

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

**This meeting will  
be filmed.\***



**Central  
Bedfordshire**

**please ask for** Sandra Hobbs  
**direct line** 0300 300 5257  
**date** 24 November 2016

## **NOTICE OF MEETING**

### **EXECUTIVE**

Date & Time

**Tuesday, 6 December 2016 at 9.30 a.m.**

Venue

**Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford**

Richard Carr  
**Chief Executive**

To: The Chairman and Members of the EXECUTIVE:

Cllrs	J Jamieson	– Chairman and Leader of the Council
	M Jones	– Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Health
	S Dixon	– Executive Member for Education and Skills
	C Hegley	– Executive Member for Social Care and Housing and Lead Member for Children's Services
	N Young	– Executive Member for Regeneration
	B Spurr	– Executive Member for Community Services
	R Wenham	– Executive Member for Corporate Resources

All other Members of the Council - on request

***MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS  
MEETING***

**\*This meeting may be filmed by the Council for live and/or subsequent broadcast online at**

**<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=577>.**

**You can view previous meetings there starting from May 2015.**

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## AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence.

2. **Minutes**

To approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 11 October 2016.

3. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members any declarations of interest.

4. **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any matters of communication from the Chairman.

5. **Petitions**

To consider petitions received in accordance with the Scheme of Public Participation set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

6. **Public Participation**

To respond to general questions and statements from members of the public in accordance with the Scheme of Public Participation set out in Appendix A of Part A4 of the Constitution.

7. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

To receive the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017.

### Decisions

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
8.	<b>Council Tax Support Scheme 2017/18</b>  To review the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme and to recommend to Council the approach to Local Council Tax Support for 2017/18.	35 - 44

- |     |   |           |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 9.  | <b>Using Compulsory Purchase Orders to Bring Empty Homes back into Occupation</b>   | 45 - 58   |
|     | The report presents a case to use compulsory purchase order (CPO) powers to bring a long term empty home back into occupation.  |           |
| 10. | <b>Commissioning of New School Places in Barton-Le-Clay and Marston Moretaine for September 2018</b>  | 59 - 78   |
|     | To seek support for the consultation by Arnold Academy, Barton-Le-Clay and Church End Lower School, Marston Moretaine to expand by one form of entry (30 places in each year group) by September 2018.      |           |
| 11. | <b>Proposal to Change the Age Range of Everton Lower School from 3 - 9 years of age (Lower School) to 3 - 11 years of age (Primary School)</b>  | 79 - 114  |
|     | To set out the responses to the preliminary consultation of the proposal to change the age range of Everton Lower School, Sandy and seek approval to commence stage 2, publication of the statutory notice. |           |
| 12. | <b>Corporate Accommodation Plan</b>   | 115 - 140 |
|     | To present the draft Corporate Accommodation Plan which articulates the Council's approach to its corporate accommodation.  |           |
| 13. | <b>Highways Grass Cutting Contract and Food Waste Disposal Contract</b>   | 141 - 146 |
|     | Report seeks delegated authority to award the Highways Grass Cutting Contract and Food Waste Disposal Contract. Both contracts are required to be in place and operational by 1 April 2017.                 |           |
| 14. | <b>Disposal Sites</b>   | 147 - 150 |
|     | The report addresses matters in connection with the disposal of land at Thorn Turn, Haynes, and Caddington.   |           |

<b>Monitoring Matters</b>
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<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page Nos.</b>
15.	<b>Period 6 (Quarter 2) – 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring</b>	151 - 176
	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of September 2016.	
16.	<b>September 2016 Quarter 2 Capital Budget Monitoring Provisional Outturn Report</b>	177 - 194
	The report sets out the Capital financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of September 2016. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.	
17.	<b>September Quarter 2 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring</b>	195 - 208
	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of September 2016.	
18.	<b>Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring</b>	209 - 220
	To receive the quarter 2 (July - September 2016) performance monitoring report.	
19.	<b>Exclusion of the Press and Public</b>	
	To consider whether to pass a resolution under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that the consideration of the items is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.	

<b>Exempt Appendices</b>
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<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Exempt Para.</b>	<b>Page Nos.</b>
20.	<b>Disposal Sites</b>	* 3	221 - 232
	To receive the exempt Appendix.		

This agenda gives notice of items to be considered in private as required by Regulations (4) and (5) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012.

Details of any representations received by the Executive about why any of the above exempt decisions should be considered in public: none at the time of publication of the agenda. If representations are received they will be published separately, together with the statement given in response

**CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 11 October 2016.

**PRESENT**

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)  
Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Executive Members:	Cllrs	S Dixon Mrs C Hegley	Cllrs	R D Wenham J N Young
Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	A D Brown Mrs S Clark K M Collins I Dalgarno Mrs A L Dodwell	Cllrs	E Ghent Ms C Maudlin Mrs T Stock G Tubb B Wells
Apologies for Absence:	Cllr	B J Spurr		
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	Mrs A Barker Mrs C F Chapman MBE F Firth Mrs S A Goodchild Ms A M W Graham Mrs D B Gurney	Cllrs	P Hollick K C Matthews B Saunders M A G Versallion A Zerny
Officers in Attendance		Mr Q Baker  Mr R Carr Mrs S Childerhouse Mr M Coiffait Mrs S Harrison Mrs S Hobbs Mr L Manning Mrs J Ogley  Mrs C Shohet Mr C Warboys		Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer (Interim) Chief Executive Head of Public Protection (North) Director of Community Services Director of Children's Services Committee Services Officer Committee Services Officer Director of Social Care, Health and Housing Assistant Director of Public Health Chief Finance Officer

E/16/46. **Minutes**

**RESOLVED**

**that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

E/16/47. **Members' Interests**

Councillor Mrs Gurney declared a personal interest in item 13 'Proposal to Change the Age Range of Everton Lower School from 3 – 9 years of age (Lower School) to 3 -11 years of age (Primary School), as a Governor at the school.

Councillor Hollick declared a personal interest in item 8 'Passenger Transport Strategy', as a trustee of South Beds Dial-a-Ride.

Councillor Mrs Chapman declared a personal interest in item 8 'Passenger Transport Strategy', as she represented the Council on the Mid Beds Link-a-Ride Community Transport Board.

E/16/48. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made no announcements.

E/16/49. **Petitions**

In accordance with the Scheme of Public Participation set out in Annex 2 of Part 4 of the Constitution, the Executive noted that a petition had been submitted to Council on 22 September 2016 against the proposed cuts to the 188 and 190 bus services. The Executive agreed to consider the petition under item 8 'Passenger Transport Strategy'.

E/16/50. **Public Participation**

The Executive noted that there were two public speakers for item 8 'Passenger Transport Strategy' and agreed to invite them to speak under that item.

E/16/51. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

**RESOLVED**

**that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 November 2016 to 31 October 2017 be noted.**

E/16/52. **Passenger Transport Strategy**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that set out the draft Passenger Transport Strategy for Central Bedfordshire. The Strategy referred to users of road based public transport, such as commercially operated local bus routes and community transport, as well as fleet transport for the provision of home to school transport and home to day setting transport for vulnerable children and adults.



The Chairman invited the lead petitioner for the petition against proposals affecting the 188 and 190 bus services to speak. Mrs Gibson expressed concern about the proposed changes to bus services within the rural areas and the impact this would have on communities in Central Bedfordshire.

The Deputy Executive Member for Community Services explained that a decision on the bus routes would not be considered until the Council had adopted the Passenger Transport Strategy. Following the adoption of the Strategy each route would be assessed before decisions were made.

The Chairman invited the two members of the public to speak:-

- Mr Barrett spoke on behalf of South Beds Dial-a-Ride and referred to the recommendation from the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) proposing a delay in changes to the Community Transport element of the Strategy, specifically the Dial-a-Ride service, in order to allow further discussions to take place; and
- Dr Egan explained that she was a trustee of Dial-a-Ride and supported the recommendation from the Sustainable Community OSC Committee. She also expressed concerns about the consultation process.

The Deputy Executive Member explained that the continuation of the existing grants for the Dial-a-Ride Service might lead to a breach of procurement legislation. By adopting the proposed tender process, the operators would have some certainty in relation to future funding. A delay of 1 year from April 2018 was not required as discussions were already taking place with the Service and other interested parties to find solutions.

The Head of Public Protection and Transport described the various consultation processes that had been carried out.

In response to questions, the Deputy Executive Member explained that the Council had to consider ways in which to make savings by delivering services in different ways to avoid making cuts. The Director of Community Services reiterated that the delay of 18 months in the community transport element was not necessary as discussions with providers were ongoing and there remained several months within which these could be concluded.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council has a Strategy that delivers transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose.

***RECOMMENDED to Council***

**that the Passenger Transport Strategy for Central Bedfordshire, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted.**

E/16/53. **Fees & Charges 2017**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that:

- set out the proposed fees and charges for 2017;
- identified the new fees and charges to be introduced for 2017; and
- identified those charges where proposed increases were significantly different from the 1% advisory increase, as per the 2017/18 Budget Strategy.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Corporate Resources confirmed that the proposal to move to pre-payment arrangements based on a debit/credit card service via the website would be implemented during the next financial year.

***RECOMMENDED to Council***

1. ***that the prices for the fees and charges for 2017, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved;***
2. ***that the new fees and charges to be introduced for 2017, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved;***
3. ***that the fees and charges for Social Care, Health and Housing (including HRA) be considered by the Executive on 7 February 2017 and Council on 23 February 2017;***
4. ***to note that whilst some statutory charges had been left at the 2016 rate currently, these would be amended to the new charges once the Council had been advised of the rates applicable to 2017;***
5. ***that the progress of the fees and charges cyclical review process, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be noted;***
6. ***that the fees and charges that deliver the most income for the highest volume usage, as set out in Appendix D to the report, be noted; and***
7. ***that the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as set out in Appendix F to the report, be noted.***

E/16/54. **Traded Services to Schools and Academies – Proposed Charges for 2017/18**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the proposed revised charges for 2017/18 for traded services to schools and academies for non statutory services.

The Department for Education was consulting on changes to school funding arrangements but the outcome of this would not be known until the end of 2016 at the earliest.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to agree the charges as part of delivering a balanced budget for 2017/18.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

1. ***that the charges for 2017/18 for non statutory services to Schools and Academies be approved; and***
2. ***that the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be noted.***

E/16/55. **All Age Skills Strategy**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Members for Education and Skills and Regeneration that set out the refreshed All Age Skills Strategy for 2016 – 2020. The Strategy had a critical role to play in enabling Central Bedfordshire to achieve its full economic potential.

Reason for decision: To provide a framework to deliver a flexible and responsive workforce.

**RESOLVED**

**that the All Age Skills Strategy be approved, to provide the framework of the Council's employment and skills activities from 2016-2020 with performance reported through the Council's Five Year Plan monitoring arrangements.**

E/16/56. **Shared Vision (Education, Health and Social Care) for Children and Young People (0-25) from Central Bedfordshire with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care and Health that provided a summary of the new duties under the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reforms and the work undertaken to co-produce the draft SEND Vision and Strategy.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to act upon its duty to ensure integration between educational provision and training provision, health and social care provision.

**RESOLVED**

**that the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Vision and Strategy, be approved.**

E/16/57. **Proposal to Change the Age Range of Everton Lower School from 3 - 9 years of age (Lower School) to 3 - 11 years of age (Primary School)**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Education and Skills that sought the Executive's approval to commence the 2 stage consultation process for the proposal to change the age range of Everton Lower School, Sandy.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Education and Skills confirmed that proposals to change the age ranges of schools and academies were led by schools and academies themselves, rather than the Council.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council continued to meet its statutory obligation by ensuring that there were adequate school places and to meet the legal requirements placed on the Council by the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

**RESOLVED**

1. **that the commencement of the 2 stage consultation process for the proposal to change the age range of Everton Lower School from 3 – 9 years to 3 - 11 years from September 2017, be approved; and**
2. **that the Executive Member for Education and Skills, be authorised to determine the proposal, if the responses to the statutory notice are favourable.**

E/16/58. **Stratton Street Railway Bridge**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that sought additional capital funding to complete the reconstruction of Stratton Street Railway Bridge. Adverse weather had extended the works programme.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the reconstruction of Stratton Street Railway Bridge was completed.

***RECOMMENDED to Council***

1. ***that the allocation of an additional £800k in 2016/17 of capital funding for the Stratton Street Railway Bridge be approved, to complete the works; and***
2. ***that an additional allocation of £50k be approved, as a risk pot for 2016/17.***

E/16/59. **The Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care and Housing that set out the outcome of engagement on the future day offer for older people and adults with disabilities and proposed the next steps.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Social Care and Housing confirmed that the Council would be liaising with the voluntary sector to provide greater day opportunities.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to carry out a period of public consultation to develop a new day offer.

**RESOLVED**

1. **that the commencement of public consultation on the draft Day Offer contained in Appendix 2, as set out in paragraphs 22 to 29 of the report, be approved; and**
2. **that the outcome of the consultation be reported to a future meeting of the Executive.**

E/16/60. **Consultation on the Council's Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2018/19**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Education and Skills that sought approval to commence the consultation on the admission arrangements for the academic year 2018/19. The proposed changes to the Council's admission arrangements included:

- moving the designated measuring point for admission to Shefford Lower from the school site to the war memorial site in the town centre; and
- creation of priority areas within the catchment area of Fairfield Park Lower School and moving the designated measuring point for admission to the school from the main entrance of the Dickens Boulevard site to the halfway point between the school's 2 sites.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the statutory requirements for consultation as set out in the School Admissions Code was met.

**RESOLVED**

**that the commencement of consultation for the proposed changes to the Council's admission arrangements, for the academic year 2018/19, be approved.**

E/16/61. **Parking Strategy - Consultation**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that highlighted the need for a Parking Strategy to help effectively manage parking across Central Bedfordshire. The report set out the methodology and timescales for producing the Strategy.

In response to a question, the Deputy Executive Member for Community Services agreed to give a written response on the issue of parking outside schools and the proposed approach to tackling this area of concern. The management and enforcement of parking had been greatly impacted by the restricted use of CCTV cameras and any proposals made would have to take this constraint into account.

Reason for decision: To enable the effective and safe operation of the roads in Central Bedfordshire.

**RESOLVED**

**that the Parking Strategy be approved for public consultation.**

E/16/62. **Revenue Budget Monitoring Forecast Outturn June 2016 (Quarter 1)**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the projected outturn financial position for 2016/17. The forecast outturn position, excluding HRA, as at June 2016 was a £1.9m overspend.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning.

**RESOLVED**

1. **that the revenue forecast position which was to overspend budget by £1.9M be noted; and**
2. **that officers be requested to continue to look for compensatory savings in order to deliver a balanced budget.**

E/16/63. **June 2016 Quarter 1 Capital Budget Monitoring Provisional Outturn Report**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the capital projected outturn for 2016/17 as at June 2016. The approved budget, excluding HRA, but including deferred spend from 2015/16 was £124.6m (gross).

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. to note that the approved budget, excluding HRA, but including deferred spend from 2015/16 (approved by Executive in June 2016) was £124.6M (gross). The gross forecast was below budget by £11.8M (£11.0M last year against a higher budget of £139.2M). The net forecast is £5.1M over budget due to less forecast grant receipts than budgeted; and**
- 2. to note that action to reduce the net forecast overspend was currently being reviewed.**

E/16/64.

**June Quarter 1 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Members for Social Care and Housing and Corporate Resources that provided information on the 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projected outturn revenue and capital position as at June 2016.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. to note that the revenue forecast position was to achieve a balanced budget with a contribution to HRA Reserves of £5.346M, thus strengthening the Council's ability to invest and improve its stock of Council Houses;**
- 2. to note that the capital budget was £15.589M (including £4.280M deferred from 2015/16) and that the forecast position indicates a new outturn of £12.250M, below budget by £3.399M. It was proposed that this £3.339M of future investment works be deferred to 2017/18; and**
- 3. to note that Right to Buy (RtB) sales would be monitored for the possible impact on predicted surpluses in the medium to longer term.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.55 a.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated .....

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**Central Bedfordshire Council  
Forward Plan of Key Decisions  
1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017**

- 1) During the period from **1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017**, Central Bedfordshire Council plans to make key decisions on the issues set out below. “Key decisions” relate to those decisions of the Executive which are likely:
- to result in the incurring of expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant (namely £200,000 or above per annum) having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
  - to be significant in terms of their effects on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the area of Central Bedfordshire.

There are exceptions to these criteria which is set out in C2 1.3 in the Council’s Constitution. Specifically, expenditure which is identified in the approved Council revenue and capital budgets are not key decisions.

- 2) The Forward Plan is a general guide to the key decisions to be determined by the Executive and will be updated on a monthly basis. Key decisions will be taken by the Executive as a whole. The Members of the Executive are:

Councillor James Jamieson	Leader of the Council
Councillor Maurice Jones	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Health
Councillor Steven Dixon	Executive Member for Education and Skills
Councillor Carole Hegley	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing and Lead Member for Children’s Services
Councillor Nigel Young	Executive Member for Regeneration
Councillor Brian Spurr	Executive Member for Community Services
Councillor Richard Wenham	Executive Member for Corporate Resources

- 3) Whilst the majority of the Executive’s business at the meetings listed in this Forward Plan will be open to the public and media organisations to attend, there will inevitably be some business to be considered that contains, for example, confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information.

This is a formal notice under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 that part of the Executive meeting listed in this Forward Plan will be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

- 4) Those items identified for decision more than one month in advance may change in forthcoming Plans. Each new Plan supersedes the previous Plan. Any person who wishes to make representations to the Executive about the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made should do so to the officer whose telephone number and e-mail address are shown in the Forward Plan. Any correspondence should be sent to the contact officer at the relevant address as shown below. General questions about the Plan such as specific dates, should be addressed to the Committee Services Manager, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ.
- 5) The agendas for meetings of the Executive will be published as follows:

Meeting Date	Publication of Agenda
7 June 2016	26 May 2016
2 August 2016	21 July 2016
11 October 2016	29 September 2016
6 December 2016	24 November 2016
10 January 2017	22 December 2016
7 February 2017	26 January 2017
4 April 2017	23 March 2017

Central Bedfordshire Council

Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017

Key Decisions

Date of Publication: 24 November 2016

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
1.	Draft Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire -	To agree the draft Local Plan for public consultation (Statutory stage - Reg 18).	10 January 2017	Wide range of Stakeholder and community engagement planned for 2016.	Open  Draft Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire	Executive Member for Regeneration Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Sue Frost, Interim Head of Service for Place Delivery Email: <a href="mailto:sue.frost@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">sue.frost@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4952
2.	Award of Contract - Development of Biggleswade South Gypsy and Traveller Site -	Tender evaluation submission for Executive approval for the construction of a new Gypsy and Traveller Site at Biggleswade South.	10 January 2017		Part exempt  Award of Contract - Development of Biggleswade South Gypsy and Traveller Site	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Ian Johnson, Housing Asset Manager Email: <a href="mailto:ian.johnson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">ian.johnson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5202

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
3.	Disposal Site - Village Farm Sutton -	To consider disposal of land at Village Farm Sutton.	10 January 2017		Part exempt Commercially sensitive Disposal Site - Village Farm Sutton	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Andrew Gordon, Head of Estate Management Email: <a href="mailto:andrew.gordon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">andrew.gordon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5882
4.	Leisure Management Contract -	To consider the Leisure Management Contract arrangements following capital investment of £20.095m at Dunstable Leisure Centre.	10 January 2017		Fully exempt The report contains sensitive commercial and contractual information. Leisure Management Contract	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Jill Dickinson, Assistant Director Leisure, Libraries and Countryside Email: <a href="mailto:jill.dickinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">jill.dickinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4258

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
5.	Children's Services Transformation Programme -	To consider a transformation programme for Children's Services.	10 January 2017		Open  Children's Services Transformation Programme	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services Email: <a href="mailto:sue.harrison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">sue.harrison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4229
6.	ERP System Replacement -	To receive an update on the SAP contracts covering HR and Finance.	10 January 2017		Open  ERP System Replacement	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Stephan Conaway, Chief Information Officer Email: <a href="mailto:stephan.conaway@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">stephan.conaway@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4463

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
7.	Sustainability and Transformation Plan -	To receive an update on the Sustainability and Transformation Plan.	10 January 2017		Open  Sustainability and Transformation Plan	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Health Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Patricia Coker, Head of Service, Partnerships - Social Care, Health & Housing Email: <a href="mailto:patricia.coker@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">patricia.coker@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5521
8.	BT's Proposal to Remove 80 Payphones across Central Bedfordshire -	The Executive will be asked to consider the results of the Council's consultation on BT's proposal to remove 80 payphones across Central Bedfordshire and make its Second decision on which phones it supports being removed and which phones should remain.	10 January 2017	Ward Councillors, Town and Parish Councils and residents were consulted from 15 November - 15 December 2016.  The consultation comprised an online consultation form and direct email.	Open  BT's Proposal to Remove 80 Payphones across Central Bedfordshire	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Sarah Hughes, Community Engagement Manager Email: <a href="mailto:sarah.hughes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">sarah.hughes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6166

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
9.	Refresh of the Partnership Vision for Education -	To provide the Executive with the refreshed Partnership Vision for Education which has been developed following the Peer Review of Arrangements for School Improvement in March 2016.	7 February 2017	Engagement will take place with a range of key partners, including schools.	Open  Refresh of the Partnership Vision for Education	Executive Member for Education and Skills Comments by 07/01/17 to Contract Officer: Helen Redding, Assistant Director School Improvement Email: <a href="mailto:helen.redding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">helen.redding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6057
10.	Determination of the Council's Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2018/19 -	Determination of the Council's admission arrangements for the academic year 2018/19.	7 February 2017		Open	Executive Member for Education and Skills Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contract Officer: Jessica Mortimer Email: <a href="mailto:jessica.mortimer@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">jessica.mortimer@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4766

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
11.	2016 Economic Insight -	To review the economic assessment for Central Bedfordshire.	7 February 2017	Internal consultation and informal consultation with external partners undertaken between April 2016 to October 2016.  The Business Survey – October 2015.	Open  2016 Economic Insight	Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Linda Kitchener, Economic Policy Officer Email: <a href="mailto:linda.kitchener@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">linda.kitchener@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6415
12.	Re-development of Croft Green, Dunstable -	To award the tender for the construction phase of the re-development of Croft Green, Dunstable.	7 February 2017		Part exempt Appendix will contain commercially sensitive information. Re-development of Croft Green, Dunstable	Deputy Executive Member for Social Care and Housing (Volunteering) Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Matt Berry, Interim Regeneration & Renewal Manager Email: <a href="mailto:matthew.berry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">matthew.berry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4493



Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
13.	Proposed distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block for 2017/2018 -	The report sets out the proposed distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block for 2017/2018 and requests ratification of the Authority Proforma Tool (APT) which must be approved by no later than 28 Feb 2018 which is the date that schools budgets should be sent out.	7 February 2017		Open  Proposed distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block for 2017/2018	Executive Member for Education and Skills Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Helen Redding, Assistant Director School Improvement Email: <a href="mailto:helen.redding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">helen.redding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6057

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
14.	Commissioning of New School Places in Barton-Le-Clay and Marston Moretaine for September 2018 -	To provide the outcome of the consultation by Arnold Academy, Barton-Le-Clay and Church End Lower School, Marston Moretaine to expand by one form of entry (30 places in each year group) by September 2018.	4 April 2017		Open  Commissioning of New School Places in Barton-Le-Clay for September 2018	Executive Member for Education and Skills Comments by 04/04/2017 to Contact Officer: Victor Wan, Senior Education Officer (Planning) Email: <a href="mailto:victor.wan@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">victor.wan@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 5574
15.	Parking Strategy -	To receive the outcome of the consultation and adopt the Parking Strategy.	4 April 2017	Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 March 2017. 12 weeks public consultation commencing in November 2016.	Open  Parking Strategy	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Gerri Davies, Principal Strategic Transport Officer Email: <a href="mailto:geraldine.davies@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">geraldine.davies@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4854

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
16.	The Integration of Health and Social Care in Central Bedfordshire -	To provide the Executive with the Council's emerging vision for the integration of Health and Social care in Central Bedfordshire.	4 April 2017	Sustainable Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Task and Finish Group	Open  The Integration of Health and Social Care in Central Bedfordshire	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Jonathon Partridge, Head of Governance Email: <a href="mailto:jonathon.partridge@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">jonathon.partridge@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4634
17.	The Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities -	To report back to the Executive with the outcome of Stage 1 to improve the day offer for older people and adults with disabilities and to seek approval of Stage 2.	4 April 2017		Open  The Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: John King, System Redesign Officer (Prevention) Email: <a href="mailto:john.king@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">john.king@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6310

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
<b>NON KEY DECISIONS</b>						
18.	Draft Budget & Medium Term Financial Plan 2017/18 – 2020/21 -	The report proposes the Budget for 2017/18 and updates the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) approved by Council in February 2016.	10 January 2017		Open  Draft Budget & Medium Term Financial plan 2017/18 – 2020/21	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: <a href="mailto:denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6083
19.	Draft Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2020/21 -	The report proposes the Capital Programme for the four years from April 2017. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.	10 January 2017		Open  Draft Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2020/21	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: <a href="mailto:denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6083

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
20.	Draft Budget for the Housing Revenue Account 2(Landlord Service) 2017/18 - 2020/21 and Business Plan -	The report sets out the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Budget for 2017/18.	10 January 2017		Open  Draft Budget for the Housing Revenue Account 2(Landlord Service) 2017/18 - 2020/21 and Business Plan	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing, Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: <a href="mailto:denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6083
21.	Final Budget & Medium Term Financial Plan 2017/18 – 2020/21 -	The report proposes the Budget for 2017/18 and updates the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) approved by Council in February 2016.	7 February 2017		Open  Final Budget & Medium Term Financial plan 2017/18 – 2020/21	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: <a href="mailto:denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6083

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
22.	Final Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2020/21 -	The report proposes the Capital Programme for the four years from April 2017. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.	7 February 2017		Open  Final Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2020/21	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: <a href="mailto:denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6083
23.	Final Budget for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Service) 2017/18 - 2020/21 and Business Plan -	The report sets out the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Budget for 2017/18.	7 February 2017		Open  Final Budget for the Housing Revenue Account 2(Landlord Service) 2017/18 - 2020/21 and Business Plan	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing, Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: <a href="mailto:denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6083

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
24.	Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of December 2016.	4 April 2017		Open  Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: <a href="mailto:denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6083
25.	Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Capital Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the Capital financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of December 2016. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.	4 April 2017		Open  Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Capital Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: <a href="mailto:denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6083

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
26.	Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of December 2016.	4 April 2017		Open  Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing, Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: <a href="mailto:denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 6083
27.	Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring -	To receive quarter 3 (October to December 2016) performance monitoring report.	4 April 2017		Open  Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Tobin Stephenson, Programme Manager Email: <a href="mailto:tobin.stephenson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">tobin.stephenson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0300 300 4098

Postal address for Contact Officers: Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ



**Central Bedfordshire Council  
Forward Plan of Decisions on Key Issues**

For the Municipal Year 2016/17 the Forward Plan will be published on the thirtieth day of each month or, where the thirtieth day is not a working day, the working day immediately proceeding the thirtieth day, or in February 2017 when the plan will be published on the twenty-eighth day:

<b>Period of Plan</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>
1 May 2016 – 30 April 2017	1 April 2016
1 June 2016 – 31 May 2017	29 April 2016
1 July 2016 – 30 June 2017	26 May 2016
1 August 2016 – 31 July 2017	24 June 2016
1 September 2016 – 31 August 2017	21 July 2016
1 October 2016 – 30 September 2017	2 September 2016
1 November 2016 – 31 October 2017	29 September 2016
1 December 2016 – 30 November 2017	28 October 2016
1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017	24 November 2016
1 February 2017 – 31 January 2018	22 December 2016
1 March 2017 – 28 February 2018	26 January 2017
1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018	24 February 2017
1 May 2017 – 30 April 2018	23 March 2017

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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

6 December 2016

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## COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

Report of Cllr Richard Wenham, Executive Member for Corporate Resources ([richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officers: Charles Warboys, Director of Resources ([charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)) and Gary Muskett, Head of Revenues and Benefits ([gary.muskett@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:gary.muskett@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**This report relates to a Key Decision**

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### Purpose of this report

1. The purpose of the report is for the Executive to review the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme and address the requirement to recommend to Council the approach to Local Council Tax Support for 2017/18.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **review the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and recommend to Council that the current scheme be extended for a further year (2017/18), as set out in paragraph 22 below .**

### Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. The draft Council Tax Support Scheme for 2017/18 will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 November 2016. A verbal update will be provided to the Executive at their meeting.

