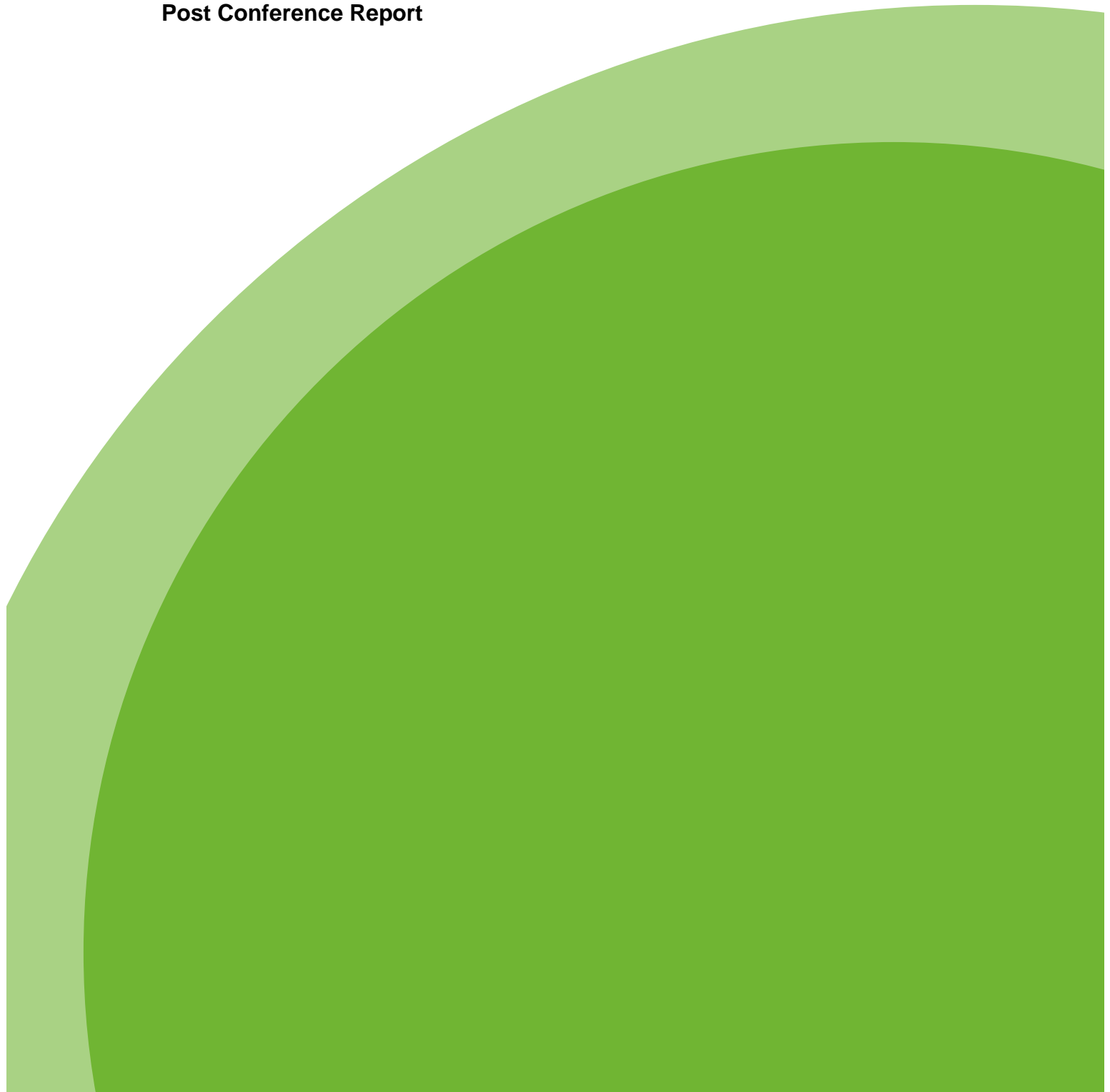




Town & Parish Council Conference

20 January 2015
Post Conference Report



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INTRODUCTION

Thank you to everyone who attended our 16th Town & Parish Council Conference. I was delighted to welcome over 80 delegates, representing 37 parishes.

Before the presentations I gave an update on the success of our recent initiative to implement community defibrillators across Central Bedfordshire. With your help we have distributed 44 units in the 31 Parishes that took part. This means that 179,000 residents now have access to life saving equipment. I also gave an update on the safety camera scheme; that 16 parish councils expressed an interest, following our presentation at the conference in April, and how we are currently working with 7 parish councils to install new digital cameras in their areas. I finished with an update on the Highways Helpline and reassured you that this facility will remain in place for reporting highway issues to enable further consideration of the implications.

This conference covered a range of subjects including: the Highways contract; parliamentary and local government elections; dog control orders; and the budget. We were also pleased to welcome the Police and Crime Commissioner to share with us his plans for a proposed uplift in the Police precept to recruit 100 additional police constables.

Feedback from the conference was very positive and we look forward to hosting the next conference after the elections; more details will follow in due course.

In the meantime, if you have any suggestions on how we can improve these events please let me know.



