Bank to meet and discuss issues and concerns important to them, with one such meeting occurring during Parliament week.
- b. Create the role of Youth Champion(s) to attend these quarterly meetings, hear and discuss YP's concerns and ideas, feeding this information to Full Council through an appropriate mechanism.
- c. Allow and support YP to put forward questions, topics for debate or motions.
- d. Ensure YP are provided with a written response to any questions, debates and motions put forward to Full Council including YP accessible action points on how the council will tackle this.
- e. Embed this within the constitution.”

Following the debate the motion was put to the vote.

Upon being put to the vote 41 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 10 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 8) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Leaman and was duly seconded:

“That this Council notes the hard work of Bedfordshire’s police officers, PCSOs and auxiliary staff in trying to keep our local communities safe.

Further notes that despite their best efforts, according to Home Office statistics, over 4,000 burglaries went unsolved between July 2021 and June 2023 in Bedfordshire with a 10% increase in car thefts in the year to June.

Believes that many more crimes could be prevented in Central Bedfordshire with an increased community policing presence and believes that many of our towns and villages have seen a drop in police visibility and presence in their local communities over recent years.

Notes that according to a Freedom of Information request, the Office of the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, including staff running costs, came to £1,210,233 an increase of 13% on the previous financial year.

Further notes that since 2015, 67 Police Community Support Officers have been removed from Bedfordshire's streets.

Believes that the cost of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner could be better spent on providing frontline police services - the equivalent of 52 new Police Community Support Officers.

Further believes that regardless of the incumbents political allegiances it is clear that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is not a necessary role and calls on the Leader of the Council to write to the Home Secretary expressing this Council's view that the role should be abolished with the financial savings reinvested into frontline policing that would benefit Central Bedfordshire."

During debate a request was made for a recorded vote under Council Procedure Rule 22.5.1 and was supported by more than 10 Members.

A motion was moved and seconded, under 19.1.4 of the Council's Procedure Rules to refer the motion to the Police and Crime Advisory Panel.

Upon being put to the vote 17 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 34 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **LOST**.

Following debate the motion was put to a recorded vote:

Councillors Baker, Bell, Bligh, Bongo, Carnell, Childs, Chillery, Ford, French, R Goodchild, S Goodchild, J Gurney, Hamill, Hares, Holland-Lindsay, How, Leaman, McMahon, Owen, Pughe, Roberts, Smith, Summerfield, Townsend, Walsh, Watkins, Whitaker, Wightwick, Wye and Zerny voted for the motion.

Councillors Brown, Clark, Collins, Crawley, Daniels, Fage, Ghent, Hegley, Liddiard, Shelvey, Spicer, Stephenson, Versallion and Young voted against the motion.

Councillors Alderman, Clinch, Farrell, K Gurney, Harvey, Mackey, Neall and Pashby abstained from voting.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

The meeting adjourned for a five minute comfort break.

- 9) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Pashby and was duly seconded:

“The A1 dual carriageway passes from Georgetown at the north of Sandy, through Girtford, both of which have been absorbed into Sandy, and then through the village of Beeston, which is dissected by the A1 to the south. The distance between Georgetown and Beeston is 2 miles.

Between Girtford and Beeston is “Sandy” roundabout. This intersects with the A603/Bedford Road, leading to Sandy Town Centre to the east, and Bedford to the west.

Many residents have properties that immediately front onto the A1, and others are less than 50metres away. These residents suffer from pollution, noise and vibrations caused by the traffic at all the times of the day, but particularly between 6am and 7pm.

At Sandy roundabout there are frequent queues of traffic especially southbound at rush hour. Apart from the pollution this causes, vehicles jump the queue on London Road or “rat run” through Sandy, adding to high volumes of traffic and pollution in residential streets and Sandy Town Centre. This is being exaggerated by modern GPS/SatNav Systems which automatically divert traffic around delays.

When traffic is flowing on the A1, the speed that it travels (limit of 50mph), and acceleration from the roundabout adds to the pollution, noise and vibration. The speed limit is only partially controlled by fixed speed cameras and these also result in deceleration and acceleration.

The “Sandy A1 Problem” is not new. Indeed, previous governments have talked about a bypass; questions have been raised about this junction in the Houses of Commons by the Right Honourable Gentlemen, Alistair Burt and Richard Fuller MPs; National Highways have spent years in procrastination.

Indeed, the Leader of the Council and MP Richard Fuller, recently wrote to the Secretary of State for Transport regarding removal of A1 roundabouts at Sandy and Biggleswade. However, this is long term.

In 2027 the Black Cat / A421 improvements will bring further traffic down the A1 through Sandy. Therefore, a medium-term solution needs to be found. This must be acceptable to the majority of residents that live in proximity to the A1 and should include to reduction of the speed limit; use of average speed cameras in both directions, north and south of Sandy; and changes to discourage egress of through traffic into Sandy on residential roads.

I propose that the Leader of the Council writes a further letter to the Secretary of State for Transport to pressurise National Highways to prioritise a solution for the “Sandy A1 Problem”, include funding for this in RIS3 if it is not available now, and complete this before the Black Cat/A421 improvements open in 2027.”

During debate a request was made to put the motion to the vote under Council Procedure Rule 19.1.10. which was duly seconded.

Upon being put to the vote 47 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 2 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **CARRIED**.

Upon the motion being put to the vote 47 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 2 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 10) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Whitaker and was duly seconded:

“With many Central Bedfordshire residents owning dogs there is an increasing concern about the banning of specific breeds that have been deemed dangerous. Central Bedfordshire-based trainers are equally concerned that any dog can be dangerous without the appropriate training and care and any ban would fail to address the underlying issue. This Council agrees to write to the Government asking that the ban on XL Bully dogs be reconsidered and replaced with better regulation of breeders and mandatory training for all dog owners to promote safer dog ownership and improved animal welfare.”

Following the debate the motion was put to the vote.

Upon being put to the vote 11 Members voted in favour, 20 Members were against, and 16 Members abstained from voting. The motion was **LOST**.

- 11) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Chillery and was duly seconded:

“Many areas of Central Bedfordshire have experienced significant housebuilding and with development of new roads in recent years. In a number of cases, developers have handed over the maintenance of these developments to management companies without, it would appear, making any effort to have them adopted by Central Bedfordshire Council. Residents are left at the mercy of such companies and are in a position where they pay Council Tax to CBC even though the council’s Highways department cannot support the roads around their homes.

This council asks the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, asking them to bring the main roads on their estates to be brought to an adoptable standard and make it a legal requirement for developers to pay for their new roads to be adopted by the relevant local authorities and make it a legal requirement for developers to pay for their new roads to be adopted by the relevant local authorities.”

Councillor Chillery moved an alteration to her motion, which was duly seconded.

“Many areas of Central Bedfordshire have experienced significant housebuilding and the development of new roads in recent years. In a number of cases, developers have handed over the maintenance of these roads to management companies without, it would appear, making any effort to have them adopted by Central Bedfordshire Council. Residents are left at the mercy of such companies and are in a position where they pay Council Tax to CBC even though the council’s Highways department cannot support the roads their homes are in.

This council asks the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, to require developers do the following:

- To bring the main roads on their estates to an adoptable standard *at the point of delivery*.
- Make it a legal requirement for developers to pay for new roads to be adopted by the relevant local authorities.”

Upon being put to the vote to accept the alteration 43 Members voted in favour, 0 Members were against, and 5 Members abstained from voting. The alteration was **ACCEPTED**.

Following the debate the motion was put to the vote.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 12) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor Stephenson and was duly seconded:

“Consulting Ward Members and Regular Reporting on the Highways Annual Plan

Central Bedfordshire Council releases a Highways Annual Plan (‘the Plan’) summarising the work to be completed in our towns and villages during the forthcoming year. These include road surfacing enhancements, pavement maintenance, drainage schemes, street lighting upgrades, rights of way, bridge works, and the like.

Ensuring our highways are properly maintained is an important priority for our residents and it is important that Ward Members are properly consulted to inform the Council about what our communities consider to be important in each of our wards. The Plan should respond to the needs of our local communities, but also be realistic, achievable, and delivered.

In answer to a question at the Sustainable Communities OSC, about whether the scheduled highways discussions with Ward Members during November are opportunities for Ward Members to influence highways priorities, the Executive Member for Highways said that *“this Council is going to be very much data driven”* and not driven by *“who shouts the loudest”*.

Central Bedfordshire Council agrees with these statements but is concerned that a data driven approach should not be a substitute for genuine consultation with Ward Members. It is disappointing that the Executive Member could not confirm that Ward Members would be properly consulted in the development of the Plan each year.

Ward Members have a unique and useful insight into the state of the highways in their wards, they know what projects residents would most like to see progressed and why, and they are on the front line engaging with residents about what is and isn't being done. A pure "data driven" approach at the expense of good consultation limits opportunities for collaboration and to influence good outcomes for all our communities.

