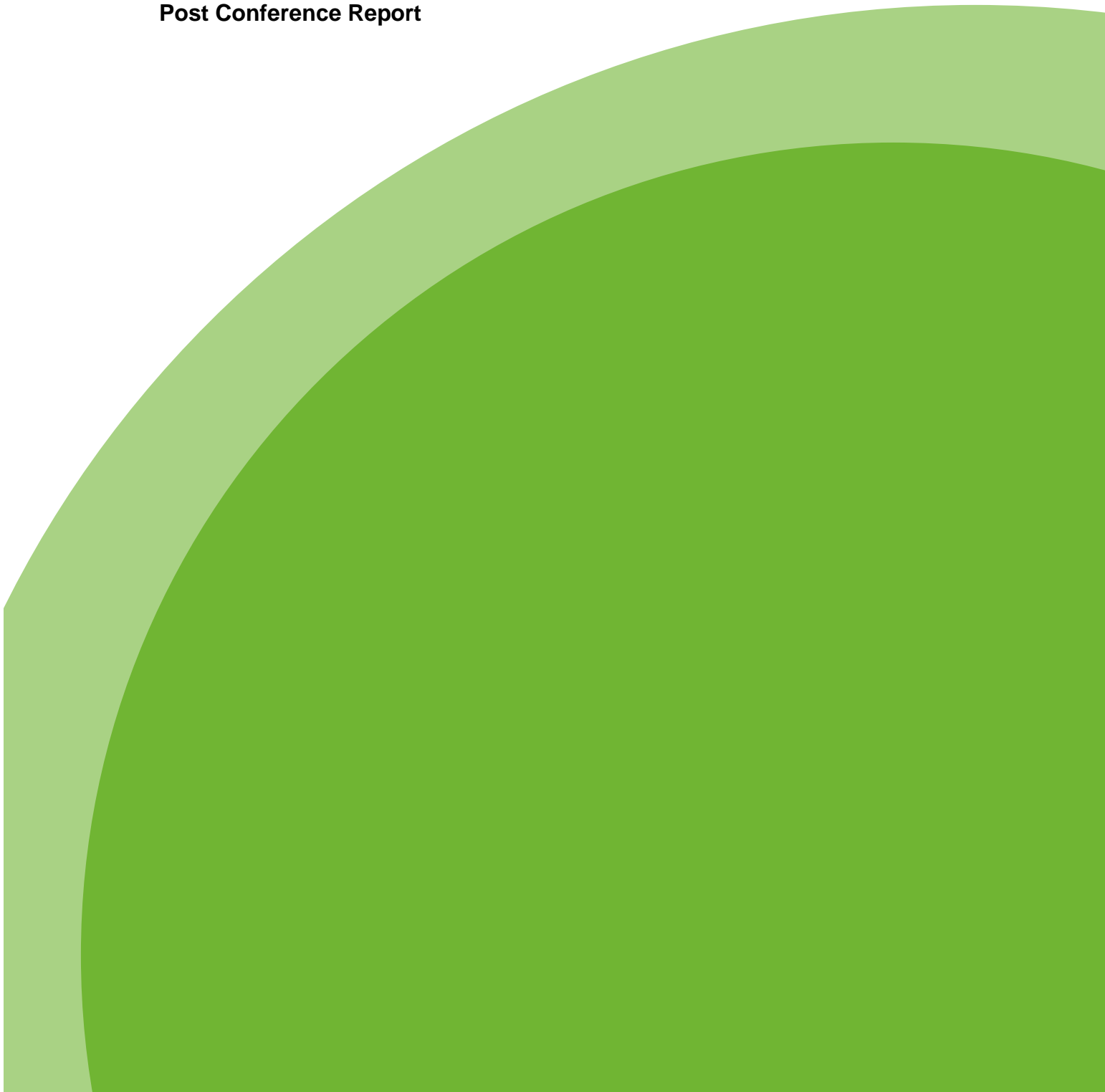


# Town & Parish Council Planning Conference

23 September 2015  
Post Conference Report



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## WELCOME

Thank you to everyone who attended our 18<sup>th</sup> Town & Parish Council Conference. I was delighted to welcome over 110 delegates, representing 40 parishes.

A lot of information was covered during the evening including an update on the Development Strategy, how Planning applications are considered, Affordable Housing and Neighbourhood Planning. We also looked at Planning Enforcement and Opportunities for Open Space. The presentations provoked a large number of questions and full replies are included in the report.

We have learnt a lot from your feedback which, on the whole, was positive. In the meantime, if you have any suggestions on how we can improve these events please let me know.



**Councillor Andrew Turner**

Executive Member, Stronger Communities,  
Central Bedfordshire Council

## Introduction

Andrew Davie, Group Manager Development and Infrastructure, presented the key aspects of planning including the National Policy framework and legal background; Strategic Planning (Planning Policy); Development Management (Planning applications); Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Affordable Housing.

A copy of the presentation can be found here ([link](#)).