Councillor David Hopkin

Deputy Executive Member for
Corporate Resources and
Lead Member for Localism,
Central Bedfordshire Council

PRESENTATIONS

There were five presentations, on the following subjects:

The Highways Contract

Paul Mason, Head of Highways

Combined Parliamentary and Local Government Elections, 7th May 2015

Brian Dunleavy, Democratic Services Manager

Dog Control Orders

Steve Barrett, Community Safety Operations Manager, Community Services

The Budget 2015

Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader of the Council

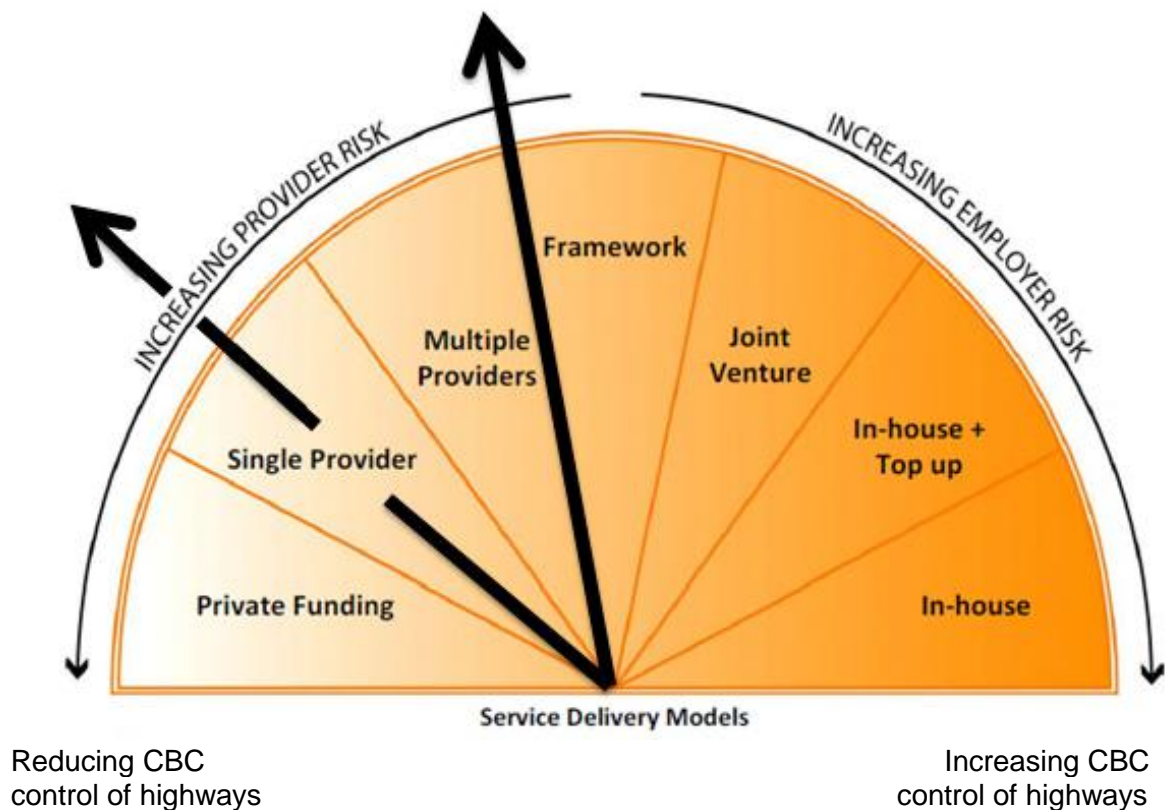
Police & Crime Commissioner

Olly Martins, Police & Crime Commissioner

The Highways Contract Renewal

The Highways Contract Renewal goes live in April 2016. The current contract which has run from 2005 is with The Managing Agent Contract (MAC), initiated by Bedfordshire County Council. Following consultation with potential contractors and other interested groups, Executive required greater control of its highway network, whilst enabling more effective branding in line with CBC aspirations. This also reflects residents' requests to see a greater CBC presence. Executive authorised a new Term Maintenance Contract Plus, whilst some highway client services are coming in-house from the current provider. Under this arrangement CBC will be able to intervene earlier.

Moving from a MAC to a TMC+



In readiness for the change, CBC has re-organised some of its resources and the Amey Area Teams are now managed by CBC. The New Roads and Street Works Team transferred in the new year. In preparation for the change, current processes will be consolidated, the asset management approach will be optimised and industry standard Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) documents utilised, which will aid future funding bids to Department for Transport.

Paul Mason explained the key dates for the tendering process and these are set out in the presentation ([link](#)).

In order to ensure that new faults or issues raised on the CBC web portal are dealt with in a timely manner, the web portal is now mobile friendly.

Summary of discussion

Questions raised during the presentation:

Q: Cllr Livesey, Clifton Parish Council: Will you have access to road accumulated data as lots of data seems to have been skipped on change over.

A: The history should remain.

Q: Cllr Cooper, Stotfold Town Council: As the contract changes, will work that has already been approved on the existing schedule remain unaffected, or can we expect changes?

A: The existing schedule for the last year of the contract is not going to change drastically, but there may be some changes.

Q: Cllr Bingham, Ampthill Parish Council: Is Cllr Spurr here tonight. Is Martin Freeman going to be involved?

A: Cllr Spurr is not present tonight and Martin Freeman is not involved.

Q: Cllr Ellis, Flitton & Greenfield Parish Council: Regarding the arrangement for MAC – who will be overseeing contract health and safety checks when the department should be doing the checks?

