General Purposes Committee

Schedule  
Monday 9 September 2019, 10:00 AM — 1:00 PM BST

Venue  
Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, SG17 5TQ

Description  
To the Chair and Members of the Committee: -

Cllr R Berry (Chair)  
Cllr G Perham (Vice-Chair)

Cllrs J Baker, N Bunyan, S Dixon, A Dodwell, S Ford, E Ghent, J Jamieson, P Snelling, R Wenham and A Zerny


Notes for Participants  
Any member of the public who wishes to speak at this meeting can register via the online form:
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/speak

This meeting may be filmed by the Council for live and/or subsequent broadcast online and can be viewed at https://centralbedfordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting will be filmed by the Council. 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 attending the meeting, you are deemed to have consented to being filmed by the Council. Full details on the use of recordings is provided via the link above.

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 further information on this meeting contact: committeemeetings@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.
# Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Apologies for Absence</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitute Members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Minutes</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 20 June 2019.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[General Purposes minutes - 20 June 2019.pdf](#) 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Members' Interests</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To receive from Members any declarations of interest.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Chair's Announcements and Communications</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To receive any announcements from the Chair and any matters of communication.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Petitions</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To receive petitions from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Part 4G of the Constitution.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Questions, Statements or Deputations</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Reports | 13 |

To consider the findings of the Electoral Review Working Group in relation to the appropriate council size for Central Bedfordshire from 2023 onwards.

- Electoral Review Working Group report.docx
- Appendix A.docx

8. Community Grant Schemes - Amendments to the Constitution

To consider the outline operation of the community grant scheme approved by Executive on 20 August 2019 and to seek approval to amend the Constitution.

- Community Grants report.docx
- Appendix A.docx

9. Joint Committees Terms of Reference

To consider a single set of Terms of Reference for the Town Joint Committees in Central Bedfordshire (Biggleswade, Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Linslade).

- Joint Committee Terms of Reference report.docx
- Joint Committees Terms of Reference - Appendix A.docx

10. Appointments to Outside Bodies

To consider the proposed amendments to the Constitution and the proposed additions to the Council's approved list of Outside Bodies.

- Outside Bodies report.docx

11. Work Programme

To consider the General Purposes Committee Work Programme.

- Work Programme report- to be updated.docx
- Appendix A.docx
1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitute Members.
2. Minutes

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 20 June 2019.
At a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held in Room 15, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ on Thursday 20 June 2019, 10:00 AM — 11.23 AM

Present:

Cllr R Berry (Chair)
Cllr G Perham (Vice-Chair)

Members:
Cllrs J Baker
N Bunyan
S Dixon
A Dodwell
S Ford
Cllrs E Ghent
J Jamieson
P Snelling
R Wenham
A Zerny

Apologies:
None

Absent:
None

Members in Attendance:
Cllrs D Bowater
T Wye
Cllr D McVicar

Officers in Attendance:
Mrs V Chapman  Assistant Director - People
Mrs C Gurney  Head of Housing Solutions
Mrs C Jagusz  Committee Services Officer
Mrs R King  HR Programme & Improvement Manager
Ms E Morris  Chief Information Officer
Mr J Partridge  Head of Governance
Mr S Rix  Monitoring Officer
Mr C Warboys  Director of Resources

1. Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2019 and the Special meeting held on 16 May 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. Members' Interests

None.

3. Chairman’s Announcements and Communication

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.
4. **Petitions**

None were received.

5. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

None were received.

6. **Nominations for the Vacancies on the Appointments Panel and Electoral Review Working Group**

The Committee considered the outstanding vacancies for the Appointments Panel and the Electoral Working Group.

A Member of the Committee asked if the Electoral Working Group would be open to all Members to attend, particular those who represented wards in which there was significant housing growth. Whilst it was noted that the working group was not a public meeting, officers would be asked to make the meeting dates available to all Members.

RESOLVED

1. that Cllr J Baker be added to the Appointments Panel with Cllr S Ford as the Substitute; and
2. that Cllr R Berry and Cllr S Dixon be added as Substitutes to the Electoral Working Group.

7. **Market Rate Supplement – Annual Update**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Resources providing the annual update on the Market Rate Supplements (MRS).

Points and comments included:

- The Assistant Director for People informed the Committee that the application of the MRS was used to evaluate grades and the ‘market’ rate of pay for specific roles which were key to the delivery of services.
- It was noted that there had been reduction in the MRS for more senior roles but an increase was noted for lower grade roles and this was in part due to the success in recruiting social workers and the move away from using temporary contracts.
- A trend had also been identified in the property and construction fields and it had been anticipated that this would continue into the next update.
NOTED

the annual update on the Market Rate Supplements (MRS) for posts across Central Bedfordshire Council.

8. Proposed Changes to the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing’s Delegated Powers on Housing Functions

The Committee considered the joint report from the Executive Member for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources regarding the proposed changes to the delegations of the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing.

It was noted that the proposed changes were required in order to update references to current legislation within the Constitution and to identify and address any areas where clarification was needed.

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the proposed changes to the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing’s delegated powers, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved and the Constitution be updated accordingly.

9. Parental Leave Policy for Elected Members

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources on the proposal to adopt a formal parenting leave policy for elected Members.

Points and comments included:

- It was noted that currently the Council did not have a formal policy in place.
- Discussion included the need for the policy as part of a modern, forward looking organisation which is a step toward encouraging more women into politics.
- The Committee agreed that a working group of 6 Members would be set up to further consider this policy, with political proportionality waived and nominations sought from all elected Members.
- It was proposed that Cllr Dodwell would chair this group and, working with the Group Leaders, determine the membership.
- It was noted that the working group would benefit from the experience of those with young families and consideration would be given to holding the meetings in the evening to facilitate this.
- It was agreed that the working group would bring an update/report to the October meeting of this Committee.
RESOLVED

1. that a working group be formed of 6 Members with Cllr Dodwell as Chair, and the membership to be determined by Cllr Dodwell and the Group Leaders;
2. that the strict rules on political proportionality be waived for this working group to enable a member from the Liberal Democrat group to participate;
3. that the working group consider meeting in the evening; and
4. that the first update report of the Working Group be taken to the October meeting of this Committee.

10. Proposal to Reconfigure the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources on the proposal to reconfigure the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Points and comments included:

- Currently there were four Overview and Scrutiny Committees and an Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel.
- In response to identifying the challenges of the current function, discussions and research had taken place to look at how other Local Authorities addressed these challenges and how best to implement changes that would benefit the Council.
- It was proposed that a Working Group be formed to better consider the outcomes of this research and to look at the options in more detail.
- The Committee agreed that the Working Group should be formed of 9 Members who were not Members of General Purposes but would be determined by the Group Leaders on a politically proportionate basis.

RESOLVED

that Option 2, as detailed in the report, be chosen and a cross party Working Group be formed of 9 Members, on a politically proportionate basis, as agreed by the Group Leaders.

11. Amendments to Members Scheme of ICT Allowances

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources which proposed that Members be appropriately equipped with IT to carry out their role in a fashion that maintained the integrity and security of the Councils systems, complying with legal responsibilities in respect of residents and service users.

Points and comments included:

- It was clarified that Members had two options:
  1. to purchase their own IT equipment and mobile phones either through Central Bedfordshire Council or an alternative supplier using their own allowance, but complying with the list of devices included in the report and
for this equipment to have the appropriate security software installed by CBC; or
2. for CBC to provide the device(s) i.e. iPhone and a laptop or tablet, with security already installed but that the Member will not be entitled to the IT equipment or phone allowance. A Member could have a CBC laptop or tablet and use their own phone, or vice versa, and the allowance would be adjusted accordingly. All devices would need the appropriate security software installed.

- It was confirmed that Appendix B listed the devices that CBC could provide but Members would be encouraged to discuss their needs with IT when purchasing from an alternative supplier if they wanted to purchase a device(s) not on this list to ensure it complied with the Council security policies.
- Concern was raised that the security installed by CBC would enable the device to be fully wiped at the end of a 4-year Council term, should that member not be re-elected. It was clarified that this security would be in place to ensure that should a device be lost or stolen, data could be removed by IT as soon as possible. In addition locally stored data would be the responsibility of Members under GDPR.
- It was noted that data should not be located in cloud storage as the Council could not guarantee the security of that data.
- Concern was expressed that the implications of applying the Council’s security software should have been made clear earlier.
- It was noted that Members appreciated the support of the IT team.
- It was agreed by Members that clarification was needed on the use of the Council’s security software and the manner in which devices the removal of information from those devices should a Member not be re-elected would be managed.
- It was also agreed that the scheme be amended to reflect that Members could choose to have a CBC owned computer but use their own phone and vice-versa; and that the wording of Option 2 be amended to remove the word ‘these’ and replace with the words ‘Council owned’.
- A Member also proposed a further change to the recommendations that any equipment would come with the appropriate data and telephone contracts.

RESOLVED
that a further report be presented a future meeting of General Purposes in relation to the use of the Councils mobile device management software for wiping data on Member devices.