Considering this, Central Bedfordshire Council resolves - as a way of supporting focus on what is important throughout our towns and villages - to impose the following duties on the Executive Portfolio Holder for Highways:

1. In developing the Plan each year, to consult directly with each Ward Member and have due regard to their local knowledge and understanding before projects in their wards are scheduled in the Plan;
2. To provide a written update to all Ward Members each quarter detailing the progress made against the Plan for their ward. Where projects are behind their delivery timetable outlined in the Plan, the update should explain why."

Following the debate the motion was put to the vote.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 13) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor R Goodchild and was duly seconded:

"That this Council reaffirms its commitment made to Leighton-Linslade Town Council during the pandemic in 2020 to actively assist with the identification and procurement by the Town Council of new cemetery land including the use of compulsory purchase if necessary."

As the motion fell within the remit of the Executive due to the financial implications, the motion would be referred to the Executive, as set out in Section 18.6.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, to allow a report to be submitted to the Executive setting out the implications and appropriate risks associated with the proposal in the motion.

- 14) A notice of motion had been received from Councillor S Goodchild and was duly seconded:

“That this Council notes the disappointment of thousands of Bidwell West residents in the administration's decision to postpone the delivery of Bidwell West Primary School.

Believes that the school is vital for providing much needed school places and early years provision for families in Bidwell West.

Further notes that the school is fully funded through Section 106 monies, so delaying delivery does not impact upon the Council's Capital Budget.

Requests that the Executive Member and Director of Children's Services publishes the full rationale for the decision including all relevant school places data sets, predictions and models, alongside the previous data and rationale that led the Council to agree to its original decision to deliver the school for September 2025.

Is disappointed that Ward Members were not given an opportunity to have a briefing from either the Executive Member or Senior Officers before the decision was communicated to all Members.

Expresses further concern that this is yet another letdown for Bidwell West residents who moved to Central Bedfordshire with the promise of a number of community facilities including the school that have yet to be delivered.

Calls on Senior Officers from Assets, Highways, Children's Services, Planning and Legal teams to meet with Ward Members and representatives from the Bidwell West Consortium in order to take a holistic view at issues affecting the local community including delays to community infrastructure and facilities and the safety of the Bedford Road.

Further calls that at such a meeting a clear set of actions and indicative timelines are agreed and given to relevant ward members and Executive Members.”

As the motion fell within the remit of the Executive due to the financial implications, the motion would be referred to the Executive, as set out in Section 18.6.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, to allow a report to be submitted to the Executive setting out the implications and appropriate risks associated with the proposal in the motion.

Councillor S Goodchild moved an alteration to her motion, which was duly seconded.

“Requests that the Executive Member and Director of Children's Services publishes the full rationale for the decision including all relevant school places data sets, predictions and models, alongside the previous data and rationale that led the Council to agree to its original decision to deliver the school for September 2025.

Is disappointed that Ward Members were not given an opportunity to have a briefing from either the Executive Member or Senior Officers before the decision was communicated to all Members.

Expresses further concern that this is yet another let down for Bidwell West residents who moved to Central Bedfordshire with the promise of a number of community facilities including the school that have yet to be delivered.

Calls on Senior Officers from Assets, Highways, Children's Services, Planning and Legal teams to meet with Ward Members and representatives from the Bidwell West Consortium in order to take a holistic view at issues affecting the local community including delays to community infrastructure and facilities and the safety of the Bedford Road.

Further calls that at such a meeting a clear set of actions and indicative timelines are agreed and given to relevant ward members and Executive Members.”

Upon being put to the vote to accept the alteration Members voted in favour. The alteration was **ACCEPTED**.

As the motion fell within the remit of the Executive due to the financial implications, the motion would be referred to the Executive, as set out in Section 18.6.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, to allow a report to be submitted to the Executive setting out the implications and appropriate risks associated with the proposal in the motion.

A motion was proposed that under Council Procedure Rule 18.6.3 that the above motion be debated prior to it being referred to the Executive, this was duly seconded.

Upon being put to the vote to debate the motion, Members voted in favour. The motion was **CARRIED**.

Following the debate, Councillor S Goodchild's motion was referred to the Executive. The Executive would take on board the comments raised during the debate.

Chairman

Dated

3. Members' Interests

To receive from Members any declarations of interest.

4. Questions, Statements or Deputations

To receive any questions, statements or deputations from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Part 4G of the Constitution.

5. Petitions

To receive petitions from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Part 4G of the Constitution.

- Request to build and deliver the Wixams GP Practice and Health Centre by December 2024 (2,015 signatures - only 177 of these signatures indicated that they lived in Central Bedfordshire, the majority of the signatories lived in Bedford)

6. Chair's Announcements and Communications

To receive any announcements from the Chair and any matters of communication.

7. Leader's Announcements and Communications

To receive any announcements from the Leader of the Council and any matters of communication.

8. Recommendations from the Executive

To consider the recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 9 January 2024 and answer questions asked under Rule No. 14.1

8.1. Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Full Council – 25 January 2024
Recommendation to Full Council from the Executive meeting
held on 9 January 2024

1. Local Council Tax Support Scheme

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Finance that sought a recommendation to Full Council to approve the Local Council Tax Support Scheme

In response to questions and comments raised, the Executive Member for Finance stated that:

- It was the responsibility of all Councillors, Officers and customer service staff to ensure residents received the necessary support with their Council Tax bills.

Reason for decision: So that Full Council could endorse the Central Bedfordshire Council Local Council Tax Support scheme.

RECOMMENDED to Full Council

- 1. That the current scheme be extended for a further year (2024/25), as set out in paragraph 32 of the report, be adopted.***

A copy of the public report can be viewed via the [Executive Agenda](#).

9. Recommendation from the General Purposes Committee

To consider the recommendation from the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 14 December 2023 and answer questions asked under Rule No. 14.1

9.1. Pay Policy Statement

Central Bedfordshire Council

25 January 2024

Full Council

Pay Policy Statement

Report of:

Cllr Steve Watkins, Chair of General Purposes Committee

Purpose of this report

This report proposes the Pay Policy Statement be adopted and published on the Council's website with effect from 1st April 2024 without the proposed recommendation to increase the salary grade requiring an Appointment Sub-Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

Full Council is asked to;

- 1. approve the adoption and publication of the Pay Policy Statement, as set out at Appendix A, on the Council's website with effect from 1st April 2024.**
- 2. note that the General Purposes Committee did not recommend to increase the salary grade for those posts requiring an Appointment Sub-Committee.**

Background

1. The Localism Act 2011 ('the Act') Sections 38-43 set out requirements for all Local Authorities to publish a comprehensive Pay Policy Statement which is reviewed and updated annually and under the Council's Constitution, this is a matter for the General Purposes Committee
2. Guidance on the Localism Act 2011 s40, outlines 'that Full Council, or a meeting of members should be provided an opportunity to vote before large salary packages are offered in respect of a new appointment. The Secretary of State considers that £100,000 is the right level for that threshold to be set'.
3. The figure of £100,000 outlined within the guidance referred above, does not account for indexation and notably the Bank of England calculator models £100,000 in 2011 as being £19,414.01 greater (£119,414.01) as at 2021. The General Purposes Committee deemed this an unnecessary change.
4. Appendix A was presented to the General Purposes Committee at their meeting on 14 December 2023 at which the Committee agreed to recommend it to Full Council without the proposed amendment to increase the salary grade requiring an Appointment Sub-Committee as it was in the public interest that it remains at £100,000. Appendix A does not contain the proposed amendment that was proposed.

Council Priorities

5. This report and the proposed Pay Policy Statement in Appendix A meet the statutory requirements of the Localism Act and in turn ensures that the Council continues to meet one of its overriding principles of Fairness. Our reporting under the Localism Act also helps to support the Council's priorities of "making the best use of resources, working efficiently and having the most positive impact on our residents' lives".

Legal Implications

6. The Localism Act 2011 ('the Act') Sections 38-43 set out requirements for all Local Authorities to publish a comprehensive Pay Policy Statement which is reviewed and updated annually.
7. The statement must be prepared and approved by 31st March. A pay policy statement must set out a local authority's policies for each financial year in relation to the remuneration of its chief officers, its lowest-paid employees, and the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.
8. Section 38(3) specifies that the statement must include a definition of "lowest-paid employees" adopted by the authority for the purposes of the statement and the reasons for adopting that definition. Section 38(4) provides that the authority's policies must include (amongst other things), the remuneration of each chief officer on recruitment and the publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of chief officers.
9. Section 39(4) provides for a local authority to amend its pay policy statement (by resolution) "...including after the beginning of the financial year to which it relates".
10. Section 40(1) states that a local authority ("a relevant authority") must, in performing its functions under section 38 or section 39, have regard to guidance issued or approved by the Secretary of State.
11. In addition to the legislative framework, guidance titled "Openness and accountability in local pay" (2012) was issued under section 40 of the Localism Act 2011. The Local Government Transparency Code 2015 requires (amongst other things) the publication of the pay multiple between the highest earning and the median earnings of the whole of the workforce.
12. In determining the pay and remuneration of its employees, the Council must comply with all relevant employment legislation, including equal pay under the Equality Act 2010, Part-time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000.
13. The Pay Policy Statement must be prepared and approved by 31 March each year by Full Council.