A: The safety process sits with the provider – which we can do, this is not a problem. There are strategies and work is in hand for policies to be put into place with regards MAC and TMC differentials. Continuing under the TMC we will have more control through an asset management approach and will be more involved with the when and how work is done; taking back asset management.

Q: Regarding the design element – previously a contractor designed and came back 6 months later (Amey) – what are the technical capabilities?

A: This capability will be identified as part of the tendering process. Single point contact works well and we need to get it right when it is back in house.

Q: Cllr Gendle, Woburn Parish Council: With regards the new contract – what are you doing and are you giving parishes any flexibility?

A: The labour contract is 7 years, with an option to extend for a further 7 years – there is an investment cycle, and we will be investing in equipment, plant etc. If not performing against KPIs and other measures then it will not be extended. Other people are working on the network and areas that have not been fixed will be looked at.

Q: Cllr Clapham, Lidlington Parish Council: In terms of designing a scheme, will you be going for new systems or staying with the ones you are currently working with? Also, although parishes are customers, will there be joint working?

A: Work will be done through the process of consultation, in which we listen to local knowledge.

Cllr Hopkin referred to the 'Framework for the Delivery of Services by Town and Parish Councils' that was presented at a previous conference. This encourages joint working with parish councils and sets out different ways in which services can be enhanced – e.g. by T&PCs acting as our eyes and ears on the ground, T&PCs delivering some services themselves or by providing a financial contribution for local enhancements. If you need any further information, please contact Peter Fraser:

peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

Q: Cllr Bingham, Ampthill Town Council: Will you be sharing the results of the survey?

A: Yes, a link to the results will be emailed to all town and parish councils. In summary the results indicate there is some follow up work to be done which include drainage, flooding and lining issues.

Combined Parliamentary and Local Government Elections, 7th May 2015

The Democratic Service Manager, Brian Dunleavy, gave a presentation on the combined parliamentary and local government elections on 7th May 2015, and discussed the changes to the process.

Brian explained the Parliamentary Constituencies within Central Bedfordshire, which are as follows:

- **Mid Bedfordshire** (inc: parishes of Turvey, Stagsden, Kempston Rural, Wootton, Elstow, Stewartby and Wilshamstead from Bedford Borough).
- **South West Bedfordshire.**
- **North East Bedfordshire** (parishes of Tempsford, Blunham, Everton, Sandy, Moggerhanger, Potton, Northill, Sutton, Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley, Biggleswade, Eyeworth, Dunton, Edworth, Langford, Astwick, Arlesey, Henlow (part), Stotfold to Bedford Borough).
- **Luton South** (parishes of Caddington, Hyde, and Slip End to Luton Borough).

Key dates for the process are below:

- Notice of election brought forward from 30 March to Monday 16 March
- Poll Card Delivery (3-6 April - Easter Weekend)
- Nomination papers (hand delivered) from 17 March until 4pm Thursday 9 April
- Close of withdrawals – 4pm Thursday 9 April
- Statement of Persons Nominated – 4 pm Friday 10 April
- Last day for registration – Monday 20 April

Postal votes information was also provided:

- 1st issue: Tuesday 14th April (Electors registered by 31 March)
- 2nd issue: Friday 17th April (Electors registered after 31 March)
- 1st opening: Saturday 18th April and daily thereafter
- Final issue: Friday 24th April
- The count for town and parish councils will take place later on Friday 8th May and is likely to finish at 9pm.
- Total cost is approximately £400,000 and is shared between Central Government, Central Bedfordshire Council and town and parish councils.

Summary of discussion

Questions raised during the presentation:

Q: Have the ballot paper colours been chosen with poor vision in mind, ie colour blindness?

A: Yes, there has been a lot of consideration around the colours chosen.

Q: Cllr Eileen Brown, Maulden Parish Council; Do we (Councillors) need to apply for the electoral role?

A: Yes, you will need to apply. Please contact Brian Dunleavy:
brian.dunleavy@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

Q: Cllr Clapham, Lidlington Parish Council; Regarding online registration - can you provide electronic copies please?

A: No, postal votes can be provided but due to formatting issues this cannot be done.

Dog Control Orders

Steve Barrett, Community Safety Operations Manager, Community Services, gave a presentation on the 4 new dog control orders;

- Fouling of Land by Dogs (Central Bedfordshire) Order 2014
- The Dogs on Leads (Central Bedfordshire) Order 2014
- The Dogs on Leads by direction (Central Bedfordshire) Order 2014
- The Dogs Exclusion (Central Bedfordshire) Order 2014

The public consultation indicated considerable support, including from dog charities and trusts, local organisations and a large percentage of responsible dog owners. The aim of the orders is to promote responsible dog ownership and there is a campaign in place to reduce fouling at night, following a successful project in other counties.

Steve covered the dog control order implementation plan and explained that his team will be closely working with town and parish councils in order to establish signage requirements. Below is a list of the accredited officers who have authority to issue fixed penalty notices (FPNs) following training:

- CBC Council Officers – Rights of Way and Countryside Access
- Greensand Trust rangers
- National Trust Officers
- Forest of Marston Vale Officers
- Dog Wardens
- Town Council Ground Staff

The CBC website has further information about the dog control orders, enforcement, penalties, and who to contact should you have any problems. Please see the [link](#) for more details on how to run your own campaign in your area.