## Planning Service

The Planning service, which is part of the Regeneration and Business Directorate, aims for quality sustainable development, the regeneration of our towns, growing the local economy and delivering the right infrastructure. As part of this the Planning service delivers development briefs and masterplans for urban extensions, produces a Design Guide and an Environmental Enhancement Strategy, as well as securing planning obligations and (soon) the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). It also ensures the provision of affordable housing, supports Neighbourhood Plan development, historic buildings, conservation areas and the archaeology service.

## Development Overview

A map and statistics indicated the areas of greenbelt, allocations, commercial sites, new roads and road improvement schemes and housing permissions in Central Bedfordshire. Andrew reported that 2,090 planning applications were determined in 2014/15. Permission was given for a further 7,743 homes and 1,522 homes were built - of which 50% were affordable. Central Bedfordshire Council achieved the 7<sup>th</sup> highest build rate for a local authority in 2014/15.

## Legislative Framework

The legislative framework governing planning decisions was explained, which includes the Planning Acts, Localism Act, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Case Law. The NPPF states that 'there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

This legislative framework is locally reflected in different policy regimes for North and South Central Bedfordshire through the Core Strategy and Allocations Local Plan (North), the South Beds Local Plan (South) and the Development Strategy (Central Bedfordshire). The Development Strategy provides for 31,000 homes and 27,000 jobs and the local planning authority must be able to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites. The Inspector indicated in his view that CBC had not met the Duty to Co-operate and judicial review proceedings have been undertaken (NB on 6<sup>th</sup> October Executive resolved to withdraw the Development Strategy).

## Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People

We are required to plan for Gypsies and Travellers accommodation in the same way as for the settled community. Our Plan was submitted in June 2014 and withdrawn following the Inspectors concerns in September 2014. We are considering the change in Government guidance and recent case law to determine next steps.

## Neighbourhood Planning

A brief overview on Neighbourhood Planning was provided as part of the presentation and supported by a more detailed handout that was included in the delegate pack ([link](#)).

The Localism Act 2011 introduced provision for neighbourhood plans. They must be produced by a Town or Parish Council on behalf of the community. They must be land use based and can be used to allocate land for development or planning permission. When produced they become part of the statutory development plan. 16 towns/parishes in Central Bedfordshire have embarked upon the process to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

## Development Management

### Pre Application Advice

The key stages of the development management process were explained, starting with the pre application stage whereby CBC engages in pre application advice. Encouraged to do so by central Government, all these discussions are undertaken on a 'without prejudice' basis. Many schemes are discussed; some of which become planning applications.

### Planning Application Stages

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 sets out the day to day procedural requirements for Development Management processes including:

- Statutory consultations
- Statutory 21 day consultation period
- Non-statutory/discretionary consultations

There are five types of planning application:

- Full application
- Outline application
- Reserved Matters application
- Listed Building consent
- Conservation Consent.

## Determination

The Council sets out the determination process in its Constitution. Planning applications are determined by the Development Management Committee or by delegation (to officers). The application can also be 'called in' by Members which means it has to be decided at a committee.

## Material Consideration and Weight

There was considerable discussion regarding what determines material consideration and the weight applied to it. In principle any consideration which relates to the use and development of land is capable of being a planning consideration. A vital guide when considering the weight of material evidence is 'in attributing weight so unreasonable that no reasonable authority could have decided that'.

Material considerations **must be** genuine planning considerations; i.e. they must be related to the development and the use of land in the public interest and not, for example, personal circumstances (see also the answer to Q 18).

## Planning Conditions

Conditions can only be applied if they comply with 6 key tests, they must be:

- Necessary
- Relevant to planning
- Relevant to the development to be permitted
- Enforceable
- Precise
- Reasonable in all other respects

It would be considered unacceptable and outside of the planning process:

- to require that the developer comply with the by-laws and general statutory provisions in force in the area; and
- to require that the site be kept tidy at all times.

Hence Planning has relationships with other controls such as Building Control, Environmental Health and Highways.

## Post Decision

Once a decision has been made and published on the Council's website there are various Appeal stages - if the application has not been determined or refused, or conditions applied unreasonably. The Appeals procedure must be by written representation, which can be followed by a Hearing, an Inquiry and ultimately a Judicial Review. The decision and conditions are enforced through Notices, a Breach of condition and, finally, an Injunction.

## Permitted Development Rights

Government has introduced a number of changes to Permitted Development rights; i.e. where development is allowed without planning permission. Recently government has:

- increased the size limits for the depth of single-storey domestic extensions from 4m to 8m (for detached houses) and from 3m to 6m (for all other houses);
- increased the size limits for extensions to shops and professional/financial services establishments to 100m<sup>2</sup>, and allowing the building of these extensions up to the boundary of the property (except where the boundary is with a residential property), in non-protected areas, for a period of three years;
- increased the size limits for extensions to offices to 100m<sup>2</sup>, in non-protected areas, for a period of three years;
- increased the size limits for new industrial buildings within the curtilage of existing industrial premises to 200m<sup>2</sup>, in non-protected areas, for a period of three years; and
- removed some prior approval requirements for the installation of broadband infrastructure for a period of five years.