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the revised scheme of Member ICT Allowances be approved as set out but with the following amendments:
(a) to make it clear that any equipment comes with the appropriate data and telephone contracts;
(b) that Members can choose to have a CBC owned computer but use their own phone and vice-versa; and
(c) that the wording of Option 2 be amended to remove the word ‘these’ and replace with the words ‘Council owned’.
(d) that it be clarified that the equipment listed in Appendix B was such that the Council could purchase on behalf of a Councillor, it was not an exhaustive list of all the devices that Members could use.

12. **Review of Urgent and Minor Updates to the Constitution**

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources which set out the changes made under the Monitoring Officer’s delegated powers to the Council’s Constitution between October 2018 to May 2019.

**NOTED**

the changes made under the Monitoring Officer’s delegated powers to maintain the Council’s Constitution, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

13. **Work Programme**

The Committee considered a report which set out the Committee’s Work Programme and it was noted that there was a requirement for the report on Joint Committees – Terms of Reference to go to the August committee as Town and Parish Councils would also be considering their terms of reference at the same time.

**RESOLVED**

1. to note the Work Programme for 29 August 2019; and

2. to note that the first update of the Parental Leave Policy Working Group be included for the October meeting of this Committee.

Chairman ………………………………………

Dated …………………………………………..
3. Members' Interests

To receive from Members any declarations of interest.
4. Chair's Announcements and Communications

To receive any announcements from the Chair and any matters of communication.
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.
6. 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.
Reports

To consider the findings of the Electoral Review Working Group in relation to the appropriate council size for Central Bedfordshire from 2023 onwards.
Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the electoral review working group in relation to the appropriate council size for Central Bedfordshire from 2023 onwards.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee discuss and recommend to Full Council the proposed council size submission (appended) to be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

Background

1. The LGBCE have commenced a review of the electoral arrangements for Central Bedfordshire. The timing of the review will ensure that revised electoral arrangements will be introduced in time for the ordinary elections in 2023.

2. The object of the review is to ensure a fairer representation at local government elections given the significant changes in the distribution of electors since the last review in 2009.

3. In March 2019 the General Purposes Committee agreed to establish a working group of 4 members to conduct the detailed investigation and to prepare a draft report.

4. At this stage the matter being considered is the total number of Councillors to be elected to the Council (known as Council size). Following the conclusion of this stage of the review a review of the following will subsequently be undertaken: -

   4.1 The number and boundaries of wards/divisions;
   4.2 The number of councillors to be elected for each ward/division; and
   4.3 The name of any ward/division.

Council Size

5. In making its judgment on council size the Commission considers three broad areas:
5.1 Governance arrangements of the Council and how it takes decisions across the broad range of its responsibilities.
5.2 The Council’s scrutiny functions relating to its decision making and the Council’s responsibilities to outside bodies.
5.3 The representational role of Councillors in the local community and how they engage with people, conduct casework and represent the Council on local partner organisations.

6. In light of these areas the appended document sets out in detail the rationale for a proposed council size of 63 elected Members from 2023 onwards.

Council Priorities

7. This report contributes to the Council’s priority of creating stronger communities and a more efficient and responsive Council. Ultimately, the recommendations made in a electoral review ought to bring about improved community engagement, more cohesive communities, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.'

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

8. The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act) section 56 requires the LGCBE to review ‘from time to time’ every principal local authority in England and make recommendations about electoral arrangements. In addition, the LGCBE can at any time review the arrangements for all or any part of a principal local authority’s area.

9. The LGCBE can make recommendations for the following aspects of local authority electoral arrangements:
   1. The total number of councillors to be elected to the council (known as ‘council size’);
   2. The number and boundaries of wards/divisions;
   3. The number of councillors to be elected for each ward/division; and
   4. The name of any ward/division.

10. Schedule 2 of the 2009 Act sets out the statutory criteria to which the LGBCE are required to have regard in conducting electoral reviews. In summary, in making recommendations, LGBCE are required to have regard to:

    1. The need to secure equality of representation;
    2. The need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
    3. The need to secure effective and convenient local government.
Financial and Risk Implications

11. If approved the council size would increase by 4 Members, this will represent an additional spend of approx. £60k per year as follows, based on the existing scheme of Member allowances:

- Additional basic allowances: £10,995.60 x 4 = £43,982 per year
- Additional ICT allowances: £1,050 x 4 = £4,200 per year

12. In addition, these Members will be entitled to travel and subsistence allowances, whilst these vary between Members the average per Member for 2018/19 was £84, suggesting a further additional spend of approximately £330 per year.

13. This additional cost will need to be reflected in the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Equities Implications

14. 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 partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

15. There are no direct equities implications that have been identified as relevant to this report. However, achieving a more even distribution of electoral representation in every ward will provide an opportunity for fairer representation.

Conclusion and next Steps

16. Any changes to the electoral arrangements that are approved by the LGBCE are brought into effect by means of a formal Order. This Order shall come into force on 1 April 2023.

17. The timetable for the remainder of the review as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commission Meeting on Council size</td>
<td>15 October 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation on warding patterns</td>
<td>22 October 2019 to 13 January 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission Meeting on Draft Recommendations</td>
<td>17 March 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation on Draft Recommendations</td>
<td>31 March 2020 to 8 June 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission Meeting on Final Recommendations</td>
<td>21 July 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order laid</td>
<td>Autumn 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order made</td>
<td>Winter 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>2023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Council size submission

Background Papers

None

Report author(s):

Jonathon Partridge, Head of Governance Services
Jonathon.partridge@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Appendix A

Council Size Submission
Central Bedfordshire Council (2019)
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Authority Profile</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Leadership</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statutory Functions</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Issues</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

1. Central Bedfordshire Council believes that a council size of **63 Members** is the most appropriate to enable Central Bedfordshire Council to continue to provide effective and convenient local government. This increase of four Members takes into account the significant growth underway within the area; the ambitions of the Council to continue to make Central Bedfordshire a great place to live and work; and the significant increases in workload during the period 2009 to 2019 that are visible throughout this submission in relation to accountability, the delivery of statutory functions and community leadership. A Council size of 63 will permit the Council to continue to engage proactively with its partners and local, regional and national bodies.

2. The evidence presented in this submission demonstrates that the Council is ambitious in its plans for the future. It wants Central Bedfordshire to be a great place to live and work and that is set alongside considerable housing growth in the area that makes Central Bedfordshire the fastest growing area outside of London.

3. The Council has clear ambitions to deliver growth in an efficient and effective fashion and to continue to support local and regional partnerships proactively. These relationships have been fostered over more than the previous 10 years and the Council feels it is vital we continue to be able to represent the interests of our residents in these settings effectively.

4. This submission demonstrates there has been a significant increase in the requirements of Executive Members meaning that this role is now considered to be full-time in the majority of cases. Whilst historically Executive Members have been able to be appointed to multiple committees, supporting the previous council size in 2009, going forward there will be less flexibility for Executive Members to be on more than one formal committee, they will not continue to be able to commit to the average of 2.8 positions per Member. Given the current number of Executive portfolios there will continue to be a minimum requirement of 10 elected Members to deliver the Executive governance model and a greater reliance on non-Executive Members to fulfil the remaining committee positions. This will require a higher number of committee positions to be filled by each Member than the present 2.8 average, something the Council does not deem to be acceptable given the concurrent increase in casework.

5. With regard to statutory functions the evidence highlights the significant increase in the commitment for Members on DMC up to 15.5 hours per month on this meeting alone, in light of which it is not appropriate for the majority of DMC Members to be on more than one formal committee at a time. Given the significant commitment for these Members it would not be appropriate to expect each of the Members of DMC to fulfill the same number of Committee meetings as all other elected Members. The average number of committee positions for those on DMC ought therefore to typically be lower than the average across the Council, placing greater pressure on those not on the Executive or on DMC. A minimum commitment of at least a further 10 Members is therefore required by the Council to deliver the planning element of its statutory functions.

6. Given the increasing complexity of these meetings it would not be appropriate to reduce the Council size, the proposed increase allows an equitable share of committee responsibilities that would allow those on DMC to focus on a smaller number of Council commitments.
7. In light of the changing nature of internal accountability and the Council’s aspirations to enhance the value provided by the overview and scrutiny process it is felt necessary for all non-Executive Members to be involved in the process and the current number of at least 49 non-Executive Members will continue to need to be involved to facilitate these ambitions alongside the other commitments that they have in the Council’s governance process.

8. Applying the national average of 3.2 committee positions to the remaining committee positions (144) suggests a further minimum of 45 elected Members, leading to a proposed Council size of 65. However, when considering the impact of a Council size of 65 on the elector ratio (see appendix) this would lead to a reduction in the average number of electors per Member. Whilst the governance framework suggests that more Members might be necessary the working group did not feel that a council size of more than 63 was necessary.

9. Given the forecast growth in the electorate of approximately 17,000 electors (8% growth) and the council’s ambition to further enhance its member development offer between 2019 and 2031 the Council has considered a range of options for changing the council size of between 55 and 63 based on this electorate growth and the ongoing commitment to the Council’s existing governance model and the effective delivery of community leadership.