Summary of discussion

Questions raised during the presentation:

Q: Cllr Green, Brogborough Parish Council: If a parish owns the land can we put our own signs up?

A: No, Town and Parish Councils cannot make any orders in relation to its space/land. There will be a review to look at refining the orders in 3 years time, but we will need to consult and try to tailor orders accordingly.

Q: Cllr Thompson, Flitton & Greenfield Parish Council: If you do report someone, are you obliged to tell them?

A: A statement may be required and may go to court, (although very few cases go to court), but the informant may be asked to stand up in court.

Q: In your presentation you did not mention about the maximum number of dogs someone can walk – please can you confirm.

A: A consultation on the maximum number of dogs was undertaken, but there was a mixed response that did not enable a mandate.

Q: Cllr Gendall, Woburn Parish Council: We regularly have to clear up after dog fouling before any games can be pursued on our playing field. Can any restrictions be put into place? Also, there are some people that walk their dogs at night and cannot pick up the mess due to being frail or not being able to see in the dark.

A: The area needs to be clearly signed. We can involve the dog warden enforcement and educate people but cannot stop people from taking their dogs onto the field. In 2016 micro chipping dogs will be a national requirement.

The Budget 2015

Cllr Maurice Jones presented information on the Budget for 2015 and explained the 3 areas of spending: Revenue Budget; Capital Programme; and Housing Revenue Account. He outlined the context for revenue budget setting 2015/16 which included national cuts in public spending (an 8% grant reduction), the demands on services (ageing population; vulnerable children), national legislation and policy (Care Act; NNDR), new homes (New Homes Bonus; Council Tax base) and resident's feedback on council tax and local priorities (approximately 2,500 residents gave their feedback).

Cllr Jones focused on this feedback from residents and how most people love living in Central Bedfordshire and how the majority of residents agree that CBC provides value for money. The feedback indicated that most would prefer for council tax to remain the same, and that fewer residents said they could influence decision making in their area than said they could not. Balancing the budget for 2015/16 would require £13.7m savings to be made.

The key community issues for improvement, raised by residents, were road and pavement repairs, the level of crime and ASB, shopping facilities, public transport, sports and leisure facilities and clean streets. We have plans in place to improve these areas, by providing a better infrastructure (including improved roads, broadband reach and transport), maintaining quality services and enhancing Central Bedfordshire by creating jobs, managing growth, improving academic results for young people and protecting our countryside. This is alongside our planned investment in social care (£63m), services for children (£44m), community services (£34m), £7m on planning and business support, 10m on public health. The 13.7m savings will be achieved through greater efficiencies in back office services, reducing the use of temporary staff, improved procurement and more effective use of technology.

In summary, the main headlines of the Budget are to freeze our element of Council Tax, protect services for the public, increased efficiency to deliver savings and to invest in a range of services, housing and capital schemes.

The timeline to agree the budget is as follows:

- 20 – 27 January** - Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- 3 February** – Public consultation closes
- 10 February** – Executive recommends final budget
- 26 February** - Council approves budget

Summary of discussion

Questions raised during the presentation:

Q: Cllr Green, Brogborough Parish Council: In the future, looking at the way services are changing, and bear in mind cuts by 2020, do you envisage the council to be a servicer or provider?

A: We are bringing some things back in house, for example BUPA Care Homes, the Highways Contract, in order to run things in a better way.

Q: Cllr Cooper, Stotfold: I notice in the budget proposals that there is quite a substantial amount of money going on site development – which will add to road congestion, and car parking issues. Appreciate that there is more housing, but it needs to be providing a sustainable quality of life. It would make things worse if it's a blanket policy. How closely has this been looked at?

A: There are garage sites in the south and the majority are in poor condition. We are looking carefully at each site, and being selective regarding future development. This is not a blanket policy.

Q: Cllr Walsh, Harlington Parish Council: Is there a more effective way to disseminate information? How are you going to take steps to consult whilst making budget cuts?

A: We are not making cuts.

Q: Cllr Mitchell, Kensworth Parish Council: There are many services online, but the broadband is actually abysmal – there is a problem with mobile coverage. Also, please consider the elderly and don't get rid of things that work.

A: It is evident that many of our residents now prefer to contact us on line, but we are keeping the tradition lines of communication open too. The online facility enables 24 hour access to a wide range of services and information. However, we also offer the opportunity to meet face to face with our customer services staff and people can make enquiries by telephone. We are not closing down on communication, we are opening up. With regards broadband, our hands are tied.

Q: Cllr Holmes, Shefford Town Council: Regarding the council tax and not putting it up; we had problems last year and we never understood why our precept had gone up so much. You never explain why the figures are different. Will it be the same situation this year?

A: We recently addressed this specific issue at a seminar to which all Town and Parish Councils were invited – the seminar was held in November and was well attended. The Clerk should have all of the information necessary, including an interactive spreadsheet that shows the relationship between your budget and the tax base, and the impact on your precept. If the tax base changes this can affect the precept.

Q: Cllr Clapham, Lidlington Parish Council; Have you done anything with £5M on East Rail project? It would have been better invested on broadband. Let the government spend on railways.

A: This has not happened, although it is planned.