Financial and Risk Implications

14. There are no financial implications arising from this report or the attached Pay Policy Statement.

Equalities and Fairness Implications

15. Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Pay Policy applies to employees regardless of protected characteristic as appropriate to their level in the organisation and the relevant terms and conditions of their employment.

Sustainability Implications

16. There are no direct implications from this report or the attached Pay Policy Statement.
17. The definition of sustainability that underpins the council's Sustainability Plan is based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. As well as focusing on issues such as the climate emergency and ecological crisis, it also covers other aspects including decent work and economic growth. The council is a major employer and therefore its pay policy contributes to these.

Conclusion and next Steps

18. Members are requested to consider and approve the Pay Policy Statement recommended by the General Purposes Committee.

Appendices

Appendix A: Pay Policy Statement

Background Papers

[General Purposes Committee Agenda- 14 December 2023](#)

Report author:

Jonathon Partridge, Assistant Director of Governance Services
(jonathon.partridge@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Pay policy statement 2024/2025

A great place to live and work.

Pay policy statement

2024/2025

1. Introduction and scope

This Pay Policy Statement is produced in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and sets out Central Bedfordshire Council's position in relation to pay for its senior managers and lowest paid employees to demonstrate openness, accountability and value for money.

For Central Bedfordshire Council, 'senior managers' applies to the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service, Directors, the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Assistant Directors, Heads of Service and those managers paid at grades between CBG15-CBG20.

This policy applies to those employed on Central Bedfordshire Council's terms and conditions of employment. It excludes those staff who are employed in Local Authority Schools.

Central Bedfordshire Council also employs a small number of employees on other nationally determined terms and conditions, including School Teachers, Soulbury, and TUPE staff groups. For TUPE'd employees the Council applies their inherited terms and conditions.

The Council ensures that its lowest paid staff receive at least National Living Wage.

This Pay Policy Statement reflects the existing pay arrangements that cover the year up to 31 March 2024.

2. Remuneration of Chief Officers

When determining the pay and remuneration of the below employees, Central Bedfordshire Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes the Equality Act 2010, Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations.

Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service

The Chief Executive Terms and Conditions are in line with the JNC Conditions of Service for Chief Executives and Chief Officers.

The starting salary paid to the Chief Executive is determined by the Council's Appointments Sub-Committee, taking into consideration guidance from the JNC National Framework and market forces. This is currently paid as a spot salary.

The decision to award any salary increase to the Chief Executive is made by the Leader of the Council.

The Chief Executive is the Council's Head of Paid Service. The Head of Paid Service is additionally the Council's Returning Officer. The responsibility of this role is one of a personal nature distinct from duties as an employee of the Council. The fee paid to the Returning Officer is determined by

legislation and the recovery of the costs of the Returning Officers' services and expenses at a UK election is met from Central Government funds and so does not constitute a cost to the Council. Where local elections occur a scale of fees and charges, approved by the Council, determines the total overall amount the Returning Officer may expend in connection with an election. The fees paid to staff who undertake election duties vary according to the type of duties they undertake and are broadly in line with Central Government rates.

Directors

The Directors' Terms and Conditions are in line with the JNC Conditions of Service for Chief Executives and Chief Officers.

All Directors are paid on a spot salary. The range in which the spot salary is determined is decided by the Appointments Sub-Committee, taking into consideration guidance from the JNC National Framework and market forces.

The Chief Executive has delegated power to make amendments to Directors' salaries from time to time to provide flexibility to respond to organisational changes, and to review the allowance associated to the Deputy Chief Executive responsibilities.

The Council will apply JNC nationally agreed cost of living pay awards to the salaries of Directors.

Assistant Directors and Heads of Service

Terms and Conditions for Assistant Directors and Heads of Service are in accordance with the National Joint Council (NJC) conditions of service for Local Government Services.

Assistant Directors & Heads of Service commence employment on the bottom spinal point of the relevant pay scale for the role. Where exceptional circumstances exist, recruiting managers can use their discretion (subject to budget manager agreement) to appoint an Assistant Director or Head of Service on a higher spinal point for the grade.

Salary packages that exceed the Council's pay ranges for Assistant Directors should be determined and decided by the Appointments Sub-Committee.

The Council's pay scales for these posts are as follows:

Assistant Directors

The salary scale is determined by the grade for the post but will be within the range £71,672 to £103,954. These are across 4 separate pay bands each with 3 incremental points.

Assistant Directors on the Housing Revenue Account salary scale are within the range of £73,095 to £106,037.

Heads of Service

The salary scale is determined by the grade for the post but will be within the range of £55,449 to £71,672. These are across 2 separate pay bands each with 3 incremental points.

Heads of Service on the Housing Revenue Account salary scale are within the range of £56,541 to £73,095.

The Council will apply NJC nationally agreed cost of living pay awards to the salaries of Assistant Directors & Heads of Service.

Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer

The post of the Council's Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer is currently held by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources.

The role of Monitoring Officer is undertaken by an employee of the Council within the Directorate of Resources. The salary of the Monitoring Officer is within the range of our Heads of Service.

Deputy Chief Executive role

The Deputy Chief Executive can deputise for the Chief Executive at any meeting or function and shall assume the CEX role and functions at designated times of annual leave or other absence. The principal day-to-day role is to assume specific responsibility for financial performance across all directorates.

3. Remuneration of other employees

When determining the pay and remuneration of non-chief officer employees, Central Bedfordshire Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes the Equality Act 2010, Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations. Remuneration for each of our non-chief officer groups of staff are set out below.

National Joint Council (NJC)

Pay rates are negotiated at a national level through the NJC. The pay spine used by the Council is aligned but not directly comparable to the national pay spine.

In October 2011 the Council applied a 2% reduction to the national pay scales. To protect lowest earners, salaries at grade CBG7 and below in 2011 were exempt from this reduction. The reduction did not apply to roles funded by the Housing Revenue Account.

The National Pay Agreement for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 applied a flat rate increase of £1,925 per annum (pro rata for part-time employees) on each scale point.

All non-chief officer employees commence employment on the bottom spinal point of the relevant pay scale for the role. Where exceptional circumstances exist, recruiting managers can use their discretion (subject to budget manager agreement) to appoint a non-chief officer employee on a higher spinal point for the grade.

The Council implemented Job Families for all roles across the Council in 2019 replacing Job Descriptions with Family Profiles focusing on the outcomes and the competencies required for each role. This change did not impact on employees' salaries. The grading of Family Profiles up to and including Grade 10 are underpinned by the NJC job evaluation scheme. Roles on and above Grade 11 are underpinned by the Hay job evaluation scheme.

The Council's pay scale up to but not including Director level ranges from £20,441 to £103,954 this excludes the Housing Revenue Account pay scales which are detailed below.

Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account main pay scale for up to but not including Director level ranges from £20,441 to £106,037.

Education Professionals and Educational Psychologists

Pay rates are negotiated at a national level through the Soulbury Committee. The National Pay Agreement for the Academic year 2023-2024 is yet to be confirmed at the time of preparing this Pay Policy. The pay spine used by the Council is aligned, but not directly comparable to the national pay spine, following a 2% reduction to pay implemented in October 2011.

Centrally Employed Teachers

Pay rates are negotiated at a national level through the School Teachers Pay & Conditions Document. The National Pay Agreement for the Academic year 2023-2024 awarded a 6.5% uplift to all pay points and allowances. Within the Teachers main pay range, higher increases of up to 8.9% were awarded at the minimum scale to achieve a starting salary of £30,000 by September 2023.

Apprentices

Apprentices are paid above the statutory minimum National Apprenticeship Wage. Apprenticeships that are level 3 and above are subject to the NJC pay spine.

JNC – Youth Worker

Pay rates are negotiated at a national level through the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC). At the time of preparing this Pay Policy the last National Pay Agreement was for the period commencing 1st September 2021 which increased JNC salaries by 1.75%.

TUPE Groups

Where employees have been transferred into the Council under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) their remuneration packages reflect their protected rates of pay. In accordance with the TUPE Regulations, the receiving employer is not under any obligation to implement pay awards for these groups of staff unless expressed as part of the TUPE contract.

In order to ensure the pay review is fair and equitable the review uses the outcome of the NJC pay award as a reference when making pay award recommendations.

Attraction and Retention

The Council may pay time-limited additional payments to those roles where it has been identified that there is a difficulty to attract and retain staff. Any Market Rate Supplement plus any other regularly recurring or contractual retention payment that is paid to those specifically identified posts will be in accordance with the Council's Market Rate Supplement policy.