10. The increased number of hours spent on casework during the period 2009 to 2019 is evidence of a particular increase in those areas where the growth is more significant, demonstrated by the disparity in the size of some wards. Some Members have advised that in particular they spend a greater amount of time supporting new residents who move into the area. In light of the growth of Central Bedfordshire and the increased use of social media the existing 20% increase in casework since 2009, will only increase further.

11. Whilst it is not yet included in the data in this report the recent introduction of the community grant scheme will also have a significant impact on the workload of Councillors within their community. This additional time commitment will necessitate the further involvement of Councillors in their community and therefore any reduction in Council size would be wholly inappropriate given this increase in workload.

12. Furthermore, whilst the development of a formal area board structure, through the use of joint committees is in a pilot phase (although there are five existing joint committees) the proposals to roll out a further eight joint committees in future years will significantly increase the number of committee positions and meetings to be facilitated. In light of the requirements to reduce the commitment on some Executive and DMC members this further commitment enhances the view that an increase in Council size is necessary.

13. In considering the most suitable council size it was felt particularly important to ensure that this size was sustainable for at least a further 2 council cycles beyond 2023. The current average number of electors per Member (3,575) is appropriate for all Members to engage fully in the work of the authority and the average figure should not vary significantly.

14. Therefore, whilst the proposal is based on electorate growth up to 2025, Members have proposed a figure of 63 as they felt this would maintain a sufficient council size up to at least 2031 and that in comparison to other authorities would maintain a suitable number of electors per Member based on the data available at the time (see table below).
15. A proposal of 63 Members retains an average number of electors per Member of 3,603 and given the significant levels of growth expected up to 2023 and then up to 2031 the Council does not feel it would be appropriate to propose a figure of less than 63, which would be unsustainable in the long-term.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average electors per Member</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Electorate¹</th>
<th>Per Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheshire West &amp; Chester</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>272,229</td>
<td>3,889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>367,686</td>
<td>3,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheshire East</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>299,422</td>
<td>3,651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Bedfordshire Council</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>227,000</td>
<td>3,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>220,605</td>
<td>3,502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Gloucestershire</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>200,587</td>
<td>3,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shropshire</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>240,220</td>
<td>3,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedford</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>129,657</td>
<td>3,241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Somerset</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>161,464</td>
<td>3,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solihull</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>159,884</td>
<td>3,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calderdale</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>149,005</td>
<td>2,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swindon</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>162,942</td>
<td>2,859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Berkshire</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>121,277</td>
<td>2,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrington</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>158,488</td>
<td>2,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herefordshire</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>141,294</td>
<td>2,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath &amp; North East Somerset</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>132,930</td>
<td>2,253</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. The Council feels that given this growth in the electorate it would not be possible to maintain the principles of effective strategic leadership, accountability, delivery of statutory functions or community leadership without the number of Members being increased to 63 to reflect the increase in the size of the electorate over that period.

17. In reaching a conclusion the Council surveyed Members on the proposal to increase the number of Members to 63 and received the below response, which further substantiates the view that this is the most appropriate council size.

---

¹ Electorate figures for each of these authorities are based on the 2018 actuals, for CBC the electorate figure is the projection for 2024, if the data for CBC was also based on the current actual information the number of electors (210,228) per Member is 3,575
18. Given the levels of commitment laid out in this report the Council felt that it would not be appropriate to propose any reduction in the Council size otherwise this would have a significant impact on our ability to continue to support the existing governance process in an effective fashion. As there are currently no proposals to reduce the size of the governance model it has been assumed that the commitment to supporting this model will continue at its existing level.

19. In light of the changing nature of internal accountability and the Council’s aspirations to enhance the value provided by the overview and scrutiny process it is felt necessary for all non-Executive Members to be involved in the process and the current number of at least 49 non-Executive Members will continue to need to be involved to facilitate these ambitions alongside the other commitments that they have in the Council’s governance process.
Introduction

20. In 2018 the LGBCE informed the Council of its intention to carry out an electoral review due to the electorate in some wards being significantly different from the average for the area. The last review of the Council by the Commission was in 2009-10 at which point the council size reduced from 66 to 59 elected Members having previously been represented by 136 Members under the former mid-Bedfordshire and south-Bedfordshire authorities prior to 2009.

21. To undertake this review of council size the Council formed a cross-party working group of five Members to review evidence and develop proposals to be presented to the Council’s General Purposes Committee. This report was approved by the General Purposes Committee in September 2019 [TBC] and was subsequently approved by Full Council in September 2019 [TBC].

22. Additionally, a number of surveys of all elected Members were undertaken to provide further evidence to support the proposals and to formulate the recommendation that is included in this submission.

23. The remainder of the report is structured around the LGBCE’s template for responses and provides the rationale for the Council size submission to ensure that the Council can continue to provide the following in an efficient and effective fashion: -

- Strategic leadership;
- Accountability;
- Support for statutory functions; and
- Community Leadership.
Local Authority Profile

24. Central Bedfordshire is a unitary authority serving a growing population of around 280,000. It is a largely rural area with over half the population living in the countryside and the rest in a number of market towns. The largest of these are Leighton Linslade, Dunstable, Biggleswade, Houghton Regis, Flitwick and Sandy.

25. The area is generally prosperous, with above average levels of employment although there are some areas of deprivation and greater need.

26. The area has excellent transport links with the A1 and M1 running through it, three main rail lines and two international airports, Luton and Stansted, on the doorstep. It is in the centre of an academic ‘golden triangle’ between Oxford, Cambridge and London Universities and also benefits from its own academic institutions at Cranfield University, the University of Bedfordshire and other further education colleges.

27. It is a great place to live and work. It is a relatively safe, green and affluent area which attracts major investment. People living in Central Bedfordshire earn more than the national average; this is in part influenced by some residents commuting out of the area – primarily to Hertfordshire, Luton, London, Milton Keynes and Bedford.

Population growth in Central Bedfordshire

28. In 2017 the population of Central Bedfordshire was 280,000. This is an increase of 27,600 people since 2011, a 10% increase over the six-year period. This was much higher than the overall growth rate of 5% in England and Wales over the same period. It is also a faster rate of increase than the previous ten years. Between 2001 and 2011, the population of Central Bedfordshire increased by a total of 21,600, a 9% increase, compared with 7% growth in England and Wales overall.

29. The rate of growth for the 18+ population was fairly similar, with 12% growth between 2001 and 2011, and 10% between 2011 and 2017. This compares with growth in in England and Wales of 9% between 2001 and 2011 and 5% between 2011 and 2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>2019 population</th>
<th>2025 population</th>
<th>Additional people aged 18+, 2019-25</th>
<th>% increase, 2019-25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Bedfordshire total</td>
<td>224,590</td>
<td>240,220</td>
<td>15,630</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: forecasts showing ward population, age 18+, in 2019 and 2025

30. The tables below also demonstrate that Central Bedfordshire is forecast to grow significantly faster compared to our comparator local authorities.

Note: Source: Office for National Statistics, Mid-Year Estimate of Population 2017
31. Wards vary in the size of their population, from 2,810 people in Houghton Conquest and Haynes, to 16,100 in Arlesey. Between 2011 and 2017, the wards with the biggest population increases are those that have seen major development in the last few years.

32. The Central Bedfordshire population increased by 9% between 2011 and 2017. However, ward growth ranged from 0% in Barton-le-Clay and Dunstable Watling to 33% in Silsoe and Shillington. The wards with the biggest population growth correspond to the areas with the biggest housing developments.

33. In all wards, at least 85% of the population were living in that ward one year ago. The proportion of people who had lived elsewhere one year ago ranged from 6% in Barton-le-Clay, Northill and Flitwick wards, to 11% in Dunstable Central and 15% in Cranfield and Marston Moretaine. Cranfield and Marston Moretaine had a particularly high proportion of residents who lived outside the UK one year ago. This is likely to be linked to the university.

**Migration**

34. The majority of the increase in our population is the result of people moving to Central Bedfordshire from outside the area.

35. Population growth is measured using births and deaths (known as ‘natural growth’) and migration. Between 2011 and 2017 natural growth resulted in an additional 7,750 people in Central Bedfordshire. Over the same period, migration within the UK accounted for an additional 12,300 people and international migration (outside the UK) for an additional 4,340 people. Migration accounts for more

---

3 Source: Office for National Statistics, Mid-Year Estimate of Population, 2017

than two thirds of the growth experienced between 2011 and 2017, with the majority of people moving from other parts of the UK.

**Electorate forecast**

36. The forecasts produced for the electoral review have made use of the methodology set out by the LGBCE in their guidance for the Polling District Forecasting Tool. However, they have also incorporated local intelligence about housing completions, trends in growth rates and data on the reasons for population changes.

37. As suggested by the Electoral Commission, we have used the ONS, Sub National Population Projections for Central Bedfordshire as our starting point. These suggest a total population of 306,100 by 2024, with 237,700 of these aged 18 or over.