Police & Crime Commissioner

Olly Martins, Police and Crime Commissioner gave a brief presentation regarding his current consultation to raise the police element of the council tax by 15.8% (which averages to approximately 48p extra per week per household). This increase would be used to recruit 100 additional police constables. He explained that although the increase sounds significant, the police precept is only 10% of the total council tax and this proposal is about adding to the force through to 2021, at which time the strength will need to be reviewed again. The plan is to have more warranted officers in each part of the county. The extra officers will enable better focus on cyber crime, child abuse and exploitation. The PCC was seeking to establish the likely outcome of a referendum on an increase using voting cards for delegates to place in boxes marked “Unsure”, “Yes” or “No”.

Olly Martins said he had spoken with over 600 residents in the last week, at various locations throughout the county, to establish the level of support for this proposal. He explained that if a referendum is necessary it will be held on the same day as the elections. If the referendum goes ahead there will be a 3 month window to explain the rationale for the increase and he called on the support of towns and parishes to spread the message.

Summary of discussion

Q: Cllr Hellen, Stondon Parish Council: I am very impressed with the policing in our village who are always helpful and cooperative, but they are always somewhere else when trouble flares up. Really do need more officers. I will support this 100% and go back to the parish and feedback.

Q: Cllr Joy, Henlow Parish Council: Whilst I fully back the principle of the child protection unit, how can we be sure that the officers will be available to us in rural villages? What is being done to affect the national settlement for Bedfordshire Police?

A: This is a national issue – and the policing central government fund needs to address it. There are 7 neighbourhood teams across Central Bedfordshire and officers would be allocated to these teams. In relation to the central government fund – I have spoken with the Chief Constable who said that we need a force that is 300 police officers larger than we have already got. We are reasonably optimistic about the funding formula and that any revision would be to Bedfordshire’s advantage. We are writing to MPs about the precept plan and support for national funding increases.

Q: Cllr Gendall, Woburn Parish Council: Has it been considered that we have inherited a problem because the retirement age has lowered? Also, it seems we are losing personnel to other police services. Please consider streamlining upper management like the Fire Service who are cutting down on upper management. You would get a lot more support if police were more visible on the streets and this needs to be looked at.

A: Bedfordshire Police is lean and most other forces have larger structures. 94% of our force is being used on the front line and we are top of the league for this measure. There more we can do to improve efficiency, such as better use of technology to enable officers to enter information whilst in the community. We are taking a variety of measures and have brought our establishment back to where it should be.

Q: Cllr Jackson, Sandy Town Council: How long do you envisage before the officers will be on the streets?

A: The process takes about a year; we will need to recruit, train, mentor, and provide driver training.

Q: Cllr Mitchell, Kensworth Parish Council: Can you look at PSCOs to be trained as warranted officers? PSCOs can’t make arrests or do certain things.

A: This is why we want to put more warrant officers back onto the policing teams. There are occasions where we need warrant officers to tackle problems in other areas. Some PCSOs have successfully applied to become police constables, but others prefer their role as PCSOs.

Q: Cllr Ellis, Flitton & Greenfield Parish Council: How many of the additional officers will be going into Central Bedfordshire?

A: We are currently working on the details. I cannot give an honest answer at the moment.

Q: We need more justification on how many we will get before we can support your proposal.

Q: Cllr Drinkwater, Central Bedfordshire Council: The proposal needs to be delivered with a number as this is not a clear story. Please come back to us with a business plan.

A: Unfortunately, time is not on our side, and we cannot put a specific number on each team. The 7 Central Bedfordshire teams will get a better benefit than Luton.

Q: Cllr Marner, Blunham Parish Council: You have been to Morrison's – there will be a lot of concern from rural villages, so please can you get their views too?

A: We have been to Shefford, Leighton Linlade, Luton, Bedford, Dunstable and Ampthill so far to consult with people in supermarkets.

Q: I recently had a need to contact the police about a moped in a field - 2 police officers called me as they didn't know the area and where to find it. It seems whoever you contact doesn't know the area and this needs to be improved.

A: I am aware of this incident as it had been highlighted on my significant issues report. If we have more people on local policing teams then the local knowledge would achieve an improvement. We are looking at 2 modal/satellite hubs and the concern has been raised with the Chief Constable about response times not being as they should be.

Q: If we are to put up the precept by 2% would it cost any more? You are probably going to pay £400K to have this referendum.

A: Only if it's a positive result - £4M benefit to the police budget.

Q: Cllr Gledhill, Toddington: Would you agree that criminals don't live in the areas where they commit their crimes? The rural areas are where the police need to be deployed in order to catch them.

A: The whole point is to build strong partnerships – we need communities to work alongside the police. This returns to the original policy to build confidence and resilience.

Q: Cllr Breed, Clophill Parish Council: What information can you give us to give to our parishes?

A: This proposal will put warranted officers in the community.

Overall it was felt that there was a need for a firm proposal.

The results of the survey taken at the conference were:

67 votes were cast, 27 said "Yes", 14 said "No" and 26 were "Unsure".

SUBMITTED QUESTIONS

Cllr Harfield, Harlington Parish Council

Q: For Paul Mason: Are there any plans to replace the prioritisation system for road maintenance based on road class (which implies that eg unclassified roads are used lightly even though we know that they can be more heavily trafficked than classified roads) with a more rational one based on actual wear and tear?