There have also been changes or extensions or new rights to permitted development rights on the change of use to existing buildings:

- from small shops/provisionally financial services to residential;
- from Shop to bank or building society;
- from agricultural buildings to residential;
- for premises used as offices (B1), hotels (C1), residential (C2 and C2A), non-residential institutions (D1), and leisure and assembly (D2) to change use to a state funded school, to also be able to change to nurseries providing childcare; and
- to create a permitted development right to allow a building used for agricultural purposes of up to 500m<sup>2</sup> to be used as a new state funded school or nursery providing childcare.

## Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

CIL is a tax on development and it is a non negotiable levy. It is charged per metre squared of floor space. Rates can vary by geographical area, use or size and the Local Authority is required to publish a Charging Schedule. Subject to a further consultation it is planned to introduce the charge in 2016. CIL does not wholly replace S106 Agreements, which can still be negotiated for development specific infrastructure.



## Affordable Housing

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) says 7,200 affordable homes are needed in Central Bedfordshire by 2031. These are mainly delivered through S106 Agreements. Affordable Housing can be achieved through the following tenure arrangements:

- Social Rent – rents are typically low; set by government guidelines through the National Rent Regime.
- Affordable Rent – rent is set at 80% of market rent
- Intermediate Tenure – Shared Ownership – part owned mortgage and rent paid.
- Help to Buy – Is a shared equity product Government scheme to provide a loan of up to 20% for buyers.

In Central Bedfordshire we seek the following percentage of affordable housing in developments of 4 units and above:

- 30% affordable housing on sites of 4 and above in South CBC. Tenure mix of: 71% affordable rent; and 29% intermediate tenure.
- 35% affordable housing on sites of 4 and above in North CBC. Tenure mix of: 63% affordable rent; and 37% intermediate tenure.

The quality of new homes is controlled through design codes, Lifetime Homes, Mobility and Wheelchair Accessible Standards.

Registered providers are the major partners in delivery (although house builders play a key role). CBC has lowered the threshold for affordable housing to 4 in order to try and maximise housing delivery.

## Affordable Housing – Rural Programme

Both private and CBC land are being assessed for development and parish council support sought in all cases. Working together with the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, over 20 housing needs surveys have been completed.

## Questions

### **Q1. Why not just change the plan?**

**A1.** The Inspector found our plan (the Development Strategy) had not complied with the new duty to co-operate. Unfortunately, once the Plan is submitted we can't simply change the item challenged by the Inspector. We would have to withdraw the entire plan and start again. Judicial Review proceedings were then launched in relation to the Inspector's conclusion, but subsequently a recommendation went to the Council's Executive on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2015 that the Development Strategy be formally withdrawn by Council. It is expected that a

Council decision will be issued in line with this recommendation at the meeting of Full Council on 19<sup>th</sup> November.

**Q2. Our Parish is having 2000 houses built in the village. Do we need to find any more land?**

**A2** The new Central Bedfordshire Local Plan will need to make additional allocations to meet the housing target that is identified. There is likely to be a further call for sites in relation to the new Central Bedfordshire Local Plan. These sites will then be considered alongside those already submitted between December 2014 and February 2015. However, the sites will be fully assessed to determine whether they are suitable for development using rigorous site assessment criteria, which will take into account the cumulative impact of development. We have to demonstrate an ongoing 5 year land supply of sites for housing.

**Q3 Call-in process – why should it go to Committee?**

**A3** An application goes through consultation and a decision is made by either delegation to the CBC Officer or to the Development Management Committee held once a month. Public speaking at Development Management Committee gives a chance for questions and input. Applications can be referred by Ward Members to committee.

There is sometimes disagreement between CBC Officers and Ward Members, which is perfectly acceptable in terms of how the application is considered, which is a weighing up process. The decision must be based on material planning considerations. Some issues which are brought up are not a planning matter, such as licensing.

**Q4. Can you give an example of something outside of the planning regime?**

**A4.** Extensions, windows and conservatories may not require planning applications; they may be 'permitted development'.

**Q5. Do you consider planning decisions for planning applications based on highways?**

**A5.** Highway safety issues are always taken into account.

**Q6. Our Parish has an issue around personal circumstances with gypsies and travellers. What influence do you have over this?**

**A6.** There have been recent changes in planning weight given to personal circumstances, for example, the need for children to attend schools. We are required to make provision for homes for gypsies and travellers, but also have 30,000 homes to provide for people who want to live in bricks and mortar, so this gives the context.

**Q7. Design and access statement - construction traffic. There are 600 cars a day passing through the village, and generally making a mess. Part of building process should take account of disturbances to small villages. How are they going to move/dispose of rubbish?**