38. We have then taken the average ratio of electors for 2016-2018 (0.95) and applied this to the 18+ population in 2024. This gives a total number of electors of 226,952 in 2024. This is an increase in the electorate of 16,724 (8%) compared with the 2018 figure. This increase is down to two key elements, population increase (32%) and net migration (68%).

39. The Council’s figure also takes account of housing completions, incorporating where houses will be built, when they will be complete and when they will be occupied. The Council has used completions as identified in the Central Bedfordshire Housing Trajectory, April 2019. It should be noted that the housing trajectory is a snapshot of expected completions at a point in time. To try and ensure that we only use those dwellings that have been occupied by 2024, we have only included planned completions up to 2023.

**Deprivation**

40. In general, levels of deprivation in Central Bedfordshire are relatively low. However, there are a small number of areas where it is higher. The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 combines 37 indicators to produce a single overall deprivation score for every Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in England. Central Bedfordshire is divided into 157 LSOAs, each containing around 1,600 people.

41. In 2015, five LSOAs in Central Bedfordshire were in the 10 to 20% most deprived in England, and eight were in the 20 to 30% most deprived. These were in parts of Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Leighton Linslade, Sandy and Flitwick.
Strategic Leadership

Governance Model

42. The Council has adopted the “Strong Leader” Executive model. The Leader is responsible for appointing Members to the Executive, for allocating portfolio responsibilities and for approving Executive delegations. The Leader has been appointed for a four-year term of office until the next election in 2023.

43. The Council maintains a list in Part 3B of the Constitution\(^5\) setting out the delegations to regulatory and other committees for the Council’s functions (other than those matters expressly reserved to Council). With the exception of quasi-judicial decisions and those taken under delegated powers the majority of decisions are taken collectively by the Council’s Executive. For that reason, it is proposed that in many cases the role of the Executive Member is a full-time one.

44. The Council has each of those committees that it is compelled to establish as set out below:

- Full Council
- Executive
- Licensing committee
- Planning Committee (DMC)
- At least one Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Health and Well-Being Board
- Schools Forum

45. In addition, whilst it is not a statutory requirement the Council has established an Audit committee, General Purposes committee, Appointment committee and a Standards committee in line with the majority of other local authorities. Whilst these are not statutory, they are critical to the efficient organisation of Council business.

46. In providing a general picture of the changing nature of the Council’s governance the table below sets out the level of commitment currently undertaken by Members in relation to the Council’s formal governance arrangements since the previous review in 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Committee meetings (per year)</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Committee positions</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Committee positions per Member</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National average committee and sub-committee places</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

47. Whilst several of the committees that were appointed by the Council in 2009 are no longer in existence, they have typically been replaced by other statutory committees such as the Schools Forum or the Health and Wellbeing Board. Both the total number of meetings and the total committee

\(^5\) Part 3B of the Constitution - [https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/fm6ws4z6o72gju1igf6s53xvqf2hwsq5](https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/fm6ws4z6o72gju1igf6s53xvqf2hwsq5)
positions has fallen between 2009 and 2019 but as the Council size was reduced during that period the average number of committee positions per Member has remained similar.

48. The figures outlined above for committee positions does not include numbers of substitutes, either for 2009 or 2019. If this were included it would significantly impact on the numbers of positions held by Members. As Members will on occasion need to take a place on the Committee for which they are a substitute the above represents the minimum time commitment to deliver the governance model.

49. In providing an assumption of the time commitment required for Members the working group felt that an average of 2-3 hours per meeting was appropriate. The working group also felt that Members would typically spend 2-3 hours preparing for each of these meetings. On average there are 6 meetings of a committee on an annual basis providing a monthly commitment for each Member of between approximately 3 to 4 hours per month to support the Council’s formal governance processes.

**Executive Portfolios**

50. The Council has the maximum number of Executive Members permissible (10) and each Member has a different portfolio covering a wide range of service areas. These roles necessitate attendance at a greater number of committee meetings, a total of 10% of the committee positions on the Council must be filled by one of the 10 Executive Members. However, the role of the Executive Member also necessitates undertaking significant work in partnership with other local authorities and external organisations.

51. The number of Executive Members has fluctuated between seven and 10 during the period 2010 -2019 as a result of the changing responsibilities of the Council. The table below reflects the significant number of new areas of responsibility referenced within the roles of the Executive Members that were not previously referenced in 2009, those roles that were included in 2009 are still present in the responsibilities of the Executive highlighting the significant expansion in the role and responsibilities of this group of Members over that period of time: -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio</th>
<th>New Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>External Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources:-</td>
<td>No specific new areas of responsibility set out in the Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing and Communities (new Post 2019)</td>
<td>Public Health Services; Improving Health and Wellbeing of Central Bedfordshire; Health and Wellbeing Board; Town and Parish Councils; Community Resilience; Community Engagement; and Stronger Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Member for Families, Education and Children</td>
<td>School Organisation; Understanding Businesses Skills requirements ; Adult Skills and Learning; Leaving Care; SEND Education Delivery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

6 Details portfolios of the Executive Members [https://centralbedfordshire.box.com/s/85g6fkowifg09r4nnoie0p233m43tx57]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio</th>
<th>New Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Member for Adults Social Care and Housing Operations (HRA)</td>
<td>Housing Operations (HRA); Empty Homes; Private Sector Housing; Housing Solutions (front line/Homelessness); Volunteering; Ageing Population including Learning Disabilities; Housing List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Member for Planning and Regeneration</td>
<td>Building Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Member for Community Services</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Member for Assets and Housing Delivery</td>
<td>Delivering Homes; Independent Living; Learning Disability; Accommodation; other HRA and Council Delivered Housing; and Housing Company delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Member for Transformation and External Relations</td>
<td>Transformation Agenda; Advisory role in Property and Assets Management; and Portfolio Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Member for Highways Delivery and Innovation</td>
<td>Highways Reactive Maintenance Delivery Strategy; Parking Strategy and Enforcement; Rural Match Funding; Highways Innovation; Cycling/Walking strategy and Missing Links Programme; and Reporting Systems development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

52. In addition to the Executive Members there are also 4 Deputy Executive Members who have no decision-making powers but support the Executive Member in undertaking their role, there role is not considered to be full-time but it does impact on their ability to undertake the average number of committee positions.

53. Due to the commitment of these Members to their responsibilities it is not proposed to reduce the number of Executive portfolios nor does it suggest that the Council size should be reduced.

**Delegated Responsibilities**

54. There is an extensive scheme of delegation to Directors laid out in the Constitution at Part 3E\(^\text{7}\) that permits officers to take delegated decisions, many of them in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

55. Whereas the vast majority of decisions within the Council, with the exception of planning and licensing matters, are taken by the Executive in formal meetings there is an ongoing responsibility outside of those meetings to be consulted on and to support delegated decision-making with officers.

\(^{7}\) Part 3E of the Constitution - [https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/pg1vxt80yxn04d5a98faan1ktrcx1](https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/pg1vxt80yxn04d5a98faan1ktrcx1)
56. In addition, the Executive has delegated a small number of matters to specific Executive Members as follows:

- Decisions that relate to traffic management, which are taken by the Executive Member for Community Services in a formal meeting organised to provide residents with an opportunity to attend and speak. In 2018/19 there were eight such meetings chaired by the Executive Member to make decisions on 61 matters.
- Decisions relating to schools age range changes, taken by the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children. In 2018/19 there were 2 such decisions taken by the Executive Member.
- Decisions that are the responsibility of the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, in 2018/19 there were 2 such decisions.
Accountability

Internal Scrutiny

57. The principal means of accountability within the authority is delivered through the Council’s overview and scrutiny process. Since 2009 the number of overview and scrutiny committees (OSCs) has reduced from five to four and covers the following four broad areas of responsibility (the detailed functions are set out in Part 3C of the Constitution\(^8\)):

- Corporate Resources
- Children’s Services
- Social Care, Health and Housing
- Sustainable Communities

58. There is also a Co-ordination Panel (OSCP) consisting of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the OSCs, which co-ordinates the function and matters that are relevant to more than one OSC and meets at least four times a year.

59. Whilst providing the opportunity for elected Members to hold the Executive to account it also provides a forum for residents to seek answers to questions from Executive Members and in some cases external organisations, and to challenge proposals. Over the previous three years the number of residents or partners attending OSC meetings or task and finish groups has increased by 67%.

60. These committees have a dual role in that they support the Council’s Executive in developing policy (overview), whilst they also hold the Executive to account (scrutiny). In recent years Members have encouraged a shift in the emphasis of the work of these committees towards a greater share of the agenda relating to policy development, from 15% (during 2016-17) to 41% (during 2018/19).

61. The Council also has a call-in process that allows elected Members to request the call-in of decisions that have been taken by the Executive. However, as the majority of controversial items or those on which there might be a public interest are considered by the OSCs before a decision is taken by the Executive is remarkably small. Over the previous four-year council cycle (2015-2019) two call-ins were considered by the OSCs. Both of these were referred back to the original decision maker to be reconsidered.