### Background

3. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit. Under the Local Government Finance Act 2012 local authorities had to design their own Local Council Tax Support scheme (LCTS) for working age customers and administer the national Council Tax Support scheme for pensioners. There were certain limitations on what local authorities could include in their schemes, for example, pensioners were protected.

4. In January 2016 Council approved a Council Tax Support scheme for Central Bedfordshire for the financial year 2016/17. The scheme remained broadly the same as that for 2015/16 and mirrored the previous entitlement under the old Council Tax Benefit system for all claimants except for:

- All working age claimants who do not fall into one of our vulnerable protected groups are required to make a 25% payment of their Council Tax liability.
- The removal of the Second Adult Rebate.
- The rate of Non-dependant deductions increased.

Pensioners have not seen any change to the support they receive.

5. The only change to the 2015/16 scheme was an adjustment to bring our levels of entitlement for working age claimants in line with other state benefits; this is commonly referred to as “uprating” or “an inflationary increase”. This meant an increase of about 3% in the premiums and allowances built into our LCTS scheme. The 2016/17 scheme replicated the 2015/16 as most working age benefits, including Housing Benefit applicable amounts, were frozen for 4 years following the then Chancellor’s emergency budget of July 2015.

6. The intention of the Central Bedfordshire Council scheme was to reduce the amount of Council Tax Support discount awarded from that paid under the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme to take into account the reduction in funding from Central Government. The current scheme ensures that every Council Tax payer pays at least 25% of their Council Tax bill unless they are a pensioner or they fall within one of our protected groups of claimants.

7. National trends for 2016/17 Local Council Tax Support schemes are examined in a New Policy Institute report. It includes the following information:

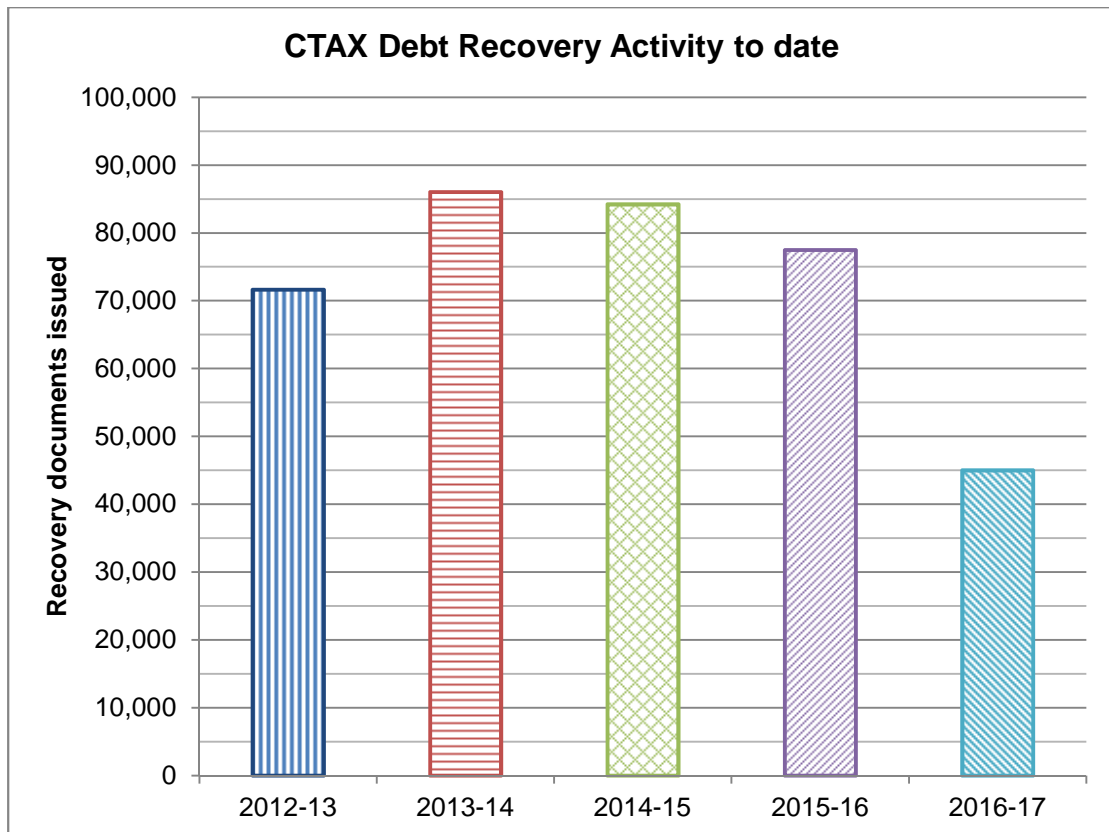
- a) 66 authorities have changed their scheme for 2016/17.
- b) Of these 66, 39 have either introduced or increased a minimum payment.
- c) 259 of 326 have a minimum payment.
- d) 50 authorities have a minimum payment of 8.5% or less.
- e) 65 authorities have a minimum payment between 8.5% and 20%.
- f) 77 authorities have a 20% minimum payment.
- g) 67 authorities have a minimum payment greater than 20% (of which 11 authorities have a minimum payment over 30% and 1 authority – Kettering Borough - has a minimum payment of 45%).

8. Nationally the introduction and effects of Local Council Tax Support schemes was statutorily reviewed this year by the Government. Some of the recommendations to Central Government which may be of use to the Council if the Government is minded to pass the relevant legislation for 2017 onwards could include:
- a) Allowing multi-year or rolling schemes. Councils being required to review their schemes at Full Council only when changes are being proposed.
  - b) The statutory consultation requirements being clarified by Government, so that Councils can take a less risk-averse approach. This should make consultations less burdensome on Councils and more engaging to residents.
  - c) Government should enable Council Tax Support recipients to pay off arrears through a voluntary attachment to benefits agreed with the Council, without the requirement to obtain a Liability Order. Safeguards should be put in place to ensure that individuals have had time, information and capacity to consider the option and make an informed decision.
  - d) Government should confirm that Council Tax Support will remain a local discount scheme for a local tax, and that it will not be rolled into Universal Credit.
  - e) Government should consider localising at least part of the Council Tax Support scheme for pensioners, allowing Councils to decide how much support they wish to provide for all low-income residents.
  - f) Government should consider granting more flexibility over nationally set Council Tax discounts, such as the Single Person Discount.
  - g) Government should take steps to better understand the impact of Council Tax Support on individuals and Councils, widening the data it holds on Council tax Support. This will enable future policy evaluation.
  - h) Government should commission in-depth academic research on the impact of Council tax Support within the wider context of other welfare and socioeconomic changes.
  - i) Government should be transparent about how much funding for Council Tax Support is paid through Revenue Support Grant, and it should be explicit about future funding of Council Tax Support schemes, including any expectations on how Council Tax Support should be locally funded.

9. The current legislation states that Council Tax Support schemes must be reviewed by Members each financial year and approved by full Council no later than the 30 January preceding the start of the new financial year.
10. If there are changes to the current scheme, legislation states that these changes must be consulted upon. Minor changes such as uprating of premiums and applicable amounts are exempt from this consultation process.

### **Impact of Council Tax Support Scheme on Collection Rates**

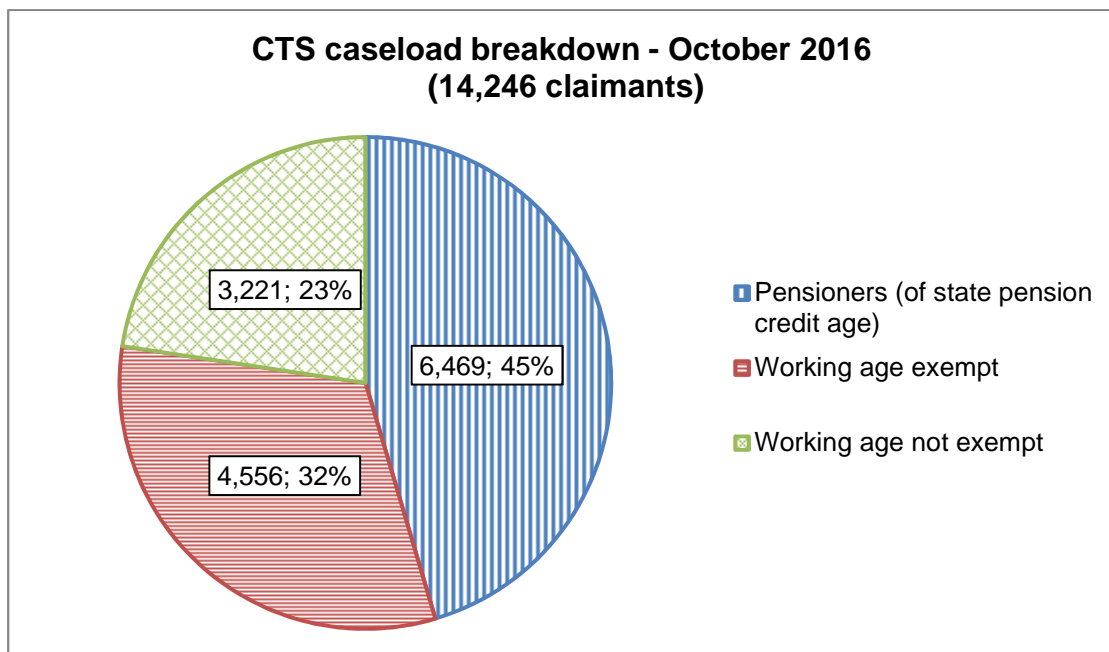
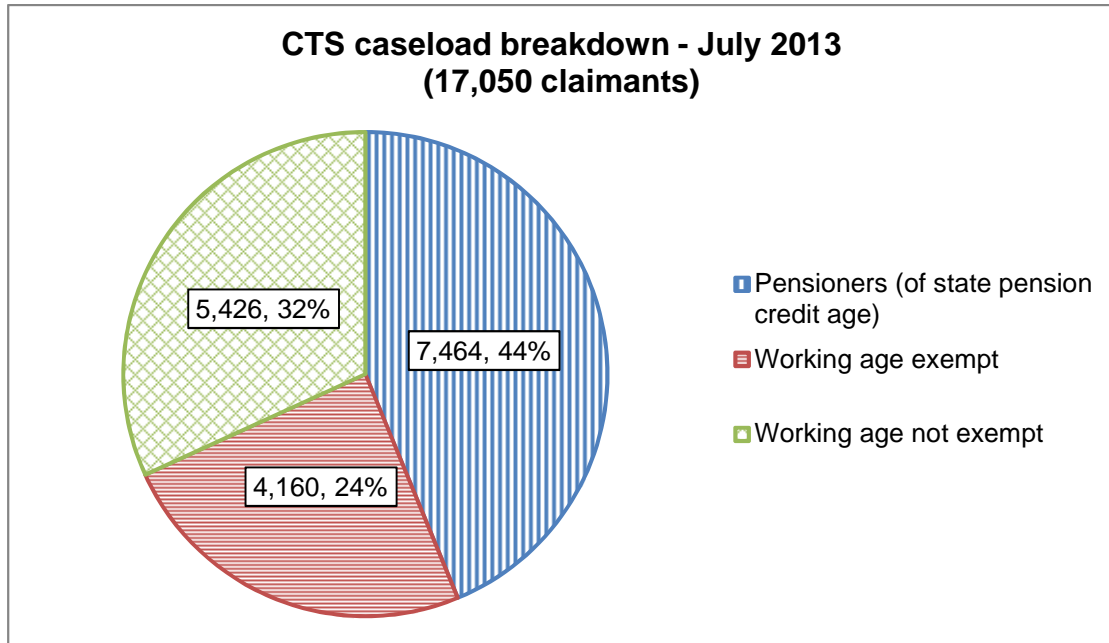
11. An in-year Council Tax collection rate of 97.8% in year was achieved for 2015/16, which was a 0.05% improvement on 2014/15 levels. Collection rates for the first 6 months of the 2016/17 financial year have been almost identical to the same period in 2015/16.
12. The average collection rates for unitary authorities in 2015/16 was 96.9% and for all councils it was 97.1% in 2015/16. Central Bedfordshire therefore performed better than average on both measures.
13. In 2015/16 a total of 77,493 debt recovery documents were issued which was an 8% reduction on 2014/15 levels. This reduction can be attributed to the freeze on debt recovery activity related to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) referendum in May 2015. 9,810 Magistrates Court summonses were issued in 2015/16, a reduction of 124 on 2014/15 levels. In 2015/16 the Council's Revenues Team dealt with about 48,000 phone calls from residents regarding payment of their Council Tax liability. Most of the increased debt recovery action in 2013/14 can be attributed to the introduction of the LCTS scheme.
14. The chart below illustrates the level of Council Tax debt recovery activity for from 2012/13 to 2016/17. The activity levels for 2016/17 are as at 30 September 2016.



15. The debt recovery activity for 2015/16 saw a predictable reduction in the number of documents issued although this did not adversely affect collection rates as late and non-payers were rigorously pursued once all residents had been re-billed following the PCC referendum.
16. In 2015/16 Council Tax totalling £160.3m was collected compared to £154.9m in 2014/15, which was an increase of £5.4m. This reflects the growing tax base (number of households) and improved collection of both current years and previous year's Council Tax debt.

### The Current Central Bedfordshire Council Scheme

17. Since the introduction of Council Tax Support the number of Central Bedfordshire Council claimants receiving LCTS has dropped by 19% or 3,372 claimants, from 17,667 in April 2013 to 14,295 in September 2016.
18. The case load can be separated into three distinct categories of claimants, Pensioners, Protected working age claimants and Non Protected working age claimants who are required to pay a minimum of 25% of their Council Tax liability.
19. The charts below illustrate how the number of claimants in these the three categories has changed since the scheme was introduced.



20. The number of pensioner claimants has reduced by 995 cases or 13.3%, working age exempt (protected) claims have increased by 396 or 9.5% and working age not exempt (required to pay 25%) have reduced by 2,205 or 40.6%.
21. The overall reduction in claimants can in the main be attributed to the improved economic climate although this does not explain the increase in working age exempt cases.



Several other Councils in the same benchmarking group have seen similar increases in their exempt cases, and whilst there are no hard facts available to explain the increase (other than we know we now have more disabled claimants), some of the advice agencies have said that the Personal Independence Payment or PIP is easier to claim than Disability Living Allowance. This may be a factor as well as an increase in the number of people affected by diabetes.

### **The proposed scheme for 2017/18**

22. It is proposed that the current scheme be readopted for 2017/18 with no changes being proposed.

### **Other factors impacting on future schemes**

23. It is important that any scheme agreed by the Council is capable of being administered effectively. This Council uses Civica software, one of three systems available for this purpose. The costs of implementing changes to the scheme are relevant, in the context of the likely sums to be recovered from Council Tax payers and claimants. The Council's software company along with other similar providers stated its intention not to make any major changes to its software until after the national review of Council Tax Support. It is now discussing possible changes with Councils in particular with a view to making modifications when the full roll out of Universal Credit is due in 2022.
24. Several Councils are discussing what are known as "banded discount schemes" which are thought to be a simplified version of the existing means tested schemes, although nationally only one Council has introduced such a scheme. It seems unlikely that there will be any Civica software users who introduce major changes to their schemes in 2017/18.
25. Current and future Welfare Reforms will impact in late 2016/17 as we see the introduction of the reduced level of Benefit Cap, with about eight times more Central Bedfordshire Council residents subject to its reduction in Housing Benefit from November 2016 (increasing from the current 38 residents to about 300). The four year freezing of benefit rates at their 2015/16 levels will continue to place a strain on household budgets.
26. Universal Credit (UC) has been introduced on a small scale into Central Bedfordshire since February 2016, and the number of claimants is likely to remain relatively insignificant through the next 18 months. There are currently about 300 Central Bedfordshire Council residents in receipt of UC although only about 30 have any rent or Council Tax liability. Calculating Council Tax Support for UC recipients does present challenges and the Council will need to consider how to apply changes to its future Council Tax Support scheme once UC is fully rolled out.

### **Options for consideration**

27. None.

### **Reasons for decision**

28. So that Full Council can endorse the Central Bedfordshire Council Local Council Tax Support scheme. If the scheme is not approved by 31 January 2017, the Council will have to award Local Council Tax Support in accordance with the Government's default scheme which will result in the cost of the scheme significantly exceeding that of the Local Council Tax Support scheme.

### **Council Priorities**

29. By protecting vulnerable and elderly people as well as providing incentives to work, the proposed Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme is designed to support the Council's Medium Term Plan priorities of:
- Promoting health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
  - Improved educational attainment.

### **Corporate Implications**

#### **Risk Management**

30. The transfer from Council Tax Benefit to localised Council Tax Support means the impact of increased demand and cost will be a risk for all preceptors.
31. The Council and its precepting partners, the Police and Fire authorities, will need to monitor closely local social and economic changes and ensure there is a consideration of the impact of possible future shortfalls in funding.

#### **Staffing**

32. The introduction of a local CTS scheme has led to a significant increase in the number of residents who have contacted the Council. These contacts have mainly been to the Revenues and Benefits teams and Customer Services.

### **Legal Implications**

33. The Local Government Finance Bill 2012 states that for each financial year, Councils must consider whether to revise their Council Tax Support scheme or replace it with another scheme and that such decisions need to be made by 31 January in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to take effect. If the Council does not make a Council Tax Support scheme by 31 January 2016, a default scheme will be imposed on the Council which will be effective from April 2017.

### **Financial Implications**

34. The gross Council Tax Support discount awarded within Central Bedfordshire in 2016/17 is presently £13,463,994 on an annualised basis, which is a 0.35% increase on the same period last year.
35. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan assumes that the current scheme will continue with no additional savings planned to be met by scheme changes in 2017/18.

### **Equalities Implications**

36. Public authorities have a statutory duty to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
37. A full equality assessment was conducted as part of the approval process for the 2013/14 Council Tax Support Scheme to ensure that due regard was given to the impact of the scheme on the Council's residents, particularly those who are vulnerable and hard to reach.

### **Conclusion and next Steps**

38. Approval is being sought to keep the local Council Tax Support scheme unchanged for 2017/18.

### **Appendices**

39. None.

### **Background Papers**

40. None.

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Central Bedfordshire Council

Executive

6 December 2016

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## Using Compulsory Purchase Orders to bring Empty Homes back into Occupation

Report of Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing ([carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officers: Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, ([julie.ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:julie.ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)) and Nick Costin, Head of Housing Service, ([nick.costin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.costin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)), Tel: 0300 300 5219

**This report relates to a key issue**

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### Purpose of this report

1. The report presents a case to use compulsory purchase order (CPO) powers to bring a long term empty home back into occupation. The report recommends the use of CPO for a particular long term empty home but also seeks delegated authority to take all necessary steps to complete the process.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. approve the principle of the acquisition of Empty property A, either voluntarily or through the use of a compulsory purchase order (CPO) and the subsequent disposal of the property;
2. approve the principle of the disposal of Empty property A following a successful acquisition and renovation to a habitable standard, regardless of the resulting value;
3. authorise the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Assistant Director Legal Services (Monitoring Officer), to make a compulsory purchase order to be known as “The Central Bedfordshire (Property A) Compulsory Purchase Order” under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 or any other relevant legal powers, in respect of land and property indicated on a map marked with the name of the Compulsory Purchase Order, where the words property A will be replaced with the full address of the property. For the avoidance of doubt this authorisation extends to a Key Decision should that be necessary; and

**4. Authorise the Assistant Director Legal Services (Monitoring Officer), in respect of Property A:**

- a) to take all necessary steps in connection therewith including the making and serving of the Order, the signing publication, and serving of all notices, the submission of the Order to the Secretary of State for Housing (and if any objections are received) the making of arrangements for a Public Enquiry, including the appointment of Counsel.
- b) to either serve a Notice to Treat under the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 or make a General vesting Declaration under The Compulsory Purchase (vesting declarations) Act 1981 so as to acquire all necessary interests in the land and property included in the confirmed Compulsory Purchase order.

**Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations**

2. This item has not been presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Council's Empty Homes strategy, which was presented to the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 October 2010, includes proposals for the use of CPOs and that approval is required from Executive for proposed cases.

**Issues**

3. Empty homes are a wasted housing resource and have a negative effect leading to a decline in the neighbourhood. They can cause a nuisance to adjoining properties by attracting fly tipping, infestation of rodents, vandalism, unauthorised entry and other anti social behaviour.
4. The total number of empty homes in Central Bedfordshire in May 2016 was 2,542 and of these 1,442 have been empty for six months or longer (although 379 of these are exempt from potential enforcement). There are 225 properties that have been empty for two years or more. These are the focus of the Housing Service. The Council, at 4 October 2016, has a housing waiting list of 1,453 households.
5. The Council has a successful record of using legislation to bring empty homes back into use with Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO). EDMOs allow the Council to acquire management, refurbish, and use the property to meet needs for a period of seven years. Upfront costs are recovered through rental income. This enforcement action is suitable where the costs of refurbishing the property can be recovered in the seven years that the EDMO is in force.

6. There are cases where EDMOs are less suitable, due to size, location, cost of refurbishment, or other factors that make the property less able to meet housing need. On 12 January 2016, a review of the Empty Homes Capital programme resources resulted in Cllrs Wenham, Hegley and Collins agreeing to recommend the provision of additional resources (through a reserve amount in the MTFP capital programme) to increase empty homes activity and in particular to test the use of CPO's through the appropriate approval process.
7. Housing Services have procured a contract with Kent Legal Services (LS), who have expertise in supporting local authorities successfully obtain CPOs for empty homes. Five complex empty homes have been identified and reviewed as potentially suitable for CPO. The use of CPO's is new to the Council and can pose a significant financial risk, particularly if a public enquiry is held that results in the CPO application being unsuccessful. Working with Kent LS aims to minimise that risk.
8. The Council's Empty Homes Strategy concludes that a balanced approach to tackling empty homes is maintained with a co-ordinated approach between incentives and enforcement. Significant advice, information, and assistance is offered before using enforcement as a last resort. The Empty Homes strategy also sets out the Enforcement Protocol, which is followed by Officers pursuing EDMO or CPO action.
9. The details and rationale for recommending CPO in respect of property A are set out in Appendix A. It is intended that one property is initially subject to CPO action as this is a new course of enforcement action for the Council.

#### **Options for consideration**

10. Where a property has a Council Tax debt in excess of £1,000 against it, the Council may seek to secure a Charging Order against the property concerned. A final Charging Order has to be approved by a District Judge at a hearing and follows a process where firstly a Liability Order is secured for the debt, and then an Interim Charging Order is made. The property owner(s) can challenge a Final Charging Order but if it is granted by the Judge, the debt is secured against the property and interest is applied.
11. Where a Charging Order is secured against a property, the Council could apply for an "enforced sale" of that property to release equity that would pay off the debt. To date, the Council have not enforced a sale through this route although the Head of Revenues and Benefits has confirmed that Charging Orders are being progressed in two of the five potential CPO cases that are being considered. The making of a Charging Order secures the debt but does not release funding unless the Council enforces a sale.

12. A further option for the five potential CPO cases is to pursue EDMOs. However, in most cases, the cost of refurbishment might not be recoverable during the seven year EDMO period. Although an application to extend an EDMO can be made, it leaves a risk that the Council might not be able to recover all initial capital costs. EDMOs are, however, more cost effective as there are minimal legal costs and no compensation payable (as the owner does not lose the value of the asset).
13. EDMO's are progressed as a cost effective solution where appropriate but in complex cases, CPO's have the benefit of giving the Council full control of the property acquired. CPO is a "strong" enforcement action and sends a positive message to all owners of long term empty homes that the Council is committed to meeting housing needs through bringing empty homes back into use.

#### **Reason/s for decision**

14. The decision will enable Housing Services to progress a CPO in respect of property A and will enable the Director of Social Care Health and Housing to take all necessary steps to complete the process in consultation with Assistant Director Legal Services (Monitoring Officer).

#### **Council Priorities**

15. The proposed actions support the Council's priority to Enhance Central Bedfordshire. Returning empty homes to use improves the quality of housing and enhances the immediate residential area.

#### **Corporate Implications**

#### **Community Safety Implications**

16. Empty homes can be an attraction to criminal and anti social behaviour. They attract fly tipping, damage, and unauthorised entry, which in turn can lead to arson. Neighbours of empty homes are often fearful of anti social behaviour and the impact on their quality of life.

#### **Legal Implications**

17. The Council has the power under s17 of the Housing Act 1985 to acquire land by compulsory purchase (land in this instance includes houses and buildings) for housing purposes. The guidance on the compulsory purchase process is Circular 06/2004, which states that bringing empty properties into housing use is one of the main uses of the power.



18. The Council's constitution currently provides the Director of Community Services with delegated authority to exercise the functions of the Housing Act 1985 in consultation with Assistant Director of Housing (4.3.34). In addition the constitution provides the Director of Community Services delegated authority for the development and appropriation of land and buildings, subject to a maximum value in any case of £200,000 per annum (revenue) or £500,000 (capital) (4.3.91). The Council's Empty Homes Strategy 2010, however, states that approval to progress a CPO would be made by Executive. It is likely that property A acquired with CPO will increase in value above £0.5M following renovation works.
19. Part XVII of the Housing Act 1985 applies, with modifications, the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 (compulsory purchase procedure), the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 (post confirmation procedure) and the Land Compensation Act 1961 (amount and assessment of compensation).
20. The Council, as part of the acquisition process is required to provide a supporting Statement of Reasons for the CPO. This should set the context for taking action and explain the need for the Order. It should explain that there are no legal impediments to the making of the Order, that funding is in place and the policy reasons behind the making of the order. It should also consider the proportionality of the Councils action in terms of the owner s rights.
21. The Council is obliged to act in a way which is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The Convention Rights relevant to compulsory acquisition are Article 1, Article 6, Article 8 and Article 14. These rights are qualified rights and may be interfered with provided such interference is prescribed by law, is pursuant to a legitimate aim, is necessary in a democratic society and is proportionate.
22. As with all empty homes work the Council would prefer to bring property A back into use with the cooperation of the owner. If the principle of using CPO to acquire property A is agreed by Executive, the owner will be written to requesting voluntary purchase of the property.
23. It is also possible that the owner may ask the Council to withdraw the CPO to allow him to complete renovation on the property and either let, sell or occupy it himself. This is considered unlikely in the case of property A, however, if this occurs it is proposed that the Council will proceed with the CPO but give an undertaking not to enforce it on condition that steps towards occupation are completed within given timescales.

24. The process for making and confirming a CPO then taking ownership of the property and selling it to achieve future occupation requires a series of detailed and prescribed steps, which will require the Council's Legal Services, LGSS to implement. Housing Officers will work closely with LGSS.
25. There is the likelihood that further properties may need to be acquired and be subject to a CPO. CPO is seen as a measure of last resort and it is important that those authorising a CPO have full information. The case for the making of the CPO must identify the acquiring powers, the financial ability, and the extent of land to be acquired. The case should ensure that the action is proportionate in terms of the owner's Human Rights and that there is no discrimination arising under the Equalities Act.

### **Financial and Risk Implications**

26. The financial aspects of undertaking a CPO are included in appendix A. There are greater costs associated with CPO in comparison to alternative enforcement action. This is due to the significant impact of the action. In particular compensation and legal costs have to be met by the Council.
27. If, however, the Council undertake the renovation works to the property and the value increases beyond the cost of those works, the "surplus" element of the sale can be used to cover the legal and compensation costs. The key here is to increase the value to a greater extent than the cost of CPO and refurbishment. Undertaking refurbishment would be an additional impact upon Council's capital programme but should be recoverable through re-sale of the property.
28. There is the risk that if the Council are unsuccessful at the public enquiry, the Council then become liable for the objector's costs, which might include legal costs. This risk will be minimised through following the advice of Kent LS, who are experienced in supporting local authorities with successful CPOs. Kent LS have provided many examples of successful local authority use of CPO.
29. The Council's capital programme provides £0.302M gross in 2016/17 and £0.21M gross for the remainder of the MTFP period, with a reserves amount of £0.2M in each year of the MTFP (see paragraph 6 above), and slippage, where agreed. Whilst a "back to back" sale might be conducted within one financial year, it would not, however, provide the opportunity to refurbish and make a surplus on the property, which could cover legal and compensation costs. For these reasons, a "back to back" sale is not recommended. This plan, is likely, however, to result in overspend within the year that the property is acquired.