- A7.** This is not an uncommon complaint. The Considerate Construction scheme is in place which builders sign up to and comply with, and ensures the developer and construction companies consider their impact on local communities. It is a voluntary scheme.
- Q8. What about the disposal of dangerous elements, ie asbestos and could you have better control?**
- A8.** This would require the involvement of the Health and Safety regulatory body rather than the planning legislation.
- Q9. A Planning decision which may impact on a disability - would this add any weight?**
- A9.** It largely depends on the particular circumstances of the individuals concerned. Recently, an application for annexes and extensions in the Green Belt was refused and this decision endorsed by the Planning Inspector at appeal. The problem is that certain situations cannot be restricted by planning condition.
- Q10. Parking – is this taken into account? There was a recent application to convert something on an industrial area, yet the parking strategy was not implemented.**
- A10.** We balance those issues. Towns and parishes should make a reference to the design guide, so this is the starting point for your comments.
- Q11. Can you put the link to the parking strategy on the website please?**
- A11.** A Parking Strategy is in development and will feature at the next T&PC Conference. Meanwhile the link to the Design Guide is on our website with the Conference presentations and this report.
- Q12. Pre application stage; are you able to challenge it?**
- A12.** Giving of advice prior to submitting an application was included as a specific piece of legislation in the Localism Act. No complaints have been made about the service offered by CBC.
- Q13: Do you check byelaws? There is land which is not accessible to dog walking but there has been no enforcement.**
- A13.** Where we are aware of bylaws we can bring to the attention of the applicant. We do not enforce byelaws.
- Q14. Is there a record of all breaches and which cases you can bring to court?**
- A14.** There is a time limit for taking enforcement action but it is dependant upon the type of breach.

Breaches of planning control are not a criminal offence. Anyone can do anything without planning permission on their land. When the Council is asked to be involved we can consider whether to take enforcement action. Technically, a change may need planning permission but it can become lawful over time. Our judgement is on

whether it is causing harm. The Courts are very reluctant to intervene in local authority enforcement decisions.

**Q15. What is the timescale for considering an application?**

**A15.** We are obliged to consider 40% of all applications within 13 weeks. It is important for us to maintain achievement of that target.

**Q16. There seems to be a lot of confusion over what is and what is not permitted development? For example a porch, conservatory, ATM; why are they having to go through planning?**

**A16.** People can use our pre-application advice to find out if planning permission is required.

**Q17. How are decisions on retrospective applications considered? How is the process supposed to work?**

**A17.** Retrospective applications are dealt with exactly the same as any other applications and the fact that it is retrospective is irrelevant unless the Council can demonstrate that there was intentional unlawful development, in which case it can be a material consideration to which weight can be attached.

**Q18. The weighting factors for determining applications – are they published/accessible?**

**A18.** These will differ for each application and are considered in the context of the application. It is essential that we prove that this exercise is done reasonably to justify the decision. It is subjective, so someone else's consideration of weighting can be different.

**Q19. How can Town and Parish Councils see the decision?**

**A19.** Decisions are published on website – the recommendations are within the officer's report.

**Q20. Will making a planning decision also set a precedent, eg a fence?**

**A20.** We have to consider every application on its individual merits.

**Q21. Is a resident entitled to extend their property within the thresholds of the planning regime without coming to the Council – as long as it is on main footprint?**

**A21.** Permitted development applies to a development once, so the allowance is often used up. A subsequent change may need planning permission. This would be clarified through pre application advice.

**Q22. Regarding the Neighbourhood Areas and the Community Infrastructure Levy – is it based on the Arlesey area or town or electoral area?**

**A22.** Neighbourhood Areas are based on the parish/town boundary.

**Q23. Confirm the status of the recently published Community Infrastructure Levy schedule.**

**A23.** A 6 week consultation concluded on the 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015. The outcome of the consultation is currently pending. Comments will be analysed and adoption is planned for April 2016.

**Q24. Does Right to Buy apply to rural sites?**

**A24.** Any homes developed on exception sites are subject to a legally binding agreement known as a Section 106 agreement, which includes a cascade of priority setting out the local connection criteria. There is no Right to Buy on the rented properties, and shared ownership homes have a maximum 80% purchase level with the housing association retaining at least 20% ownership. These measures ensure that the homes will remain affordable in perpetuity for local people.

**Q25 There have been three recent applications for a bungalow in the garden of a larger house, all three were objected to by the PC on over development of the plot of land. All three were passed by CBC. Is over development of a plot a reasonable reason for an objection and if yes what percentage of land to be developed is reasonable?**

**A25** Overdevelopment is a reasonable reason for an objection. However, it is a subjective matter.

**Q26 How do communities deal with the current lack of any form of planning controls and non-compliance by travellers?**

**A26** Communities need to report any issues of non-compliance to the Council's Enforcement Team.

**Q27 Could DMC/Planning Officers include parish clerks when emailing out decisions. Telling us to look on the website is fine, but at 10-15 minutes trawling on your website for each one, it is very time consuming. Including the clerk in the distribution takes 5 seconds and the problem is solved!**

**A27** We will look into whether this is a workable proposal. In the meantime our decisions list is available to view on our website. These webpages are updated daily. Please see [link](#).

There are a number of search criteria that can be used to narrow your search i.e. Parish Name and Decision Date from and Decision Date to. Information and documents relating to the applications are displayed.

**Q28 Is permitted development allowed in fields on green belt?**

**A28** Green Belt designation does not affect any permitted development rights.

## PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

### Mike Duffett, Principal Planning Officer (Enforcement)

Mike Duffett presented the National Policy Framework governing planning enforcement, the Local Enforcement Plan for Central Bedfordshire and described the types of investigations that have been carried out. Mike condensed his presentation due to time constraints.