A: Our road maintenance is based upon an asset management approach whereby we intervene at the right time in the lifecycle of the road. We survey the condition of all our A, B, C and unclassified roads using a machine or visual inspections. The frequency of our inspections is determined by the amount of use and not necessarily the classification of the road. All roads are assessed at least once a year but some are assessed more frequently and we use the results of these inspections to inform our resurfacing programme. We also consider road usage, traffic speed, accident figures and the number of issues reported to us. We aim to intervene at the appropriate point in the life cycle of the road, resurfacing techniques increase the life of the road which in turn saves the inconvenience of defects such as potholes and also saves money by not having to reconstruct roads. More information and in particular our resurfacing factsheet can be found at the following location:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/travelling/roads-safety-and-highways/default.aspx>

Cllr Harfield, Harlington Parish Council

Q: For Steve Barrett: The meaning of “enclosed children’s play area” is fairly clear and unlikely to be disputed but what is meant exactly by “enclosed” multi-sports areas. How enclosed do these need to be? Eg fully chain link fence with lockable access gates as per many tennis courts or standard playing field fence and hedging?

A: You will be aware that dogs are banned from enclosed multi-use games areas – The Dogs Exclusion (Central Bedfordshire) Order 2014. Our definition of an enclosed multi-use games area is typically a hard court surface area, ranging in size from a basketball pitch size, up to one that includes several 5-a-side type football pitches, all enclosed by its own perimeter fence (not hedging). It would not include tennis courts as they are not multi-use. A fenced area that covers a wider enclosed playing field would not be included. Where there is doubt it would be up to a Court to decide.

Cllr Harfield, Harlington Parish Council

Q: For Cllr Maurice Jones: Your budget slides did not seem to have any reference to the “black hole” of the Luton-Dunstable guided busway for which all council taxpayers regardless of location in Central Beds will be paying and about which a substantial proportion had no opportunity

to vote.

Are you able to explain why it does not appear in the budget presented to us?

A: The busway is a key infrastructure scheme which is proving to be a lever for investment and is helping to bring jobs into Central Bedfordshire that will benefit the wider area. Prologis and BBC Three Counties radio are just two organisations which have cited the busway as a reason for locating in our area. For this reason the council remains committed to further investment.

This investment is clearly set out in the Capital Programme report being considered by Executive on 10 February. Appendix A, page 142 of the Agenda, shows the Council is committing to £2m in each of 2015/16 and 2016/17. This is in addition to £2m in the current (2014/15) Budget.

The presentation made to the T&PC Conference was at a summary level only, which is why no specific mention was made of the busway.

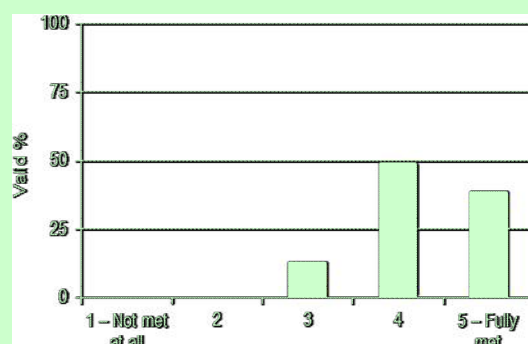
FEEDBACK ON THE CONFERENCE

A conference feedback form was provided in the delegate packs, and the results are shown below.

Usefulness of following aspects of the event

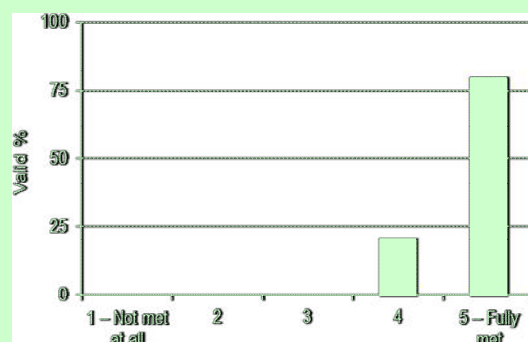
The Highways Contract

	Count	%	Valid %
1 – Not met at all	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	5	13	13
4	19	49	49
5 – Fully met	15	38	38
Total	39	100	
Missing	0	0	
Total	39	100	
Mean score	4.26		



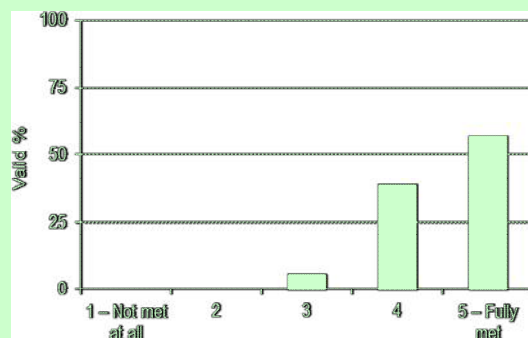
Combined Parliamentary and Local Government Elections, 7 May 2015

	Count	%	Valid %
1 – Not met at all	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	8	21	21
5 – Fully met	31	79	79
Total	39	100	100
Missing	0	0	
Total	39	100	
Mean score	4.79		