30. There are risks that the anticipated costs/values outlined in Appendix A could eventually be higher or lower. These are indicative best estimate costs at this stage and will be firmed up before a CPO is made.
31. There is a risk that if the CPO is not confirmed by Secretary of State, the associated legal costs (and potentially the objector's costs) would have to be met from revenue funds, not capital as there would be no capital project. This risk can be minimised through taking expert legal advice on what is required to ensure a successful CPO.

### **Equalities Implications**

32. Compulsory Purchase Process and Crichton Down Rules (29 October Circular 2015) advises acquiring authorities that CPO should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest. The purposes for which the order is made should justify the interference with the human rights of those with an interest in the affected land. In this case officers have considered the relevant factors and are satisfied that the benefits of acquiring the property provide a compelling case in the public interest for the use of CPO powers and outweigh the impact on the existing owner.
33. Access to appropriate housing is particularly important for reducing inequalities, because too often, those most disadvantaged are more likely to be living in housing that does not meet their needs. Lack of choice and quality in the housing stock means that the most vulnerable communities are often housed in cramped, poor quality accommodation within deprived areas. Ensuring that empty homes are brought back into use can therefore be of assistance in terms of tackling housing inequality.
34. It is acknowledged that the service of a CPO may cause stress for the owner of property A. However, there have been numerous communications (written and spoken) between the owner and the Council's Empty Homes Officer, who has provided advice and offered assistance towards voluntarily bringing the property back into occupation. Property A is a bungalow, which would be desirable and suitable for older people or those with mobility problems in Central Bedfordshire.
35. The owner will not lose financially on the value of the property, which will be professionally determined, and will also be compensated, at 7.5% of the value. The owner has opportunity to appeal if he feels that the value offered by the Council is insufficient.

36. It is acknowledged that this proposal will have an effect on the human rights of the owner of the property, however, on balance it is suggested that the Council finds the public benefit of the proposal outweighs the impact on those affected. Regard has been taken in particular to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and to Articles 6 and 8.
37. Article 1 of the First Protocol provides that: *“Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law. The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties”*.
38. The order will affect the Article 1 rights of the present owner if confirmed by the Secretary of State. However there shall be no violation of those rights as officers are content that the steps taken are in the public interest and lawful as required by the first protocol. Those directly affected by the order will be entitled to compensation as provided by law, such compensation to be settled in absence of agreement by the impartial Upper Tribunal.
39. Article 8 of the Convention provides as follows: *“(1) Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence (2) There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic wellbeing of the Country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”* Article 8 is a qualified right and interference can be justified in appropriate cases with reference to Article 8(2).
40. The Order will be made pursuant to s17 of the Housing Act 1985 which authorises the Council to acquire land compulsorily subject to following the procedures laid down in the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Whilst the Council could argue that an unoccupied and previously tenanted property does not provide its owner benefit from protection under this right, there is anyway a compelling case in the public interest to acquire the Order Land (property A) and the public benefit will outweigh the private loss. In the circumstances, the compulsory acquisition of the Order Land will not conflict with Article 8 of the Convention.

41. Article 6 of the Convention provides as follows: *“In the determination of his civil rights and obligations..... everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law”*.
42. The Order, when made will be publicised and all those affected by the Order will be notified and have the opportunity to make objections and to be heard at a public inquiry before a decision is made on whether or not the Order should be confirmed. A right of legal challenge exists to this process in accordance with section 23 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any dispute as to compensation payable is determined by the Upper Tribunal, a court established by law. All of those whose Article 1, Article 6 and Article 8 rights would be affected by the Order will have an opportunity to object to it and to have their objection considered at an independent and public hearing. Statutory judicial challenge provisions also exist.
43. The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics namely: age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or beliefs and sex and sexual orientation. It places the Council under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers. In particular the Council must pay due regard to the need to:
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
44. Having paid due regard to the provisions of Equalities Act and how they may relate to this case, it is considered that the proposal is fully compliant with the legislation. The Order required to facilitate the proposal is not anticipated to have any additional effects. The requirements of the Empty Homes Strategy Enforcement protocol are met, which was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment before being approved by Executive.

### **Implications for Work Programming**

45. There are no implications that might impact on the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and no further reports which might be considered by Members.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

46. There are a significant number of longer terms empty homes in Central Bedfordshire at a time of continued high housing need. The Council has been pro-active in using EDMOs, which are suitable for properties that the Council can manage and bring back into use. Compulsory purchase orders (CPO) can be used for more intransigent cases where the opportunity to negotiate with the owners has been exhausted, the property is causing social problems, and compulsory acquisition is a measure of last resort. The application of these powers can send a message of intent to all empty property owners, demonstrating that the Council is committed to bringing the worst condition empty homes back into occupation.
47. The CPO process can be lengthy, complex and costly in comparison to alternative courses of action. The service of a CPO can, however, lead to a voluntary sale of the property by the owner, which provides the same desired result at little cost.
48. It is recommended that the Council progress the CPO for property A and if successful, renovate the property to a habitable standard before resale. This plan will help ensure that the costs associated with CPO are covered by the increase in value resulting from complete renovation. Whilst this lengthens the process, it reduces financial risks and has the added benefit that the Council are in control of renovation, which is not the case where there is a back to back sale.
49. As part of the CPO process, delegated authority should also be provided to Director of Social Care Health and Housing in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to dispose of property A, regardless of the resulting value.

## **Appendices**

The following is attached;

50. Appendix A Property A Case Details and Cost Implications of CPO

## **Background Papers**

51. The following background papers, not previously available to the public, were taken into account and are available on the Council's website:
  - (i) Empty Homes strategy is a background paper but is available on the Council's website.

## **Appendix A – Property A Case Details and Cost Implications of CPO**

### **History**

The property is registered as a second home but neighbours confirm that it has been empty for around 3 years, although in all likelihood it is much longer. The neighbours who complained brought the property to the attention of the Empty Homes Officer; it is not registered as empty on Council Tax records. The owner resides in Dorset. The owners circumstances might be a contributory factor to not progressing the sale of the property, as the owner has suggested would happen. Neighbours confirm that until 2 years ago the owner came back to the house and spent time maintaining the property. There is no council tax debt other than ongoing charge which is being paid by direct debit. Owner has been charged single person discount since 1<sup>st</sup> April 1993.

### **Description**

The property is a single storey detached bungalow and in very poor condition. It has seriously dilapidated in the past 2 years. It is in a residential area that comprises a wide mix of properties, both older and newer construction. The property is at the centre of a village area and the majority of the other properties in the area are in a good condition and well maintained. The village is a desirable place to live and the negative impact of this particular property is acknowledged by neighbours.

The property is in a seriously run down condition.

The front and rear gardens are overgrown and the internal store door has been breached and has left this part of the property open. Neighbours have complained about the condition of the front and side gardens to the property. The side garden has a particularly poor impact on the next door neighbour, who is struggling to control the overgrowth of ivy on the fencing.

A full internal inspection was undertaken through a Court Warrant on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016. Previous Notices of Entry appointments have not been kept.

The property has five bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and two bathrooms. It is not water tight, with significant damage caused from extreme damp ingress in the rear addition, through the roof and walls.

There is evidence of asbestos. The kitchen and bathroom facilities are minimal and the heating system is poorly installed. Wiring needs renewing and there is evidence of a rat infestation in the kitchen. There are numerous other structural repairs required to walls, windows and parts of the floor.

**Actions to date**

The Council's Empty Property Officer has written to the owner at his home address in Dorset and at the empty property address (the property is not on the Land Register) several times between 2013 and 2016, offering assistance and advice to bring the property back into use but also asking the owner what their intentions are. The Officer has also spoken directly with the owner.

The owner has responded to correspondence confirming that he has personal issues. The owner has stated an intention to sell the property but no progress has been made to date. The owner was served with Notice of Intended Entry under the Housing Act 1985 and the Housing Act 2004 but neither the owner nor a representative attended the property during the planned visit in February 2016.

A final letter confirming the intention to progress enforcement action was sent on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016. A warrant to enter the property forcibly was enacted on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016.

**Consideration for Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)**

Account must be taken of the costs of repair to Decent Homes Standard and the costs of associated management (assumed for these purposes to be 15% of the rental value) and a 2% of rental income taken as maintenance over the 7 year period.

All costs associated with serving and carrying out the functions of an EDMO are recoverable under statute either via rental receipts or through a legal charge on the property or direct recovery from the owner (if this is practicable).

Estimated renovation costs to make habitable	£76,250
7 year Management costs @15% of rental income	£9,286
Maintenance (estimated 2% rental income)	£1,238
Fee for Residential property Tribunal	£150
Insurance for 7 years	£1,400

**Total costs** **£88,594**

Rental Income (*Local Reference Rent – Market Rent as assessed by Rent Officer Service*)

Local R Rent at September 2010 for a 4 bedroom property £204.49 per week

Monthly Rental £886.12 X 7 Years (*no increase*) £ 74,434

**Shortfall** **£14,160**



It will not be possible to recover the cost of refurbishment and redevelopment in the 7 years available under the EDMO over 7 full years unless a full market rent was charged. This, however, would not meet affordable housing need.

**CPO costs for an uncontested case (Back to back sale)**

Property cost (subject to independent valuation)	£340,000
Basic loss payment (7.5% of purchase cost)	£25,500
Vendor's Agent fees	£2,000
Vendor's legal fees	£1,000
Stamp Duty Land Tax (5%)	£17,000
Insurance	£100
Legal costs (Kent LS)	£1,500
Land registry	£500
Misc costs	£1,000
LGSS costs (estimated)	£1,000
Secretary of State costs (estimated)	£1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£391,100</b>

If the valuations are disputed and contested by the owner, the case would be heard by the Lands Tribunal. This would result in additional legal costs of between £4,000 and £7,000, depending upon the decision of the Lands Tribunal. This makes it important to offer a realistic valuation to the property owner.

If contested and the Council loses, all costs of the objectors are payable by the Council. These are unknown.

Council costs may be applied for but are not guaranteed to be paid from the proceeds of the sale.

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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

6 December 2016

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**Commissioning of New School Places in Barton-Le-Clay and Marston Moretaine for September 2018**

Report of Cllr Steven Dixon, Executive Member for Education and Skills,  
([steven.dixon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:steven.dixon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officers: Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services,  
([sue.harrison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sue.harrison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**This report relates to a key decision**

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**Purpose of this report**

1. This report seeks support for the proposed consultation by Arnold Academy (middle), Barton Le Clay, to expand by 1 form of entry (30 places in each middle school year group) by September 2018.
2. This report seeks support for the publication of the official proposal for the proposed expansion of Church End Lower School (Forest End campus) Marston Moretaine, to expand by 1 form of entry (30 places in each lower school year group) by September 2018.
3. The schools referred to within the report serve the Wards of Marston Moretaine and Barton Le Clay.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Executive is asked to:**

1. **support the proposed commencement of consultation by Arnold Academy (middle), Barton Le Clay to expand by 1 form of entry (30 places in each year group) by September 2018;**
2. **support the publication of the statutory proposal for the proposed expansion of Church End Lower School (Forest End campus), Marston Moretaine to expand by 1 form of entry (30 places in each year group) by September 2018; and**

- 3. approve delegated decision to the Director of Children’s Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Education and Skills and the Director of Resources in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to determine the temporary programme of up to £2.0m for additional school places as a result of deferred or unsuccessful Free School applications, which are required to meet the basic need for school places in 2018.**

**Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations**

4. This report was presented to Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 22 November 2016 and the Committee was asked to indicate its support for the recommendations set out within the report. The views of the Committee will be reported to Executive prior to the meeting.

**Pupil place planning for Middle School places in Barton Le Clay from September 2018**

5. In July 2016 the demographic forecasts for the Council’s School Place Planning pyramid area covering Barton Le Clay and the surrounding area were revised with refreshed data as part of the annual review of the Council’s School Organisation Plan.
6. The Councils revised School Organisation Plan was published in September 2016 and can be found at, <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/organisation/plan.aspx>
7. The outcome of the revision is a forecast deficit in middle school provision in the village from 2017/18. This is a sustained deficit of up to 1 form entry (30 places per year group).
8. The forecast deficit for Barton Le Clay from the Councils School Organisation Plan for the next 5 years is as follows:-

	Total PAN, Sept 16	Total year 5, Jan 16	Forecast				
			2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
PAN/ forecast year 5	150	132	151	174	153	165	166
<b>Balance of places at YR 5</b>			<b>-1</b>	<b>-24</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-15</b>	<b>-16</b>

9. There is 1 middle school in the village. In December 2013, Arnold Academy was rated by OFSTED as a “Good” school in all areas.

10. There are no new middle school sites secured through the S106 in the village. The anticipated rate of growth in the village's middle school year group is also such that a new standalone school would not fill and be revenue efficient for a number of years. The solution to manage the further growth in places is therefore through the proposed expansion of Arnold Academy.
11. Arnold Academy has agreed through the request of the authority to temporarily admit pupils over its planned admission number in 2017 in Year 5 to meet a local demographic need. The school has supported the council's principles to provide additional school places at a local popular and successful school.
12. Further accommodation will be required to enable the school to permanently expand by 1 form of entry to meet the local basic need from September 2018. The governing body of the school are supportive of the proposed permanent expansion.
13. Arnold Academy converted to an academy in July 2011. The council has a duty to ensure adequate school places are provided to everyone that wants a place and can commission these additional places at academies and maintained schools as long as they meet the Council's policy principles for pupil place planning
14. An Academy is required to submit an application to the EFA for approval to expand. The results of the consultation undertaken by the academy will be presented to the EFA in support of their application.

**Pupil place planning for Lower School places in Marston Moretaine from September 2018**

15. The 2016 school organisation plan for Marston Moretaine forecasts a deficit of lower school places from 2018-2019 of up to 1 form of entry.
16. The forecast deficit for Marston Moretaine from the Councils School Organisation Plan for the next 5 years is as follows:-

	Total PAN, Sept 16	Total year R, Jan 16	Forecast				
			2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
PAN/ forecast year R	<b>143</b>	<b>133</b>	126	136	166	134	149
<b>Balance of places at YR R</b>			<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-23</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>-6</b>

17. There is forecast deficit in 2020 but no forecast deficit in 2019. In 2019 there is a 6% surplus of school places forecast. Considering the rate of growth in the local area this small surplus is acceptable and will be monitored through the school organisation plan on an annual basis.

18. Since 2013 the Council has commissioned an additional 150 lower school places in Marston Moretaine, required as a result of demographic growth in the area, most significantly due to increases in housing on the Marston Park development on land east of Bedford Road.
19. The additional lower school places have been provided by the expansion of Church End Lower School on to a new second campus on land east of Bedford Road. The new campus was phase 1 of the expansion, known as the Forest End campus. The school opened in September 2014 and now provides up to 150 lower school places.
20. There are no large lower school sites secured through S106 in the village. Land has been secured adjacent to the Forest End campus, as planned for phase 2 of the school expansion to meet the local need as the occupation of the housing increased. The additional land will provide the Forest End campus with space to expand to a 2 form entry school.
21. The anticipated rate of growth in the village's lower school year group is also such that a new standalone school would not fill and be revenue efficient for a number of years.
22. There are 3 other lower schools within the Marston Moretaine pyramid: Shelton Lower, Thomas Johnson Lower and Houghton Conquest Lower. Shelton Lower is on a constrained site and would not be able to expand without additional land. Thomas Johnson and Houghton Conquest Lower are not in the area of the greatest basic need. Church End is the preferred school for the proposed expansion due to its location in the area of greatest need, the availability of the land secured through S106 as part of the phase 2 proposal and the school is an Ofsted rated 'Good' school.
23. The solution to manage the further growth in places is therefore through the proposed expansion of Church End Lower School, through the Forest End campus.

**Guidance for prescribed alterations as set out by the Department of Education (DfE)**

24. The revised guidance for prescribed alterations, published by the DfE in April 2016, requires local authorities to undertake a statutory process for proposed expansions of maintained schools that meet a specified threshold. Although the previous requirement for a 2 stage consultation process has been removed (ie both pre statutory and statutory) the DfE expects that the local authority will consult interested parties to develop the statutory proposal prior to publication.

25. The proposed expansion of Church End Lower School meets the specified threshold. Therefore, in order to develop the statutory proposal for the proposed expansion a preliminary consultation has already been undertaken. This was launched on the 28 September 2016 and concluded on the 2 November 2016.
26. The letter used to canvas the views of stakeholders are summarised in Appendix A.
27. In summary, 23 responses were received to the preliminary consultation of which 19 were in favour, 3 were against and 1 was unsure of the proposal. Appendix C summarises the key themes from the consultation and the council's responses.
28. The proposal is supported by Marston Moreteyne Parish Council (Appendix B). The considerations requested by the Parish Council are addressed in Appendix C.
29. Stakeholders who were canvassed included
  - I. The Governing Body of Church End Lower School
  - II. The staff of Church End Lower School
  - III. Parents/ carers of the children currently attending Church End Lower School
  - IV. Marston Moretaine Parish Council
  - V. Other schools and academies within Central Bedfordshire
  - VI. Central Bedfordshire Ward Members
  - VII. Local diocese
30. The responses to this preliminary consultation will help to develop the statutory proposal.

### **Guidance for Making Significant Changes to an Open Academy**

31. The guidance for academies differs to the guidance for prescribed alteration to a maintained school. Academy trusts need to confirm that a fair and open local consultation has been undertaken, with all those who could be affected by the proposed change, and that the proposal takes account of all responses received.
32. For Academies there is no requirement to publish a statutory notice. An assessment of the proposal will be made before the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) or Secretary of State, as appropriate.

## **Pupil place planning and meeting the demographic growth in Central Bedfordshire**

33. Additional school places are forecast to be needed to meet a basic need in parts of Central Bedfordshire. In order to ensure that the council fulfils its duty to provide adequate school places and to meet the council's policy principles for pupil place planning, additional accommodation may be required at schools for 2018.
34. The Academies Act 2010 enables the Secretary of State to enter into an academy arrangement with any person wishing to establish a Free School. Academy Trusts can submit a Free School application to the Secretary of State for new school places. The next wave of Free School applications is Wave 13.
35. Free School applications, supported by the council, have been submitted under Wave 12 and proposed for Wave 13. The outcome of all these applications will not be known until Autumn 2017.
36. The process for approving and planning new school places through the Academies Act can be extensive. It is prudent for the council to have in place a contingency fund, for applications to the Secretary of State for Free Schools which are deferred or are unsuccessful and where there is a clear basic need for school places. The contingency will enable the council to set in place a temporary programme for commissioning additional school places to meet its statutory obligations.
37. The timing of the announcements for the Free schools do not allow for a further opportunity to report back to Executive and in the same time have in place a programme to deliver the additional accommodation required for the beginning of the autumn school term 2018. The Executive is therefore asked to approve delegated decision to the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Education and Skills, to determine the temporary programme of up to £2.0m for additional school places.
38. The temporary programme is up to £2.0m. This sum is allocated and reserved from the New School Places programme, which is a contribution of s106 funds and the basic need grant.

## **Conclusion**

39. Each of the 2 schools in this report support the proposals to expand and provide new school places for the local communities and in the areas of greatest basic need.
40. Maps indicating the location of each of the 2 schools are attached in Appendix D of this report.



41. As an academy, Arnold Academy can propose an enlargement of their premises. It is a requirement of the Department for Education that they must consult with stakeholders and prescribed organisations and persons on their proposal.
42. For Church End Lower School, which is a maintained foundation school, the Council is required to carry out the required consultation for the proposed expansion via the publication of the statutory proposal.
43. The consultees for the 2 proposals will include staff at the schools and their feeder schools, the head teachers and governing bodies of all other Central Bedfordshire schools, all members of Central Bedfordshire Council, local diocese, local town and parish councils and local residents and all other prescribed consultees.
44. The outcome of the consultations, along with a business case submitted by each school to illustrate the alignment of their proposal with the Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools, will be reported to the Council's Executive for final approval.
45. The Executive will be asked to determine the outcome of the 2 proposals and the accompanying business cases in April 2017.
46. Executive approval, in April 2017, of each proposal will enable the schools to continue to work in partnership with Council officers to influence the design and delivery of the new provision, funded through developer contributions and Department for Education basic need grant, within the Council's New School Places Programme.

### **Legal Implications**

47. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on Councils to secure sufficient primary and secondary school places to provide appropriate education for pupils in its area. S14A of the Education Act 1996 imposes a duty to consider representations about the exercise by local authorities of their functions from the parents of qualifying children in relation to the provision of primary and secondary education. Qualifying children include all those of compulsory school age or under.
48. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Councils a strategic role as commissioners, of school places and includes duties to consider parental representation, diversity and choice, duties in relation to high standards and the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and fair access to educational opportunity.
49. The main legislation governing school organisation is found in sections 6A-32 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

50. Department for Education Guidance for proposers and decision makers regarding school organisation in maintained schools was published in April 2016 to support the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.
51. This guidance can be viewed at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>
52. The guidance for prescribed alterations, published by the Department for Education (DfE) in April 2016, requires local authorities to undertake a statutory process for proposed expansions of maintained schools that meet a specified threshold. Although the requirement for a 2 stage consultation process has been removed (ie both pre statutory and statutory) the DfE expects that the local authority will consult interested parties to develop the statutory proposal prior to publication.
53. The local authority is expected to ensure that there is effective consultation with parents and other interested parties to gauge demand for the proposed change, and provide consultees with sufficient opportunity to give their views.
54. The Council will need to ensure that the new accommodation is suitable and the necessary capital funding and planning permission have been secured before the expansion can be implemented.
55. Department for Education (DFE) Guidance for Academies wishing to make significant changes, including enlargement of their premises, was published in March 2016.
56. The Guidance can be viewed at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-significant-changes-to-an-existing-academy>
57. Academy Trusts are required to exercise their own judgments in deciding whether a change is significant, although it is anticipated that the proposals set out in this report for Arnold Academy would come within the definition of 'fast track significant change' as set out by 2016 DfE Guidance.
58. The process is overseen by the Education Funding Agency on behalf of the DfE and requires an academy to undertake consultation, to obtain consent of the Secretary of State and to secure any capital required by the proposal before implementation.
59. The business case submitted to the Education Funding Agency by an academy must be rigorous enough for a decision to be made on whether the change is necessary. Details of minimum content are set out in the 2016 DfE Guidance.

60. In both cases there are statutory and processes for consultation and applications which, if the proposals are agreed, must be followed to ensure the proposals can be implemented when required.

### **Council Priorities**

61. The support to launch the proposed consultations for new school places at Barton Le Clay and Marston Moretaine meets the Council priorities to 'Improving education and skills in Central Bedfordshire'. This is in addition to the council's statutory obligations to provide adequate school places and the Council's 9 policy principles for pupil place planning.

### **Financial and Risk Implications**

62. The New School Places Programme is funded by developer contributions and Basic Need grant income from the Department for Education (DfE) and on current planning assumptions the programme 2016/17 to 2019/20 with gross expenditure of £18.2M (£4.0M net) in 16/17, £25M (net nil) in 2017/18, £17.2M (net nil) in 2018/19 and £15M (£3.4M net) in 2019/20.
63. The Council will continue to ensure that all opportunities are taken to increase income and to seek alternative funding sources for new build and expansions of existing school buildings.
64. The day to day running costs of school provision is met through revenue funding which is made available to each school as part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and is based primarily on the numbers of pupils attending and will increase accordingly in an expanded school.
65. Where necessary and where Schools and Academies are undertaking significant expansion on commission from the Council additional revenue support for relevant costs can be accessed on application through the DSG funded Growth Fund established by the Schools Forum.
66. Capital expenditure within the New School Places Programme is subject to the Council's Code of Financial Governance.
67. There are no financial implications arising out of a decision to support the commencement of consultations as outlined in this report.
68. Approval is sought at this stage for a temporary programme with a fund of £2.0m for delayed or unsuccessful Free School applications to the DfE. Free school applications, supported by the council, have been submitted under Wave 12 and proposed for Wave 13. The outcome of these applications will not be known until 2017.

The temporary programme will allow the council to meet its statutory obligations of providing additional school places in light of any failed or deferred Free School applications.

69. The new school places if approved will be funded through a combination of s106 contributions from local developments and the Basic Need grant received from the DfE.

### Equalities Implications

70. The consultation and decision making process set out in regulation for proposals to maintained schools and academies requires an evaluation on a project by project basis of any equalities and human rights issues that might arise.
71. 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.
72. This statutory duty includes requirements to:-
- I. Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
  - II. Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
  - III. Encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
73. The proposed consultations are not envisaged to have an adverse impact on any of the listed groups below:-

I.	Sex	N/A
II.	Gender Reassignment	N/A
III.	Age	Lower and Middle aged pupils will have access to sufficient school places
IV.	Disability	N/A
V.	Race & Ethnicity	N/A
VI.	Sexual Orientation	N/A
VII.	Religion or Belief (or No Belief)	N/A
VIII.	Pregnancy & Maternity	N/A
IX.	Human Rights	N/A
X.	Other Groups (rural isolation etc)	N/A

## **Risk Management**

74. The proposal set out in this report has been developed and evaluated against the key criteria for decision makers that are outlined in guidance. Likewise the proposal has followed the procedures set out in regulation. This mitigates the risk on the Council of failing to comply with the relevant statutory requirements.
75. The key risks mitigated by the process that has been followed include:
  - I. Failure to discharge legal and statutory duties/guidance.
  - II. Failure to deliver the Council's strategic priorities.
  - III. Reputational risks associated with the non delivery of required school places.
  - IV. Financial risks, no capital investment from the council and all consequential additional running costs will be borne by the school
76. If approved, the Council and the Governing Body and Trustees of the schools will develop and implement change management plans that will include risk assessment and management criteria to ensure the effective delivery of the objectives set out in the proposal document

## **Conclusion and next Steps**

77. If approved, Arnold Academy will launch the proposed consultation and draft a business case for the expansion. The academy will also seek the DfE approval to expand.
78. The Council will publish the statutory notice for the proposed expansion at Church end Lower (Forest End site).
79. The responses to the consultations will be presented at Executive on the 4 April 2017 for determination and approval for capital expenditure.

## **Appendixes**

80. The following appendices are attached:

Appendix A Church End Lower School: Letter used to canvas the views of stakeholders.

Appendix B Marston Morteyne Parish Council

Appendix C Key themes to the preliminary consultation for the proposed expansion of Church End Lower School

Appendix D Maps indicating the location of the two schools.

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**Appendix A: Letter used to canvas the views of stakeholders.**

To governors, staff and parents/carers  
Church End Lower School  
Marston Moretaine

Your ref:  
Our ref: NSP/CELS/FE  
Date: 28/09/2016

Dear stakeholders

Proposed expansion of Church End Lower School – Forest End campus

As you will be aware, Church End Lower School was expanded on to a second site, the Forest End campus, 2 years ago. The new site opened to staff and pupils in September 2014 and had its official opening in March 2015. This was Phase 1 of the 2 Phase school expansion which was planned to meet the demand for school places from the number of homes being built within the village.


We are now planning Phase 2 of the school's expansion, to provide extra school places at the Forest End site to meet the local need. The proposed expansion, which has the approval of the school's governing body and leadership team, would provide an additional 30 places for each year group. These would be introduced on a phased basis with the first additional class for reception at the start of the new autumn term in 2018.

Before we publish anything formal about the expansion, we are asking all interested parties to give their feedback about the plans. If, after considering the results of this preliminary consultation, the Council's Executive approve the launch of the second part of the process, there will be a further opportunity to have your say when the statutory 4-week consultation is launched in January 2017. There will be more information available about the proposed expansion at that stage, and a drop-in session will also be held at the school where you can find out more details as well as answers to any questions.