62. Due to the cross-cutting nature of the items received by these committees Members will often attend meetings of committees on which they are not a committee Member. For example, children’s health matters are typically received by the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC. In addition, the performance and budget monitoring functions are centralised in the Corporate Resources OSC and typically Members of each of the other OSCs will attend on a quarterly basis for those meetings in addition to the committees on which they are a Member.

63. Detailed task and finish reviews are also set-up as required and the appointment of Members varies depending on the topic and areas of interest. Appointment to task and finish groups is not restricted to members of the OSCs only in order to maximise the use of the knowledge and skills of all Members.

\(^{8}\) Part 3C of the Constitution - [https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/hapg4zap9wmhboypxk48ia5s22o89gi4](https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/hapg4zap9wmhboypxk48ia5s22o89gi4)
64. These task forces are a significant time commitment for Members. For example, a recent review on the integration of health and social care was formed of seven Members and undertaken in two phases over a period of 14 months. In addition to attending 17 individual task force meetings, of between 2 and 3 hours in duration, and attending 6 site visits to other local authority areas. Members of the task force also spent considerable hours reviewing research and evidence as part of this review. Whilst this commitment on this review is not typical of the current approach to all reviews the Council has an aspiration to undertake more reviews of this nature in the future, which will require sufficient Members to support the process and the number of reviews that might be undertaken concurrently.

65. In addition to the above the Council is also a Member of the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK) Integrated Care System Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which meets on a roughly quarterly basis but is envisaged to meet more regularly as plans for substantial changes to health services in the area start to be considered.

66. Each non-Executive Member of the authority is permitted to be appointed to an OSC and in addition is able to serve on any detailed task force reviews that might be established by the authority to review any specific topics. It is reasonable for each Member to be appointed as a Member or a substitute to no more than two OSCs or task forces concurrently. On the basis the Council has four OSCs, a long-term Joint OSC, and is currently encouraging two task force reviews to run concurrently the function currently requires a minimum of 38 Members.

67. At present there is a working group formally constituted to produce recommendations on the future shape of the OSCs before the end of the 2019/20 municipal year, which may lead to a change in the structure of these committees but all non-Executive Members will continue to be involved.
Statutory Functions

Planning

68. The Council has a Development Management Committee (DMC) that exercises decision-making powers with regards to planning matters. These meetings are roughly every four weeks or as necessary. There are no area planning committees at present.

69. Executive Members are also appointed to the DMC committee, there are presently three Executive Members and one Deputy Executive Member on the DMC committee (23% of the Membership).

70. The proportion of planning applications considered by DMC has remained stable over the previous four years at approximately 90 applications (approximately 2% of the total applications determined by the authority).

71. Although Central Bedfordshire is experiencing significant housing growth it is not envisaged that the number of planning applications considered by DMC will increasing significantly. However, whilst the number of applications received by DMC has been consistent these have become more complex in their nature as they typically relate to much bigger development schemes, reflecting the nature of growth in the area.

72. In addition, the average duration of these meetings has increased significantly as a reflection of the complexity of the matters being considered. In 2010 the average DMC meeting was less than 3.5 hours in duration. In 2018 the average meeting was more than 4.5 hours in duration with at least one meeting lasting more than 7 hours. Members of DMC also attend site visits prior to DMC meetings, to assist in understanding of the applications to be determined. These can also last up to 6 hours. Assuming that Members spend approximately 10 hours reading papers and attending site visits for each meeting the typical monthly time commitment for DMC Members who attended 100% of the meetings during 2018/19 was 15.5 hours.

Licensing

73. The Council has a standing Licensing Committee (of 12 Members) and also arranges Licensing Sub-Committee hearings as necessary, constituting three of the 12 Members of the Licensing Committee. Meetings of the Licensing Committee are arranged on a quarterly basis but only one took place during 2018/9. The number of Licensing Sub-Committee meetings has increased from four meetings per year in 2009 to eight meetings per year in 2018, doubling the workload for those Members involved. Any Member of the Licensing Committee can serve on the Sub-Committees and training is provided on a two-yearly basis for Members.

Other Regulatory Bodies

74. The Council has appointed a number of other Committees to assist with the discharge of its functions as set out in Part 3B\(^9\) or Part 3D\(^10\) of the Council’s Constitution. The cycles of the meetings vary but generally they are programmed to meet between four and six times per year. These committees are:

---


\(^10\) Part 3D of the Constitution - https://centralbedfordshire.app.box.com/s/41x79c7yl6wcz04w1xbd72x9dne9s5sr
75. The number of meetings and positions involved in these other bodies has been included in the governance section earlier in this report, but the number is largely in line with the other Council committees within the governance structure.

**External Partnerships**

76. The Council is involved in numerous bodies at a regional, sub-regional and national level with a range of partners, many of which have decision-making powers that includes the following:

- County Council Network
- Fire authority
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Local Government Association
- Police and Crime Panel
- South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP)

77. Appointments to these bodies are normally held by Executive Members but that is not a requirement, particularly in relation to the appointments to the Fire Authority, many of which are held by non-Executive Members.

78. In addition, the Council is also involved in a wide range of strategic, general and ward-based outside bodies\(^\text{11}\) all of which impact on the time commitment of Members. These bodies are approved by Full Council on a four-yearly basis and the representation is drawn from all Members of the Council, although some of the appointments are required to be Executive Members or local Ward Members. A total of 11% of these appointments must be filled by an Executive Member. For all others any Member could take part, these are not politically proportionate appointments. The majority of appointments to

---

\(^{11}\) List of CBC appointed outside bodies -
[https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/27/about_your_council/238/how_to_get_involved_in_council_decisions_-_make_your_voice_heard/9](https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/27/about_your_council/238/how_to_get_involved_in_council_decisions_-_make_your_voice_heard/9)
outside bodies are non-Executive Members. The commitment for these outside bodies is set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External partnerships</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External partnerships and outside bodies:</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total appointments:</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total meetings:</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average appointments per Member:</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average meetings per Member (per year):</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

79. In addition to the above Members are also appointed to school governing bodies, whilst the number of Member appointments as governors of maintained schools in the area has fallen from 92 to 11 this reflects the general movement towards academies, which now make up 40% of schools in Central Bedfordshire. This is a further commitment for all Members, which will continue in the future.

80. Given the significant growth of the area and the Council’s desire to work in a collaborative way with its partners it has been assumed that the number of external partnerships and outside bodies on which the Council has Members appointed will increase over the next 4-12 years, increasing the level of commitment for all Members.
Community Leadership

81. The Council has a number of joint committees who influence decisions, support local place-shaping and encourage local participation. Whilst these are not called area boards they fulfill the same functions in that they support local governance and engagement to resolve matters locally and meet quarterly. These joint committees are supported by the Council’s community engagement team as a reflection of the community-focused nature of their business. They also have their own clearly defined terms of reference.

82. In addition to these joint committees a pilot scheme for community governance is due to commence in Autumn 2019 covering the areas of Sandy, Moggerhanger, Northill, Southill, Blunham and Old Warden. These schemes encourage the use of area boards following the existing approach to joint committees to promote local community governance. Should this pilot scheme prove successful it will lead to changes in other areas and an increased commitment from Members to support up to seven additional joint committees throughout the area. This would represent an increase in workload of up to a further 35 positions (five Members on each area board) and 28 meetings per year (based on quarterly meetings).

83. The increase in local governance and community development models in which local Members have a role is a reflection of the reductions in Council funding and the requirement for community resilience. The increase in community resilience further impacts on the roles of Councillors who have a role in supporting and leading their communities in these models.

84. In those areas where joint committee or area boards do not currently exist Members are free to undertake their representational roles in whatever way they consider to be most appropriate. In those areas where growth has been highest Members have advised that they spend more time than previously with third parties and developers, engaging in the design and development of infrastructure projects. Given the significant growth in the area in recent years this was not a prevalent challenge for most Members in 2009.

85. There is a mix of approaches across the Council that includes use of social media and surgeries although the majority of ward Councillors hold surgeries on a periodical basis. Some Members are also town and parish councillors but there is no minimum requirement in relation to this. The increase in the use of social media has a significant impact on the role of elected Members with regard to expectations and changing the nature of the conversation that Members have with their residents. Social media provides a platform for Members to engage with residents; gather knowledge and feedback; canvas opinion; and publicise local campaigns. All of this is an additional commitment for elected Members and given there is almost an expectation from residents that Members will engage in social media this commitment is consistent across the Council.

86. To provide an accurate reflection of the time commitment for elected Members with regard to their community leadership role the working group undertook a survey of elected Members to ascertain feedback. A total of 54% of Members responded to the survey, although several Members responded to say that as they had only been elected for a couple of months, they felt it would skew the figures to provide a response. To provide an accurate reflection of the current position the data below reflects responses between the 10th and 90th percentile: -
87. In addition to the above in August 2019 the Executive approved two Community Grant Schemes throughout Central Bedfordshire. These schemes are designed to enable Councillors to support local community action.

88. Under the first scheme each Member will be allocated a balance of £2,000 capital funding to deliver ambitions in the local community. This scheme will require Members to carry out engagement in the local community to determine and assess the feasibility of projects and to consult on the nature and purpose of these schemes and award funding.