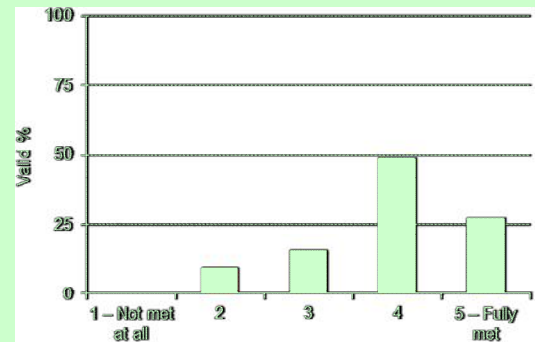
Dog Control Orders

	Count	%	Valid %
1 – Not met at all	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	2	5	5
4	15	38	38
5 – Fully met	22	56	56
Total	39	100	100
Missing	0	0	
Total	39	100	
Mean score	4.51		



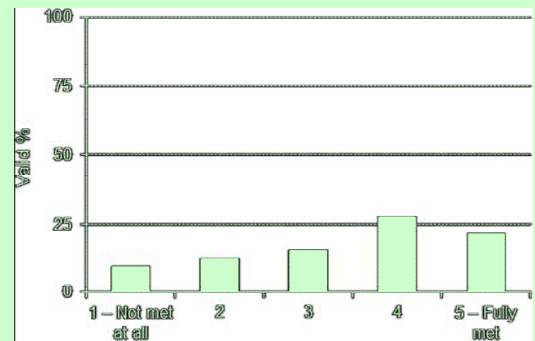
The Budget 2015

	Count	%	Valid %
1 – Not met at all	0	0	0
2	3	8	9
3	5	13	15
4	16	41	48
5 – Fully met	9	23	27
Total	33	85	100
Missing	6	15	
Total	39	100	
Mean score	3.94		



Police and Crime Commissioner

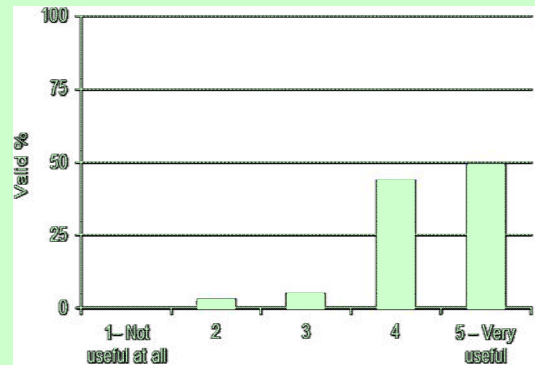
	Count	%	Valid %
1 – Not met at all	3	8	9
2	4	10	12
3	5	13	15
4	9	23	27
5 – Fully met	7	18	21
Total	28	72	85
Missing	11	28	
Total	39	100	
Mean score	3.46		



Event

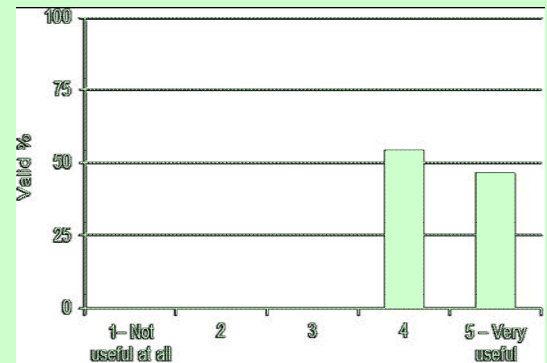
Organisation of the event

	Count	%	Valid %
1– Not useful at all	0	0	0
2	1	3	3
3	2	5	5
4	17	44	44
5 – Very useful	19	49	49
Total	39	100	100
Missing	0	0	
Total	39	100	
Mean score	4.38		



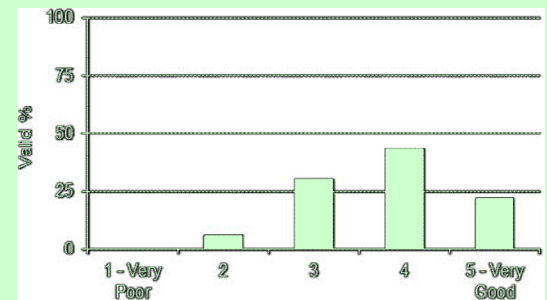
Venue

	Count	%	Valid %
1- Not useful at all	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	21	54	54
5 - Very useful	18	46	46
Total	39	100	100
Missing	0	0	
Total	39	100	
Mean score	4.46		



Catering

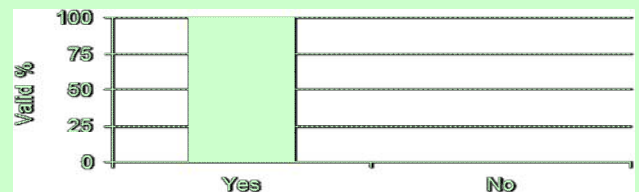
	Count	%	Valid %
1 - Very Poor	0	0	0
2	2	5	5
3	11	28	30
4	16	41	43
5 - Very Good	8	21	22
Total	37	95	100
Missing	2	5	
Total	39	100	
Mean score	3.81		



Views of the event overall

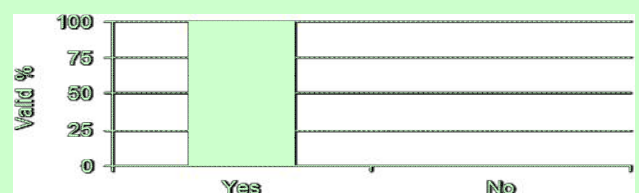
Did you find this conference useful?