Please turn over for a very short response form about the initial plans. We would be very grateful if you would fill this out as all feedback is very valuable in any expansion scheme like this. Responses need to be returned to us by 2 November.

Yours sincerely

**Sue Harrison**  
Director of Children's Services

<p><b>Proposed expansion (Phase 2) of Church End Lower School, Forest End campus</b></p> <p><b>Initial consultation</b></p>	
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1.	<p><b>In light of the extra homes being built in Marston Moretaine, do you agree with the council's proposal to expand Church End Lower School on the Forest End site?</b></p>
2.	<p><b>Do you have any comments or concerns regarding the proposed expansion?</b></p>

**Please help us to identify why you have an interest in the proposal –**

Are you a: (Please tick one)

	Parent of child at a Church End Lower School
	School employee
	School governor
	Local resident
	Other - please specify -

**Responses are required by 2 November 2016**

Please complete the above and return this form to  
**FREEPOST RSJS GBBZ SRZT (you do not need a stamp)**  
**School Organisation, Admissions & Capital Planning**  
**Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk,**  
**Chicksands, Shefford, Beds, SG17 5TQ**  
 Or alternately, please email your responses to  
[school.organisation@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:school.organisation@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)



**Appendix B:Marston Morteyne Parish Council**

**MARSTON MORETEYNE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Clerk to the Council**

Mrs. H. Trustam

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016

School Organisation  
Admissions & Capital Planning  
Children's Services  
Central Bedfordshire Council  
Priory House  
Monks Walk  
Chicksands  
Shefford SG17 5TQ

For the attention of Sue Barrow – Information Manager

Dear Sue

**Proposed expansion of Church End Lower School – Forest End campus**

Marston Moretyene Parish Council has considered the proposed expansion and accepts that given the future growth of the village, provision needs to be made to meet the emerging demand of school places.

The parish council feels that the following issues should be considered:

- Parking, congestion and traffic along Gold Furlong at drop off / pick up times. Whilst schools encourage parents to walk their children to school, there are still many that arrive by car and this poses a problem for the surrounding area. Gold Furlong is the main route through the Marston Park development and consideration needs to be given as to how any potential problems can be mitigated.
- Members are mindful that the village is also served by Shelton Lower School and that there are places available. What consideration is being given to filling pupil numbers at this school.
- Should expansion plans be approved, will the management of both campuses continue under the current arrangement?
- Consideration needs to be given to ensure adequate outside play area / communal space.
- Consideration for admissions criteria and how this will be delivered fairly for the parish. The council would welcome knowing if there are sub-catchment areas within the parish?
- Concern was expressed regarding where additional pupils will continue their education once they reach Year 5. Are the feeder middle and upper schools working alongside Central Bedfordshire Council to ensure that they have the capacity to accommodate children from Marston Moreteyne?

If you need any further clarification on any of the above points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs H. Trustam  
Parish Clerk

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**Appendix C: Key themes to the preliminary consultation for the proposed expansion of Church End Lower School:**

In summary over 82% of respondents were in favour of the proposal.

1. Key themes in favour of the proposal:

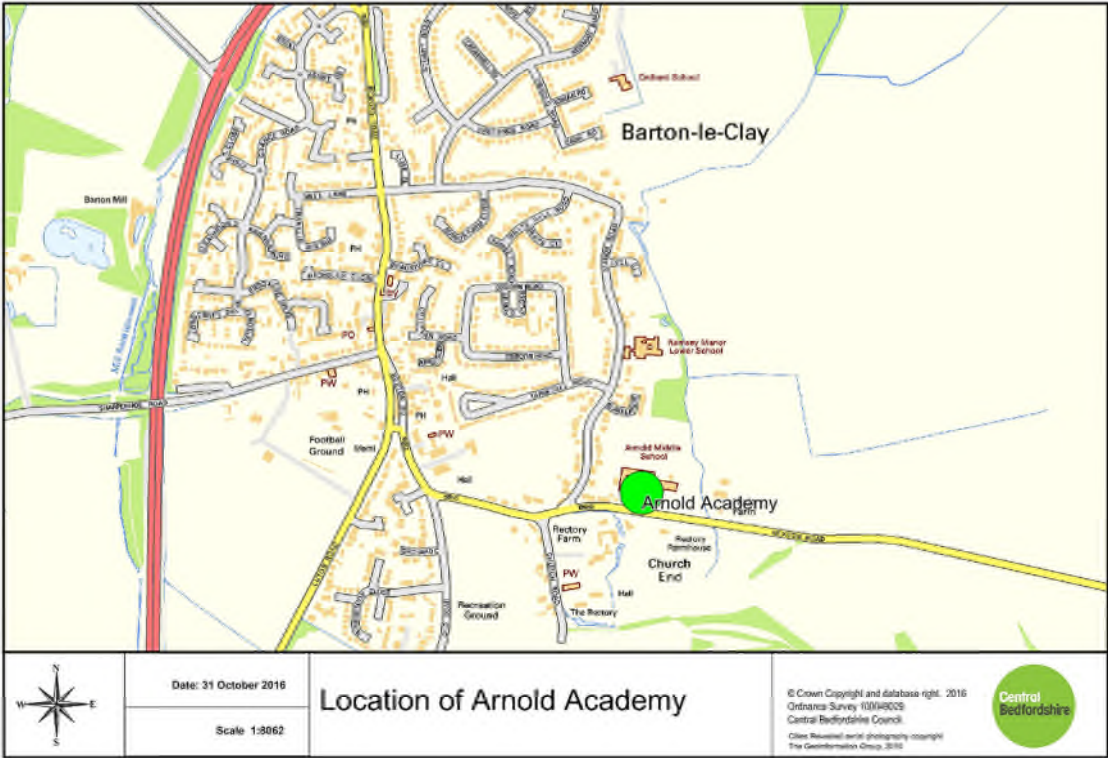
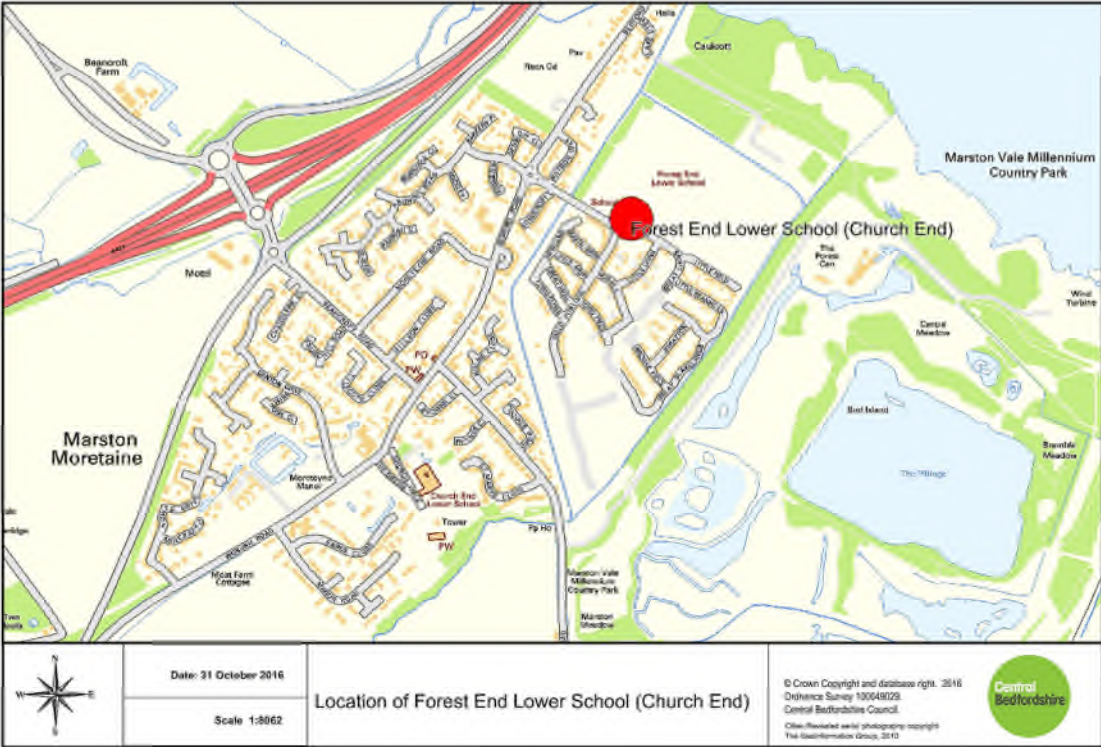
- a) School places are needed in the village as there are more homes
- b) Early Years places also needed
- c) Village is growing and school places are needed
- d) Agree, but more land is needed
- e) Agree, but more parking needed
- f) School is filling from the existing development

2. Key themes not in favour of the proposal and responses:

Themes	Response
a) The school site is not big enough. Why was the need for additional places not forecast?	<p>Phase 2 of the expansion will incorporate additional land to enable the school site to be sufficient for a 2FE.</p> <p>The school build was planned over two phases and was subject to the rate of house building. This has been monitored annually by the council.</p>
b) An alternative school site should be sought.	<p>The school operates as a 1FE at the Forest End Campus. A 2FE site will enable the school to deliver a full curriculum and be financially viable. There is no alternative site secured through s106 agreements.</p> <p>Shelton Lower School is not directly in the area of greatest need.</p>
c) Highways and safety concerns as more parents use the roads around the school.	<p>The proposed build will need to meet strict town planning and highways conditions.</p> <p>Mitigation measures to reduce potential highways issues and increase safety will be implemented as required to meet planning conditions.</p>

<p>d) The expansion will be unsettling for staff and children.</p>	<p>The expansion will offer children the option of a wider curriculum and staff development opportunities.</p>
<p>e) There are still school places available in the area</p>	<p>The long term forecast for school places in the planning area indicates a deficit of school places. The school forecast is within a 1% error rate overall within the authority.</p>
<p>f) There is inadequate notice of the consultation.</p>	<p>This is a preliminary consultation. The formal consultation is subject to Executive approval. If approved, a comprehensive list of consultees will be produced.</p>
<p>g) What about middle school places?</p>	<p>The school organisation plan is reviewed annually and places are continuously monitored. If additional middle school places are required to meet a local basic need, additional places will be commissioned as close as possible to the area of greatest need.</p>
<p>h) How will Forest End be managed?</p>	<p>Church End Lower already successfully manages 2 sites and there are no proposals to change the management.</p>

Appendix D Maps indicating the location of the two schools



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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

6 December 2016

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**Preliminary Consultation Responses to the Proposal to Change the Age Range of Everton Lower School from 3 - 9 years of age (Lower School) to 3 - 11 years of age (Primary School)**

Report of Cllr Steven Dixon, Executive Member for Education and Skills  
([steven.dixon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:steven.dixon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officers:

Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services  
([sue.harrison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sue.harrison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Helen Redding, Assistant Director, School Improvement, Children's Services  
([helen.redding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:helen.redding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**This report relates to a Key Decision**

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**Purpose of this report**

1. To report back to Executive the responses to the preliminary consultation of the proposal to change the age range of Everton Lower School, Sandy.
2. To seek Executive approval to commence stage 2, publication of the statutory notice.
3. If approved the proposed change of age range would be implemented from September 2017.
4. The school referred to in this report serves the Ward of Potton.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Executive is asked to:**

1. **approve commencement of stage 2 of the consultation process, to publish statutory notice, for the proposal to change the age range of Everton Lower School from 3 – 9 years to 3 – 11 years from September 2017;**

2. **delegate approval to the Executive Member for Education and Skills, in consultation with the Director of Children's Services to determine the proposal if the responses to the statutory notice are favourable; and**
3. **determine the proposal following the representation period of the statutory notice at Executive on the 4 April 2017 if there are any new objections.**

### **Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations**

5. The original report was presented to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 6 September 2016 and the Committee was asked to indicate its support for the recommendations set out within the report. The Committee recommended:
  - Detailed information on school options for pupils be provided to parents in the Everton locality. Parent information and advice on school options be detailed on the School's Admissions web pages.
  - That officers facilitate and coordinate the proposed changes in age range and undertake to mitigate any repercussions to neighbouring schools in the vicinity where possible.
  - That subject to the above, the Committee support the proposal to extend the age range at Everton Lower School.

### **Background**

6. At the Executive meeting on the 11 October the committee approved the launch of the preliminary consultation for the proposed change of age range at Everton Lower School.
7. The preliminary consultation was launched on the 12 October for a period of 5 weeks. The preliminary consultation concluded on the 16 November 2016.
8. An initial proposal from the Governing Body of Everton Lower School to become a 3 - 11 Primary school from September 2017 was received and acknowledged by the Council in March 2016.
9. Prior to April 2016 as a consequence of changes introduced by the 2013 Regulations and Statutory Guidance, Governing Bodies were able to propose a range of age changes to their schools without following a formal statutory process.



10. The guidance was revised and updated again by the Department of Education (DfE) in April 2016. The revised guidance can be viewed at:  
  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>
11. The new guidance states that local authorities can propose:
  - a change of age range of up to 2 years (except for adding or removing a sixth-form) for voluntary and foundation schools by following the non-statutory process
  - a change of age range of 1 year or more for community schools (including the adding or removal of sixth-form or nursery provision) and community special schools or alter the upper age limit of a foundation or voluntary school to add sixth-form provision by following the statutory process.
12. The process for making changes to Everton Lower School, which is a community school, including the statutory process involves:-
  - I. Pre publication consultation
  - II. Publication of statutory notice
  - III. Representation period / formal consultation
  - IV. Decision
  - V. Implementation
13. Whilst the revised guidance removed the power of governing bodies to propose and determine a change of age range of up to 2 years at community schools, it maintained that governing bodies of foundation and voluntary schools can propose:-
  - age range change of up to 2 years (except for adding or removing a sixth-form) by following the non-statutory process.

### **Proposal**

14. The governors at Everton Lower School have expressed a desire to change the school's age range to enable it to be a primary school from September 2017.
15. Separately, but in line with the new guidance the Council were informed by the Governing Bodies of the following schools in the Sandy planning area that there was a desire to change their age range.
  - Robert Peel Lower School
  - St Swithun's VC Lower School
  - Moggerhanger Lower School
  - Sandy Upper School
  - John Donne C of E VA Lower School

16. The above schools launched their consultations between the 12 and 13 October 2016. The closing date for their consultations is 23 November 2016.
17. Robert Peel Lower School and Moggerhanger Lower School are foundation schools. St Swithun's is a voluntary controlled school. John Donne is a voluntary aided school. Unlike Everton Lower School, which is a community school Governing Bodies of foundation and voluntary schools can propose an age range change of up to 2 years (except for adding or removing a sixth-form) by following the non-statutory process.
18. If the consultations for the above schools are favourable it is likely that Robert Peel Lower School, St Swithun's VC Lower School, Moggerhanger Lower School and John Donne C of E VA Lower School will change age range and become primary schools from September 2017.
19. The Governing Body of Sandy Upper would need to further consult on their admission arrangements for 2018 (6 weeks between 1 October 2016 and 31 January 2017). They would need to identify the point(s) of entry, the admission number for this and any changes to their oversubscription criteria.
20. Everton Lower School was judged by Ofsted to be an outstanding school in October 2011. The school have a planned admission number (PAN) of 10 pupils and the school have no plans to change the PAN. If both stages of the consultation are favourable and the proposal is approved, the school would have pupils continuing in to year 5 and year 6.

### **Consultation responses**

21. Following the recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny on the 6 September 2016 and inline with the DfE guidance, the information and preliminary consultation questionnaire was shared with:-
  - Parents/carers of Everton Lower School
  - Governing body of Everton Lower School
  - All schools & academies in Central Bedfordshire.
  - All Central Bedfordshire ward members
  - Local residents through a local press release
22. Officers have ensured that the proposals have been disseminated to a wide audience, including all schools in and near the areas of the proposal. The statutory notice will further consult with concerned parties.

23. Everton Lower School facilitated a public drop in session on the 2 November 2016 at the school. The governing body and representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council presented the information and advice to parents and interested parties. A FAQ was produced by the school (Appendix A). The drop in was well attended by parents, governor, head teachers of neighbouring schools, teachers and interested parties. The notes of the meeting are attached in Appendix B.
24. Information for the preliminary consultation was also placed on the schools web page at: - <http://www.evertonlowerschool.org.uk/>. If Executive approves to proceed to the statutory notice, further information will be placed on Central Bedfordshire Councils web page. Appendix C is a copy of the questionnaire, Appendix D is a copy of the information on all the school proposals in the Sandy area.
25. The preliminary consultation closed on the 16 November 2016. A total of 28 responses were received. The vast majority of responses were in favour of the proposal. 1 objection was received to the proposal.
26. The responses received were from the following groups:-
- |                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Parents/carers   | 13 |
| School employees | 6  |
| School governors | 2  |
| Local residents  | 2  |
| Parish Council   | 1  |
| Others           | 4  |
27. Over 96% of all respondents were in favour of the proposal. A summary of the comments received is attached in Appendix E. The 1 objection was received from a local resident with concerns on the highway. This is addressed in Appendix E.
28. Everton Parish Council agreed with the proposed changes. Additional comments from the Parish Council were made including impact on other local schools, transport arrangements and concerns about the mixed class arrangements. This is addressed in Appendix E.

### **Reason/s for decision**

29. The recommended consultation on the proposal to change the age range at Everton Lower School is to ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory obligation ensuring there are adequate school places and also to meet the legal requirements placed on the Council by the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

30. The preliminary consultation was for 5 weeks and the outcome of the consultation is reported back to Executive on the 6 December 2016. If Executive approves the recommendation, a statutory notice will be issued for the proposal. The representation period will be from 4 January to 1 February 2017. This represents the start of the formal consultation.
31. If during the representation period no new objections are received then it is proposed that determination is delegated to the Executive Member for Education and Skills, in consultation with the Director of Children's Services. If new objections are received to the statutory notice, a final decision on the proposal would need to go to Executive on the 4 April 2017 for determination.

### **Council Priorities**

32. The proposal supports the following Council priority:
  - Improving Education and Skills

### **Legal Implications**

33. The main legislation governing school organisation is found in sections 7 -32 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England Regulations 2013 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Mainstream Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.
34. DfE regulations and guidance outline the requirements and process for proposals to change age range at Council maintained schools and these include full public consultation, the publication of statutory proposals and the decision making process. The Council is the decision maker for proposals relating to maintained schools, which are set out in this report.
35. The Executive Member for Education and Skills is authorised, under delegated authority, to exercise the council's duty to determine proposals to alter the upper and lower age range of pupils in schools. As decision maker the Council must be satisfied that the proposals have followed due process and must also have regards to statutory guidance.
36. As decision maker for the statutory proposal reflected in this report the Executive Member for Education and Skills must determine whether to:-
  - Reject the proposal
  - Approve the proposal
  - Approve the proposal with a modification (e.g. the implementation date)
  - Approve the proposal subject to them meeting a certain condition

37. In any case the proposal must be determined within 2 months of the close of the determination period, otherwise the proposal will be referred to the schools adjudicator.

### **Financial and Risk Implications**

38. There are no capital implications for the Council arising as a result of the proposals set out in this report. The school have undertaken to reconfigure the existing space in the school building to enable there to be adequate class bases for the proposal.
39. The day to day running costs of the school are met through revenue funding which is made available to each school as part of the dedicated schools grant, calculated on a per pupil basis. Nationally, School and Academy revenue budgets are set in line with the School and Early Years Finance Regulations 2013 which uses October school census data of pupil numbers accommodated at that moment in time to calculate the budget for the following financial year, for Council maintained schools, and the following academic year for Academies.
40. If the proposal is determined in favour of the change of age range, the school are likely to require additional teaching staff. The school have shown prudent financial management which was reported at the last audit. The school will recruit and advertise for a new class teacher.
41. There will be a lag in funding provision to the school if the proposal is implemented in September 2017. This funding 'lag' can have a significant impact on those schools and academies that are implementing changes in age range and retaining or admitting pupils into new year groups in the following September without the corresponding revenue funding that should ordinarily follow the child which only begins to flow into the schools budget in the following April, or September in the case of Academies.
42. Funding will not be due to the school until 2018/19. Everton Lower School will need to consider the financial viability of its proposals as a result of the inevitable shortfall in revenue during the transition period. The Governing Body has confirmed that they would seek a licensed deficit at the time, if required.

### **Equalities Implications**

43. The consultation and decision making process set out in regulation for proposals to maintained schools requires an evaluation on a project by project basis of any equalities and human rights issues that might arise.

44. 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.
45. This statutory duty includes requirements to:
- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
  - Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
  - Encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
46. The proposed change of age range at Everton Lower School is not envisaged to have an adverse impact on any of the listed groups below:-

a) Sex	N/A
b) Gender Reassignment	N/A
c) Age	Primary aged pupils will have access to sufficient school places
d) Disability	N/A
e) Race & Ethnicity	N/A
f) Sexual Orientation	N/A
g) Religion or Belief (or No Belief)	N/A
h) Pregnancy & Maternity	N/A
i) Human Rights (Please see articles in toolkit)	N/A
j) Other Groups (rural isolation etc)	This is a rural designated school which provides school places in a village.

### **Risk Management**

47. The proposal set out in this report has been developed and evaluated against the key criteria for decision makers that are outlined in guidance. Likewise the proposal has followed the procedures set out in regulation. This mitigates the risk on the Council of failing to comply with the relevant statutory requirements.

48. The key risks mitigated by the process that has been followed include:
- a) Failure to discharge legal and statutory duties/guidance.
  - b) Failure to deliver the Council's strategic priorities.
  - c) Reputational risks associated with the non delivery of required school places.

Financial risks, no capital investment from the council and all consequential additional running costs will be borne by the school.

49. If approved, the Governing Body of Everton Lower School will develop and implement change management plans that will include risk assessment and management criteria to ensure the effective delivery of the objectives set out in the proposal document.

### **Conclusion and next Steps**

50. The recommendation is for the Executive to note the favourable responses from the majority of respondents (over 96%) to the preliminary consultation and approve the proposal to the next stage and progress with the statutory notice for the change of age range at Everton Lower School from 2017.
51. To progress to the next stage with the recommendations stated at the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny on the 6 September 2016.
52. A detailed programme for the representation period has been developed with the school which will seek maximum stakeholder feedback. This will enable an informed decision to be made by the Executive to approve or not the proposal to change the age range at the school.

### **Appendices**

The following Appendix's are attached:-

Appendix A: FAQs - produced by Everton Lower School

Appendix B: Notes of the Everton drop in session 2 November 2016

Appendix C: Copy of the questionnaire

Appendix D: Copy of the information sheet: Fact Sheet

Appendix E: Summary of the comments received to the preliminary consultation

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## Appendix A: Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

### Frequently Asked Questions: Age Range Extension 2016

#### Who will be in Charge of KS2?

All the Teachers at ELS are Early Years / Primary Specialists. We would need to recruit 1 new teacher. However the new staff will not solely be recruited for upper KS2. When the green light is provided by Central Bedfordshire authority the Head Teacher, with support from the Governing body, will seek to appoint an additional teacher at the school. A new structure will then be drawn up and proposed to the Governing body which will include appointing a designated lead for KS2 across all 4 years and appointing each teacher for the appropriate years. The Head Teacher will be responsible to ensure the levels and standards we have achieved are maintained throughout the development of the children and the Governing Body will continue to oversee this process.

#### Will there be more staff recruited?

Other than seeking a new fully qualified teacher, the school does not intend to recruit additional staff at this time.

#### What will be the difference in staff ratios?

Main school current ratio for teachers: children is 1:13

Main school current ratio for support staff: children is 1 :17

Proposed ratio in first year for teachers: children will be 1 :12

Proposed ratio in first year for support staff: children will be 1 :20

#### What will you do at lunchtimes?

Staggered lunchtimes for Key stages

#### What classroom will the children be in?

Pre-school - Classroom 1

EYFS - Ash Classroom

KS1 - Beech Class

LKS2 - Hall

UKS2 - Oak Classroom

#### Will the children be able to go to Potton Middle?

Yes, as long as there are spaces and they meet the entry requirement parents will be able to apply for places for their children.

#### How will you deliver the Year 5 and 6 curriculum to the required standards?

All elements of the Primary Curriculum are deliverable to a high standard with the facilities we currently have at Everton. The DfE defines the following structure which is already delivered at Everton. All staff are already fully trained in teaching the primary years. Any new staff required for yrs 5/6 will be appropriately trained. In line with primary schools across the country we will deliver this broad and balanced National Curriculum without the need for specialist facilities but continuing as a school to deliver high quality teaching using specialist teachers for areas including PE, Music and Languages.

[How will the school deliver appropriate level of PE / Sports for Years 5 & 6](#)

The recreation ground is large enough for football, rugby etc. and the playground is ideal for other sports. We will also be looking to further enhance our already very good links with local schools, to provide opportunities to share resources, specialist teaching and create opportunities for competitive games and competitions. We will continue to be members of the East Beds Schools Partnership Programme that set up intra and inter school competitions for KS1 and Lower and Upper KS2. This will also provide training for staff in teaching upper KS2 PE. This will also allow us links to other schools to invite participation in KS2 Curriculum activities such as track athletics and trampolining.

[Science - Middle schools have access to Labs, Everton does not, how will you deliver on the requirements for Years 5 & 6?](#)

The curriculum taught currently in the few remaining middle schools in Central Bedfordshire is the same national curriculum that is taught in primary schools in the vast majority of other boroughs across the country (over 95% of children in the country attend primary schools). The Primary Science curriculum is easily deliverable within the classroom environment, with the level of investigation, experimentation and practical work being appropriate to the demands of the curriculum. The Governing Body are committed to providing our children with the best possible education. To this end we will be exploring investing in more science equipment, aimed specifically at the upper Primary years to ensure we can offer high quality teaching and learning. We have also secured an agreement with Sandye Place Academy for us to borrow any specialist equipment we may need for the foreseeable future. We are also planning to budget for Mobile Science Stations and have a company interested in providing us with these and the training for all staff.

[Year 6 SATs are very important, how will you manage this?](#)

We are currently expected to complete a series of statutory assessments with children in Foundation Stage (Baseline Assessments) and Year 1 (Phonics Screening Assessments). This will be increasing to include Year 2 with the Government implementation of the new Year 2 Standard Attainment Tests (SATs). This is in addition to the in house half termly assessments we use to determine the children's strengths and next steps. Year 6 SATs are simple to administer, there are very clear guidelines to follow in order to ensure they are completed in a standard way across the country.

[More children in the school will place greater pressure on the support in place for Special Educational Needs children. How will you deal with this?](#)

An increase in children in Years 5 and 6 (a maximum increase of 20) may involve an increase in the number of children we are working with whom have individual needs. A majority of the work with SEND children is completed by our Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TA's or HLTA's). The lessons planned include opportunities for all children to progress and feature different levels of difficulty to challenge all children.

The Teachers, as the staff members who best know the child, are responsible for developing learning programs for those who need extra support and they are also responsible for determining what type of intervention children may require. Our skilled Teaching Assistants know our children very well, and provide high quality support both within lessons and within intervention groups. We would continue to use an external specialist in the role of Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo). The SENDCo is responsible for ensuring the level of support is appropriate, frequently reviewed and individualised to each child. The SENDCo also liaises with outside specialist agencies whom we use to support our children, parents and staff for those whom have more complex needs. This system would continue to be the case if we had Years 5 and 6 at Everton. The major benefit for SEND children would be that they have another 2 years at Everton before they need to transfer.

#### [How will you ensure the transition at the end of Year 6 is smooth?](#)

Currently, the transition to Year 5 at the end of Year 4 is managed carefully with Potton Federation, Gamlingay Village College and Sandye Place Academy. The new proposal will change the schools our year 6 children will move to include Sandy Upper, Stratton, Comberton and Bassingbourn. We have already close links with Sandy Upper and we have begun exploratory discussions with Comberton. The Governing Body and staff feel that the extra 2 years at Everton will allow our pastoral support and social and emotional support to continue, allowing children to naturally mature further before making the change to Secondary School.

#### [Why are you including Cambridgeshire schools?](#)

Our rural school sits on the educational boundaries of Central Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire and we serve families across these geographies including children from Potton, Gamlingay, East Hatley, Sandy as well as Everton. All parents have a the right to selecting preferred schools and as such we will facilitate all options available to them across the boundaries. We sincerely hope that all parents would prefer their children to continue their childrens Primary education within a single organisation, however, any parents who does not wish their child to continue in Years 5 or 6 will be able to apply through their respective Local Authority to move their child to an alternative school if spaces exist and they meet the criteria for entry.