Enforcement action is discretionary but is important as a means of maintaining public confidence in the planning system. Planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control.

The Local Enforcement Plan sets out how the planning authority will monitor the implementation of planning permissions and investigate alleged unauthorised development. They should take action where it is appropriate to do so. The CBC Local Enforcement Plan sets out clear standards of service and performance, to investigate alleged breaches of planning control and aim to resolve issues through negotiation whenever possible.

The Enforcement service carries out different types of investigations for example:

- Building development work
- Changes of use of land or buildings
- Compliance with approved plans and planning conditions
- Works to listed buildings
- Untidy land/buildings
- Waste management sites

Mike explained that in the 6 month period January to June this year, 95 investigation cases were opened with regard to building / development work whilst 58 cases were opened in the same period regarding compliance with approved plans and planning conditions. He also demonstrated that a typical timeline for a planning investigation can take over 60 weeks.

In terms of mineral sites over 100 inspections take place annually. Examples of non compliance include wheel cleaning, stockpile height or location and restoration planting.

Mike mentioned that local communities can help planning enforcement but told delegates that enforcement does not get engaged in neighbour disputes, or anonymous complaints or complaints on the grounds of commercial competition. Mike also urged that a complainant has to be clear on the harm being caused and requires patience as solving breaches does take time.

Mike explained how to contact Planning Enforcement either by the:



Customer Services 0300 300 8307



Online form on the CBC website ([link](#))



[planning.enforcement@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.enforcement@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Mike concluded by emphasising the importance of working together with local communities to investigate alleged breaches of planning control and that planning enforcement is a key aspect of the integrated planning service at Central Bedfordshire Council.

## Questions

**Q29. Most people and some residents have had years of hell; mud on road, contractors parking inappropriately. It would be useful if they ring in but people don't know who to speak to about it.**

A29. People should ring the Customer Services Helpdesk and report these issues on 0300 300 8000 (see [link](#) for out of hours and Customer Services Centres). These are logged and forwarded to an officer who will prioritise and visit.

**Q30. The 30,000 houses in Central Bedfordshire represent 30% increase in housing. Do we really need that? Is the Council being reactive and not proactive? Do we need them?**

A30. The number of houses required in Central Bedfordshire is not a matter for planning enforcement but rather planning policy and covered by the Development Strategy.

**Q31. Can we be told who the Enforcement Officer visiting a site is please? We had a problem which was reported on Thursday, the visit took place on Friday. Issue is next to a travellers' site where there isn't a blade of grass but they are grazing horses. I would like to get in touch with the Enforcement Officer that came out to visit just to keep the dialogue going.**

A31. The problem was registered as a case, and we can see it and get the details to you at the break. The process is always feed in, registered and allocated to an officer so there is no doubt who is the point of contact. We will look again at the feedback loop. The Ward Councillor can also put you in touch.



**Q32. Regarding the example of the waste site shown in your presentation; an emergency plan should have been there from the beginning, not wait until the fire happened.**

**A32.** The Environment Agency and Planning are still taking legal action against the owner. What happened was not anticipated and was extreme, but we have learnt from it and emergency planning for that site use is now in place. The majority of waste transfer sites have been in existence for many years, and it is for Emergency Planning (not Planning Enforcement) to satisfy themselves that a suitable plan of action is in place if/when there is an emergency. Due to the recent increased incidence of fires breaking out at waste sites, especially those handling waste wood, if a new facility is proposed then there would be consultation with the Fire Services. This may have a direct impact on the outcome of the planning application, or lead to the imposition of certain conditions. Here at CBC there has not been a waste application that has been considered since the serious fire of February 2013 which was the case study in the presentation.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR OPEN SPACE**

**Laura Kitson, Green Infrastructure Officer**  
**Lisa White, Policy Officer – Leisure Services**  
**Connie Frost-Bryant – Principal Planning Officer**

Lisa and Laura explained how key stakeholders from Leisure, Green Infrastructure, Heritage, Ecology and Landscape help to inform development management decisions and ensure opportunities for open space are considered in the decision making process.

The 2 key policy areas relevant at the town/parish level are the Leisure Strategy and Town and Parish GI Plans. Thirty-four town/parish councils have green infrastructure plans in place which identify priority areas for protecting and improving existing green infrastructure and creating new, in order to develop a network of multi-functional greenspaces.

Lisa explained that Chapters 2 and 3 of the Leisure Strategy comprise strategies for Recreation Open Space – where 9 types of open space are covered:

- Allotments
- Cemeteries and Churchyards
- Countryside recreation sites
- Large formal recreation areas
- Informal recreation areas
- Small Amenity spaces
- Children's Play spaces
- Provision for young people
- Urban Parks.

and Playing pitches which covers 9 types of outdoor sport facilities.



Lisa explained that the team is preparing Parish Schedules which will be vital to provide a strong and robust evidence base regarding open space requirements. Drafts will be sent to all town and parish councils for comment to make sure they are accurate and reflect the priorities of the relevant town or parish council.

Laura explained the Green Infrastructure Plans identify priority areas for protecting and improving existing green infrastructure and creating new in order to develop a network of multi-functional greenspaces. The example of Biggleswade was covered in the presentation.