Hybrid Working

In 2022 the Council introduced hybrid working arrangements for the majority of its employee's dependant on the nature of the role, to modernise its approach to work, whilst recognising the increasing need for flexibility. Employees who voluntarily agreed to hybrid working, and new employee's joining the Council who accept hybrid working, receive a one-off hybrid working taxable payment of £250 towards setting up a safe and suitable workstation at home, that extends beyond equipment provided by the Council.

Electric Vehicle Leasing (EV) Scheme

In 2023 the Council introduced the Electric Vehicle (EV) leasing scheme for centrally employed members of staff who have successfully completed their probationary period. The scheme is designed to provide competitively priced and trouble free motoring. This is based on salary sacrifice lasting for an agreed time specified on the Variation of Contract.

Business Mileage

Employees may be eligible for a business mileage related lump sum car allowance in accordance with the Council's Business Mileage Related Lump Sum policy. This applies to all employees with a fixed office base. If the post that an employee is appointed to requires them to travel, they are required to have available for business the use of a motor vehicle.

Relocation

Relocation support may be available where relocation is considered necessary by the relevant Director and in the interests of the Council to enable the employee to effectively take up their new post. Eligibility and payments are outlined within the Council's Relocation policy. Relocation payments are paid in line with the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) rate.

Pay Protection

If, as a result of a restructure and to mitigate redundancy, an employee accepts a post which is one grade lower than their substantive post, then pay protection applies for a period of one year, in accordance with the Redeployment Policy and Procedure.

Performance Related Pay Systems or Bonus Schemes

The Council does not have any performance related pay systems or bonus schemes in place.

4. Relationship between the highest and lowest paid employees

Lowest paid employees

For the purposes of the Pay Policy Statement, the Council's pay scales define the lowest paid employees as those whose salary falls within the lowest grade which has a starting salary of £20,441 from 1st April 2023. This is subject to change contingent on national pay award.

The Council employs Apprentices to provide an opportunity to develop new talent and ensure staff have the right skills and qualifications for the future. Apprenticeships are used to develop technical specialism within the existing workforce, especially in areas of high demand and low supply by providing quality on the job learning. Apprentices are not included within the definition of lowest paid employees, due to the nature of their engagement in a development role.

Pay multiples

It is the Council's policy that the salary of the Chief Executive will be no greater than 8x the median earner of the Council's workforce.

The current pay relationship between the highest paid employee who is the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) and the Council's median and lowest earners and the mean salary has been measured.

As at the 1st October 2023, the ratio of pay of the Chief Executive to that of:

- the median earner was 5.9:1
- the mean salary was 5.3:1
- the lowest earner was 9.4:1

The above median and mean ratios are below the expected multiples of 8.1:1 for the public sector as identified in the Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector (March 2011) Report.

5. Other employment-related arrangements

Pension provisions

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is open to all employees up to 75 years of age and with a contract of more than 3 months' duration. Details are set out on the [LGPS website](#). No additional pension payment to the Local Government Pension Scheme is made on behalf of Chief Officers.

Individuals employed on Teachers terms and conditions will be eligible to join the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS). Details are set out on the [Teachers' Pensions website](#).

The Council automatically enrolls eligible job holders into a qualifying pension scheme if they are not already a member of it, on a 3 yearly anniversary basis. It is then up to the employee to opt out again.

Learning and development

The Council is committed to developing and ensuring that all employees receive equal access to learning and development opportunities. The learning and development activities are designed to meet statutory requirements and support the delivery of the Council's priorities.

6. Severance provisions for all employees including Chief Officers

The Council will normally pay severance in redundancy situations based upon the Statutory Redundancy Payment Scheme using actual weekly salary where this is greater than statutory redundancy pay.

Any Council employee with 2 years' continuous service, including Chief Officers, irrespective of hours worked, is eligible for a redundancy payment should they be dismissed by reason of redundancy.

7. Publication of pay data

In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and the Localism Act 2011, this policy, along with the publication of Senior salaries can be found on the [Council's website](#)

In line with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, the [Council's Gender Pay Gap report](#) can be found on our website.

The Localism Act 2011 requires relevant authorities to prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each subsequent financial year. Our next Statement is scheduled to be for the year commencing April 2024 and will be submitted to Full Council for approval by 31 March 2024.

8. Review

Only fundamental changes to the Pay Policy will be presented to Full Council for review and agreement.

**Central
Bedfordshire**

Central Bedfordshire in contact

Find us online: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Call: 0300 300 8000

Email: customers@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Write to: Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House,
Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

10. Calendar of Meetings 2024/25

To seek approval of the Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25.

Central Bedfordshire Council

25 January 2024

Full Council

Calendar of Meetings 2024-25

Report of:

Cllr John Baker, Executive Member for Finance
John.baker@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Responsible Director:

Charles Warboys, Director of Resources
(Charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to seek Full Council's approval of the Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25.

RECOMMENDATION

Full Council is asked to approve the Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 as set out at Appendix A.

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

1. This report is not scheduled to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny because full consultation is undertaken on the draft Calendar of Meetings during the course of its preparation, including with the Chairs of all Overview and Scrutiny and other committees, followed by consideration by Full Council.

Background

2. It is common practice for Local Authorities to fix in advance dates for ordinary meetings for the forthcoming year to allow for planning and transparency.
3. The draft Calendar of Meetings sets out the proposed meeting schedule for the municipal years 2024-25, together with dates of meetings which occur immediately after that period.
4. The draft Calendar has been circulated for comment to the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Executive Members and the Chairs of committees. In addition, the Chief Executive and all Chief Officers have also been consulted. Wherever possible any suggested amendments have been incorporated into the draft.

5. It should be noted that the draft Calendar only lists those meetings which can or need to be programmed (for constitutional, financial or other reasons). Meetings of other Council bodies, such as the Licensing Sub-Committee and Appointments Sub-Committee, will be arranged as and when necessary.

Evening meetings

6. Throughout 2023/24 Members have expressed a preference for holding some of their meetings during the evening. In the case of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the Chairs have agreed to hold some evening meetings, with the exception of Children's Services where the committee was mindful of the presence of voting co-opted Members, for a period of 12 months following which the impact of evening meetings will be reviewed. Some Executive meetings have also taken place in the evening.

Draft Calendar of Meetings

7. During the preparation of the draft Calendar the following was taken into consideration:
- Executive has been scheduled to alternate between a 9.30 a.m. and a 6.30 p.m. start time for 2024/25 following a request from the Leader of the Council.
 - General Purposes has been scheduled to alternate between a 9.30 a.m. and a 6.30 p.m. start time for 2024/25 following a request from the Chair of that committee.
 - Where appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees have been scheduled to alternate between a 9.30 a.m. or 6.30 p.m. start time up until November 2024 when the one year trial comes to an end in accordance with the wishes of the Chairs of the Committees. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will then have the opportunity to determine the start time of their future meetings.
 - Audit Committee dates have been arranged in accordance with the timeline approved at their meeting on 30 October 2023.
 - Due to the request that Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee meets first within the Overview and Scrutiny meeting cycle, Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been moved from a Tuesday to a Thursday to accommodate this.
 - Development Management Committee – between December 2024 and January 2025 there is a five-week gap instead of 4-week gap to allow for the site visits to take place.
 - Corporate Parenting Board meeting dates may need to be amended as the Board are still to determine when they are going to meet due to consideration being given to moving from meeting during half term to meeting during term time and from during the day to early evening to allow for foster carers and the Children in Care Council to attend.

Reason/s for decision

8. The Constitution specifies that citizens have the right to attend meetings of the Council, the Executive and its committees and the availability of a Calendar enables citizens to be aware in advance of meeting dates.
9. Approval of the calendar will ensure that advance notice of meetings can be given.

Council priorities

10. Having in place effective leadership and political management arrangements for the Authority is critical to the delivery of the Council's Strategic Plan.

Legal Implications

11. The submission of the draft Calendar of Meetings for approval annually by Council complies with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

Financial and Risk Implications

12. Administration of the proposed meetings set out in the Calendar of Meetings can be met within existing budgets.

Equalities and Fairness Implications

13. Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity. The availability of a Calendar enables citizens to be aware in advance of meeting dates and to make arrangements to participate in the democratic process.
14. On completion of the trial, an EQIA will be undertaken.

Sustainability Implications

15. There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report. The effective and organisation of meetings will ensure that any proposals that do arise in relation to the Council's Sustainability Plan (2020-2023) can be debated and determined in an efficient manner.

Conclusion and next Steps

16. Approving the draft Calendar will assist the Council and its Members to undertake their duties and enable citizens to attend and participate in the democratic process.
17. Following approval of the draft Calendar the dates will be published on the Council's website.