#### [Is there any additional funding to grow the school?](#)

Central Bedfordshire has not made available any additional funds specifically for Age range Extension. We are not proposing to increase our annual Pupil intake beyond the current allocation of 10. Therefore any growth will be organic. Our assessment is that the current building has sufficient capacity to deliver a combined year 5 and 6. The department of Education defines the space requirements for teaching each age group and Everton will be within the defined parameters and guidelines. The school Governors continue to explore additional funding opportunities that would allow the school to develop and enhance the facilities (as we have done over the past few years Medical Room, 2 new classrooms), but these are not a requirement of the proposed age range extension.

[How will you manage extra children for school lunches and breaks?](#)

We would have staggered times for lunchtimes and breaks allowing children of similar ages to play and eat together.

[Can the kitchen cope with more children for school lunch?](#)

Our school does not prepare meals on site, these are currently prepared off site by a specialist catering supplier, at Potton Middle School. We would ensure that our catering supplier contract/ capacity includes the increase in any demand for school meals by having an additional 2 years at our school. We will investigate other catering services to ensure we have the best provision for our children.

[Parking at or near the school is already a real problem, how would you deal with this?](#)

Parking in school grounds is currently for staff only. Parents and visitor use the public road and this will continue to be the same should we convert to a Primary School. We will work with the Local Authority and the Parish Council to see if any further action is required. The Potton Road has sufficient parking spaces to accommodate the minor increase. We will also look at drop – off zones and supervised entry into school to avoid parents having to physically take the children into the playground. Different arrival times will also be an option.

[Will the school day change?](#)

No. There are no immediate plans to change the school day. Any future changes to be made must be completed through a full consultation, should changes be required in the future parents will be consulted fully before any changes are made.

[Will the school uniform change?](#)

There will be no change to the school uniform colour. However, due to the change from Lower to Primary the school name would change. We would design and offer a school emblem that could be ironed on.

[Will there be a wider variety of after-school/in-school clubs as currently provided at middle school?](#)

The school provides a number of after school clubs. As we have seen parent demand is currently low. We will happily provide other clubs as long as they are financially viable to the school.

[Why are additional primary school places needed when there is current surplus at Potton Middle?](#)

The school's aim is to deliver a single institution primary learning with no break. We are not proposing to increase the new pupil entry beyond the current PAN of 10, but we are proposing to extend the period at the school by 2 years. This brings us in line with other schools in the area and the country as a whole.

Should parents desire to transfer their children to a Middle School for Year 5 they will be able to do so through the current system of application. Both Potton Middle and Sandye Place Academy remain Middle schools within the locality. The Gamlingay schools has initiated a consultation to bring GF and GVC together and make them a single primary.

### Curriculum

The National Curriculum will continue to be taught (in all subject areas) and we will make sure that all teachers are suitably trained and highly skilled in teaching throughout the primary years. Through a mix of training, development and recruitment we are confident that we will be able to build upon the existing high levels of staff expertise and dedication to create an excellent primary team.

### How will you safeguard younger children from any undesirable behaviour and influence that may come from older children?

The safety and welfare of all our students is, and will always be, our highest priority. We will carefully monitor how children at different stages of their education interact and will take the greatest care to ensure that no child is exposed to negative behaviour. [Don't children need the challenge of a fresh start provided by changing schools?](#)

We believe that a Primary school with no break in their education between KS1 and KS2 is key to improve children's education results. However, if students and their parents would like a fresh start at a different school then there are alternative options in the area which they could move to at any stage in their education.

### How will the classes be arranged?

Pre-School children will be taught in their own class up to 10 at any session. Year R will be taught as a single year group.

Years 1/2 will be taught together as Keystage 1-just as we always have.

Years 3/4 will be taught together as lower Keystage 2 -just as we always have.

Years 5/6 will be taught together as upper Keystage 2

### Who will provide the funding for extra teaching staff?

Schools receive funding for each pupil on roll at the school, and so funding will increase in line with the numbers of children attending the school.

### Who decides if the proposal goes ahead?

This would be finally decided by the Local Authority. The various stages of the decision making process are set out in the consultation document.

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## **Appendix B: Notes of the Everton drop in session 2 November 2016**

Nabeel Mardi (NMa), Chair of Governors ELS, chaired the meeting.

NMa opened the meeting at 16:40 by welcoming everybody.

He gave a short health and safety brief and reminded those present that children were on site at an After School Club and Crèche.

He introduced the representatives of CBC, the full Governing Body of ELS and welcomed the Head Teachers of Moggerhanger Lower School; Robert Peel Lower School; St Swithuns Lower School; John Donne Lower School and Sandy Upper School.

Marg Smith (MS) was introduced. MS is a recently retired highly experienced KS2 teacher, who has been helping the Head Teacher (HT ELS) and Governing Board (GB ELS) anticipate, identify and resolve potential issues with the future provision of a complete KS2 curriculum.

David Tall, Clerk to ELS GB, took notes.

**NMa** explained that as a maintained school (legal status) the process for age range extension differs for ELS from what was being undertaken by each of the other schools' present at the meeting. Until January 2016 the guidelines, provided by the Department for Education, had been similar across all school (legal bodies), in that Governing bodies could propose changes of up to 2 years and determine these changes themselves.

The guide for "maintained schools" was withdrawn (Jan. 2016) and the subsequent updated guideline released in April 2016, excluded "maintained" schools from this process. The new guidelines required the "Local Authority (LA) to undertake the decision for maintained schools only.

**NMa** explained that the GB of ELS had been working closely with the LA since January 2016 and ensured kept them informed of the interest of the Governing body. Having undertaken the views of parents at various stages over the past 9 months the Governing body made a formal request to the LA in June 2016 for a change to the age range for ELS.

**NMa** explained that each of the other schools present were undertaking their own consultation and that we were all working in a co-ordinated effort across the Sandy cluster, however their own results would be known sooner. NMa asked HR to say a few words.

**HR** explained that the other schools are Voluntary Aided, Voluntary Controlled or Foundations and as such are able to propose and determine a change of age range 3 up to two years, via a single-stage consultation process, without CBC consent. CBC is only a consultee

**HR** advised that this preliminary consultation (Stage 1), including tonight's meeting, was being held by CBC to gather the views of parents and other stakeholders for the proposed change of age range which will then help to compile the full report, which will include the evidence gathered here tonight, for the Council's Executive to consider on the 6th of December 2016. Based on the responses to the Stage 1 of the consultation (the current stage), and subject to positive support, the Executive will then recommend proceeding to the next stage. At this stage the Council will publish a formal statutory notice in January 2017 which would last for 4 weeks. (this is a statutory part of the process, as required by the Department for Education).

**VW** confirmed that the statutory notice would be published on the council website, public libraries and sent to other stakeholder that as defined by the Department for Education in accordance with the law.

**HR** explained that the Council's Executive will then make a final decision on the proposal in April 2017. *HOWEVER*, if the Executive agrees in December that there is sufficient support for the proposal, they could agree an earlier delegated decision by the Executive Member for Education and Skills, following completion of Stage 2 of the consultation (February/March 2017).

If the final decision is favourable it will allow ELS to receive Y5 pupils in September 2017. It was emphasised that no decision had yet been taken and that the team at the council were preparing the report for submission to the Executive for consideration.

**NMa** then invited questions from the floor.

**Q1 (Parent) *Have there been many responses to date? I personally wish to support the proposal, but am interested to hear about other people's views.***

Response 1 **ARus** responded that having spoken to Sue Barrow at the council they had confirmed receipt of 13 formally logged responses. Overwhelmingly supportive.

**NMa** highlighted that the preliminary study undertaken by the Governing body of the school during the summer term the school received a 50% response rate from parents with over 80% in favour of the school extending its age range.

**HR** stated that it was important that as many responses as possible are sent in so that any decision is as informed as possible.

**NMa** said if anybody needed yet to complete the consultation, forms are available tonight.

**Q2. (Parent) *Is the consultation available on school website and in word format?***

Response 2: **ARus** Yes in both pdf and "word" format.



**Q3. Parent When does the decision have to be taken for September 2017 Y5 entry?**

Response 3. ARus by the 4th April 2017.

**NMa** said that it was recognised that this was beyond the date for middle school application for places but explained that it was possible for parents to decline such places and to keep the children at ELS for a Y5 place at ELS if age extension approved. He reported that 3 parents had already stated their intention to remain. A parent observed that her child did not want to leave ELS – ever!!

**HR:** if and when a decision is made to extend the age range we just ask you to formally inform the admissions team of your final decision.

**Q4. Parent What happens after Y6?**

Response 4. **NMa** explained that due to the unique geographical location of Everton Lower school on the boundary of Central Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire parents have a choice. The school did not only cater for children within the Central Bedfordshire Authority but across both. As such parents will be able to apply for places in either Local Authority but will need to be aware of the admissions policy of each school. As an example 70 children residing in Potton, which geographically are in Central Bedfordshire are currently educated at Cambridgeshire secondary schools including Comberton and Bassingbourn. The remainder attend either Stratton Upper (Biggleswade) or Sandy Upper school for secondary education. For those living in Everton we are aware of a split between children attending Cambridgeshire schools and Sandy Upper School.

**NMa** reminded that Sandy Upper was also seeking an age range extension of 2 years and as such children may be able to go straight to there, if the Governing body approved the age range extension for 2018.

**Q5. Parent: Please confirm that we can select a secondary school or middle school.**

Response 5. **NMa** said that was the case, but we are seeking to minimise the number of transitions to ensure greater stability for ELS children and noting that a two tier system is in place in most places in England and that these schools have better results in KS2 SATs.

**Q6. Parent: Does the school have the facilities to provide a full KS2 curriculum?**

Response6. **ARus** explained that the Primary education curriculum is designed to be delivered within a single class environment and ELS has carefully reviewed all aspects of the education curriculum including science and can confirm all of this will be provided within the current facilities. **ARus** also confirmed that Sandy Upper for example would make any specialist equipment available and this also includes the use of their facilities. **ARus** went on to explain that these would be on pupil enrichment days and not every week.

**Q7. Many middle schools have a laboratory, what about ELS?**

Response 6. MS said that she had taught science to Y5 / Y6 for many years. She said the curriculum is classroom based, and although some middle schools do have a laboratory this is normally for the use of Y7 and Y8 pupils. There is no need for a lab for Y5 / Y6 children. MS has noticed that there tends to be less hands on activities such as cooking and science and a greater shift to design activities, further reducing any need for a dedicated lab.

**NMa** stated that the Governing body with support from the HT had explored the exact requirements of delivering science for years 5 and years 6 and have concluded that this is not only possible but that the school would also be able to work towards achieving the Primary Science Quality Mark. The Governing body was confident that should approval be given it will be able to deliver all aspects of the curriculum.

**Q8. What about sporting facilities and provision?**

Response 8. **NMa** The school had sufficient grounds for the provision of different sporting activities including the use of the recreational ground across from the school.

**DG** reminded the parents of the fact that our school also had its own swimming pool.

**NMa** explained that the school received grant from Sport UK and that this was used to contract professional coaches to deliver a variety of sports and train the teachers in delivering a full sport curriculum.

**ARus** stated that the additional local cooperation with Sandy Upper broadened the provision even further, such as dance and music. Meanwhile, with the help of the PTA, we are trying to fund the provision of a swimming pool roof for all round use by us and other schools and groups.

**NMa** highlighted one of the biggest challenges faced by the school is lack of numbers of pupils for activities such as sport at "After School Clubs". Parents are urged to encourage their children to participate in these.

**ARus** reminded parents that the school participated in competitions organised by the Bedfordshire Sports' Partnership.

A parent observed how vital such links were and how proud ELS children were of their achievements at these events.

**DG** said that the GB is very pleased to receive such positive comments.

**HR** said such enrichment helped to learn through play.

**Q9. Will going to Sandy be time consuming and anyway how will the children travel?**

Response 9. **ARus** stated that these enrichment activities will be outside core curriculum provision. Sandy Upper has kindly offered to assist using their 2 mini buses and that the school had a fully qualified bus driver among the staff.

**Q10. Does the school not need a new classroom to accommodate Y5 / Y6?**

Response 10. **NMa** The school already had 5 classrooms. The school had sufficient room to accommodate the 20 additional children (10 pupils per year). NMa said that the Governing Body had carefully considered the space and guidelines provided by the Department for Education and would not be seeking/ proposing an age – range extension had that not been the case.

**DG** Asked if parents had seen the newly refurbished room and invited those present to look around the newly refurbished area.

**Q11. Parent How will we manage the transition from a small school to a large secondary school?**

Response11. **NMa** explained that moving from a small Village to a larger secondary could be a potential shock if not managed properly. The school already works very well with other schools to manage transition and are looking at other Primary schools around the country to assess, and implement best practice. The presence of Sandy Upper HT at this consultation is evidence of their interest in working with ELS to ensure a smooth transition for children.

**ARus** remarked that any transition process is so much better than it had been in the past. And taster days would be setup for children in co-ordination with Sandy Upper.

**DG** observed that Primary Schools and Secondary Schools with the one transition and better for the children.

**Q12. Parent I chose ELS because I wanted the children to have the benefits that offers.**

Response 12. **ARus** stated that even with 20 additional children (10 per year) over 2 years, ELS will still be a small school.

**Q13. Will Evertots remain?**

Response13. **NMa** Providing numbers remain viable, yes.

**ARus** stated that indeed the decision to move to full PS may encourage parents to consider an all through provision until Y7.

**Q14. Will there be separate Assemblies?**

Response14. **ARus** Yes.

**NMa** then said the school already manages separation of play times and meal times between pre-school and reception, KS1/ lowerKS2.

**ARus** stated that parents will continue to be invited to appropriate celebrations but limited to each key stage.

**Q15. What about a dining room?**

Response 15. **NMa** to our knowledge no funding is currently available from the Local Authority.

**VW** confirmed limited capital expenditure was available from the LA.

**NMa** explained that a staggered system would come in to play, as is already done in other Primary schools.

**Q16. There was another question about science lab provision**

Response 16. **MS** repeated her previous answer about not necessary to deliver KS2 curriculum.

**Q17. How will the school handle the practicalities of having older, more body conscious / aware children in the school especially when it comes to changing for sports?**

Response 17. **AR** There are separate changing rooms available and these will be put in to full use across the year.

**Q18. Are there enough loos?**

Response 18. **AR** Yes. There are enough toilets and they are an appropriate size. The wash basins are rather low for larger children so this would be a refurbishment programme to plan for the future to have some taller ones put in.

**Q19. Will class sizes change?**

Response 19. **ARus** The Planned Admission Number (PAN) is set at 10 new pupils / year. Children will never therefore be in a larger class than 20.

**NMa** the plans is to keep combined years for Years1/2, Years3/4 and for the new additional years 5/6. Only reception class will remain a single year.

**Q20. Will the school be hiring an additional teacher? If so will the teacher be an NQT?**

Response20. **NMa** The Governing have budgeted for an additional teacher and will seek to ensure the most appropriate person teaches Y5 / Y6. It is for the Head Teacher to decide how Staff are deployed across the school. We shall recruit the very best teacher available, as the quality of teaching and learning is a very high priority for the HT, Staff and the Governing Body.

**Q21. Parent Will a “late” decision impact on recruiting timetable?**

Response21. **NMa** the Governing body has prepared a full plan in preparation for a positive decision from the LA. Once we receive the green light we will proceed with our recruitment plan.

**AR** Teachers only have to give a half terms notice. We are prepared to launch recruiting process immediately once the decision is known to be positive.

**Q22. HR Have the children been consulted? Their views are important to CBC.**

Response 22. **NMa** Not directly, although this was raised by parents at a recent assembly. We would welcome CBC to visit the school during the school day to gather views. The school will consult with the children and provide feedback to all.

**Q23. Parent What negative worries have other parents had at other schools?**

Response23. **HR** said that the curriculum is often raised. Transition is another issue.

**Q24. Has the local community been involved in the consultation?**

Response 24 **VW** Yes. There are a number of statutory groups who have to be consulted. To date overwhelmingly supportive.

**Q25. Will the decision of the other schools impact on CBC’s decision for ELS?**

Response 25. **HR** It will be a consideration, noting that CBC wants to see the broadest collaboration and cooperation, between schools and opportunities for all children to flourish.

**Q26. Can any decision be appealed?**

Response 26. **NMa** Yes but will invariably impact on any start date. We should be prepared for a NO as we cannot predict the outcome but we can prepare and we are prepared.

**Q27. What about potential impact on new house build in Potton?**

Response 27. **VW** Not happening immediately. CBC has, since being responsible from 2009, an excellent record of providing the correct number of school places at the right time. The expansion of Biggleswade and successful school place provision is an excellent example of planning and judgement.

**Q28 Is it possible to receive any information in a more user friendly way? Parents are busy people who may not have time to cut through a lot of jargon.**

Response 28 **ARus** We will do whatever we can to help everybody’s understanding of a complicated and challenging process. The Chair of Governors has and continues to be willing to hold surgeries or individual meetings if that will help.

The Parent Ambassadors, Lisa Gorringe and Samantha Dawson who were present at the meeting, are able to assist as well, as are Parent Governors. They will all ensure everything of concern is brought to the GB and correctly recorded.

**Q29. What about parking / delivery of children?**

Response 29. **ARus** The school has already trialled and adopted different system this year, which is working well. That process will be monitored as numbers increase.

**Q30. Can parents visit other schools?**

Response: 31. **HT** of Sandy Upper has extended an open invitation for parents to visit.

**NMa** asked if attendees had any further questions and then invited parents to visit the newly built area, to complete the consultation forms and stay for a chat.

He thanked everybody for attending.

The meeting closed at 1745.

**Appendix C: Copy of the questionnaire**

<p><b>Proposed change of age range for Everton Lower School</b></p> <p><b>Initial consultation</b></p>	
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<p><b>1.</b></p>	<p><b>Do you agree with the Governing Body's proposal to change the age range of Everton Lower School from 3 – 9 years to 3 – 11 years</b></p>		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p><b>Yes</b></p> </td> <td> <p><b>No</b></p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>		
<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>Do you have any comments or concerns regarding the proposed change of age range?</b></p>		

**Please help us to identify why you have an interest in the proposal –**

Are you a: (Please tick one)

<p>Total no.</p>	
	<p>Parent of child at a Everton Lower School</p>
	<p>School employee</p>
	<p>School governor</p>
	<p>Local resident</p>
	<p>Other - please specify</p>

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**Appendix D: Copy of the information sheet: Fact Sheet**

<p><b>Proposed changes to schools within the Sandy school area of Central Bedfordshire</b></p>	
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- 1) These schools are to consult/consulting on a proposed change of age range from a three-tier lower, middle and upper school system to a two-tier primary and secondary school system:**

<b>School</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
Everton Lower	Proposed primary school
Moggerhanger Lower*	Proposed primary school
Robert Peel Lower*	Proposed primary school
St Swithun's VC Lower*	Proposed primary school
John C of E Donne Lower*	Proposed primary school
Sandy Upper*	Proposed secondary school

\*These schools are either 'Voluntary Aided', 'Voluntary Controlled' or 'Foundation' and can propose and determine a change of age range of up to 2 years, via a single-stage consultation process, without the Council's consent. The Council is a consultee in this process. They are required to follow the guidance and expectations of the Department for Education for both the consultation process and the subsequent final decision.

Everton Lower is a community school and it is up to the Council to propose and determine a change of age range of up to 2 years, via a 2 -stage consultation process. Approval is needed from the Council's Executive for both stages of the consultation and the final decision.

The following schools in the Sandy area are NOT consulting on age range changes:

Sutton Lower School	Maple Tree Lower School*
Wrestlingworth Lower School	Sandy Place Middle School*
Potton Lower School	Potton Middle School (formerly Burgoyne Middle)
Laburnum Lower School*	

\* These schools are consulting on forming a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). Please see Section 2 of this document for more information.

### Understanding a 2-tier and 3-tier school organisation system

#### 2-tier system

In a 2 tier system, pupils attend primary school between the ages of 4 and 11 and secondary school between the ages of 11 and 16 -18. This means that pupils complete Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum at a primary school before moving on to secondary school for Key Stages 3 and 4.

#### 3-tier system

In a three-tier system, pupils attend lower school between the ages of 4 and 9, middle school between the ages of 9 and 13 and upper school between the ages of 13 and 16 -18. As a result, responsibility for Key Stage 2 falls across lower and middle schools, and Key Stage 3 across middle and upper schools.

The following table charts the relationship between key stages of the curriculum and year groups in the different school types within two and three tier models of education:-

Key Stage	Foundation Stage				Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3				Key Stage 4	Post 16			
Year Group	Nursery	Reception	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
2-tier		Nursery	Primary School						Secondary						
3-tier		Nursery	Lower School				Middle School			Upper School					

### **Consultation documents for Voluntary Aided, Voluntary Controlled or Foundation schools**

These consultations are owned and proposed by the schools governing bodies and not the Council.

All of the consultation documents have been produced by the individual schools' governing bodies. We have suggested minor alterations to make certain points clearer but the consultations are proposed by the individual schools' governing bodies.

The Council will be a consultee to the schools' proposals, in the same way as parents, neighbouring schools, local councillors and interested parties. The Council will be robust in responding to the consultations, ensuring that the proposals do not jeopardise the number of school places required and the high quality of education expected.

Any assumptions in the proposals will need to be evidence-based and clearly demonstrate educational benefits to the local community that the schools serve. The Council may not agree with all the schools' points and will seek their assurance that plans for transition and school places are not adversely affected.

### **Consultation document for Everton Lower School**

The preliminary consultation document for Everton Lower has been produced by the Council in response to a request from the school's governing body to consider a change of age range, from 3 - 9 years to 3 - 11 years.

Everton's governing body is working with the governing bodies of the other schools listed above in an effort to coordinate a proposed change from three-tier to 2-tier. This preliminary consultation document is for the Council to gather the views of parents and other stakeholders for the proposed change of age range which will then help to compile the full proposal which will be considered by the Council's Executive in December 2016. The Council's Executive will consider the responses to the preliminary consultation, and if it is happy that there is evidence to support proceeding to the next stage, will publish the proposal in January 2017 (which is the statutory part of the process, as required by the Department for Education).

The Council's Executive will then make a final decision on the proposal in April 2017 (or if the Executive agrees in December that there is sufficient support for the proposal, they could agree an earlier delegated decision by the Executive Member for Education and Skills).

### **Understanding the various proposals**

The proposals for a change of age range from the schools will create a pattern of lower and middle schools and primary and secondary school in the Sandy area. This table shows the current and proposed size of all the schools:

Schools	Size <small>(Current admission number)</small>	Type	Size <small>(Planned admission number)</small>	Type
	Current		Proposed	
Everton Lower	10	Lower	10	Primary
Moggerhanger Lower	15	Lower	15	Primary
Robert Peel Lower	60	Lower	60	Primary
St Swithuns Lower	30	Lower	30	Primary
John Donne Lower	24	Lower	24	Primary
Sandy Upper	269	Upper	269	Secondary
Sutton Lower	15	Lower	No change	
Wrestlingworth Lower	13	Lower		
Potton Lower	60	Lower		
Laburnum Lower	30	Lower		
Maple Tree Lower	45	Lower		
Sandye Place Middle	150	Middle		
Potton Middle (formerly Burgoyne Middle)	90	Middle		

### Admission arrangements

Where a school is proposing to:-

1. reduce their published admission number (the number of places available in each year group), or
2. add an additional point of entry to the school or
3. changing the normal year children join the school,

The admission authority for the school must publicly consult on these changes for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1 October and 31 January 2 years prior to the proposed change comes into effect. The earliest these changes could be implemented is for September 2018 providing the admission authority of the school consults for 6 weeks by 31 January 2017.

The admission authority for Voluntary Controlled and Community schools is the Council, for Voluntary Aided or Foundation schools the admission authority is the school's governing body.

Of the six schools proposing changes, the Council is the admission authority for Everton Lower (Community school) and St. Swithun's VC Lower. It is the governing bodies of Robert Peel Lower, Moggerhanger Lower, John Donne VA Lower and Sandy Upper School that are the admission authorities for their schools.

Where a lower school is proposing to convert to a primary school, without a reduction in the number of places available in each year group, they do not need to consult on changing their admission arrangements as there is no change to the normal point of entry to the school (this remains Reception Year). As the lower schools are not proposing a reduction in their published admission numbers there is no requirement for a consultation on their admission arrangements.

An upper school which is proposing to convert to a secondary school would need to consult on their admission arrangements as their point of entry to the school would change. Sandy Upper's proposal to have 2 points of entry for 2018 (Year 7 and Year 9) means that they need to conduct a 6 week consultation reflecting their changing admission arrangements. This needs to take place between 1 October 2016 and 31 January 2017. The schools proposal states that from September 2020 the school would have 1 single point of entry (Year 7); to facilitate this the Governing Body would need to consult between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2019 (for a minimum of 6 weeks).

### Calendar of key dates

Date	Action
12/ 13 October 2016	All 6 consultations begin
October/November	Schools hold meetings for their staff and parents/carers
20 October 2016 7pm	Meeting for stakeholders for all 6 schools at Sandy Upper
By 23 November 2016	All consultations will have ended
Following close of the consultations	All governing bodies, except Everton Lower School, meet and determine their respective proposals. Decisions will be published on the school's websites
September 2017	If approved: current Year 4 pupils are able to remain at their current school forming the first Year 5 group, or parents can decide to take up their middle school place.  Sandy Upper School admits Year 9 students from the existing middle schools.

September 2018	<p>If approved: First Year 6 group established at each new primary school</p> <p>Parents of Year 6 pupils make application for Transfer to Secondary 2019</p> <p>Children have the opportunity to join Sandy Upper school in Year 7</p> <p>Sandy Upper admits Y9 students from the existing middle schools.</p>
September 2019	First transition of pupils from the (now) primary schools to secondary school

### School Places

Children applying to start school are unlikely to notice any difference in the number of school places available in the Sandy school planning area.

Middle school places will remain at Potton Middle and Sandye Place Middle. Alban CofE Academy (in Bedford Borough) is consulting on extending its age range to cater for pupils between the age of 3 and 13. The proposal will be implemented in September 2017. The planned admission number for Year 5 will reduce to 60 from 140.

The planned admission number at Sandy Upper School will remain at 269.

### 2) These schools are consulting on joining together to form a multi-academy trust (MAT)

School	Proposal
Laburnum Lower	Join together to form Sandy Multi Academy Regional Trust – SMaRT  (No age range change proposed)
Maple Tree Lower	
Sandye Place Academy - Middle	

Multi-academy trusts are groups of academies that come together to form a charitable company, with a single group of ‘members’ (who have an overview of the governance arrangements) and a single board of trustees or directors, whilst allowing each school to retain its own identity.

Sandy Place Middle School became Sandy Place Academy after converting to an academy in April 2011. In order for a MAT to be established between the three schools both Laburnum and Maple Tree Lower will be required to convert to academies.

The schools are required by the DfE to consult on their proposal and to then present the results of the consultation, along with their proposal, to the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) for determination.

The schools do not need the Council's permission to convert to an academy, propose a MAT, consult on the proposal or apply to the RSC. They do however have to follow the DfE's guidance and include the Council as a consultee for the proposals.

The reasons given by the schools for the proposed multi-academy trust are listed within the consultation documents

The consultation regarding the proposed multi-academy trust was launched by each school on 9 September 2016.

**3) We need your views to help the schools and the Council make an informed decision**

Please respond to the consultations.

For each consultation you are invited to state whether or not you agree with the proposed change of age range and add any comments regarding the proposal

The consultation documents, which contain the meeting dates for each school and how to respond to each consultation, can be found on the schools' websites.