89. Under the second scheme asset-based community projects will be able to bid into a pot of up to £25,000 for each scheme based in local wards. This scheme will place an additional responsibility on Members to work with local groups prior to endorsing and negotiating for funding to be allocated under this scheme.

90. Given the Member role as community leaders and likelihood for disagreement and negotiation in the ward it is likely this will lead to a significant time commitment in the local ward for Members.

**Casework**

91. There is no mandatory scheme for responding to casework neither is there guidance provided to Members, it is a matter of individual preference how Members undertake their casework. Officer support is provided to the Leader and Executive and Deputy Executive Members to support them in their role, which sometimes includes minor support on casework. However, no officer support is provided to non-Executive Councillors.

92. The survey of Members undertaken by the working group asked members to provide an indication of the number of items of correspondence received on a weekly basis and the number of hours on average spent on a weekly basis carrying out their casework (see below). In comparison to the data provided in 2009 this demonstrates an average increase of 1.9 hours per Members per week.
93. The survey indicates that the total weekly commitment for Members on their Community Leadership role was a total of 17.9 hours. This compares to the figure provided by the national census in 2018\textsuperscript{12} of 13.9 hours.

94. To verify this figure, we subsequently asked Members to what extent they felt an average of approximately 16 hours per week carrying out their community leadership role, responding to casework, attending meetings in the community (including town and parish council meetings) and supporting residents was an accurate reflection of their experience (see below), we received responses from 73% of Members as follows: -

To what extent is 16 hours an accurate reflection of your experience of this role?

Answered: 43 Skipped: 0

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart.png}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{12} https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Councillors%27%20Census%202018%20-%20report%20FINAL.pdf
Other Issues

Member development

95. In January 2019 the Council achieved Charter Status for its Member Development Programme (MDP). There is an ongoing commitment to support and enhance this programme up to 2023 by which time the Council hopes to achieve Charter Plus status. The development of this scheme is supported by a cross-party Member Development Forum of six elected Members, which meets up to four times per year. The Council is also rolling out personal development plans to Councillors (on a self-selection basis) to support the delivery of Charter Plus status. The Council hopes to achieve Charter Plus status before the end of 2020.

96. The programme commences with a significant induction programme that is delivered to all Members and for which new Members are encouraged to attend. Following the local elections in May 2019 a total of 16 sessions were delivered during a period of seven weeks to all Members to support their introduction to the Council.

97. The programme represents a serious commitment to Members to deliver this scheme that requires attendance at training events organised across the four-year council cycle in addition to monthly briefing sessions. These modules aim to enhance community leadership and professional development as follows:

- Scrutiny and Challenge
- Communications Skills
- Community Leadership
- Partnership Working

98. There are also compulsory learning events that are organised for Members as part of the induction programme, some of which are e-learning and cover the following topics:

- Development Management Committee (Planning) for Members of the Committee
- Licensing for Members of the Committee
- Being a corporate parent
- Ethical Governance (e-learning)

99. In addition to the formal learning events there are monthly briefings and information sharing sessions arranged for Members under the Member development scheme covering a wide range of topics. There were 11 Member Development events and briefings delivered during April 2018 and March 2019.

100. This additional commitment of Members to be involved in and to support the Councils bid for Charter Plus status is further demonstration of the increased commitment required from Members to attend meetings organised by the Council. This focus on personal development has increased significantly since 2009 and with the application for charter plus status there is a desire to continue this level of engagement beyond 2023.
Appendix A

The Working Group considered a range of alternatives based on the data contained in this report: -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of elected Members</th>
<th>Current (2019)</th>
<th>Based on the electorate projection for 2024</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. committee positions per Member</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. committee meetings per Member (per year)</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average external partnership positions per Member</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. external partnership/outside body meetings per Member (per year)</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average total weekly commitment for community leadership per Member (hours)</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average items of correspondence per Member (weekly)</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average electors per Member</td>
<td>3,575</td>
<td>3492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(+/-) change to electorate per Member compared to 2019</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 On average there are six meetings of a committee each year, this figure is based on the average meetings per Member based on the committee positions
14 On average there are four meetings of each external partnership or outside body per year.
Central Bedfordshire in contact
8. Community Grant Schemes - Amendments to the Constitution

To consider the outline operation of the community grant scheme approved by Executive on 20 August 2019 and to seek approval to amend the Constitution.
Central Bedfordshire Council

General Purposes Committee

Community Grants – Amendments to the Constitution

Responsible Director: Charles Warboys Director of Resources
Charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Purpose of this report
To outline the community grant schemes approved by Executive on 20 August 2019 and to seek approval for required amendments to the Constitution to enable implementation of these schemes.

RECOMMENDATIONS
The General Purposes Committee is asked to:

1. Consider proposed amendments to the Council’s Constitution as set out in Appendix A to enable newly established community grant schemes and existing grant schemes to be implemented within the Council’s constitution; and

2. Recommend to Council to approve the amendments to the Council’s constitution.

Introduction

Community Grant Schemes

1. At its meeting on 20 August 2019, Executive approved the implementation of two new community grant schemes, the Ward Councillor Grant Scheme and a Community Assets Grant scheme. Executive also endorsed the approach for development of a third grant scheme to enhance the public realm across Central Bedfordshire. Executive report – Community grants.

2. The Ward Councillor Grant Scheme is designed to enable the allocation of relatively modest amounts of funding to local priority projects in areas such health, culture, sport, environment, heritage and community developments. Under this scheme, the decision to support a project or group with a grant lies with the Ward Councillor. At the point of endorsing an application, the Ward Councillor will also be required to declare any pecuniary or other interest in the project.
3. The Community Assets grant scheme is designed to enable investment in community assets (such as community buildings / community facilities/community infrastructure) which support the social wellbeing of the local community and is aimed at supporting larger, asset-based community projects with potential single grant awards of up to £25,000. The Public Realm Improvement Scheme will support partnership working between Central Bedfordshire and local Town and/or Parish Councils to improve the local environment.

4. In the spirit of the established “town ranger” scheme which is operating in Dunstable, the proposed approach is to facilitate reactive and flexible arrangements for maintaining the public realm through a combination of Town and Parish Council funded staff, who will operate with Central Bedfordshire grant funded equipment.

**Existing grant schemes**

5. There are three existing grant schemes in place - the Langford and Biggleswade Windfarm Community Fund Panel, Eggington Community Fund Panel and the Angus Brewer Community Fund Panel (Caddington) were required as part of the relevant S106 Agreements attached to the Windfarm in Langford / Biggleswade and the Solar Farms in Eggington and Caddington parishes.

6. The Windfarm grant scheme has £24,000 (index linked) of S106 funding to support local environmental and community projects, whilst the S106 funding for the solar farm grant schemes is linked to the amount of solar power generated on an annual basis and is designed to support local community projects.

7. As required by the S106 Agreement a Grant Fund Panel comprising local ward and town councillors and the developer/owner is in place to approve applications for grants to support local projects. Two of these Panels are already approved Outside Bodies and one is being proposed to this Committee to be added. The Constitution needs to be updated to give delegated authority to Councillors to approve these grants.

**Issues**

8. The Monitoring Officer has advised that amendments are required to the Council’s Constitution to ensure the appropriate delegated authority is in place for new and existing grant schemes. To implement the Ward Councillor Grant Scheme, Members will need to be provided with delegated authority to approve the grant payments. The Monitoring Officer’s advice is that additions are required to Part 3A ‘Allocation of Responsibility For Functions – Full Council and Executive’ and Part 2 Article 2 ‘Members of the Council’.

9. To implement the Community Asset Grant Scheme, the Director of Resources will require delegated authority to approve the grant payment which will require changes to the Constitution at Part 3E ‘Scheme of Delegation by the Council and by the Executive to Directors and Other Officers’. A further report will be brought to General Purposes Committee when operation of the scheme is confirmed.
Reason/s for decision

10. Amendments to the Constitution are required in order for the new and existing grant schemes to be implemented within the Constitution.

Council Priorities

11. **Creating Stronger Communities** - Community grant schemes will support Ward Councillors in their role as community leaders and support projects which will contribute to the Council’s priority to create strong communities, building local resilience amongst residents and local community groups.

12. **Protecting the vulnerable; improving wellbeing** - Community action achieved through grant funding will also help groups to tackle local issues including supporting the vulnerable and improving social and community wellbeing.

Corporate Implications

13. Community grant schemes will require collaboration and joint working across Council services, to pool the required expertise and deliver a new scheme of grant funding that is legal and compliant with guidelines on capital expenditure.

Legal Implications

14. The Council has the power to make the grant payments pursuant its general power of competence contained at section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

15. The changes proposed to the Constitution will give Members and the Director of Resources delegated authority to award the grant payments.

Financial and Risk Implications.

16. The capital funding allocated to the community grant schemes was approved by Council in February 2019 and covers the financial year 2019/20. Any subsequent capital allocation will need to be addressed in the Medium Term Financial Plan Capital Programme.