	Count	%	Valid %
Yes	39	100	100
No	0	0	0
Total	39	100	100
Missing	0	0	
Total	39	100	



Would you recommend attendance at future conferences?

	Count	%	Valid %
Yes	39	100	100
No	0	0	0
Total	39	100	100
Missing	0	0	
Total	39	100	



FEEDBACK FROM DELEGATES

What topics would you like addressed at future events?

Recycling

Impact of the Care Act. Updates on how we are supporting the more vulnerable members of our community, the elderly and people with learning difficulties.

Rubbish collections and recycling; costings, earnings (for recycling materials) and joint ventures with neighbouring districts, ie why is glass recycling from doorstep a Health and Safety issue in Central Beds but takes place in bordering Hertfordshire?

Neighbourhood plans.

Broadband service to all areas. Communication between residents and council – use of website.

Police and Fire Service precepts?

Housing allocation – I do not think the bidding system is fair.

Road congestion and parking issues.

Monitoring developers and ensuring they deliver on their promises and responsibilities.

Public Transport.

Affordable housing.

Green infrastructure.

Broadband.

Policing in rural areas.

Planning, wind turbines, solar panels.

Broadband provision in rural areas.

Policing in rural areas.

Planning – future wind turbines, solar farms, etc.

Lack of infrastructure – surgeries, new schools.

Overview of the complications of the following, with particular reference to smaller rural communities;

- Care Act
- Charges in Primary Care
- Bedford Hospital dev
- Better Care Fund changes

Post implementation of Highways Contract objectives/values/impact.

Update on dog orders.

Help with parking congestion and enforcement.

Domestic waste collection plans for 2015-2016 (and street waste collection?)

The Health Service. What is proposed for local Health Service provision?

What other individuals, groups or organisations would you like to see at future events?

Waste Services (x 2)

An occasional representation from the Village Care and Good Neighbour Scheme.
Successful voluntary community groups supporting the localism agenda.

Youth activities/youth clubs.

Police Front Line personnel.

Fire Service.

Health Service.

Medical and social service providers.

High speed broadband delivery/deliveries.

Recycling.

BT re broadband provision in rural areas.

BCCG for:

- Care Act
- Charges in Primary Care
- Bedford Hospital dev
- Better Care Fund changes

Any other comments

It was an extremely interesting and informative T&PC. Well done to everyone involved with the organisation. The speakers were excellent.

Highways/street verges littered with rubbish - can a litter collection service be organised at least once a month? Perhaps additional litter bins would be a move in the right direction! The Henlow Camp areas is a disgrace.

Re police budget increase - how does this work???

- The new tax bills will be sent out to homes to start paying 2015/16 precept in April.
- If the public vote against the police increase at the public referendum in May, what happens then?
- Why did this brainwave not occur to him in October when Town and Parish Councils were looking to set their levels of precept required?
- This is just following the previous examples set by CBC who say if you want more, you must pay for it, but actually you have already agreed your precept for the current year and you have probably no leeway in your reserves to actually "buy-in" some extra services, say in October, November of a year, when presented with proposals, schemes, options for projects.

The issue of trading services/skills was briefly mentioned today. Can we see examples in the future of such initiatives please?

Need better use of microphones – many speakers didn't hold them to good effect – made following conversation difficult.

Some speakers need to project their voices more – even with mics. Brian Dunleavy and Steve Barrett could be heard easily, others were sometimes difficult to hear. It would be helpful to know we shall receive copies of overheads at the beginning of the conferences.

Well done team and speakers. Very informative – great. NB: do you need "copper colour top" Duracel batteries for the mics?

Radio mics used for questions were unreliable. They need to be charged and tested ahead of the event.

Why is Brian Spurr never at Highways meetings?

Re highways – how many parishes responded to the Highways Maintenance Survey? In full – HMEP? - Industry Standards.

Would you expand "TMC Plus" – TMC in full? (included in report).

Could you send me copies of presentation particularly the chart (included in Cllr Jones' Budget presentation). [LINK](#)

For info; Nottingham University has a department of Pavement Science.

Will the new contactor have a Quality Control/Management System ISO9001/2 etc?

Allocation and support to people from other counties.

Why is housing allocated for older people being occupied by younger people who are due to their circumstances living in retirement housing by housing associations?

Item 2 heavy going with so many facts.

Handouts would be an excellent addition and if they are to be issues would be helpful to save writing considerable notes.

In my opinion one of the best conferences in recent years. Thank you.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Thank you for your attendance and participation at this conference. Whilst we still have some issues with microphones, your feedback shows that you value these events and are happy with the overall format and structure.

You have given plenty of suggestions for future agenda items and we will endeavour to respond to this.

We will contact you as soon as possible with details of the next event. In the meantime I would urge you to please contact Peter Fraser or me if you have any further comments or suggestions:

peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

Councillor David Hopkin

Deputy Executive Member for
Corporate Resources and
Lead Member for Localism,
Central Bedfordshire Council

A full copy of this report and the workshop presentations can be found on the Council's website: <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/local-government-in-central-bedfordshire/town-parish-councils.aspx>