School	Website
Everton Lower	<a href="http://www.evertonlowerschool.org.uk">www.evertonlowerschool.org.uk</a>
Moggerhanger Lower	<a href="http://www.moggerhangerlower.co.uk">www.moggerhangerlower.co.uk</a>
Robert Peel Lower	<a href="http://www.robertpeellower.co.uk">www.robertpeellower.co.uk</a>
St Swithuns VC Lower	<a href="http://www.stswithunssandy.co.uk">www.stswithunssandy.co.uk</a>
John C of E Donne Lower	<a href="http://www.johndonne.org.uk">www.johndonne.org.uk</a>
Sandy Upper	<a href="http://sandyupper.net/">http://sandyupper.net/</a>
Laburnum Lower	<a href="http://www.laburnumlower.co.uk">www.laburnumlower.co.uk</a>
Maple Tree Lower	<a href="http://www.mapletreelowerschool.com">www.mapletreelowerschool.com</a>
Sandy Place Academy – Middle	<a href="http://www.sandyplaceacademy.org.uk">www.sandyplaceacademy.org.uk</a>

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**Appendix E: Summary of the comments received to the preliminary consultation**

<b>Comments in support of the proposal</b>	<b>CBC response (if required)</b>
<p>1 Everton Parish Council – agreed with proposal but had concerns on the impact on other schools, impact of transport and mixed age groups.</p>	<p>Everton is the only lower school in the village. The number of children forecast to attend this school will not have a significant adverse impact on neighbouring schools. No significant school transport implications are forecast. Many schools operate a mixed class system, especially in smaller rural areas. Everton is judged as an 'Outstanding' school by Ofsted with 'pupils making excellent progress'. The school shared a robust plan for key stage 2 with parents at the drop in and in the FAQ.</p>
<p>2 'I think it is a good thing for the children to remain in 1 school longer to avoid disruption to their comfortable and familiar environment.'</p>	
<p>3 'Yes, I think it will be very beneficial for the children to have continuity @ the school for an additional 2 years.'</p>	
<p>4 'Fully Agree, this will be a very positive move for the school and the children. KS2 from beginning to end in 1 educational setting will ensure smooth and uninterrupted learning'</p>	
<p>5 'I feel that this move to a Primary school would be extremely beneficial to my children's education and I would like for them have the continuity of education through to the end of year 6.'</p>	
<p>6 'Yes, very exciting that the possibility of an outstanding lower school can become a primary'</p>	

7	<p>'Yes, staffing costs at 75% to 80% of budget will impact on school employing an additional teacher for Yr 5 class especially with regard to per pupil funding formula.</p> <p>Lack of specialist teachers for certain subject areas of the KS2 Curriculum.</p> <p>Costs of extension to Year 5 &amp; 6 e.g. furniture and resources.</p> <p>Several Middle schools in BBC and CBC have plans to close. Everton Lower School should investigate the purchase of second hand larger (Yr 5 &amp; 6 size) desks and chairs, Maths and English books and second hand library books from such sources.'</p>	<p>Everton Lower school are committed to provide the required facilities to deliver key stage 2.</p> <p>There will be a lag in revenue funding and the school are fully aware of this and will seek a license deficit if required.</p>
8	<p>'Yes we do agree with the Governing Body's proposal to change the age range of Everton Lower school from 3-9 years to 3-11 years.</p> <p>Our main concern regarding the change would be the infrastructure of the school, will they have enough for the older children like the bigger middle schools i.e. science lab, PE hall and other facilities. We are defiantly for our children to stay their until 11 years old as it is a fantastic school but just worried there may not be enough for them when they are that little older.'</p>	<p>As above. It is not the norm for a primary school to have specialist class rooms ie science labs for it to deliver key stage 2.</p>
<b>Comments objecting to the proposal</b>		<b>CBC response (if required)</b>
1	<p>Highways – parking by parents makes it difficult to pass by on Potton road.</p>	<p>The majority of children at the school live in or near the village. All schools are encouraged to maintain a school travel plan and promote sustainable modes of transport to and from school. A proposed change of age range and increase of a maximum of 20 pupils is likely to have minimal impact on the highways.</p>

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

6 December 2016

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**Corporate Accommodation Plan (CAP)**

Report of Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Cllr Richard Wenham,  
([Richard.Wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.Wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officer: Director of Community Services, Marcel Coiffait  
([Marcel.Coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Marcel.Coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**This report relates to a Key Issue**

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**Purpose of this report:**

1. To present the draft Corporate Accommodation Plan which articulates the Council's approach to its corporate accommodation.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**The Executive is asked to:**

1. **approve the Corporate Accommodation Plan and the conclusions reached within it.**

**Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations**

2. This item is planned to go to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 29 November 2016. The Executive will be notified of any recommendations arising from this meeting.

**Issues**

3. There is currently no holistic approach to the management of the Council's corporate accommodation. This draft CAP is intended to address this issue and is designed to ensure that the Council's corporate accommodation offer:-
  - a. Is of the appropriate scale, in the right location and in the right condition for the delivery of services;
  - b. Is flexible to future changes in requirements resulting from new operating models;

- c. Aligns with and facilitates the implementation of the Working Smarter Project, and allows staff to work in a modern and effective way; and
- d. Delivers the best value for money solution having regard to both cost and quality.

### **Options for consideration**

- 4. The various options for consideration are detailed in the attached Corporate Accommodation Plan.

### **Reason/s for decision**

- 5. Property is expensive to procure, run and maintain, especially when budgets are under ever increasing pressure. As a result, corporate accommodation needs to be carefully managed over its life to ensure best value in terms of use, maintenance and financial return, whilst still ensuring quality in service delivery.
- 6. This draft CAP will support better management of the Council's corporate accommodation and will provide a solution to the issues highlighted above.

### **Council Priorities**

- 7. The Corporate Accommodation Plan will enable the Council to provide a more responsive and efficient service from our key offices, delivering efficiency savings at the same time and more efficient cost control in capital and revenue terms.
- 8. In addition, the vacation of one current office building will enable the development of enhanced services for the vulnerable, through provision of a much needed extra care facility.

### **Corporate Implications**

- 9. ICT – Due to the office moves that are described in the Corporate Accommodation Plan there will be a requirement to relocate staff and appropriate ICT infrastructure to alternative sites. This will have resource implications that will need to be addressed with the ICT team.
- 10. Sustainability – Sustainability will be a consideration when determining office locations for any teams that are relocated as a result of the implementation of the Corporate Accommodation Plan. An assessment of any implications will be undertaken as part of the delivery stage of the plan.

### **Legal Implications**

11. It is not considered that there are any significant legal implications arising from the proposed plan. Any minor legal implications resulting from the delivery of this plan such as the termination of leases and consultation with employees will be addressed as part of the plans delivery.

### **Financial and Risk Implications**

12. It is expected that the delivery of the plan will facilitate the vacation of the Houghton Lodge site by CBC staff, this site having been identified as having alternative value in accommodating the affordable extra care facility needed in the West Mid Beds locality. The Plan will also realise revenue savings of c. £300k identified under the Working Smarter Programme. Savings identified by the Working Smarter Programme that relate to CBC properties will be addressed by the Quadrant Accommodation Plans.
13. There are some risks associated with the delivery of the plan as it links with other deliverables such as the Working Smarter Project and requires a number of office moves which could impact staff. However, a key deliverable of the Plan is to provide flexible accommodation for the future and as such the plan seeks to minimise the Authority's risks associated with accommodation going forward.

### **Equalities 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 partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
15. As part of the development of the Corporate Accommodation Plan careful consideration is being given to the needs of residents and staff.

### **Implications for Work Programming**

16. Subject to the Committee's endorsement of this plan, the CAP would be taken forward to the implementation stage. Part of the implementation will involve the development of four Quadrant Accommodation Plans as described within the CAP. These plans will be brought to Executive for endorsement at a later date.

**Conclusion and next Steps**

17. It is requested that the Executive Committee endorses the approach being proposed in the Corporate Accommodation Plan to rationalise and make better use of our office accommodation, to save capital and revenue costs, and to provide more modern, flexible work spaces for staff.

**Appendices.**

18. Appendix A Corporate Accommodation plan

## Central Bedfordshire Council

### Corporate Accommodation Plan

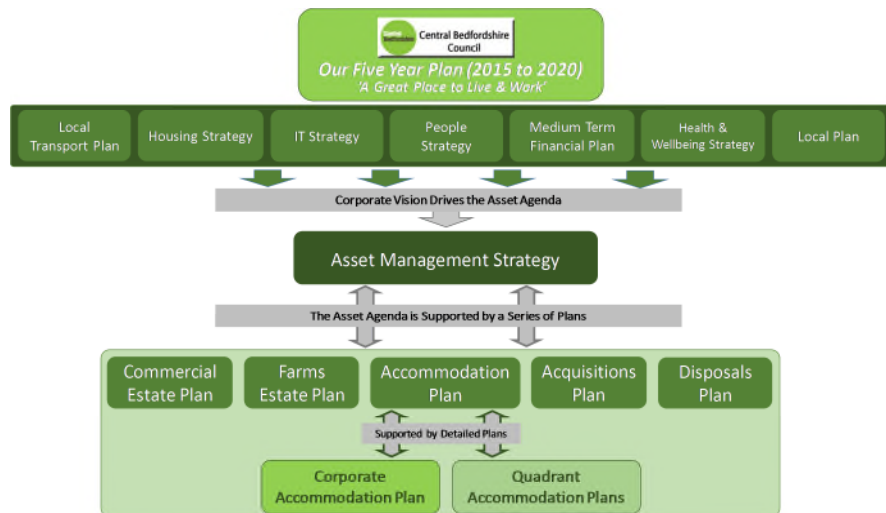


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1. Introduction
2. The Asset Management Strategy – Setting the Corporate Accommodation Plan in context
3. The Council's current corporate accommodation
4. The need for change
5. The plan for change
6. Principal Corporate Office – Priory House
7. Dunstable / Houghton Regis base
8. Conclusions and Implementation Plan

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document, Central Bedfordshire Council's (the Council's) Corporate Accommodation Plan (CAP), is part of a new suite of documents developed by the Council, to establish and articulate its holistic approach to asset management.
- 1.2. The purpose of this suite of documents is to establish how the Council's asset portfolio will become better aligned to support the delivery of its corporate aims and objectives.
- 1.3. The CAP is a specific element of Central Bedfordshire's Accommodation Plan and articulates the Council's approach to its corporate accommodation. It sits alongside plans for all four quadrants of the Council's area and explains how it accommodates its staff and services in a co-ordinated manner across the region to best support the delivery of its outcomes.



- 1.4. The purpose of the CAP is to rationalise to ensure that the Authority's corporate accommodation:
  - Is of the appropriate scale, in the right location and in the right condition for the delivery of services;
  - Is flexible enough to manage future changes in requirements resulting from changing workforce needs;
  - Aligns with and facilitates the implementation of the Working Smarter project;
  - Delivers the best value for money solution considering both quality and cost.
- 1.5. When reviewing the accommodation options as part of the development of this plan a number of elements needed to be considered including:
  - Does the asset allow staff to work in a modern and effective way?
  - Do assets hold greater value to CBC being used in ways other than office accommodation?
- 1.6. Flexibility is important and the Council's corporate accommodation must be able to adapt to and support the possible introduction of different operating models over time.



## 2. The Asset Management Strategy [AMS] - Setting the Corporate Accommodation Plan in context

- 2.1. When corporate accommodation is referred to this means the large office buildings where most of our back office functions are based. This means Priory House, Watling House, Stephenson Court and Houghton Lodge. There are other office facilities but these are smaller in scale and will be addressed when CBC considers its plans for points of presence in market towns in each quadrant plan.
- 2.2. The Council has developed an Asset Management Strategy to provide a template and framework for how the Council will seek to utilise its property and land assets as a corporate resource.
- 2.3. Property is expensive to procure, run and maintain, especially when budgets are under ever increasing pressure. As a result, assets need to be carefully managed over their lives to ensure best value in terms of use, maintenance and financial return, whilst still ensuring quality in service delivery.
- 2.4. This AMS provides an overarching asset management approach enabling delivery of the corporate priorities and service objectives, whilst ensuring the Council remains compliant with legislative requirements.
- 2.5. The AMS incorporates the Council's key principles, which guide the corporate approach to asset management generally. How the property portfolio will play a vital role in the provision of these services is the key output of the AMS. This incorporates the Council's approach to its corporate accommodation.

### **AMS Objectives**

- 2.6. The Council's asset portfolio plays a key role in supporting the delivery of the Council's vision and key priorities. The Council's overriding aim for its asset base is:
 

*'To promote the best use of the Council's assets for service delivery, deliver an optimum return from our commercial and agricultural investments, and facilitate regeneration and development'*
- 2.7. Through the development and successful implementation of the AMS, the Council's asset portfolio is assessed and reviewed such that balanced and strategic decisions can be made on its future composition.
- 2.8. Reflecting the Council's asset management aim, eight asset management objectives are proposed:
  1. Develop a five-year vision and strategic approach to managing the Council's property assets that supports the Council's Corporate Plan;
  2. Review and revise the Council's operational estate to optimise ways of working, optimise operational space, achieve revenue savings and focus on service provision;
  3. Ensure that operational properties are appropriately located, fit for purpose, provide flexible accommodation, in good condition, within an efficient cost envelope that is appropriately accessible to customers;
  4. Deliver cost effective and efficient acquisition, disposal and management of property and land to meet safe service delivery, community benefit and investment needs.

5. Maximise the delivery of capital returns from the disposal of property and land to support the Council's capital programme (this may include the Council acting as a promoter and/or developer of its sites in order to maximise receipts and income);
6. Where appropriate utilise assets to kick start, enhance or underpin economic regeneration;
7. Actively consider and implement innovative use of assets to address specific financial, housing, service and development challenges, building on innovative models being developed across the local government sector; and
8. Maximise revenue income from the rents, leases and 'traded' services.

2.9. These AMS objectives are key in shaping the Council's approach to its accommodation requirements and underpin the approach to its corporate accommodation and the operational properties situated within the 4 quadrants of the Council.

***Strategy for Corporate Accommodation***

2.10. The key commitments articulated in objectives 2 and 3 above are crucial in underpinning the CAP, to ensure that the Council's operational estate is optimised to deliver Council services as efficiently as possible in the challenging financial environment in which the Council operates, and to ensure that the Council is accessible to its varied customers.

***Corporate Accommodation and Quadrants***

2.11. The Council is approaching its operational assets portfolio in a holistic way across the Council area through this CAP and via

Quadrant Accommodation Plans (QAPs) within four defined geographical quadrants of Central Bedfordshire (based upon Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group Localities):

- West Mid Bedfordshire
- Ivel Valley
- Leighton Linlade
- Chiltern Vale

2.12. The QAPs seek to develop an approach where the Council works with relevant stakeholders collaboratively and creatively both internally across directorates, and with the broader public sector to deliver local customer facing service hubs.

2.13. The QAPs will complement the CAP and relevant local masterplans to ensure a joined up approach in each quadrant. Achieving this may require targeted investment by the Council in the local area and involves maximising the potential of its own land and property assets in each quadrant.

2.14. The Council is seeking to utilise accommodation within an efficient and effective corporate function delivered from appropriate locations and hubs located within each of the quadrants that are tailored to the local needs of its customers in these localities.

### 3. The Council's Current Corporate Accommodation

#### *Overview*

- 3.1. The Council currently operates from two main corporate office locations, Priory House in Chicksands and Watling House in Dunstable. There are also some key functions undertaken at Houghton Lodge in Ampthill and Stephenson Court in Bedford, and as a result these buildings are also included within the scope of the CAP.
- 3.2. Occupancy studies have been carried out within the last 12 months for all of these key sites. These studies have looked at the current utilisation of each office space by measuring occupancy over a 4 week period and have also considered desk/staff ratios that are applicable at each of the sites based on the nature of the accommodation. Some office buildings are able to accommodate a greater number of staff than the number of desks available due to the presence of flexible working areas and meeting spaces, as a result each site has its own ratio assigned as set out below.

#### *Specific Buildings*

##### *Priory House, Chicksands*

- 3.3. Priory House is a CBC owned modern office building occupied exclusively by the Council. Built in 2006, it is the main Civic location for the Council and incorporates the Council Chamber where all key Council meetings are held, an elected Members' suite, office of The Lord Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, and is the main location for the Council's corporate offices. It also incorporates a walk-in customer service centre.



- 3.4. The office extends across 5,800 sq. metres and is in good condition. It houses 515 workstations from which Council staff work and has a theoretical capacity to support 685 full time equivalent (FTE) staff<sup>1</sup>. There are 473 parking spaces available on the site of which 28 are allocated to visitors and 14 to disabled drivers.
- 3.5. Recent studies have demonstrated that the office has a peak occupancy rate of 75% and as a result it currently only supports 515 FTE staff. Assuming a theoretical capacity of 685, this gives a potential spare capacity to support a further 170 FTEs with the current office configuration.
- 3.6. The number of parking spaces is a major limiting factor at Priory House. In order to maximise the use of the Priory House site, parking capacity would need to be increased by a further 156 spaces (assuming the same ratio of spaces to staff as at current

<sup>1</sup> Based on the Council's assumption that the current desk ratio is 7.5 desks for every 10 FTEs

peak usage) or alternative measures need to be considered for travel to and from the site (a mixed approach is most feasible).

***Watling House, Dunstable***

- 3.7. Watling House is a c7, 000 sq. metre 1990s office building on three storeys owned by CBC. The building requires significant investment including replacing the gutters and downpipes, the boilers, heating systems and ventilation and requires decoration to much of the interior. The building is sited in an old railway siding, with a gas holder on adjacent land. Part of the car park is known to have contaminated ground.



- 3.8. The building is the second location for the Council’s corporate staff and incorporates a significant number of back office and front of house functions including the Council’s housing teams,

elements of Children’s and Adults services, the Council’s main customer contact centre and CCTV facility.

- 3.9. The building houses 606 workstations from which Council staff work and therefore has the theoretical capacity to support 808 staff<sup>2</sup> from this office environment.
- 3.10. Recent studies have demonstrated that the office has a peak occupancy rate of 50% and as a result it currently only supports 404 full time equivalent (FTE) staff. Assuming a theoretical capacity of 808, this gives a spare capacity to support a further 404 FTEs with the current office configuration.
- 3.11. There are currently 465 parking spaces available at the site including Brewers Hill car park which suggests spare capacity compared to the current office space utilisation. In order to maximise the use of the Watling House site, parking capacity would need to be increased by a further 262 spaces (assuming 0.9 space per FTE reflecting current usage) or alternative measures need to be considered for travel to and from the site (a mixed approach is most feasible).

***Houghton Lodge, Ampthill***

- 3.12. Unlike Priory House and Watling House, Houghton Lodge is not principally a corporate office location for the Council. It is a large CBC owned site occupied predominantly by Adult Social Care. It does however also act as an office rather than an operational location for a number of staff; as such it is included within the

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<sup>2</sup> Based on the Council’s assumption that the current desk ratio is 7.5 desks for every 10 FTEs



CAP. Built c1977, it incorporates a variety of functions including the Council's 24-hour emergency response team.



- 3.13. The office extends across 1,341 sq. m. and is in poor condition with significant backlog of maintenance required and a need to upgrade elements of the building. It houses 137 workstations from which Council staff work and has the capacity to support 152 office based staff<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.14. Recent studies have demonstrated that the office has peak occupancy of 60% and therefore currently supports 91 FTE staff.
- 3.15. There are currently 90 parking spaces on the site.

<sup>3</sup> Based on the Council's assumption that the current desk ratio is 9 desks for every 10 FTEs. This is substantially more than the other locations due to the cellular nature of the office

**Stephenson Court, Bedford**

- 3.16. Like Houghton Lodge, Stephenson Court is not principally a corporate office location for the Council. It is however a significant site in terms of the number of staff operating from the premises. Stephenson Court is located in Bedford and is leased by the Council. It houses staff from the Children's Services directorate managing adoption, fostering and asylum.



- 3.17. As this accommodation is leased the capital maintenance implications are limited compared to sites owned wholly by CBC. However there are significant revenue implications associated with the annual rental and provision of utilities to the site as well as the specific costs of providing office space for CBC staff such as IT infrastructure.

3.18. The office houses 70 workstations over 2 floors and currently supports 79 FTE staff<sup>4</sup>. There are 62 allocated parking spaces.

***Building Capacity***

3.19. The table below summarises the potential capacity of the existing buildings and the actual staff supported by the buildings. To be prudent a contingency has been added to the number of FTEs supported of 10% to ensure enough space is provided at peak times.

	Priory House	Watling House	Houghton Lodge	Stephenson Court	Total FTEs in major offices
Peak occupancy	75%	52%	60%	85% (est)	
No of desks	515	606	137	70	1328
Assumed desk ratio	7.5:10	7.5:10	9:10	9:10	
<b>Current FTE supported</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>1093</b>
<b>10% contingency</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Total FTE supported</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>1202</b>
Theoretical capacity	686	808	152	79	1725
<b>Spare capacity</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>523</b>

**Table 1: Existing Accommodation Capacity**

3.20. Table 1 demonstrates that the current accommodation is underutilised. As a result of this there is an opportunity to reduce

<sup>4</sup> Based on the Council’s assumption that the current desk ratio is 9 desks for every 10 FTEs. This is substantially more than the other locations due to the cellular nature of the office

the overall amount of corporate accommodation and to use the remaining accommodation more efficiently and intensively. In the process the potential for revenue savings by minimising the maintenance liabilities will be pursued. Both Priory House and Watling House have spare capacity to support additional staff (120 + 346) even at peak periods. This spare capacity (466) is in excess of the current requirements of Houghton Lodge and Stephenson Court (174).

***Total Repairs and Maintenance Costs***

3.21. The table below brings together all of the net running costs, repairs and maintenance costs, and known defect backlog costs, for the three buildings in scope.

Building	2013/14		2014/15		At 31/03/16
	Revenue £000's	Capital £000's	Revenue £000's	Capital £000's	Defects £000s
Priory House	660	530	686	530	121
Watling House	521	573	634	826	1,486
Houghton Lodge	132	117	142	8	345
Stephenson Court	135	0	167	0	TBC
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,448</b>	<b>1,220</b>	<b>1,629</b>	<b>1,364</b>	<b>1,952</b>

**Table 2: Capital and Revenue costs per site.**

#### 4. The need for change

4.1. The Council has conducted a review of its asset base, and part of this review has focussed on the existing configuration of its corporate office locations. The use of the four separate locations included in the CAP is a product of the history of the Council.

4.2. In the years since Central Bedfordshire Council was created reviews of the Asset base have centred on accommodating staff previously occupied in Bedford within CBC owned assets. A fundamental review of this asset base has now been undertaken.

4.3. This review of the asset base has highlighted the need to address a number of issues. The most significant are highlighted below:

- The corporate office estate is significantly underutilised with Watling House having only approximately 50% of the available capacity utilised on average and Priory House 75%;
- There are operational inefficiencies with having four separate office locations. This is highlighted by the significant running costs and maintenance costs of the four buildings;
- The maintenance requirements of Watling House are significant. There are costs of approximately £1.5m to bring the building up to an appropriate standard for long term occupational use;
- As the Council adopts new operating models for its services with fewer and more mobile locality based staff its corporate accommodation needs to be able to flex to suit.
- There is a need for more modern work spaces to provide staff with the ability to work in a way that reflects changes in technology since the existing offices were designed.

4.4. The case for change from an operational perspective is therefore significant. However, whilst any change must be consistent with and influenced by financial and internal operational requirements, the fundamental driver should be the way the Council intends to serve its customers in the future.

4.5. In addition to the above issues, there is also a need to consider the best use of the Authority's assets in terms of service delivery. For example where an asset is currently used as office space and could be better utilised facilitating frontline service delivery.

4.6. Watling House is a crucial public interface for the Council. Dunstable / Houghton Regis is a key urban location for the Council and its customers utilise the customer service centre situated in this building significantly more than the secondary service centre at Priory House. As such, the Council is focussed on ensuring that its customer interface is a significant consideration in the development of its operational locations.

4.7. As explained, the CAP and Quadrant Accommodation Plans strongly interact with each other to put the customer first in developing the Council's approach to its operational locations. This will therefore be a key part of the CAP going forward.

#### ***Working Smarter Programme***

4.8. The Council has commenced a major programme to examine the way in which it works and uses its space to support the delivery of its services. This programme, 'Working Smarter', seeks to develop and implement a corporate approach to agile working in order to provide clarity on the potential size of the Council in the future, and how changes in work styles and practices will adapt its office requirements.

- 4.9. The outcomes of this programme are key inputs into the medium to long term vision for the corporate estate. The main purposes of 'Working Smarter' are articulated as follows:
- Review and develop policies and protocols that support new ways of working and cultural change;
  - Deliver essential technology solutions that enable modern workplaces, mobile working, paper reduction and smarter working across the CBC estate;
  - Make more effective use of the Council's staff accommodation to create modern workplaces that are fit for purpose and will enable cultural change; and
  - Facilitate the optimisation of existing CBC assets to create capacity to support property rationalisation activities and delivery of services in localities.
- 4.10. The Council has already commenced a pilot in Priory House of the 'Working Smarter' programme, having adapted two floors of the building to a new office environment, in order to support these new working practices. The findings of this exercise will be used to shape the future roll out of the programme.
- 4.11. The Project reports to the Corporate Management Team as part of the "Making it Happen" programme and seeks to provide a set of solutions which reflect the Council's needs over the next five years.



## 5. Corporate Accommodation plan for change

5.1. The Council has considered the issues highlighted above and developed a plan for change in its corporate accommodation estate. In doing so the option of complete transformation by moving to a new corporate HQ was considered. However, as the ownership of the Priory House site is subject to a 50% overage clause from the MOD (expiring in 2024), CBC is unable to extract the full sale value from the site over the medium term. As a result alternative options have been considered.

5.2. The preferred plan is to:

- Close the offices at Houghton Lodge and re-locate staff to other CBC office locations.
- Terminate the lease on Stephenson Court and re-locate staff to other CBC office locations.
- Intensify the use of the Priory House facility to accommodate a significant proportion of the 636 FTEs that are currently supported through Watling House, Houghton Lodge and Stephenson Court. Priory House becomes the principal corporate office building that more efficiently accommodates Council staff as a result of the successful delivery of the working smarter programme and physical changes to the building.
- Develop an office to accommodate appropriate service based and back office staff in the Dunstable / Houghton Regis Area and any additional staff that cannot be accommodated within the Priory House facility. In the short term Watling House will be utilised as this office with further assessment to take place during the development of the Chiltern Vale Quadrant Plan.

5.3. The key reasons for this four stage plan are as follows:

### ***Houghton Lodge Closure***

5.4. Houghton Lodge is a dated building and is unable to provide flexible office accommodation going forward without significant refurbishment. As a result the site does not offer a value for money long term office solution. In addition, the site has potential for alternative uses which offer greater value, and options for an extra care facility are being developed.

### ***Stephenson Court Lease Termination***

5.5. As spare capacity has been identified within the accommodation stock that is within the Authority's ownership the Stephenson Court site has been identified as surplus to requirements. The Council currently spends around £140k per annum on rent and other costs for the site which would largely be saved if staff are relocated to other CBC owned locations.

### ***Priory House Intensification***

5.6. The Priory House facility has been selected as the principal corporate office location for a variety of reasons, these can be summarised as follows:

- Due to spare capacity it is anticipated that more CBC staff will be able to be based from the Chicksands area;
- Priory House is already the dominant office in the Council's corporate estate;
- The potential to adapt the facility is significant both to intensify the existing floor plan and to make amendments to

the building to provide additional space and adapt to the Working Smarter principals; and

- There is the potential to add additional car parking within the grounds of the building to support this intensification.