Appendices

Appendix A Draft calendar of meetings for 2024-25

Background Papers

None

Report author(s):

Sandra Hobbs, Committee Services Manager

Sandra.hobbs@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024 – 2025

2024

Thursday	9 May 2024	Council (Annual)	6.30pm
Thursday	9 May 2024	General Purposes	After Council
Tuesday	14 May 2024	PCAP	9.30am
Thursday	16 May 2024	SEND Sub-Cttee	9.30am
Wednesday	22 May 2024	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Tuesday	28 May 2024	Audit	10.00am
Wednesday	29 May 2024	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	30 May 2024	CPB	2.00pm

Tuesday	4 Jun 2024	Executive	9.30am
Thursday	6 Jun 2024	Traffic Management	10.00am
Tuesday	11 Jun 2024	CR OSC	6.30pm
Wednesday	12 Jun 2024	Licensing	10.00am
Thursday	13 Jun 2024	SC OSC	6.30pm
Monday	17 Jun 2024	SCHH OSC	6.30pm
Wednesday	19 Jun 2024	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Thursday	20 Jun 2024	CS OSC	9.30am
Wednesday	26 Jun 2024	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	27 Jun 2024	General Purposes	9.00am

Tuesday	9 Jul 2024	PCAP	9.30am
Wednesday	10 Jul 2024	HWB	2.00pm
Thursday	11 Jul 2024	SEND Sub-Cttee	9.30am
Tuesday	16 Jul 2024	Traffic Management	10.00am
Wednesday	17 Jul 2024	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Wednesday	24 Jul 2024	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	25 Jul 2024	Council	6.30pm

Tuesday	6 Aug 2024	Executive	6.30pm
Thursday	8 Aug 2024	CPB	2.00pm
Wednesday	14 Aug 2024	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Wednesday	21 Aug 2024	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	29 Aug 2024	General Purposes	6.30pm

Tuesday	3 Sep 2024	CR OSC	9.30am
Wednesday	4 Sep 2024	Licensing	10.00am
Thursday	5 Sep 2024	SC OSC	9.30am

Monday	9 Sep 2024	SCHH OSC	9.30am
Wednesday	11 Sep 2024	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Thursday	12 Sep 2024	CS OSC	9.30am
Wednesday	18 Sep 2024	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	19 Sep 2024	Audit	10.00am
Tuesday	24 Sep 2024	Traffic Management	10.00am
Thursday	26 Sep 2024	Council	6.30pm

Tuesday	1 Oct 2024	Executive	9.30am
Wednesday	2 Oct 2024	HWB	2.00pm
Tuesday	8 Oct 2024	PCAP	9.30am
Wednesday	9 Oct 2024	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Thursday	10 Oct 2024	SEND Sub-Cttee	9.30am
Wednesday	16 Oct 2024	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	24 Oct 2024	General Purposes	9.00am
Thursday	31 Oct 2024	CPB	10.00am

Tuesday	5 Nov 2024	CR OSC	6.30pm
Wednesday	6 Nov 2024	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Thursday	7 Nov 2024	SC OSC	6.30pm
Monday	11 Nov 2024	SCHH OSC	9.30am
Wednesday	13 Nov 2024	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	14 Nov 2024	CS OSC	9.30am
Thursday	21 Nov 2024	Council	6.30pm
Tuesday	26 Nov 2024	Traffic Management	10.00am
Thursday	28 Nov 2024	Audit	10.00am

Tuesday	3 Dec 2024	Executive	6.30pm
Wednesday	4 Dec 2024	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Thursday	5 Dec 2024	SEND Sub-Cttee	9.30am
Tuesday	10 Dec 2024	PCAP	9.30am
Wednesday	11 Dec 2024	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	12 Dec 2024	General Purposes	6.30pm
Wednesday	18 Dec 2024	Licensing	10.00am
Monday	23 Dec 2024	CPB	2.00pm

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024 – 2025

2025

Tuesday	7 Jan 2025	Executive	9.30am
Wednesday	8 Jan 2025	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Thursday	9 Jan 2025	CR OSC	10.00am
Monday	13 Jan 2025	SCHH OSC	10.00am
Tuesday	14 Jan 2025	CS OSC	10.00am
Wednesday	15 Jan 2025	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	16 Jan 2025	SC OSC	10.00am
Thursday	23 Jan 2025	Traffic Management	10.00am
Wednesday	29 Jan 2025	HWB	2:00 PM
Thursday	30 Jan 2025	Council	6.30pm

Tuesday	4 Feb 2025	Executive	6.30pm
Wednesday	5 Feb 2025	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Tuesday	11 Feb 2025	CR OSC	10.00am
Wednesday	12 Feb 2025	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	13 Feb 2025	SC OSC	10.00am
Monday	17 Feb 2025	SCHH OSC	10.00am
Tuesday	18 Feb 2025	CPB	2.00pm
Thursday	20 Feb 2025	CS OSC	10.00am
Tuesday	25 Feb 2025	Audit	10.00am
Thursday	27 Feb 2025	Council (Budget)	6.30pm

Wednesday	5 Mar 2025	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Thursday	6 Mar 2025	Council (R)	6.30pm
Tuesday	11 Mar 2025	PCAP	9.30pm
Wednesday	12 Mar 2025	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	13 Mar 2025	SEND Sub-Cttee	9.30am
Wednesday	19 Mar 2025	Licensing	10.00am
Thursday	20 Mar 2025	Traffic Management	10.00am
Thursday	27 Mar 2025	General Purposes	9.00am

Tuesday	1 Apr 2025	Executive	9.30am
Wednesday	2 Apr 2025	DMC Site Visits	10.00am
Tuesday	8 Apr 2025	CR OSC	10.00am
Wednesday	9 Apr 2025	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	10 Apr 2025	SC OSC	10.00am
Monday	14 Apr 2025	SCHH OSC	10.00am
Wednesday	16 Apr 2025	CPB	2.00pm
Thursday	17 Apr 2025	CS OSC	10.00am
Wednesday	23 Apr 2025	HWB	2.00pm
Thursday	24 Apr 2025	Council	6.30pm
Wednesday	30 Apr 2025	DMC Site Visits	10.00am

Tuesday	6 May 2025	Special SCHH OSC (Quality Accounts)	10.00am
Wednesday	7 May 2025	DMC	10.00am
Thursday	15 May 2025	Council (Annual)	6.30pm
Thursday	15 May 2025	General Purposes	After Council
Tuesday	20 May 2025	PCAP	9.30am
Thursday	22 May 2025	SEND Sub-Cttee	9.30am
Tuesday	27 May 2025	Traffic Management	10.00am
Thursday	29 May 2025	Audit	10.00am

DMC - Development Management Committee

HWB – Health & Wellbeing Board

PCAP - Police and Crime Advisory Panel

CR OSC – Corporate Resources OSC

CS OSC – Children’s Services OSC

SCHH OSC – Social Care, Health & Housing OSC

SC OSC – Sustainable Communities OSC

CPB – Corporate Parenting Board

(R) – Reserve

11. Independent Remuneration Panel: Membership

To re-appointment of two existing Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) members and the appointment of two new IRP members.

Central Bedfordshire Council

25 January 2024

Full Council

Independent Remuneration Panel: Membership

Report of:

Cllr John Baker, Executive Member for Finance - John.Baker@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Responsible Director:

Charles Warboys, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources - Charles.Warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Purpose of this report

This report recommends the re-appointment of two existing Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) members and the appointment of two new IRP members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is asked to:

1. re-appoint Dr Roy Tipping and Mr Geoff Lambert to the IRP for the periods to 31st March 2025 and 31st March 2028 respectively.
2. appoint Mrs Summara Khurshid and Miss Uhuru Lambert to the IRP for the period to 31st March 2028.

Background

Statutory Background

1. The [Local Authorities \(Members' Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#) require that a local authority may not adopt or amend a Scheme of Members' Allowances without first having regard to recommendations made to it by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).
2. The [Regulations](#) also require that each local authority must establish an independent remuneration panel consisting of at least three members who must not be a member of a committee or sub-committee of the authority or disqualified from being a member of an authority.

3. Statutory Guidance on the 2003 Regulations stipulate that,

“The local authority will need to consider the term of office of members of the panel... The panel may become more effective as its knowledge and understanding of members’ allowances is increased... Accordingly, local authorities may wish to consider appointing members of the panel for a term of office of several years, perhaps 3-5 years. Local authorities may also wish to consider phasing appointments to ensure that there is always one member of the panel who has some experience... This could be achieved by differing lengths of appointment”

Panel Membership

4. The present Panel arrangements are as follows:

Name of member	Period of appointment
Dr Roy Tipping	19.04.2012 - 31.03.2022
Mr Geoff Lambert	Pre 2009 - 31.03.2021
Vacancy	
Vacancy	
Vacancy	

5. Dr Tipping and Mr Lambert have both served on the panel for a number of years and have expressed a wish to extend their membership period. It is proposed that their periods of appointment are extended to 2025 and 2028 respectively.
6. The Panel is required to consist of at least 3 members to comply with the statutory guidance above. The Council has approved its membership to include up to 5 members. A membership of 4 would support the Panel with succession planning and continuity and combat instances where Panel members are unavailable.
7. An advert for the Panel’s vacancies was published through Central Bedfordshire’s recruitment website, to which 2 responses were received. Both candidates were interviewed by telephone and considered suitable for the role.
8. It is subsequently recommended that both Mrs Khurshid and Miss Lambert are appointed to the Panel. They fulfil the criteria required by the Regulations and have relevant experience. Mrs Khurshid was a Councillor for Luton Borough Council, was a member of various panels, and has experience in social work. Miss Lambert has multidisciplinary experience within the health sector and has experience in a voluntary governance role.