17. The risks associated with the grant schemes are listed below and have been considered by the Executive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate spending by group</td>
<td>Groups allocated funding will be monitored by Ward Councillors and officers alerted for action. Rigorous assessment of applications by officers with relevant expertise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lack of take up  
Ward Councillors will be actively supported to promote the schemes in their local communities with briefings and guidance materials.

Discrimination  
Officers will be available to advise on all aspects of the scheme to ensure decisions are made in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different members of their community.

Overspending  
Ward Councillors will be kept informed of the balance of funding available to allocate to groups in their areas.

Capacity to deliver  
Applicant groups will be checked and verified by a third party agency.

Ability of the Council to recover grant monies in the event of inappropriate spending by group  
Legally enforceable grant agreements will be in place.

Equalities Implications

18. 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.

19. The duty requires public authorities to demonstrate that they are making financial decisions in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different members of their community. It is important that Councillors are aware of this duty before they take a decision.

20. Community grant schemes will be accessible to community and voluntary organisations who are seeking funding to make a difference in their communities. Ward Councillors will promote the opportunity to apply for funding throughout their communities before they decide which projects they wish to support in their communities and will be encouraged to consider the equality implications of their decision. Groups will be required to complete an equalities implications section as part of the application form and the Equalities Officer will assist in developing the application forms and assessment processes.

Appendices

Appendix A: Proposed amendments to the Constitution
Report author(s):

**Georgina Stanton, Assistant Director, Service Development**
[Georgina.Stanton@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Georgina.Stanton@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

**Sarah Hughes, Community Engagement Manager**
[Sarah.Hughes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.Hughes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)
Appendix A

Proposed amendments to the Constitution

Part 2 Article 2 ‘Members of the Council’

Paragraph 3.  Roles and Functions of all Councillors

Current

3.1.5 Community leadership and representation.

Proposed

3.1.5 Community leadership and representation including the Ward Councillor Grant Scheme

Part 3A ‘Allocation of Responsibility For Functions – Full Council and Executive’

New paragraph 8 and 9. Current paragraph 8 re-numbered as 10.

8. Functions delegated to Ward Councillors

8.1 Ward Councillor Grant Scheme.

9. Functions delegated to Councillors appointed to outside bodies that distribute community grants.

9.1 Approving the distribution of section 106 grant payments for Eggington Community Fund and Langford and Biggleswade Windfarm Community Fund Panel.

Part 3E ‘Scheme of Delegation by the Council and by the Executive to Directors and Other Officers’

New paragraph 4.2.38. Current paragraph 4.2.38 8 re-numbered as 4.2.39 etc.

Community Assets Grant Scheme

4.2.38 To award individual Community Asset grants up to £25,000
9. Joint Committees Terms of Reference

To consider a single set of Terms of Reference for the Town Joint Committees in Central Bedfordshire (Biggleswade, Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Linslade).
Central Bedfordshire Council

General Purposes Committee  9 September 2019

Joint Committees Terms of Reference

Responsible Director: Richard Carr, Chief Executive

Richard.Carr@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Purpose of this report

To recommend for approval a single set of Terms of Reference for the Town Joint Committees in Central Bedfordshire (Biggleswade, Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Linslade).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Purposes Committee is asked to:

1. Approve universally applicable Terms of Reference for the Town Joint Committees in Central Bedfordshire (Biggleswade, Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Linslade); and

2. Recommend the Terms of Reference to Council for adoption and replacement of the individual Terms of Reference for each Town Joint Committee currently in the Council’s Constitution.

Issues

1. There are four Town Joint Committees in Central Bedfordshire in Biggleswade, Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Linslade. The origin of these four Town Joint Committees stems from a joint interest and focus on town centre regeneration. Each have developed their own Terms of Reference which are included in the Council’s Constitution.

2. Each Town Joint Committee (known as Partnership Committees in Leighton Linslade and Houghton Regis) comprises 4-5 Member representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council and the relevant Town Council, alongside co-opted members from business and the voluntary and community sector.
3. Central Bedfordshire Council’s representatives are nominated to each Town Joint Committee annually from the cohort of Ward Councillors from each town.

4. Comprehensive reports about Central Bedfordshire Council activities in the relevant towns are produced for each meeting, which generate considerable interest, discussion and follow-up.

5. A review was carried out in 2016/17 with the Town Joint Committees that revealed concerns about the perceived lack of recognition and credibility afforded to these bodies. On many issues it was felt that the Committees had limited influence and that issues were not being presented or brought to the attention of the Committees for their input.

6. The review concluded that a universal set of Terms of Reference for the Town Joint Committees was required to provide a greater degree of consistency and alignment. This has included the development of a joint branding protocol, an annual workplan and efforts to establish a reporting mechanism into Central Bedfordshire Council.

7. The Terms of Reference have been through several iterations and have been discussed with each of the Town Joint Committees at their meetings, as well as at a collective meeting of Town Joint Committee representatives on 9 October 2018.

8. The Monitoring Officer and Head of Governance have also been consulted on the Terms of Reference.

9. A final draft of the Terms of Reference has been approved by each of the Town Joint Committees at their meetings as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joint Committee / Meeting</th>
<th>Date 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leighton - Linslade Partnership Committee</td>
<td>11 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houghton Regis Partnership Committee</td>
<td>30 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biggleswade Joint Committee</td>
<td>22 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunstable Joint Committee</td>
<td>13 June</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. The final draft of the revised Terms of Reference is attached in Appendix A

11. These include a final proposed amendment to the definition of purpose, requested by the Dunstable Joint Committee. This includes a reference to the importance of local employers and reads as follows;

“To influence decisions and help shape initiatives and their delivery for the benefit of the whole town taking into account the needs of the town, customers, employers, employees, residents, visitors, traders, property owners and developers”
Reasons for decision

12. The Town Joint Committees are an important means by which the Council can engage on local issues of importance with our major towns.

13. A universal Terms of Reference ensures the Town Joint Committees are working within a consistent framework and remit.

Council Priorities

14. Effective operation of our Town Joint Committees contributes to the Council’s objective of creating stronger communities.

15. The Town Joint Committees enable the relevant Ward Councillors and Town Council Members to receive information and debate local issues of importance, as well as challenges and opportunities in their localities.

16. The Town Joint Committees provide an opportunity for locally elected Members to scrutinize developments which impact on their towns and enable Councils to work together on local solutions.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

17. The Monitoring Officer has been consulted on the draft Terms of Reference and has assisted with their drafting and advised on the process for adoption.

18. The Monitoring Officer also advised that Council will need to formally approve the Terms of Reference for incorporation into Part 3D of the Constitution and to replace the existing Terms of Reference for each Town Joint Committee.

19. A universal Terms of Reference for the Town Joint Committees enables them to operate in a consistent, coherent and transparent manner. Their adoption and continued inclusion in the Council’s Constitution ensures they are a recognised part of the Council’s corporate governance structure.

Financial and Risk Implications

20. There are no financial or risk implications to this report.
Equalities Implications

21. Public Authorities have 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. It is important that Councillors are aware of this duty before they take a decision.

22. The previous Terms of Reference did not make any reference to promoting equality but the new universal terms include the following clause;

“Consider the ways in which proposals and initiatives can help to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and foster good relations”

Conclusion and next Steps

23. The draft Terms of Reference enable the Town Joint Committees to work in a consistent way and are an important mechanism for Members of the relevant Town Councils and Central Bedfordshire Council to work together on local issues of importance.

24. The introduction of work plans will enable Members and officers to forward plan the work of the Committees and ensure relevant issues are timetabled appropriately.

25. Further work is needed to ensure an appropriate reporting mechanism is in place for the work of the Town Joint Committees to feed back into the Council.

Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Terms of Reference for Joint Committees

Background Papers

None

Report author(s): Sarah Hughes
Community Engagement Manager
Sarah.hughes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
APPENDIX A

Joint Committees : Terms of Reference Final Draft

Purpose

1. To influence decisions and help shape initiatives and their delivery for the benefit of the whole town taking into account the needs of the town, customers, employers, employees, residents, visitors, traders, property owners and developers.

2. To develop and encourage public participation and engagement and take into consideration the resident voice in the work of the Committee.

Objectives

1. Help improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural vitality of the town

2. Ensure a partnership and collaborative approach to achieve the delivery of town regeneration, including influencing Section 106 funding received for town improvements and community facilities.

3. Opportunities to delegate funding decisions to the Committees should be explored, such as Section 106 received to spend on community facilities.

4. The Committee will make decisions on any joint funding allocated to it.

5. Influence and help shape strategies / plans that impact on the future viability of the town.

6. Provide a forum for briefing Members of the Joint Committee on all key issues affecting the town, at the discretion of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

7. Make recommendations on strategically significant projects to the relevant Council’s decision-making committees, including Committees of the Town Council.

8. Develop and maintain joint branding of communication, agendas and minutes.

9. To enable communities to discuss services and influence decisions at the local level as to how these services are delivered.

10. To provide a forum for two-way communication about public service delivery and the implementation and effectiveness of policies affecting the town.

11. Promote resilience by encouraging communities to do more for themselves and champion local solutions.
12. Consider the ways in which proposals and initiatives can help to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and foster good relations.