***Dunstable / Houghton Regis office***

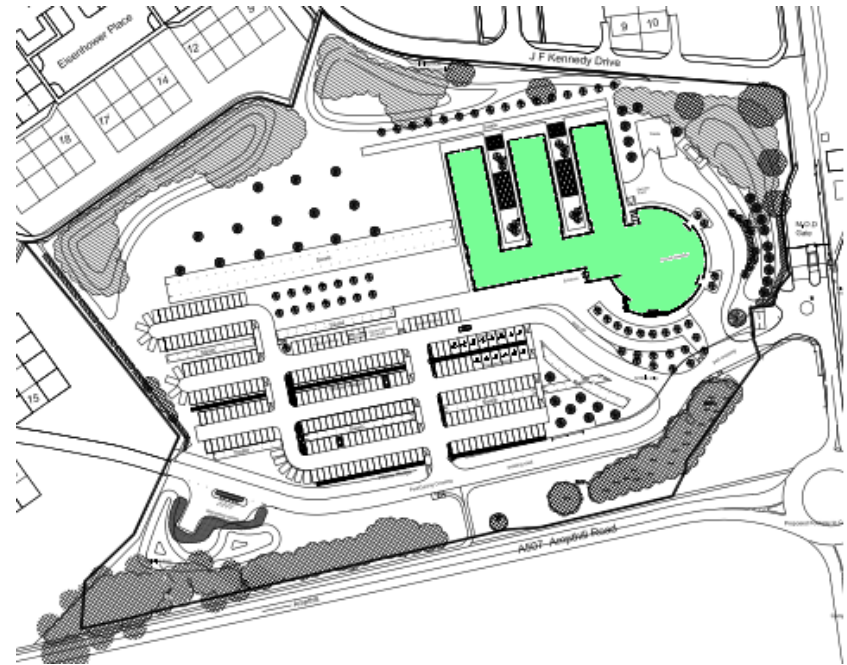
5.7. The analysis of the corporate estate and behaviours of staff and customers have demonstrated the importance of the Dunstable / Houghton Regis area. As such the Council will develop an office in this location, the principal reasons for this include:

- The principal customer contact centre is currently located in Watling House in Dunstable. This is the most important customer interface the Council currently has. There is therefore a need to maintain, or improve, this service within the Urban environment of Dunstable / Houghton Regis;
- There are a significant number of Council staff who currently work within the Dunstable / Houghton Regis area and the Council wishes to maintain this both for lifestyle reasons for staff and the important economic impact these staff have on the Dunstable area;
- The Council's housing stock is principally located in the South, there is therefore a need to locate support for these services within this area;
- There is a greater proportion of customer facing services based at Watling House than at Priory and as such there is more scope for these to be based in the Hub accommodation being developed as part of the Quadrant plans.

**6. Principal Corporate Accommodation Detail – Priory House**

**Current size**

- 6.1. Priory House is the main civic location incorporating key facilities for the elected officials and senior offices of the Authority as well as a small customer service centre.
- 6.2. The current configuration of the office is as a traditional office workspace dominated by banks of workstations occupying the majority of floors within the building and dedicated meeting spaces. It houses 515 workstations from which Council staff work and can support 686 full time equivalent (FTE) staff<sup>5</sup>.
- 6.3. The office extends across 5,800 sq. metres in the green shaded area on the plan above, and is serviced by 473 parking spaces. This is the limiting factor for staff using the building, peak occupancy of Priory House (when all parking bays are occupied) relates to the 75% of workstations being used. It is extremely difficult attain the maximum theoretical 686 staff on site because there is insufficient parking.
- 6.4. The Council has undertaken occupancy study surveys of the building to establish how intensively these workspaces are used. This analysis has shown that on average there is 32% spare capacity with 25% un utilised at peak periods



**Plan view above of the Priory House site.**

- 6.5. Council estimates show that currently there are 7.5 desks provided for every 10 staff based within the building. The Working Smarter programme is being piloted in certain areas within Priory House. The findings from these pilot studies will, in part, inform workspace discussions and decisions across the Council’s buildings.

<sup>5</sup> Based on the Council’s assumption that the current desk ratio is 7.5 desks for every 10 FTEs

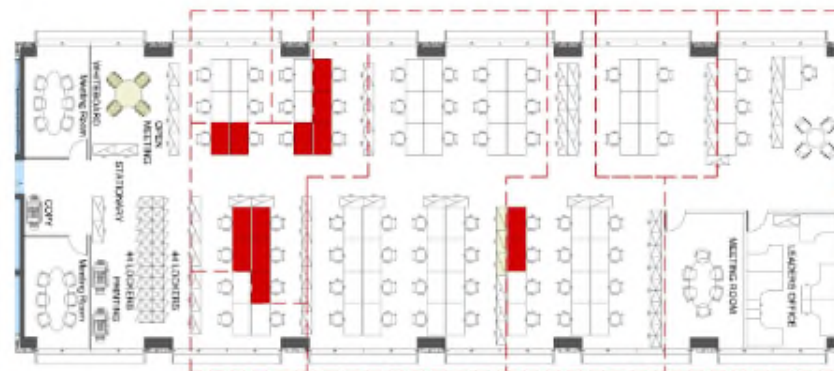
**Proposed Changes to Priory House**

**Implementing Working Smarter**

6.6. The Working Smarter programme is supporting the Council in changing the working practices of its staff. The key changes proposed for Priory House being:

- Optimising the use of office based workstation activity;
- Utilising alternative working environments within the building including dedicated project spaces, touchdown spaces and breakout spaces;
- Enabling working from alternative locations, such as Quadrant hubs, home or alternative environments; and
- Upgrading IT services to support a truly mobile workforce.

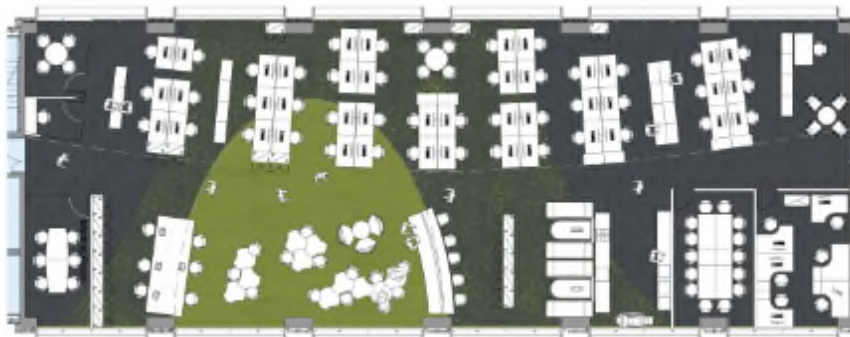
6.7. Implementing Working Smarter requires a significant change in the physical space within Priory House. The current layout contains floors dominated by banks of traditional desks providing an environment where staff are encouraged to work from individual workstations without alternative working styles being accommodated. This is highlighted in the diagram to the right of this page of the current configuration of one of the ground floor wings within the building (Ground Floor West).



**Above figure of Ground floor West wing before Working Smarter**

- 6.8. Working Smarter has piloted a new working style incorporating a variety of working environments to more efficiently match the working requirements of a modern office, task appropriate work spaces.
- 6.9. Were this pilot to be extended across the building this would provide an effective modern working environment for staff. The diagrams below show how this space is adapted following these changes being applied.





Above and below figures of ground floor West after working smarter



- 6.10. A study was undertaken to examine the potential capacity of the building ahead of any major adaptations being undertaken. The potential options that were examined included.
- All general office space is converted to the new Working Smarter environment in line with the pilot areas that have been implemented which includes a potential ratio change for staff and desks to further increase the number of staff supported by the building;
  - A review of meeting space needs to create the opportunity to access confidential space for those services that need it. The booking systems for meeting rooms also require review in order to make the best use of meeting rooms.
- 6.11. These amendments would change the office environment to more appropriately match the requirements of a modern workforce and should therefore have knock on effects in improving efficiency and quality; whilst also facilitating the relocation of staff to Priory House from other offices.
- 6.12. The costs associated with these changes have been modelled and will be considered as part of the Working Smarter Project.

***Physical Changes to the Building Fabric***

- 6.13. The Council has also been examining the potential to alter the configuration of the building, and therefore its potential capacity. A number of capital projects have been developed and their relative costs and impact evaluated. These have included:
- Various options for extensions to the front of the building extending from the windows across the covered area to the pillars outside;

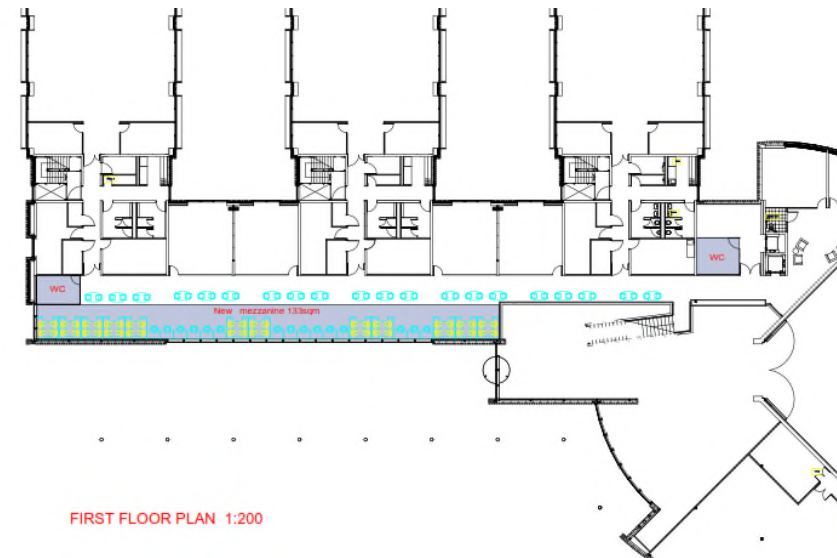
- Various options for an extension to the mezzanine area within the fabric of the existing structure to the windows;
- Various options for an extension within the fabric of the existing structure over the café; and
- Various options to increase the number of car parking spaces.

6.14. This analysis has demonstrated that the most cost effective solution, that delivers significant increases in capacity of the building, is the potential extension to the mezzanine level within the fabric of the building. The extension that has been selected is detailed below.

**Mezzanine Walkway Extension**

6.15. There is the potential to extend the walkway between the office wings and the outside window to the front of the building to deliver a new Mezzanine level that could accommodate significant space for new workstations and related flexible working space. In addition, this option also enables delivery of new bathroom facilities.

6.16. The detail of this is shown in the blue shaded area on the plan below:



**Plan view of proposed Priory House Mezzanine Extension**

6.17. It is estimated that this extension would provide an additional 66 breakout spaces increasing the operational capacity of the building and further assisting the move of staff to Priory House from other CBC office locations.

**Parking Provision**

6.18. Priory House is located at Chicksands, close to Shefford. The site is accessible by road but is not strongly linked for public transport or pedestrian access, as such most people access the building by car.

6.19. The site currently has 473 car parking spaces to accommodate Council staff, members and the public. This provision is significant but is very well used, particularly Tuesday to Thursday,

as such any increase in numbers of people within the building would require additional car parking space.

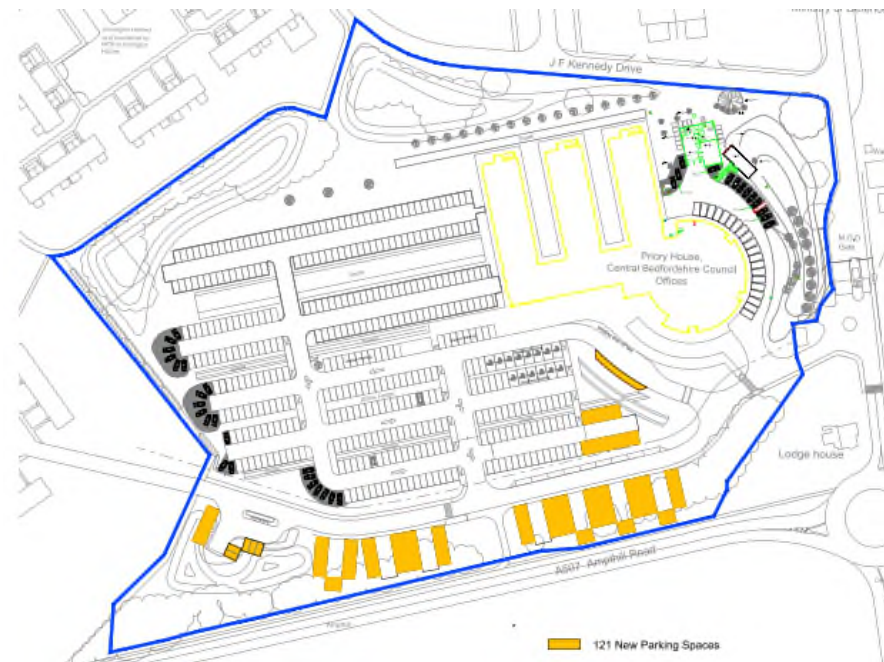
6.20. The Council have examined a number of schemes to provide this additional space, including:

- Multi story car park structures;
- Purchase or lease of adjacent farm land;
- Decked car park structures;
- Additional allocations for parking at ground level; and
- Managing car usage to limit requirements.

6.21. These options have been compared and shortlisted on a cost and impact basis in order to develop the most appropriate options to take forward as detailed below.

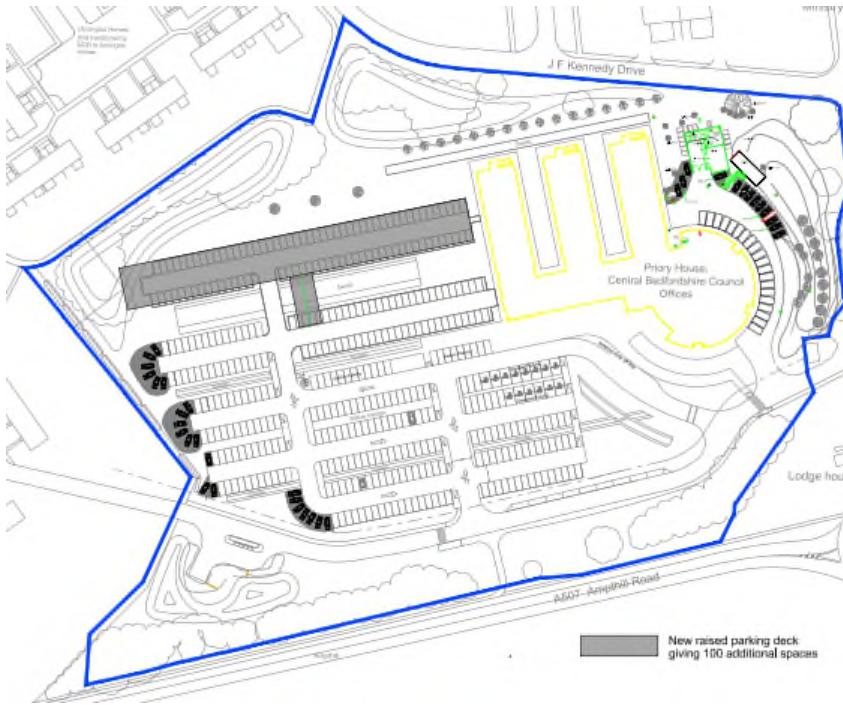
6.22. Option 1: This scheme provides additional 70-80 spaces on site and is judged to be the maximum that could be placed on site without significant capital works.

6.23. Option 2: This scheme seeks to place a raised parking deck over the existing parking area to the North of the site as shown in the attached plan below on page 19. This would provide an additional 100 spaces but would be a more capital intensive project requiring capital investment of £1m.



**Plan view above of the Priory House site [Option 1].**

6.24. Option 3: Reduce the number of cars being brought to site in order to create additional space within the existing car parks through a range of measures. Potential measures include promoting/incentivising car sharing, providing public transport options and improving facilities on site for those cycling/walking or running to work.



**Plan view above of the Priory House site [Option2].**

- 6.25. A blend of options 1 and 3 provide the best value solution to accommodate the additional vehicles on site that are likely to result from the increased utilisation of this building. This offers a lower cost approach that does not require the very significant investment associated with Option 2.



## 7. Dunstable / Houghton Regis Office

7.1. The corporate accommodation plan for change, articulated in section 5 above, requires the development of a secondary location or “Hub” to accommodate appropriate service based and back office staff in the Dunstable / Houghton Regis Area and any additional staff that cannot be accommodated within the Priory House facility.

### **Short Term Solution**

7.2. In the short term, as stated in section 5, Watling House will be utilised to provide the necessary office space in the Dunstable / Houghton Regis area. The rationale for utilising Watling House in the short term is:

- It is an existing asset under the ownership of CBC and requires minimal work to accommodate additional staff;
- The building currently has spare capacity;
- Parking on site is not currently at capacity; and
- Many of the high cost capital repair items can be postponed pending the outcome of the Quadrant Accommodation Plan.

### **Medium / Long Term Solution**

7.3. The analysis in section 3 above has shown that around 220 workstations would be required within this location. However, in order to develop the options available to the Authority in this area, an office that provides circa 200 workstations will be used to appraise the different options available.

7.4. The Council has initially examined a number of potential options

taking in to account that the result must be both financially and socially advantageous. Options must seek to balance service user requirements, staff preference and cost elements to arrive at a balanced solution.

7.5. The options that have been considered at this stage and are subject to more detailed assessment as part of the development of the Chiltern Vale Quadrant Accommodation Plan are as follows:

- Dunstable Leisure Centre – New build office building adjacent to new Leisure Centre;
- Watling House – Adaptation and use of existing facility creating a smaller CBC office and a commercial office space for lease;
- Vernon Place – Development of new mixed use facility on the site; and
- Lease Model – Lease existing space within the area.

7.6. Taking more time to develop the solution for Dunstable / Houghton Regis will allow us to factor in the impact of other known reviews, such as the Children’s Service Transformation plan and the operating model for the telephone Contact Centre as these are crystallised.

## 8. Conclusions and Implementation Plan

### *Conclusions*

- 8.1. Adapting the Council's corporate accommodation to meet the needs of a workforce that operates significantly differently to when the buildings were designed coupled with the continuous drive for efficiency and quality of services provide the back drop for the Council's review of its corporate estate.
- 8.2. The CAP has developed a strategy for significant changes to the Council's corporate accommodation estate as it also reviews its broader asset base across the region.
- 8.3. The key conclusions from this process are as follows
  - Close the offices at Houghton Lodge as they are no longer fit for purpose and do not provide value for money. The site has also been identified as having potential to provide better value uses through redevelopment. Staff to be re-located to other CBC office locations.
  - Terminate the lease on Stephenson Court as it does not offer a value for money solution for CBC and alternative office space is available within the Authority's ownership. Staff to be re-located to other CBC office locations.
  - Intensify the use of the Priory House facility to accommodate a significant proportion of the 641 FTEs that are currently supported through Watling House, Houghton Lodge and Stephenson Court. Priory House then to become the principal corporate office building.
  - In the short term – continue to utilise Watling House to act as the Dunstable / Houghton Regis Hub and also to

accommodate any staff that cannot be accommodated in Priory House.

- Undertake a comprehensive review of accommodation opportunities in the Dunstable/Houghton Regis area as part of the development of the Chiltern Vale Quadrant Plan.

### *Implementation Plan*

- 8.4. The Implementation Plan for this programme is in two phases for delivery over the next 24 months and is detailed, at a headline level, below.

#### *Phase 1: [Dec 2016 – March 2018]*

- 8.5. Intensify the use of Priory House and relocate those staff based in Stephenson Court by:
  - Improving and increasing the use of technology;
  - Implementing the principals of the Working Smarter project,
  - Undertaking capital works to the Priory House facility including a mezzanine extension and additional toilets, changes to parking provision creating more spaces;
  - Relocating appropriate staff from Stephenson Court to Priory House or Watling House;
  - Reviewing the space standards being achieved through this phase of the work and developing a key outcome assessment from phase 1 to clarify the space requirements for the Dunstable / Houghton Regis office.

**Phase 2: [April 2017- March 2018]**

- Deliver the Quadrant Accommodation Plans to determine the most efficient use of the Authority's assets within each of the quadrant areas and importantly to determine the best solution for the Dunstable / Houghton Regis office.
- Closure of Houghton Lodge resulting in a capital receipt, and relocation of affected staff to available office space in Priory House or the Dunstable / Houghton Regis Hub;

**Programme Alignment**

8.6. The CAP is a significant work stream that fits with the Council's corporate strategy as laid out in the Five Year Plan. It is designed to align with a series of other programmes.

- The Working Smarter Programme will act as the project lead for the implementation of the accommodation plan;
- Opportunities to deliver alternative priority outcomes from the Council's estate such as the potential to redevelop Houghton Lodge to deliver Older People's Accommodation;
- Continued development of the Quadrant Accommodation Plans to bring together the Council's accommodation plans with its broader aspirations from its assets as laid out in the Asset Management Strategy (AMS).

8.7. The key deliverables from this programme are detailed below:

- A fit for purpose primary corporate head office at Priory House, maximising available space;
- An second office in the Dunstable / Houghton Regis area;
- The implementation of the Working Smarter principals to enable staff to adopt new ways of working;

- Revenue costs savings for the Houghton lodge and Stephenson Court sites.

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Central Bedfordshire Council

Executive

6 December 2016

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## Highways Grass Cutting Contract and Food Waste Disposal Contracts

Report of Cllr Brian Spurr, Executive Member for Community Services  
([brian.spurr@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:brian.spurr@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officers: Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services  
([marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)) and  
Tracey Harris, Assistant Director Environmental Services  
([tracey.harris2@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:tracey.harris2@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**This report relates to a Key Decision**

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### Purpose of this report

1. The report proposes the Executive approve the provision of delegated authority to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Services, to award contracts for the highways grass cutting and food waste disposal contracts following the completion of the EU procurement processes.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **grant delegated authority to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Services, to award a contract for highways grass cutting as detailed within this report and enter into the appropriate legal agreements in order to meet the required timescales allowing the contract to be operational by April 2017; and**
2. **grant delegated authority to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Services, to award a contract for food waste disposal as detailed within this report and enter into the appropriate legal agreements in order to meet the required timescales allowing the contract to be operational by April 2017.**

## **Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations**

2. This item has not been to Overview and Scrutiny as it represents a decision to award contracts to provide services which are already carried out within Central Bedfordshire.

## **Issues**

3. This report sets out the strategy to deliver the highways grass cutting contract as well as the delivery of a food waste disposal contract that will allow for the continued provision grass cutting and waste treatment and disposal services across the authority.

## **Background Information**

4. The Council's current contract for highways grass cutting was let in April 2016, the contract included 5 lots for the provision of a number of services including highways grass cutting and rights of way hedge cutting. Due to continued poor performance under Lot 1 (highways grass cutting) the Council took the decision to terminate this lot early (with all other lots remaining in place). Consequently the Council has been required to re procure the service with a start date of April 2017.
5. The current food waste disposal (north of Central Bedfordshire) contract is in the final year, with all extension periods utilised, therefore the Council is required to re tender for this service with a required start date of April 2017.
6. Each contract will follow the EU procurement process and each contract will be awarded on the basis of the most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) with 40% of available scores being allocated to quality and 60% to cost.

## **Highways Grass**

7. The highways grass cutting contract will predominantly cover the rural highways network, covering approximately 600 linear kilometres. The aim of the contract is to ensure that the network is safe and maintained to a high standard, utilising suitable equipment and experience, whilst maintaining the ecological aspects of the network.
8. The contract will include standard cut, vision splays, full swathe cuts, roadside hedge cutting, maintenance of roundabouts and roadside nature reserves. A standard number of cuts for each will be priced by bidders with options for increased numbers of cuts where appropriate so that the service is flexible and can be tailored with potential changes to requirements.

9. It is proposed that the contract term will be 2 years to 31 March 2019. This will allow options to procure grass cutting contracts for both rural and amenity in 2019 but also allow flexibility with the option of possible 2 x 1 year extensions to 31 March 2021.
10. The anticipated procurement milestones proposed are set out below:
  - Post OJEU notice 14 November 2016
  - Issue tender documentation and receive bids 15 November 2016 to 22 December 2016
  - Evaluate bids 23 December 2016 to 7 January 2017
  - Contingency 8 January 2017 to 18 January 2017
  - Notification of intention to award 19 January 2017 to 29 January 2017
  - Formal award and mobilisation period 30 January 2017 to 31 March 2017
  - New contract start date 1 April 2017

### **Food Waste Disposal Contract**

11. The food waste collection service operates in the north of Central Bedfordshire only, providing residents with a weekly collection of food waste. The current food waste disposal contract ends 31 March 2017 and arrangements need to be in place to allow a continuation of this service from the 1 April 2017.
12. The contract will require the provider to treat up to 5,000t of food waste a year to create useable outputs such as soil conditioner and electricity and avoid the waste going to landfill.
13. It is proposed that the contract term for food waste disposal is for 3 years to 31 March 2020 with a 3 year flexible extension to 31 March 2023.
14. The procurement process milestones are set out below:
  - Post OJEU notice 28 October 2016
  - Issue tender documentation and receive bids 30 October 2016 to 29 November 2016
  - Evaluate bids 29 November 2016 to 13 December 2016
  - Contingency 13 December 2016 to 23 December 2016
  - Notification of intention to award 28 December 2016 to 07 January 2017
  - Formal award and mobilisation period 08 January 2017 to 31 March 2017
  - New contract start date 1 April 2017

### **Reason for Decision**

15. Due to the decision to terminate the current highways grass cutting contract (lot 1) the Council needs to act swiftly to re procure a provider to provide the required service by April 2017 allowing the Council to continue to meet its statutory obligations.
16. The Council has a statutory responsibility to dispose of household waste collected within its administrative area. The tender of the food waste disposal contract will allow the Council to continue to contribute to the performance of the Councils recycling performance.

### **Council Priorities**

17. The recommendations in this report support Central Bedfordshire in delivering the following priorities:
  - Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – providing the services set out will allow for a continuation and where possible an improvement in the appearance of the highways network as well as helping to maintain the recycling performance of Central Bedfordshire.
  - Great resident services – procuring the services set out will ensure the highways network is well maintained throughout the year and continue to provide residents in the north of the authority area the ability to recycle food waste generated in the home.

### **Corporate Implications**

#### **Legal Implications**

18. In order to comply with Part 4 of the Highways Act 1980, the Council has a statutory duty to keep the highway safer for users. Letting this contract will assist the authority in meeting this requirement by ensuring that visibility is maintained through preventing encroachment on the highway through a regular cutting regime.
19. Central Bedfordshire is a Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) for the purposes of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (“EPA”) and is under a duty under s.51 of the Act to dispose of household waste collected within its administrative area. Undertaking this proposal will allow CBC to meet these duties.
20. In delivering the procurements set out the Council are acting in accordance with EU Procurement Directives and ensuring that all procurement activity is conducted in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.



### **Financial and Risk Implications**

21. The Council is facing significant financial pressures in the coming years and in light of this it is essential that value for money is a key deliverable of the procurement processes.
22. As on going statutory services, adequate financial provision is made in base budgets for these services. It is anticipated that the proposal will secure services in line with the cost identified within the current MTFP.
23. Key risks to the Council that will be mitigated through the delivery of these procurements include:
  - a. Procurement risk challenge
  - b. Current contracts expiring with only high cost emergency provision of services available.
  - c. Lack of maintenance of the highways network including vision splays presenting a hazard to road users.
  - d. Lack of treatment for food waste resulting in disposal to landfill.

### **Staffing**

24. There will be no impact on staffing as a result of this recommendation.

### **Equalities Implications**

25. 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. As part of the procurement process, organisations submitting bids will be asked to provide information demonstrating an understanding of equality legislation as it relates to residents and employees.

### **Public Health**

26. Satisfactory grass cutting to areas of the network to maintain the aesthetics of Central Bedfordshire and for the safety of motorists and pedestrians.
27. The health and well being of residents would be negatively impacted if waste disposal services were not in place for an extended period of time impacting on collections. The recommendation ensures that the Council fulfils its statutory duties in relation to public health.

### **Community Safety**

28. The rural grass network needs to be maintained satisfactorily to ensure that fly tipping hotspots are visible and fly tipping activities are more likely to be observed.
29. The Council's statutory duty under Section 17 of the Criminal and Disorder Act 1998 includes the need to address environmental crimes such as fly tipping. The provision of a waste disposal service facilitates collection and allows residents to safely deposit their waste items, in a responsible and legal manner. If the provision of this service were disrupted it could lead to an increase in the incidents of fly tipping, a criminal offence. This recommendation ensures that the Council fulfils its statutory duties in relation to crime and disorder.

### **Procurement**

30. In delivering these procurements, the Council will act in accordance with the EU Procurement Directives and ensure that all procurement activity is conducted in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
31. The internal procurement team have been fully engaged throughout the process and will remain engaged until contract award. A full audit trail is in place covering the entire exercise which will be kept as a full record of the process for the required period.