Connie explained that paying for the provision of open space is changing with the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which will be a new non-negotiable levy on development. The CIL rate can vary by geographical area, use or size and implementation of CIL is planned for 2016. CIL will operate alongside reduced planning obligations (s106).

For open spaces this means that the Parish Schedules are vital in identifying local priorities to secure investment from s106 or CIL. Parishes will need to provide identified, costed projects that are deliverable and transform local communities.

In conclusion CBC and Town and Parish Councils must help each other; town/parishes should ensure their parish schedule is up to date to inform s106 investment, whilst CBC can help parishes by providing the policy and evidence base for CIL spend. CBC can also assist with contacts in partner organisations such as the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) sport governing bodies and external funders.

## Questions

**Q33. The GIS plans require T/P councils checking / verification.**

**A33.** Please let us know of any changes. To clarify, plans will be sent to all Town and Parish Councils by email asking for feedback and updates.

**Q34. In the future in a community of 2000 where there is already 2 tennis courts could S106 be used to provide additional tennis courts and upgrade existing?**

**A34.** It is unlikely that the provision of new tennis courts could be justified as required infrastructure that has been generated by the needs of any new development. This would of course depend on the size of the development. It would usually be more appropriate to provide courts using the neighbourhood portion (15%) of any CIL monies collected if this was something that was sought by the local community.

**Q35. Is it solely down to the Parish Council to decide what the neighbourhood portion of the CIL in their area is spent on or will CBC expect to have some control over this?**

**A35.** It is up to Parish Council to decide how the neighbourhood portion of the CIL is spent but as would be expected, the Parish Council is

accountable for this spending and will have to produce an annual report showing how CIL has been spent. A parish may want to call on CBC for assistance in looking at which types of infrastructure are needed and for further advice if they need help in defining their spending priorities.

**Q36. Please clarify what proportion of CIL money given is given to the parish.**

**A36.** Parishes without a Neighbourhood Plan will receive 15% of CIL receipts but this is capped at £100 per dwelling liable for Council tax. The proportion is 25% for those parishes with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan and this is uncapped.

**Q37. When a parish receives CIL money, can we save up money for a number of years for one big spend?**

**A37.** Parishes are not obligated to spend CIL money on receipt of it but it is likely that in reality parishes will wish to provide new infrastructure to support the new development in their parish that will be coming out of the ground when the money is collected. However if there is a key spending priority and the PC is aware of a future development or developments that will also generate CIL income, then it is possible that it may wish to plan for a larger project that will support all of the new developments.

**Q38. Most Parish Councils are keen to get 25% of CIL but cannot access 25% until they have an adopted Neighbourhood Plan in place. However is it true that this is not possible unless CBCs development plan is adopted?**

**A38.** Parish councils can progress Neighbourhood Plans without the new development plan being adopted. They must rely on being in general conformity with national planning policy (the NPPF) and with the adopted development plans for the north and south of Central Bedfordshire.

**Q39. CIL – Is it really a fact that CIL money will be distributed to individual T/P councils? If a relatively small parish has a couple of large developments there could be a large amount of money in its accounts that has not been precepted. How does this fit with audit matters and the retention of “spare” cash/reserves??**

**A39.** It is correct that 15% of the CIL money collected in relation to a development in that parish will go to the Parish Council. If it is a small parish then it is likely that only a small amount of incremental development will take place meaning that a proportionally small amount of income will be generated.

**Q40. How to secure and maintain open spaces in greenbelt from encampments? Legal or illegal? Why doesn't the council take into account all sites and numbers of pitches overall before granting permission for more in an area? The NPPF states travelers should not dominate settled communities.**

A40. Alongside the Planning Policy for Travellers sites (PPTS) & the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council applies the policy criteria in the existing adopted MBDC Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) and the SBDC Local Plan (2004) as well supporting documents such as the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide.

**Q41. Why cannot I access the Rights of Way maps on the web?**

A41. The following link takes you to the Rights of Way maps on the Central Bedfordshire Council website:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/environment/countryside/public-rights-of-way/default.aspx>

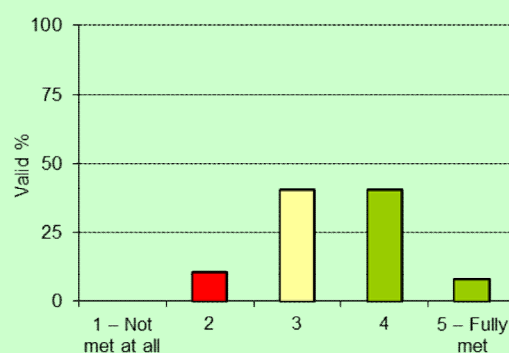
## FEEDBACK ON THE CONFERENCE

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

### Usefulness of following aspects of the event

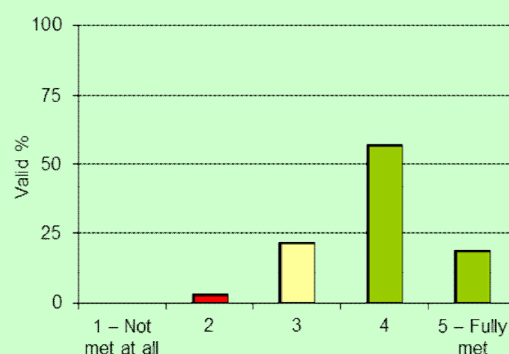
#### Introduction

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2	4	11	11
3	15	41	41
4	15	41	41
5 – Fully met	3	8	8
Total	37	100	
Missing	0	0	
Total	37	100	
Mean score	3.46		