Membership

1. Four Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and four Councillors from Biggleswade Town Council (Biggleswade Joint Committee).
2. Four Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and four Councillors from Houghton Regis Town Council (Houghton Regis Partnership Committee).
3. Five Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and five Councillors from Leighton-Linslade Town Council (Leighton-Linslade Partnership Committee).
4. Five Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and five Councillors from Dunstable Town Council (Dunstable Joint Committee).

Who must be elected representatives of the wards.

5. Two substitutes from each Council will be permitted to attend meetings as full Committee representatives. A Councillor who sits on both CBC and the Town Council can substitute. Central Bedfordshire Council Councillors shall not substitute a Town Councillor on the Committee and vice versa.

6. Substitutes for Central Bedfordshire Council Members on the Joint Committee must be a ward councillor in the town in the first instance or if not available a substitute must be an Executive Member. Substitutes for the Town Council Members of the Joint Committee will be a Ward town councillor.

7. Members are appointed annually.

8. All Members of the Committee should have the interests of the town as a priority, not their own wards.

Meetings and Quorum

1. At least three Members from each Council must be in attendance for the meeting to be quorate.
2. Meetings will be held a minimum of once per year and up to four per year and take place at venues in the area.
3. The Committee may also organise extra ordinary meetings at the discretion of the Chair and Vice Chair.
4. In addition to the Committee meetings, the Committee can organise other forms of engagement to take place such as themed discussions / task and finish groups and community conferences, including joint meetings or events with other Joint Committees in Central Bedfordshire.
5. All meetings will be open to the public unless exempt items are discussed.

Chair and Vice Chair
1. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be appointed from and by the Joint Committee’s core membership; each Council must be represented in either role.

2. The appointed Chair and Vice-Chair will hold their post for a period of one year, after which they may stand for re-election.

3. The Vice Chair will preside in the absence of the Chair. If neither is present, the Committee members in attendance will appoint a Chair from amongst them for the duration of that meeting.

4. The Chair and Vice Chair will be responsible for the content of the Committee agendas and will allow committee members and other stakeholders to submit agenda topics which will be included unless the proposed agenda item is not relevant to the Purpose and/or Objectives of the Joint Committee.

**Secretariat**

1. Either Council can administer the Joint Committee, according to their own Standing Orders. The Committee will decide annually which Council is to administer the Committee.

2. Agendas, minutes and press releases will be issued under joint branding.

3. The secretariat will prepare, monitor and keep up to date an annual work plan to set the broad direction and priorities for the Committee.

**Decision making arrangements**

1. Only members of the Committee can vote. Co-opted Members have no voting rights.

2. The Committee will not have any decision-making powers regarding planning applications and will not seek to duplicate or hinder the work of Central Bedfordshire Council as the Local Planning Authority.

3. The Committee will reach decisions by a simple majority. The Chair will have the casting vote in the case of a tie.

**Co-option**

1. To support engagement with local stakeholders the Committee can co-opt members from local representative groups, as appropriate up to a maximum of 15. Each co-opted Member will be able to engage fully in all discussions but will not have any voting rights. Co-opted members can be removed from the Committee by joint agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair.

2. The list of Co-opted Members should be reviewed annually.
Governance

1. The Minutes and action log for the Joint Committee will be presented to Central Bedfordshire Council. The detail of where this will be presented will be determined by Central Bedfordshire Council and reported back to the Joint Committee.
10. Appointments to Outside Bodies

To consider the proposed amendments to the Constitution and the proposed additions to the Council's approved list of Outside Bodies.
Central Bedfordshire Council

General Purposes 9 September 2019

Appointments to Outside Bodies

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

Purpose of this report
To propose amendments to the list of approved outside bodies for appointment by the Council and to enable the Committee to consider the delegated powers provided to the Monitoring Officer in relation to appointments to these bodies.

RECOMMENDATIONS
The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider and recommend to Council the proposed amendments to the Constitution detailed at paragraph 5; and

2. Approve the proposed additions to the Council's approved list of outside bodies detailed at paragraph 6.

Background

1. Central Bedfordshire Council appoints Members to outside bodies. An outside body is defined as either an incorporated or an unincorporated body which is not part of the Council’s own governance structure but whose work helps in some way towards fulfilling the Council’s own responsibilities and/or improving community life in Central Bedfordshire.

2. The term embraces a diverse range of organisational purposes and structures. Outside bodies are categorised as either strategic, locality / ward-based or general in nature.

3. Members appointed by the Council to an outside body will, when sitting on that body, often have duties to the organisation which take precedence over their duties to the Council. This will depend on the type of organisation on which they serve. Members will therefore wish to consider at any time when it appears that the organisation’s interests may conflict with the Council’s interests, whether that conflict prevents them from taking part in decision-making either at the organisation’s meeting or at the Council’s meeting. In such circumstances the Member should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.
Appointment of Members to Outside Bodies

4. Part 3E paragraph 4.2.79 of the Constitution delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer to make appointments to outside bodies in accordance with the wishes of appropriate Members of the Council.

5. The Monitoring Officer has determined that it is not reasonable for him to make appointments under delegated authority to Outside Bodies where there is not consensus amongst the Group Leaders. Where there is not consensus the appointment will be made by full Council. As a result, General Purposes is asked to recommend to Full Council that Part 3E of the Constitution be amended as follows:-

5.1 Part 3E paragraph 4.2.79 with regard the delegated powers of the Monitoring Officer to read: -

“After consultation with appropriate Members of the Council, where there is a consensus and where required in accordance with their wishes, to make appointments, removals or replacements to any Member body in the Council’s Constitution and to outside bodies (including school governing bodies); and to fill casual vacancies on any such bodies in accordance, where required, with Sections 15-17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.”

5.2 Part 4A paragraph 4.2 to include additional powers for Full Council at ordinary meetings as follows: -

“To make appointments to outside bodies as required.”

Approved list of outside bodies

6. During July to September 2019 all Members appointed to outside bodies were asked to provide further detail on the bodies to which they were appointed. Members were also asked to identify any outside bodies to which they were appointed that were not currently on the approved outside body list. The following were identified:

- Angus Brewer Community Fund Panel
- Broom North Quarry Liaison Group
- Broom South Quarry Liaison Group
- Greensand Country Landscape Partnership Board
- South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP)
- Special Interest Group for Countering Extremism (SIGCE)

7. General Purposes is asked to approve the addition of the above bodies to the Council’s approved list of outside bodies. Members will then be appointed to these by the Monitoring Officer where there is a consensus and if no-consensus by full Council.

Council Priorities

8. Representation on outside bodies helps towards fulfilling the Council’s own responsibilities and priorities and improving community life in Central Bedfordshire.
Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

9. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The report incorporates the Monitoring Officer’s advice on the constitutional requirements and proposed amendments.

Financial and Risk Implications

10. There are no direct or immediate financial or risk implications arising from this report.

Equalities Implications

11. 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.

12. The work of outside bodies helps fulfil the Council’s own responsibilities and/or improve community life in Central Bedfordshire.

Conclusion and next Steps

13. If this committee approves the addition of the outside bodies the Monitoring Officer will seek the views of the Group Leaders and if there is a consensus will appoint the agreed Member to the outside body for the period 2019-2023. If there is no consensus full Council will be asked to make the appointment.

14. If this committee recommends to full Council to approve the proposed constitutional amendments, full Council will consider the proposed amendments.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

Report author:

Jonathon Partridge, Head of Governance Services
Jonathon.partridge@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
11. Work Programme

To consider the General Purposes Committee Work Programme.
Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to assist the General Purposes Committee in discharging its responsibilities by providing a proposed work programme for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION
That the General Purposes Committee considers the proposed work programme attached at Appendix A.

Background

1. To assist the General Purposes Committee a work programme is attached at Appendix A to this report. The work programme contains the known agenda items that the Committee will need to consider.

2. Additional items will be identified as the municipal year progresses. The work programme is therefore subject to change.

Council Priorities

3. The activities of the General Purposes Committee are crucial to the governance arrangements of the organisation.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

4. There are no legal implications.
Financial and Risk Implications

5. There are no financial and risk implications.

Equalities Implications

6. 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.

7. Report authors will be encouraged to work with the Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity) in order to ensure that relevant equality implications are identified.

Conclusion and next Steps

8. This report will assist the General Purposes Committee in discharging its responsibilities. Any amendments approved by the Committee will be incorporated in the work programme.

Appendices

Appendix A – General Purposes Committee Work Programme

Background Papers

None

Report author: Celina Jagusz
Committee Services Officer

celina.jagusz@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
## General Purposes Committee Work Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018/19 Municipal Year</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
                         | • Arrangement for Ethical Standards (Standards Complaints (SR)  
                         | • Update on the Parental Leave Policy for Members (JP)  
                         | • Work Programme (CJ) |
| 12 December 2019       | • Annual Review of the Pay Policy Statement 2020/21 (VC)  
                         | • Work Programme (CJ)  
                         | •  |
| 26 March 2020          | • Work Programme (CJ)  
                         | •  |