Reason/s for decision

9. There are currently 2 members of the IRP, and the Regulations require that it has at least 3.

10. Those recommended for appointment and re-appointment fulfil the criteria required by the Regulations.

Council priorities

11. The effectiveness of an IRP contributes to the Council priorities by ensuring equal opportunity to become a Councillor, and hence allowing the Council to more fairly and effectively deliver on those priorities.

Implications

Legal Implications

12. The Council is required to establish and maintain an IRP with at least 3 members under the [Local Authorities \(Members' Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#). This report enables the Council to fully comply with the Regulations.

Financial and Risk Implications

13. Panel members receive an allowance for each meeting attended which is at the same level as allowances paid to co-opted members. The allowances are currently £75 where a meeting lasts up to 4 hours and £150 where it is over 4 hours. Historically the Panel has never met on more than 3 occasions in a financial year.
14. These costs will be absorbed within the total Members Allowances Budget for the current year.

Equalities and Fairness Implications

15. The Panel is required to make recommendations to the Council concerning a Scheme of Members' Allowances, and the Scheme is an essential part of the democratic process in ensuring that Membership of the Council is not limited by reason of financial considerations and all are afforded equal opportunity to become a Councillor.

Sustainability Implications

16. The broader definition of sustainability that has been adopted by the council is based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This includes objectives such as developing effective, accountable, and transparent situations at all levels, and to ensure responsive, inclusive and participatory, representative decision-making at all levels. The process outlined in this report and decision-making process that this request is subjected to demonstrates these objects in action.

Other Corporate Implications

17. Not applicable.

Conclusion and next Steps

18. The report recommends the re-appointment of two existing Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) members and the appointment of two new IRP members.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

Report author(s):

Brian Dunleavy, Democratic Services Manager -
Brian.Dunleavy@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

12. Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and Service

To receive and consider a report from the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and Service.

Welcome to the new SHOUT – the revised update of what’s been happening in Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and Service in recent months. Enabling you to tell your electorate.

Chair's foreword

Welcome to the latest edition of the SHOUT. I have been spending time reflecting on the past year and I'm looking forward to the year ahead. This year in Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service there have been challenges but there are also many great achievements to look back on and celebrate. I am proud to be the Chair of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and have heard of incredible examples where teams have worked together to keep Bedfordshire safe.

As we come to the end of the year, I encourage all members of our community to make sure you look after yourself. Whether you live in the north or the south, urban or rural, Bedfordshire has some deep-rooted connections as a community, and we need to look out for each other.

Chief's foreword

It has been an eventful time since the last edition of the SHOUT. In October, the car park fire at London Luton Airport quickly became a major incident and saw at its height more than 100 firefighters tackling the fire, including colleagues from neighbouring services. This was a major incident with many challenges but the incredible partnership working and multi-agency response helped ensure public safety, and that the damage caused by the fire was kept to a minimum.

We have lots coming up and in the coming weeks we will be consulting with our community about changing the way we measure response standards. This is so that we can make it easier for people to understand and bring it line with how other fire and rescue services report to the Government. We hope you will share your opinion.



Councillor Jacqui Burnett
Fire and Rescue Authority Chair



Andrew Hopkinson
*Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
Chief Fire Officer*

Headlines from full fire authority 15/12/23

[Details of full papers available here](#)

- The early purchase of four response vehicles currently scheduled for 2024/25 was approved
- The FRA noted the unbudgeted expenditure on kitchens is due as a result of environmental audits and covered by earmarked reserves
- The 2024/25 budget consultation question was approved
- The approach to consult on changes to the Service's operational response performance standards was approved
- The content of the Public Sector Equality Duty Report (2022/23) was approved for publication
- The amendments to the procurement policy were acknowledged and approved

Look back

October

Black History Month saw the Service host and support an event at Pavenham Golf Club with the Asian Fire Service Association celebrating the crucial role black women have played in shaping history, inspiring change, and building communities.

A large **fire at an industrial laundry unit** in the Britannia Estate, Leagrave saw crews from Luton, Bedford, Dunstable, Stopsley and Leighton Buzzard working hard to extinguish the flames and clear smoke from adjacent properties.

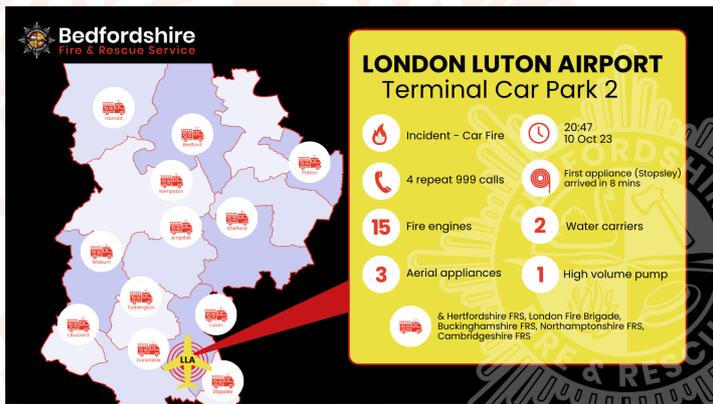
A team of five firefighters from different stations around the county took part in the **National Breathing Apparatus Challenge** which involved being faced with a scenario of a property fire.

Luton crews worked to raise awareness of the difficulties they face navigating **parking issues** in the town centre and narrow streets when attending fire calls.



Have A Go Day Event was held at Amptill Fire Station to allow members of the public to give the physical side of firefighting a try and find out if they would like to become an on-call firefighter.

At its height more than 100 firefighters tackled a fire in a car park at **London Luton Airport**. A total of five casualties were treated for smoke inhalation. A multi-agency investigation is currently being conducted following the fire. We can confirm the vehicle involved was a diesel-powered vehicle, and not an electric vehicle.



Sandy Fire Cadets learned about burns and scalds and how to treat them effectively as part of **Burns Awareness Day**.



The latest intake of **apprentice firefighters** took part in their final assessment and 18 of the total assessments were awarded with distinctions.



Potton and Sandy both opened their doors to the public on Halloween with their **Fright Nights**, to allow local families to participate in Halloween activities and learn about the dangers of flammable kids' costumes.

Luton cadets visited the **UKIM Madina Masjid** to engage with the local community and talk about fire service responsibilities, recruitment and fire safety.



Firefighters and officers from Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service were **recognised by Bedfordshire Police** for their efforts at an armed siege in Bedford in November last year (2022).



Crews took part in **Exercise Hawk** - a multi-agency exercise at Cranfield Airport, which involved a private passenger plane that had landed with an engine fire, leaking fuel and persons trapped on board.



November

Members of the Community Safety Team attended the **Preparing for Adulthood Festival** in Bedford's Corn Exchange to chat with young people from local schools, colleges and youth groups.

Firefighters were called to reports of a **fire in a first floor flat** in London Road, Luton. One person was rescued from the flat and all persons were accounted for.

Kempston Red Watch and members of the Prevention Team attended the **Festival of Lights** celebration at the Bunyan Centre hosted by Bedford Indian community.



Crew Commander Angela Beresford represented the Service at the **National Service of Remembrance** parade to the Cenotaph, Central London. Crews held a minute's silence on fire stations and attended local events.

Crews took part in an **exercise at the Luton DART** terminal facilitated by Luton Rising and supported by Bedfordshire Police, East of England Ambulance and London Luton Airport.

The Service co-hosted an event in Luton with **Lea Vale Medical Group** to welcome members of the public for a medical check and to offer home safety advice and support.

Road Safety Week saw crews meeting with the local community to talk about speeding, which was the theme of the week.



December

The Service is supporting a **Winter Warmth** campaign which kicked off in December and informs the public on how to heat the home safely, be aware of carbon monoxide, and other concerns including fuel poverty.

Charge Safe is the message the Service was spreading as part of electrical fire safety week; joining forces with other fire services to raise awareness about lithium battery-powered vehicles like e-scooters and e-bikes.

The Service's **Christingle** event saw staff, their families and stakeholders congregate at St Mary's Church in Woburn for a festive celebration.

We are currently consulting with the community about changing the way we **measure response standards**, to make reporting clearer and to match how the Government reports.