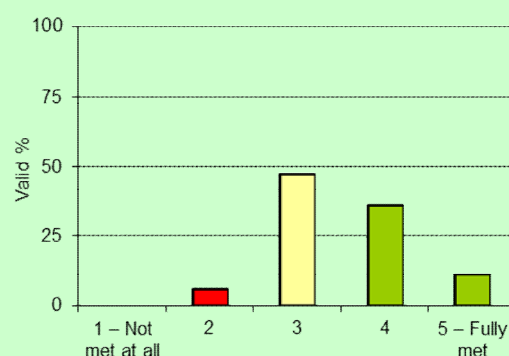
#### Planning and Development update

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3	8	22	22
4	21	57	57
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Missing	0	0	
Total	37	100	
Mean score	3.92		



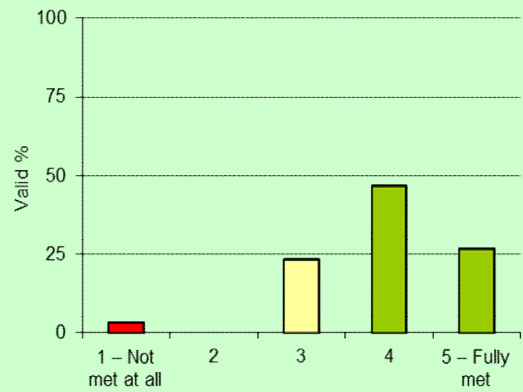
#### Planning Enforcement

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3	17	46	47
4	13	35	36
5 – Fully met	4	11	11
Total	36	97	100
Missing	1	3	
Total	37	100	
Mean score	3.53		



### Opportunities for open space improvements

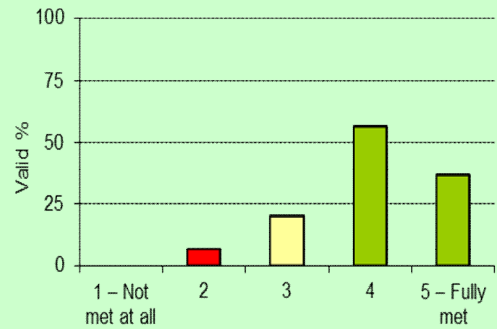
	Count	%	Valid %
1 – Not met at all	1	3	3
2	0	0	0
3	7	19	23
4	14	38	47
5 – Fully met	8	22	27
Total	30	81	100
Missing	7	19	
Total	37	100	
Mean score	3.93		



### Organisation of the event

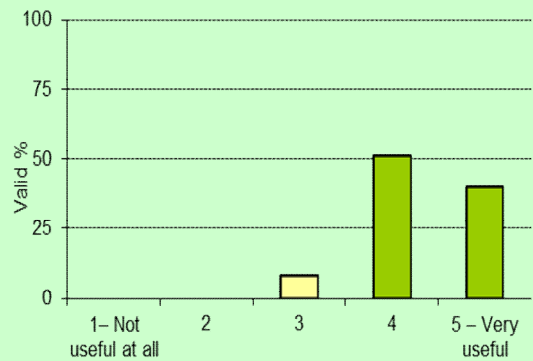
#### Information sent to you before event

	Count	%	Valid %
1 – Not met at all	0	0	0
2	2	5	7
3	6	16	20
4	17	46	57
5 – Fully met	11	30	37
Total	36	97	120
Missing	1	3	
Total	37	100	
Mean score	4.03		



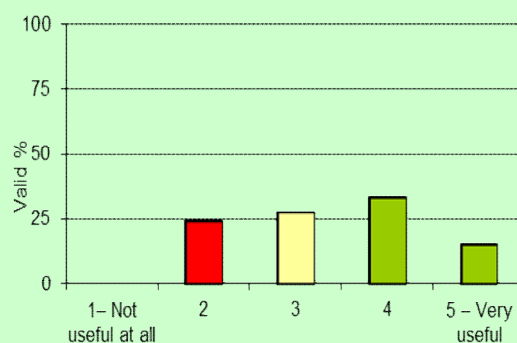
#### Venue

	Count	%	Valid %
1– Not useful at all	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	3	8	9
4	18	49	51
5 – Very useful	14	38	40
Total	35	95	100
Missing	2	5	
Total	37	100	
Mean score	4.31		