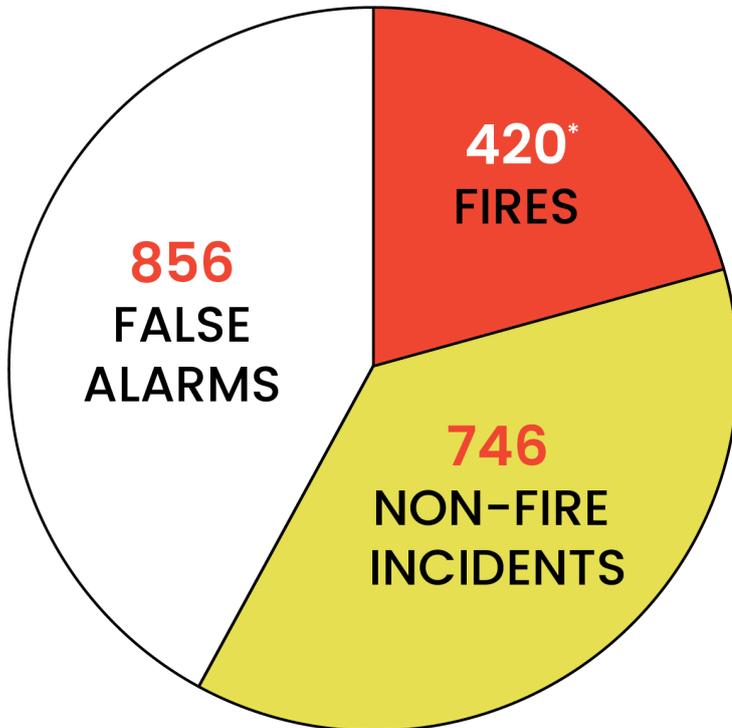
A festive **Brew with the Crew** event held at Potton Fire Station for over 60s gave them a chance to meet and get support from crews on home fire safety.

BFRS quarterly performance data - Q2

July - September 2023

2022 INCIDENTS ATTENDED

[Link to primary and secondary fire explanation](#)



176 PRIMARY FIRES

(Primary fires are generally more serious fires that harm people or cause damage to property)

245 SECONDARY FIRES

(Secondary fires are generally small outdoor fires, not involving people or property)

48 PRIMARY ACCIDENTAL DWELLING FIRES ATTENDED

5 PRIMARY DELIBERATE DWELLING FIRES ATTENDED

2 FIRE INJURIES WHERE VICTIM WENT TO HOSPITAL

251 AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARMS AT NON-DOMESTIC PREMISES

1731 HOME FIRE SAFETY VISITS

638 FIRE SAFETY AUDITS

*Note: Total fires attended is not a total of the sub fire categories listed.

Statistics for the quarter are available for release once verified, normally 5 weeks after period end.

13. Strategic Policy Debate

In accordance with Section 17 of the Council Procedure Rules, the Leader has identified flooding as the issue for the strategic debate.



Central Bedfordshire Council

Briefing paper for a meeting of Full Council on **25 January 2024** in respect of a flooding, in response to the impact of Storm Henk 2-8th January 2024.

Responsible Executive Member

Cllr Simon Ford – Executive Member for Highways and Flooding
Simon.Ford@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Responsible Directors

Lorna Carver - Director of Place and Communities
Lorna.Carver@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Background

1. Multiple parts of Central Bedfordshire were affected by flooding during Storm Henk, between 2nd January and 8th January 2024 from main rivers and smaller watercourses, surface water and ground water. Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) directly received approximately 90 reports of flooding affecting homes, businesses, roads and other infrastructure over this period.
2. Rainfall during Storm Henk fell on an already saturated catchment, resulting in excessive surface water runoff and river levels reacting rapidly. As Storm Henk developed, a slow-moving band of heavy rain swept across the catchment on Thursday 4th January and into Friday morning, bringing around 10mm-33.8mm of rain. The highest rainfall totals were seen in southern part of the catchment with the highest totals reported over the River Ouzel catchment. This rain elevated river levels and resulted in the Environment Agency issuing of 34 Flood Alert areas and 18 Flood Warnings in the Great Ouse catchment. There have been record levels seen at some monitoring stations.
3. The response to Storm Henk is still ongoing, data collection has started (as well as other aspects of recovery) and CBC is working with its partners and relevant Risk Management Authorities. An Information Pack has been prepared to support the debate and is appended to this report.

What is the topic to be debated?

4. Flooding

The key focus of the debate is to ensure the roles and responsibilities for flood risk management are well understood, and for Full Council to consider what steps CBC can take, working closely with partners to ensure our residents are aware of local flood risks and are resilient to the impacts of flooding.

Policy context

5. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 is one of the most relevant pieces of legislation to emergency planning for flooding. It lists local authorities, the Environment Agency and emergency services as 'Category 1' responders to emergencies. As a Category 1 responder, The Environment Agency has a role in flood forecasting and issuing flood warnings for fluvial, tidal and groundwater flooding.
6. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) makes provision about water, including provision about the management of risks in connection with flooding and coastal erosion. The FWMA aims to help improve flood risk management and ensure the security of water supplies in England and Wales. Under the FWMA, flood risk management in England is managed by a range of different Risk Management Authorities (RMAs). These are: The Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authorities, District and Borough Councils, Coast protection authorities, Water and sewerage companies, Internal Drainage Boards (IDB), Highway Authorities.
7. The FWMA created the role of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for county and unitary authorities. As an LLFA, CBC is responsible for coordinating the mitigation of risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater (water which is below the water table under the ground) and ordinary watercourses (excludes main rivers and IDB main drains). Importantly, all powers relating to flooding and land drainage are permissive, so the bodies involved do not have a duty to take action. Landowners have the main responsibility for safeguarding their land and property against flooding
8. The LLFA is not a Category 1 responder, although the wider local authority is. The LLFA is also responsible for developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management in their area and ensuring co-operation between the Risk Management Authorities in their area. The CBC 'Local Flood Risk Management Strategy' was adopted in 2014.
9. The Environment Agency is responsible for managing flood risk from main rivers and the sea, the Act also gave the Environment Agency a strategic overview role of all sources of flooding. The FWMA requires the Environment Agency to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a national strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM) in England. The current strategy was published in July 2020.
10. In England, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs leads on FCERM and provides funding for projects. They are mostly delivered through the Environment Agency. Funding for flood risk management is complex. The Environment Agency gets grant-in-aid (GiA) funding directly from the Government and spends some of this directly on Flood and Coastal Erosion Management (FCERM) activities. However, RMAs can also apply to the Environment Agency for GiA funding for local projects. A project is assessed for funding based on how much public benefit it will have. If it only qualifies for part-funding from GiA, the funds must be topped up through partnership funding from other, local sources or capital budgets.

Key considerations

11. The following sections provide a high-level review of the emergency response to the Storm Henk and its impact.
12. CBC activated the Emergency Plan on 2nd January 2024, from approximately 09.30 onwards, due to yellow rain and wind warning issued by the Met Office. A CBC 'Emergency Management Team' was set up virtually with an eventual number of 47

members from across the Council. A number of virtual multi-agency Tactical Coordination Groups (TCGs) were held, hosted by Environment Agency as well as Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

13. Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) in numerous locations mobilised and were often the first to report flooding and road blockages. A number of these locations co-ordinate deployment of 'Community Flood Kits', provided by CBC and the Environment Agency.
14. Bedfordshire Local Emergency Volunteers Executive Committee (BLEVEC) supported the response, including the 'Beds & Cambs 4x4' Response Team who provided support with pumping of flood water, temporary flood defences, traffic management in the case of semi-blocked roads. BLEVEC also helped CBC set up and manage Assistance Centres in Leighton Buzzard.
15. As we move into a recovery phase, CBC is collating data received during the event to determine the scale of impact and analyse the sources, pathways and receptors for flooding. Data has been requested from all partners involved in the emergency response and with a designated flood risk role. At present the impact can be summarised as: 90 reports of flooding received directly by CBC, 63 concerning flooding or drainage on a road, and 11 reports of internal residential property flooding. In addition to flooding, between the 2nd–8th January there were 42 call outs that related to fallen trees/branches.
16. Although the flooding was endemic across the area, there were certain areas with significantly more recorded incidents than others. These include: Blunham; Caddington and Slip; Clophill; Eaton Bray; Maulden; Leighton Buzzard and Tempsford.

What we have achieved / have started on so far

17. Following flooding in Central Bedfordshire over the period 2nd–8th January 2024, Central Bedfordshire Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) is undertaking a formal Flood Risk Review. It is a statutory requirement for a LLFA to investigate flooding to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate. Central Bedfordshire Council has outlined its criteria for undertaking a Flood Risk Review in response to the flooding event. This should include creating an action plan to guide future investment and more detailed investigation to minimise flood risk in the identified locations.
18. Early data analysis of the event excludes CBC as being eligible for the Government's Flood Recovery Fund, launched in response to Storm Henk. This is available where local authorities have recorded >50 properties flooding internally (as defined by the Environment Agency) between 2nd–8th January 2024.
19. There were many positives to draw from the emergency response to Storm Hank: the response was collaborative and coordinated between multiple agencies; there was an emergency plan enacted; many communities took ownership of their own resilience by supporting the distribution of temporary flood defences; and communications were regularly issued residents through the event. However, there are always opportunity to learn from an event and enable an improved response in the future. We will do this by collecting information on the way the Emergency response was co-ordinated and delivered.