## Catering

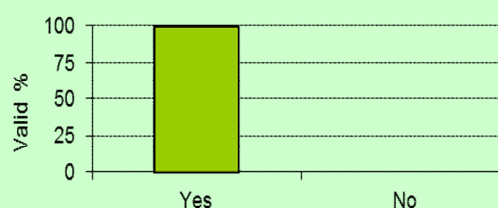
	Count	%	Valid %
1- Not useful at all	0	0	0
2	8	22	24
3	9	24	27
4	11	30	33
5 - Very useful	5	14	15
Total	33	89	100
Missing	4	11	
Total	37	100	
Mean score	3.39		



## Views of the event overall

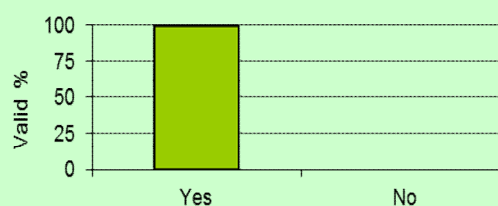
### Did you find this conference useful?

	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?

Relationships between Ward Councillors and T&PCs.

Highways post to impending restructure.

More detail in respect of Neighbourhood Plans.

Detailed presentation on DMC process – How? Why? Who?

Highways and footpaths. Probably once the new contractor is announced.

Would prefer planning and development to be divided into more manageable/in depth areas and progressively presented in 2/3 sessions.

Neighbourhood plan considerations – interaction in GI/Leisure etc.

Superfast broadband in rural areas.

Traffic Control and disparity between CBC/Highways analytical models and reality.

Education strategy and policy.

Parking cheaper parking at public places.

Hospital station town centres

Was expecting more on affordable housing.

More interaction between T&P councillors present. Share what ideas would benefit all and have worked.

Specific planning evidence for town parish councils – ‘how to respond to planning applications’.

Strategic planning.

Greenbelt??

Noise enforcement.

Environmental enforcement.

Highways management.

Gypsy and travellers – planning – enforcement – environmental health for sites.

Legal and illegal encampments – transient travellers with nowhere to go. How to move them on.

An event dealing in more depth with planning and enforcement.

Perhaps there is a scope for examining aspects of social services either – growing numbers of elderly people, etc, dependency long term conditions, loneliness etc. Can PCs doing anything to support CBC programmes.

Highways – state of the roads – drainage problems.

Flood prevention – particularly with reference to non build and water run off.

Schooling strategy within CBC

More planning.

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

Best practice @ parish council level. Perhaps get town/parish councils to present at conference?

RTPI on Neighbourhood Plan.

Public Transport. Regular!

Highways.

Environmental health.

Environmental Health Agency.

## **Any other comments**

Font size of this feedback form too small.

Would be interested in the ½ day intensive planning meeting. Once again the evening was a little rushed as there was a great deal of information that was on offer.

Suggested ½ day planning workshop – good idea.

Would have been better to concentrate the topics, too much covered, too quickly and not enough detail.

Contributions from the floor could not be easily heard.

Could not hear most topics.

Please do not allow participants to ask questions without a microphone.

Revisit community safety groups – they worked!

Parking on pavements if this is allowed markings should be in place to indicate.

The pack provided was somewhat disjointed. Specific parts as per the PowerPoint presentation would have been much more straight forward and easy to follow.

Roving microphone needs to be better organised at the start.

When a planning decision is made could not a link be given to the relevant clerk for the decision papers, ie what weighting was needed?

Overall a very useful event. Thank you.

## **Planning and Development update**

Very comprehensive update.

Is permitted development allowed in fields on green belt?

I would like to see a day/half day intensive workshop on planning.

More information regarding weighting process used on planning decisions.

Yes please on the proposed training course as mentioned by Cllr Nigel Young.

Planning applications should cover more local involvement with community input. Having more weight and understanding for future problems and understanding of this.

Too much ground covered in the time available – therefore not enough detail. Future topic specific events would be more helpful, eg Affordable Housing.

Large subject – dealt with in a professional manner.

Effects of large developments on local infrastructure, roads, doctor, hospitals, utilities etc.

Half day planning workshop – would attend.

Very thorough – provided some much needed clarity, particularly on current situation re development strategy.

## **Planning Enforcement**

Encouraging to see results.

Ok but didn't touch on the every day problems that PCs experience during a development. Parking, delivery problems, muck on roads, damage to roads, footways, road gullies.

Should try to speed up and be consistent.

Very brief – did not give the whole "picture".

Useful.

## **Opportunities for open space improvements**

Microphone management would have improved presentation.

Useful when we reached the point at which we were told how we can help gain funds from developers. Questions and answers very relevant.



Quite good – we have lots to follow up.

Where's the money coming from?

Useful session.

Presenters spoke too fast and were difficult to understand.

A 76 housing development is about to go for formal planning application, if passed it will provide a new Community Centre and improved sports pitches and playground equipment. Puts Meppershall expected 2021 population to over 2000.

Provided a good driver to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan.

## CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Thank you for your attendance and participation at this conference. We covered an enormous subject area which stimulated lots of questions. We therefore overran causing some presentations to be shorter than originally planned for and we had some issues reaching you in time with microphones. Nevertheless 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 endeavor 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 (email address [peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)) or me if you have any further comments or suggestions.

**Councillor Andrew Turner**  
Executive Member, Stronger Communities,  
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>