Finance considerations

20. None – there could be implications for capital/revenue budgets if the Council decides to reconsider approaches to flood risk management, emergency planning and drainage maintenance activities/capital schemes. Any financial considerations for the council would need to be part of the Medium-Term Financial plan discussions.

Conclusion

21. Storm Henk came at a time when we were still seeing the effects of high groundwater and river levels. The River Great Ouse has seen record high levels, and with incredibly high saturation across the catchment already, we have seen substantial flooding from main rivers and their tributaries.

22. There are several challenges facing flood risk management within Central Bedfordshire, including; the different roles and responsibilities of RMAs with a flood risk function and their need to work together; capacity and resources to respond to flooding as an emergency and as an LLFA; need to work with other policy areas to achieve sustainable flood risk management (such as the local planning authority), the need for reactive and proactive approaches to maintenance of highways and drainage assets; limiting statutory duties and powers on the council as an LLFA to be able to deliver flood risk gains; lack of access to funding for flood risk management activities.

14. Change of Membership on Committees

Notification is given under Part 4A (3.6.2) of the Council's Constitution that since the last meeting, the following changes to the membership of Committees as been made:

- Councillors Hamill, Neall, Owen, Roberts, Stephenson, Versallion and Whitaker have been appointed members of the Central Bedfordshire Police and Crime Advisory Panel. Cllrs Andrews, Leaman, McMahan and Tranter have been appointed as substitutes.
- Councillors Bell, Brennan, S Goodchild, Hegley, Malone, Versallion and Woodfine have been appointed members of the SEND Sub-Committee. Cllrs Holland-Lindsay, Tranter, McMahan and Wightwick have been appointed as substitutes. To also note that one Church of England and one Roman Catholic Diocesan representative, two parent governor representatives, one representative of SNAP Parent/Carer Forum will be appointed as co-optees, subject to confirmation at the first meeting of the Sub-Committee.

15. Written Questions

To answer written questions from Members of the Council under Part 4A, Rule No. 14.2 of the Council's Procedure Rules.

Full Council – 25 January 2024

Written Questions

1) To the Executive Member for Business, Housing and Public Assets from Councillor Collins

On 24th November 2023 it was reported on the BBC website that Nissan and its partners have announced a £2bn plan to build three electric car models at its Sunderland factory. This investment is projected to preserve the jobs of about 6,000 workers directly and thousands more across the UK.

Whilst this is welcome news for Sunderland especially and the UK automotive supply chain in general, there is potential for Central Bedfordshire to benefit from the next generation of Nissan vehicle production through the excellent work undertaken at the Nissan Technical Centre in Cranfield.

Can the Executive member update the Council as to what efforts have been made to engage with and support Nissan Technical in Cranfield, especially in respect of employment and skills training and also in persuading Nissan's international board that Central Bedfordshire is the right place to invest in designing the vehicles of the future?

2) To the Leader of the Council from Councillor Holland-Lindsay

Could the Leader please update on progress and outcomes from the Executive Fairness Task Force programme?

3) To the Executive Member for Highways from Councillor Jamieson

You kindly visited the five villages in my ward to look at speeding and other highways issues on 8 August. In addition to speeding two particular issues were raised:

- Layby on A5120 in Westoning just beyond the crossroads, restricting to 3.5t and maximum waiting time in order to stop the dangerous situation where large vehicles parking there obscure vision for those exiting Sampshill Road.
- Blocked gullies, while gullies were cleaned, this autumn, there are many instances of badly blocked gullies that need more serious work, yet this has not been followed up and exacerbated recent flooding issues.

When will these be followed up?

4) To the Leader from Councillor Owen

As the Constitution Review Working Group continues to meet in secret, will the Leader of the Council explain what dangers might result if ordinary Members are allowed to contribute to the discussions at the Working Group especially as the most recent recommendations from the Working Group will limit the rights of ordinary councillors to question and challenge but instead concentrate power into the hands of Group Leaders.

5) To the Executive Member for Finance from Councillor Fage

Can the Executive Member for Finance explain the council's current process for filling vacancies and creating new posts? Can he confirm how long this approach has been in place?

6) To the Executive Member for Highways from Councillor Leaman

Residents in Leighton Linlade South, including those on Lovent Drive, were badly affected by the recent flooding. Residents are concerned about flooding from Clipstone Brook becoming more frequent and serious. What steps is the Council taking to actively manage flood risk from the Brook, to ensure that housing development does not result in flooding further down the route of the brook and finally to ensure stakeholders including the Environment Agency and Anglian Water are working together rather than passing the buck?

7) To the Leader from Councillor Spicer

Back in September Leader of council reply to my question about Highways maintenance and said that you have a winter plan. So how was your winter plan working for Central Bedfordshire residence?

8) To the Leader from Councillor Roberts

The residents of Leighton Buzzard are disappointed to hear that the new leisure centre has been delayed again to save money in the 24/25 budget.

Will the leader agree to explore all avenues to restore the centre to the 24/25 budget, particularly if delaying actually costs more than it actually saves?

16. Open Questions

To answer Open Questions asked by Members of the Council under Part 4A, Rule No. 14.8 of the Council's Procedure Rules.

17. Motions

To consider Motions by Members of the Council under Part 4A, Rule No. 18 of the Council's Procedure Rules.

17.1. Motion proposed by Cllr Stephenson - Health Hub

Full Council – 25 January 2024

Motion Proposed by Councillor Stephenson

GETTING HEALTH HUBS BACK ON TRACK

In the Strategic Debate of 23 November 2023, it was evident that the policy to establish Health Hubs across Central Bedfordshire has widespread support. This is an important programme to improve residents' health and wellbeing. Central Bedfordshire Council recommits to deliver the Health Hub programme in full as soon as possible, as outlined regularly at the Health and Wellbeing Committee meetings.

17.2. Motion proposed by Councillor Clark - Lidlington Rail Bypass

Full Council – 25 January 2024

Motion Proposed by Councillor Clark

East West Rail Motion

Background:

Lidlington is a small and attractive former brick village in the Marston Vale divided in half by the Marston Vale rail line. With the proposed East West Rail upgrade to this line, it is critically important to avoid the devastating community severance that would be caused by either closing the road crossing in the centre of the village, or through long periods of barrier down time.

In this Council's formal response to the East West Rail Consultation in June 2021, this Council was highly critical of plans to close this road crossing and of plans to put in a hopelessly impractical one way system and road diversion to the west of the village. This made no sense, a road diversion up a steep hill through community amenity land and this Council promoted an alternative route to the east of the village.

Under East West Rail's plans, the village would have been cut in half, the school on one side, the shop on the other, with only an ugly footbridge connection. To avoid all of this, this Council firmly supported a much better solution of a rail by-pass, which would divert the rail traffic away from the centre of the village. This alternative is also firmly supported as the best solution for the village by Lidlington residents and the Parish Council.

Last year East West Rail said it is 'potentially' possible the crossing could be kept open. But this is subject to safety audits, doesn't remove prolonged barrier down time, or the intensified use of the line. They also finally accepted our arguments and agreed to look at a road by-pass to the east.

The preferable and best solution for Lidlington remains however, a rail by-pass. A rail by-pass would remove all the issues associated with increased train frequency, increased speed, increased number of freight trains, impact of noise and vibration on the homes very close to the railway line. And above all remove any risk of community severance.

There is no financial cost to this authority in pushing for a rail bypass. That cost always did and always will remain with the East West Rail project.

This authority should be pursuing the preferred and best solution that benefits Lidlington and the wider community.

MOTION

This Council reaffirms its support for a Lidlington rail bypass, **at no cost to this authority**, and will press East West Rail to achieve this preferred and best solution for the village of Lidlington.

17.3. Motion proposed by Councillor Clark - Open Questions

Full Council – 25 January 2024

Motion Proposed by Councillor Clark

Since the start of this Administration in May 2023, open questions have only been heard at 1 of the 3 Council meetings where they were on the agenda. They have been cancelled once and postponed once.

As open questions are an important means of holding the Executive to account;

This Council expects the Chairman will always allow open questions and written questions to be taken as full agenda items during Full Council meetings* and not postponed or cancelled.

*Except for Full Council meetings when questions are not permitted as per the Constitution.

17.4. Motion proposed by Councillor Leaman - ICB

Full Council – 25 January 2024

Motion Proposed by Councillor Leaman

This Council lacks confidence in the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board to deliver local health services that meet the needs of our growing communities in Central Bedfordshire.

17.5. Motion proposed by Councillor Jamieson - Highways Works

Full Council – 25 January 2024

Motion Proposed by Councillor Jamieson

That Central Bedfordshire should adopt a policy that companies/contractors who are working adjacent to the highway or on footpaths that require highway traffic restrictions to ensure a safe working environment be obliged to remove or move to the side any traffic restriction when there is no actual work being carried out for instance at night or over the weekend.