### **Sustainability**

32. Maintenance of additional roadside nature reserves with options for cut and clear techniques has been included within the rural grass cutting specification to enhance the ecological value of the area.
33. Landfilling waste leads to the release of substantial amounts of methane, a potent greenhouse gas with over twenty times the climate change potential of carbon dioxide. Through the procurement for the disposal of food waste the Council is seeking to maintain high landfill diversion performance and minimise the tonnages of waste being landfilled.

### **Conclusion and next Steps**

34. Should the recommendations in this report be agreed, once the procurement processes have been completed the Council will award the contracts identified above. This will allow for the new contracts to be operational from the 1 April 2017 and ensure a continuation of the services provided.

**Appendices - None**

**Background Papers - None**

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

6 December 2016

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## Disposal Sites

Report of Cllr Richard Wenham, Executive Member for Corporate Resources ([richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)).

Advising Officer: Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services ([marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)) and Andrew Gordon, Head of Estate Management ([andrew.gordon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.gordon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk), Tel: 0300 300 5882)

**This report relates to a Key Decision**

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### Purpose of this report

1. The report addresses matters in connection with the disposal of land at Thorn Turn, Haynes, and Caddington. Details are set out in exempt Appendix 1.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **authorise the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to dispose of land at Thorn Turn, Haynes and Caddington; and**
2. **delegate to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Assistant Director Legal Services(Monitoring Officer) and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, the authority to negotiate the relevant contractual terms and to enter into the relevant contracts to enable these disposals to take place on best available terms.**

### Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. This matter has been discussed with the Chairman of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and due to time being of the essence to agree terms for disposal, he was content that the item proceed to Executive.

### **Council Priorities**

3. The proposed sales support the following Council priorities:
  - a. Provision of employment
  - b. Provision of homes
  - c. Enhancing Central Bedfordshire
  - d. Value for money (significant contribution to the Capital Receipts target supporting all Council Priorities).

### **Corporate Implications**

#### **Financial Implications**

4. Substantial capital receipts will be generated in an accelerated timeframe; falling into the final years 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 to facilitate a number of the council's priorities and go towards achieving the council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

#### **Legal Implications**

5. The Council has a duty to obtain best value. The Council's legal team are engaged in preparation of advice and documents to facilitate the disposals.

#### **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. Facilitating the timely development of employment and residential units will help ensure that demand for local housing and employment is met.

#### **Public Health**

7. None

#### **Community Safety**

8. Any issues in relation to employment and residential development will be dealt with via the planning process.

#### **Conclusion and next Steps**

9. Executive authorise the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to dispose of the land on best available terms.

10. Assets conclude negotiations with the parties to secure the land sales.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Exempt Report

**Background Papers**

N/A

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EXECUTIVE

6<sup>th</sup> December 2016

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## Revenue Budget Monitoring Forecast Outturn September 2016 (Q2)

Report of **Cllr Richard Wenham, Executive Member for Corporate Resources** ([cllr.richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officers: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer  
([charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

### **This report relates to a Non Key Decision**

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**Purpose of this report :** The report sets out the provisional outturn financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of September 2016. It sets out spend against the approved budget and it excludes the Housing Revenue Account which is subject to a separate report. Explanations for the variances are set out below in Appendix A.

This report enables the Executive to consider the overall financial position of the Council.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. note the forecast revenue outturn position which is an overspend of £0.6M and**
- 2. request that officers continue to look for compensatory savings in order to deliver a balanced budget.**

### **Issues**

1. Forecast outturn position as at September 2016 is £0.6M over budget (£1.6M in August, £0.6M over budget at Period 6 last year). The year to date spend is £1.1M under budget and so the rest of year forecast is effectively over by £1.7M.
2. SCHH forecast overspend is £2.0M (no change on August). This forecast overspend is mainly due to flow through of overspends from 2015/16 and unachievable efficiencies against Care Act funding (£0.75M) and Care Packages (£0.7M).
3. Children's Services are under budget by £0.1M (£0.2M over in August). The movement from last month is due to lower staff costs and two expensive care placements which have now ceased.

4. Community Services are under budget by £0.5M (£0.3M under in August) which is spread across a number of cost centres. Regeneration are also under by £0.2M (£0.1m under in August) due to salary underspends.
5. ICS are over budget by £0.1M (Marginally under budget in August) due to increased IT costs offset by underspends on Legal. Corporate Costs are under by £0.7M due to lower than budgeted Minimum Revenue Provision and interest costs due to capital slippage and recent interest rate reductions.
6. Overall debt in September is £8.0M the same as August. Debt over 61 days is £4.0M (50%). August debt was also £4.0M (50%). Work is continuing to analyse the debt and ensure effective and efficient recovery procedures are followed.
7. The Table below details the full year variances by directorate:

Directorate	Year to Date - September P6			Full Year			Rest of Year Variance £m
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
SCHH	33.9	35.0	1.1	67.9	69.8	2.0	0.9
Childrens Services	18.3	18.0	(0.3)	36.4	36.4	(0.1)	0.2
Community Services	23.5	22.6	(0.9)	47.4	46.9	(0.5)	0.4
Regeneration	2.5	1.7	(0.8)	5.1	5.0	(0.2)	0.7
Public Health	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.1)
Improvement & Corporate Services	7.7	8.0	0.2	15.7	15.8	0.1	(0.1)
Corporate Resources	2.3	2.3	(0.0)	4.9	4.9	0.0	0.0
Corporate Costs	4.2	3.8	(0.4)	11.7	11.0	(0.7)	(0.3)
<b>Total Excl Landlord Business</b>	<b>92.5</b>	<b>91.5</b>	<b>(1.1)</b>	<b>189.2</b>	<b>189.8</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.7</b>
Schools	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Landlord Business	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>92.5</b>	<b>91.5</b>	<b>(1.1)</b>	<b>189.2</b>	<b>189.8</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.7</b>

## RESERVES POSITION

8. The general fund full year forecast position includes a net £2.3M increase in reserves (excluding Schools).
9. In terms of use of general fund earmarked reserves (EMR), SCHH are forecast to use £1.0M, Children's Services £0.6M, Community Services £1.0M, Public Health £0.2M, ICS £0.2M and Regeneration £0.1M.



Note that these reserves are being used for the purpose for which they were set aside last year.

10. This is offset by the creation of a £4.7M EMR for the New Homes Bonus (NHB) which we will receive in 2016/17. This was a conscious decision within the MTFP to both reduce reliance on NHB and to build a fund for investment. This leaves the NHB reserve at £6.8M including carry forward from 2015/16.
11. There is also a budgeted transfer to EMR of £0.5M to top up the Redundancy Reserve.
12. See Appendix B for details of which EMR have been used (note that Corporate Costs shows a number of reserves that are reflected in the Directorate outturns, for example the use of the redundancy reserve).

### **General Reserves**

13. The opening position for 2016/17 is £15.5M. There are no further uses or contributions planned this year.

### **Council Priorities**

14. Sound financial management contributes to the Council's Value for Money and enables the Council to successfully deliver its priorities. The recommendations will contribute indirectly to all 6 Council priorities.

### **Corporate Implications**

### **Legal Implications**

15. None

### **Financial Implications**

16. The financial implications are set out in the report.

### **Equalities Implications**

17. Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken prior to the allocation of the 2016/17 budgets and each Directorate was advised of significant equality implications relating to their budget proposals.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A – Detailed Directorate Commentary
- Appendix B – Earmarked Reserves.
- Appendix C – Debt Management
- Appendix D – Treasury Management

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**APPENDIX A – DIRECTORATE COMMENTARY**

**Social Care, Health and Housing (SCHH)**

1. The directorate General Fund outturn position is an overspend of £2.0M after the use of reserves (same as August).

Month: September 2016	Year to date				Year				
	Budget	Actual	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Social Care Health and Housing</b>									
Director of Social Care, Health, Housing	102	345	(241)	3	203	803	600	(595)	5
Housing Solutions (GF)	1,821	1,696	-	(125)	3,641	3,456	(185)	-	(185)
Care and Support	6,342	6,408	-	67	12,683	12,922	239	(84)	155
OPPD - Care Management	14,394	16,504	(70)	2,041	28,787	31,740	2,953	(140)	2,813
LD Care Management & MH Packages	10,689	10,708	-	20	21,377	21,849	472	-	472
Head of Integrated Services + Other IS	498	384	-	(114)	996	840	(156)	-	(156)
Commissioning	4,556	4,456	-	(100)	9,112	9,165	53	-	53
Resources	(4,459)	(5,127)	(70)	(738)	(8,918)	(9,968)	(1,050)	(142)	(1,192)
<b>Total Social Care and Health</b>	<b>33,941</b>	<b>35,374</b>	<b>(381)</b>	<b>1,053</b>	<b>67,881</b>	<b>70,807</b>	<b>2,926</b>	<b>(961)</b>	<b>1,965</b>

2. The Adult Social Care service (Care & Support, OPPD, Learning Disabilities/Mental Health and Integrated Services) is showing an overspend of £3.284M (excluding customer contributions).
3. This division has to absorb the risk of increasing Older People, Physical and Learning Disability package volumes and costs. People are living longer and the costs of dementia are on the increase. Demographic pressure of £4.1M has been built into the budget to reflect the impact of both an ageing population and the additional costs associated with the transition of younger people with disabilities into Adult Social Care. There are, however, significant efficiency targets for this area totalling just short of £4.2M.
4. Within the Older People 65+ external package budgets, there are projected overspends on residential and nursing placements of £1.601M offset by additional customer income which is forecast to exceed the budget by £1.108M.

There is a projected over spend on non-residential packages of £2.172M (this includes new extra care contract costs at Priory View and Greenfields). For non residential services there is a projected over achievement of customer income of £0.562M. This leaves Older People package expenditure with a net £2.103M overspend to budget.

This is after allowing for the recovery of backdated funding of £0.5M re long standing disputes regarding health and other local authority funding. Additional Better Care Fund (BCF) funding of £0.604M is currently being applied to the packages budget and additional placement costs of £0.14M relating to the Greenacre re-provision are being funded from the MANOP reserve.

5. The Directorate continues to track the impact of former self funders who exert pressure on residential and nursing placements budgets. Seventeen have required Council support during 2016/17 compared to seven that required support for the same period in 2015/16.

The full year cost is estimated to be £0.315M.

6. Within Learning Disabilities, additional budget of £1.4M has been provided to cover the impact of transitions in 2016/17 which includes the full year effect of 2015/16 new customers and the part year effect of 2016/17 new customers. The budget has also been increased to reflect carer breakdown costs for mid life customers estimated at £0.7M.

Efficiency targets for this service area amount to £1.1M. There is a projected overspend on packages of £0.078M.

7. There remain risks relating to the funding of customers being reviewed under the Winterbourne View national programme.
8. The Commissioning Service is projecting an overspend of £0.053M. The key variances are overspends within various contracts offset by Contracts and Commissioning Teams' pay.
9. The Resources division is showing a projected underspend of £1.192M the majority of which relates to a projected over achievement of customer contributions.

**Better Care Fund (BCF)**

10. The overall funding for 2016/17 is set out below: There has been a mandated increase in the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) contribution compared to last year.

11.

<b>Funding Stream</b>	<b>2016/17 Plan £M</b>
BCCG	15.276
CBC Disabled Facility Grant	1.315
CBC Additional Contribution	3.417
Under spend from 2015/16	0.586
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20.534</b>

12. The focus for 2016/17 will be on Out of Hospital Care, Prevention and on Protecting Social Services.
13. The BCCG funding stream includes funding paid over to CBC of £4.038M.
14. HRA is subject to a separate report.

## Children's Services

15. The directorate outturn position for 2016/17 is £0.091M under budget (£0.157M overspend in August).

Month: September 2016	Year to date				Year				
	Budget	Actual	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
Director	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Children's Services</b>									
Director of Children's Services	309	356	-	47	617	617	-	-	-
Children's Services Operations	11,332	10,671	(33)	(694)	22,466	21,963	(503)	(60)	(563)
LAC Placement Costs	4,477	5,020	(48)	495	8,974	9,707	733	(95)	638
Commissioning & Partnerships	1,673	1,461	(4)	(216)	3,637	3,503	(134)	(23)	(157)
Partnerships	334	404	(51)	19	555	675	120	(120)	-
Education Services	880	1,048	(156)	12	1,553	1,827	274	(283)	(9)
<b>Total Children's Services (ex Schools / Overheads)</b>	<b>19,005</b>	<b>18,960</b>	<b>(292)</b>	<b>(337)</b>	<b>37,802</b>	<b>38,292</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>(581)</b>	<b>(91)</b>
DSG + ESG Contribution to Central Support	(678)	(678)	-	-	(1,356)	(1,356)	-	-	-
<b>Total Children's Services (excluding Schools)</b>	<b>18,327</b>	<b>18,282</b>	<b>(292)</b>	<b>(337)</b>	<b>36,446</b>	<b>36,936</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>(581)</b>	<b>(91)</b>

16. The reduction in forecast outturn of £0.248M since August is mainly due to:

- £0.109M reduction in residential care home payments as two placements have ended earlier than originally forecast and an in-house placement ending.
- £0.212M reduction in staff related budgets, including freezing two posts in Fostering Service, reductions in the Court & Permanence Team, and a consultant Social Workers salary.
- £0.014M reduction in nursery, therapeutic services and parent and baby placements
- £0.050M increased income from the Academy Central Bedfordshire

Offset by increases (£0.080M) in the Leaving care budget, due to nine additional young people since July, £0.065M Independent Fostering and Adoption (IFA) changes, five siblings move from in-house and increased Direct Payments and High Level Family Support payments due to additional "no recourse to public funds" cases.

17. Mitigating action and one off compensatory savings have been identified and achieved to cover an underlying overspend which relates to two main areas in Children's Services Operations:

- £0.690M IFA and In-House Fostering where the budget only allowed for 58 IFA's and there are currently 66 non Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. This forecast overspend was previously reported on the risk register whilst mitigating action was sought.
- £0.253M Children with Disabilities, and is due to an additional five out of area placements made since the budget build took place for 2016/17. Mitigating action has been taken within the directorate to reduce the original forecast overspend of £0.365M. Out of area placements are made as a last resort when a high level of short break provisions can no longer meet the need and safeguard the child and/or their family.

18. The tables below reflect the increased number of Looked After Children (LAC) and non care placements.

	Sept 2015		Sept 2016		% change	Average £ per child/mnth Aug16
<b>Number of LAC :</b>		259		254	(1.9%)	
In House Foster Placements	113		113		n/c	1,423
Independent Foster Placements	74		67		(9.5%)	3,404
Residential Homes & Schools	20		7		(25%)	17,445
St Christopher's (Clophill & Bunyan Road)			7			11,635
St Christopher's (Stewartby)			1			13,750
Semi - Independent Living (aged 16 & 17)	14		13		(7.1%)	3,072
Placed for Adoption/ with Parents	28		31		10.7%	0 - 544
Children with Disabilities (CWD Maythorn and Residential School)	7		10		42.9%	9,334 - 20,957
Young Offenders serving custodial sentences /Temp Accom / Youth Offending	3		4		33.3%	0
Parent & Baby Units			1			15,080

	Sept 2015		Sept 2016		% change	Average £ per child/mnth Aug 16
<b>Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children:</b>		30		58	93.3%	
In House Foster Placements	5		9		80.0%	1,327
Independent Foster Placements	10		8		(20.0%)	3,250
Semi Independent Living (aged 16 & 17)	15		41		173.3%	1,487
<b>Total Number of LAC:</b>		289		312	8.0%	

(NB: The UASC numbers were not split for September 2015 reporting and are included with LAC numbers to calculate the percentage change).

	Sept 2015	Sept 2016	% change
<b>Non care placements :</b>			
Special Guardianship Orders	129	137	6.2%
Residential Orders	43	40	(7.0%)
Adoption Allowances	43	48	11.6%
<b>Other information:</b>			
Child Protection Plan	180	215	19.4%
Children in Need	1258	1412	12.2%
Number of Referrals (YTD)	1293	955	(26.1%)

	Movement YTD Inc. UASC
LAC (29 <sup>th</sup> April 302 )	+10
In House Placements (April 123)	-1
Independent Foster Placements (April 79)	-4
Semi Independent Living (April 38)	16
Special Guardianship Orders (April 132)	5

19. There are currently 27.7 Full Time Equivalent (fte) agency staff across Children's Services Operations covering 59.2 fte vacant posts.

Of the 27.7 fte Agency Staff covering vacant posts, maternity and sickness absences, there are currently 0.80 Social Workers mitigating for the Assisted Years Supported Employment in the Intake & Assessment and Family Support teams due to leavers and secondments in the teams.

### Community Services

20. The full year outturn position for Community Services is an underspend of £0.515M (£0.344M in August) after the use of earmarked reserves of £0.973M for one-off specific projects.

Month: September 2016	Year to date				Year				
	Budget	Actual	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Community Services</b>									
Community Services Director	166	132	-	(34)	332	318	(14)	-	(14)
Highways Transportation	9,022	8,919	(44)	(147)	18,659	19,044	385	(44)	341
Environmental Services - Waste	9,700	9,511	(193)	(382)	19,117	19,179	62	(577)	(515)
Environmental Services - Other	2,458	2,137	(114)	(435)	4,966	4,991	25	(294)	(269)
Assets	2,185	2,264	-	79	4,371	4,371	-	(58)	(58)
<b>Total Community Services</b>	<b>23,531</b>	<b>22,963</b>	<b>(351)</b>	<b>(919)</b>	<b>47,445</b>	<b>47,903</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>(973)</b>	<b>(515)</b>

### **Highways Transportation**

21. Highways and Transportation is forecasting an overall overspend of £0.341M. This is explained further in paragraphs 22 – 24.
22. Educational Transport are forecasting an overspend of £0.014M which is due to a £0.072M overspend within the schools transport contract and on staffing of £0.010M, this is offset by additional £0.064M of income in Special Educational Needs transport.
23. Highways Contracts are forecasting a £0.055M underspend. This is due to overspends of £0.208M within 3rd party costs (of which £0.130M relates to an increase in spend on emergency repairs following the new contract and £0.048M relates to vehicle crossovers), there is also an overspend of £0.066M within supplies & services. These overspends are offset by additional income of £0.222M and staffing underspends of £0.099M.
24. Passenger Transport Services – forecasting an overspend of £0.378M of which £0.129M relates to premises & transport including the contract hire of vehicles and Fleet maintenance and fuel costs, staffing costs are also forecasting an overspend of £0.261M of which £0.213M is for agency cover, additional income from vehicle hire of £0.021M has slightly offset this overspend.

### **Environmental Services**

25. Environmental Services is forecasting an overall underspend of £0.784M. This is explained further in paragraphs 26 – 32.
26. Waste Service – is forecasting a £0.515M underspend, which is a result of an underspend of £0.090M due to staffing vacancies and reduced hours, £0.426M underspend in kerbside collection and street cleansing due to lower indexation than budgeted for and a £0.158M underspend on Household Waste Recycling Centres due to the temporary closure of Ampthill and Leighton Buzzard. These are partially offset by underachievement of recycle income of £0.122M due to levels of contamination.
27. Libraries are forecasting a £0.135M underspend, the majority of this is due to staff vacancies of £0.276M, these have been offset by income being less than budget of £0.108M (£0.047M for library services and £0.061M for Leighton Buzzard theatre), and overspends on resources for Dunstable library of £0.050M.
28. Emergency Planning – is forecasting a £0.030M underspend which is a result of £0.040M of income no longer forecast to be received offset by staffing underspends of £0.074M.
29. Public Protection – is forecasting a £0.204M overspend, the majority of this £0.198M is due to overspends on staffing costs due unachievable staff cost reduction efficiency.
30. Community Safety – is forecasting a £0.099M underspend, this is due to staff vacancies.
31. Parking – is forecasting a £0.208M underspend, this is due to additional income of £0.190M, underspend on salaries of £0.064M offset by overspends on rates of £0.027M and Professional Services of £0.020M.



32. Leisure & Active Lifestyles – is forecasting to be on budget.
33. **Assets** are forecasting to £0.058M under budget.

**Regeneration and Business Support**

34. The full year projected outturn position for 2016/17 is a £0.160M underspend (£0.124M in August).

Month: September 2016	Year to date				Year				
Director	Budget	Actual	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Regeneration and Business Support</b>									
Director	436	331	-	(105)	872	779	(93)	-	(93)
Business & Investment	143	79	(8)	(72)	881	951	70	(40)	30
Planning	1,950	1,330	(31)	(651)	3,375	3,310	(65)	(32)	(97)
Programme Delivery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Regeneration and Business Support</b>	<b>2,529</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>(39)</b>	<b>(828)</b>	<b>5,128</b>	<b>5,040</b>	<b>(88)</b>	<b>(72)</b>	<b>(160)</b>

35. The Director's group is forecasting underspend of £0.093M which relates to staff salaries due to vacancies.
36. Business and Investment is forecasting an overspend of £0.030M. Within this £0.122M relates to staffing costs which are forecast to exceed budget once vacancies have been filled, £0.025M relates to professional services costs. Additional income of £0.113M with £0.045M of this to cover the European Regional Development Fund posts has helped offset the overspends.
37. Planning is forecasting an underspend of £0.097M. This relates to an £0.281M underspend on staffing costs and also additional income of £0.180M within Development Management and Building Control. These underspends are offset by overspends within Professional services of £0.294M. There are also £0.070M overspends forecast which relate to flooding risk assessments in connection with the local plan.

**Public Health**

38. Public Health's forecast outturn is to achieve a balanced budget after proposed use of reserves. The Public Health grant is currently ringfenced so any under/overspend results in a movement against the carried forward reserve from 2015/16.

Month: September 2016	Year to date				Year					
	Director	Budget	Actual	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Public Health</b>										
Director of Public Health	(6,030)	(6,148)	-	(118)	(12,060)	(12,294)	(234)	234	-	
Assistant Director of Public Health	6,050	6,289	-	239	12,100	12,502	402	(402)	-	
<b>Total Public Health (Excl overheads)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>(168)</b>	<b>-</b>	
Contribution to Central Support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Total Public Health</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>(168)</b>	<b>-</b>	

### Improvement and Corporate Services (ICS)

39. Improvement & Corporate Services is forecasting an overspend of £0.133M (£0.035M underspend in August).

Month: September 2016	Year to date				Year					
	Director	Budget	Actual	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Improvement and Corporate Services</b>										
Director Improvement and Corp Services	57	141	(63)	21	113	141	28	(63)	(35)	
SRO Strategy (inc Comms, Knowledge & Insight, Procurement & Legal Services)	1,355	1,316	-	(39)	2,709	2,563	(146)	-	(146)	
SRO Governance (inc Scrutiny, Democratic, Registration & Coroner Services)	1,103	1,167	(54)	10	2,413	2,328	(85)	85	-	
People	1,283	1,413	(200)	(70)	2,565	2,847	282	(271)	11	
SRO Customers (inc IT & Customer Services)	3,938	4,233	-	295	7,876	8,179	303	-	303	
<b>Total Improvement and Corporate Services</b>	<b>7,736</b>	<b>8,270</b>	<b>(317)</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>15,676</b>	<b>16,058</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>(249)</b>	<b>133</b>	

40. In IT there is an overspend of £0.2M. This is mainly due to contract and software expenses, recruitment of contract staff and the purchase of professional services increasing to meet the demands of the Council's Digital Transformation programme.
41. There is also an overspend of £0.103M in Customer Services mainly due to pressures on staffing.
42. There is an unachievable efficiency in Director ICS relating to merging of common functions (£0.1M).
43. Within the Coroner Services there is an overspend of £0.108M as a result of increase of mortuary fees charged from Luton & Dunstable Hospital and increase in costs resulting from the transfer in of coroner's officers from Beds Police, these pressures being CBC's share of the total additional costs.
44. These pressures have been mitigated in part by savings from Director of ICS post (£0.135M), further expected in year savings on existing Legal Services Budget (£0.131M), Local Land Charge provision for legal costs which was not required in full (£0.082M) and small savings against the Members budget (£0.022M).

## Corporate Resources and Costs

### Corporate Resources & Costs

45. Overall Corporate Resources is forecasting to be £0.7M below budget after movements to and from reserves. The £5.210M contribution to reserves relates to the New Homes Bonus and also the Redundancy reserves mentioned in the main report.

Month: September 2016	Year to date				Year					
	Director	Budget	Actual	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed (use of) / contribution to Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Corporate Resources</b>										
Chief Executive	155	150	-	(5)	311	311	-	-	-	-
Finance	2,417	2,413	-	(4)	5,177	5,177	-	-	-	-
Housing Benefit Subsidy	(298)	(298)	-	-	(597)	(597)	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Corporate Resources</b>	<b>2,274</b>	<b>2,265</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>4,891</b>	<b>4,891</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Corporate Costs</b>										
Debt Management	6,823	6,476	-	(347)	13,646	12,946	(700)	-	-	(700)
Premature Retirement Costs	1,224	1,225	-	1	2,756	2,756	-	-	-	-
Corporate Public Health Recharges	(316)	(303)	-	13	(631)	(631)	-	-	-	-
Corporate HRA Recharges	(60)	(60)	-	-	(120)	(120)	-	-	-	-
Efficiencies	(40)	(61)	-	(21)	130	130	-	-	-	-
Contingency and Reserves*	(3,474)	(5,799)	2,325	-	(4,096)	(9,277)	(5,181)	5,181	-	-
<b>Total Corporate Costs</b>	<b>4,157</b>	<b>1,478</b>	<b>2,325</b>	<b>(354)</b>	<b>11,685</b>	<b>5,804</b>	<b>(5,881)</b>	<b>5,181</b>	<b>(700)</b>	<b>(700)</b>
<b>Total Corporate</b>	<b>6,431</b>	<b>3,743</b>	<b>2,325</b>	<b>(363)</b>	<b>16,576</b>	<b>10,695</b>	<b>(5,881)</b>	<b>5,181</b>	<b>(700)</b>	<b>(700)</b>

46. The Corporate Costs underspend of £0.7M is due to lower than budgeted interest payments and also Minimum Revenue Provision following lower spend on 2015/16 Capital Programme than budgeted.

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## Appendix B – Earmarked Reserves

Description	Opening Balance 2016/17	Spent	Technical Movements	Balance before new transfers	New Proposed transfers	Proposed Closing Balance 2016/17	MEMO: Net movement after proposals
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Social Care Health and Housing Reserves</b>							
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	426			426		426	-
Winter Pressure 12/13 "Care Act"	20			20		20	-
Winter Pressure 13/14 "Care Act"	55			55		55	-
Mental Health Action Plan	60			60		60	-
Outcome Based Commissioning	2,484	(736)		1,748		1,748	(736)
Integrated Approaches	505	(140)		365		365	(140)
Better Care Fund	43			43		43	-
Support and Aspiration Grant	50			50		50	-
Welfare Reform - local welfare provision grant	112			112		112	-
Zero Base Review grant	18			18		18	-
<b>Total Social Care, Health and Housing</b>	<b>3,773</b>	<b>(876)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,897</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,897</b>	<b>(876)</b>
<b>Children's Services Reserves</b>							
Fostering & Adoption	95	(95)		(0)		(0)	(95)
Childrens Homes Co-location	-			-		-	-
<b>Partnership Reserves</b> inc Performance Reward Grant, LSP Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Assets of Community Value	<b>198</b>	<b>(30)</b>		<b>168</b>		<b>168</b>	<b>(30)</b>
<b>SEN Reserves</b> inc. Support and Aspiration Grant and Children's & Families Act	<b>185</b>	<b>(105)</b>		<b>80</b>		<b>80</b>	<b>(105)</b>
Children's Services Unspent Grant Income	403	(55)		348		348	(55)
<b>Total Children's Services</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>(285)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>(285)</b>
<b>Community Services Reserves</b>							
Leisure Centre Reinvestment Fund	179	(37)		142		142	(37)
Integrated consumer protection	116			116		116	-
Transport Fund	92	(1)		91		91	(1)
Community Safety partnership fund	94	(44)		50		50	(44)
Community Safety Grant	119			119		119	-
Bedford & Luton Resilience Forum	65			65		65	-
Financial Investigation Unit	579	(245)		334	27	361	(218)
Biggleswade wind farm	23			23		23	-
countryside access grant	23			23		23	-
Woodside connection options appraisal	39			39		39	-
Rural Payments	3			3		3	-
Sundon Landfill	421			421		421	-
Facilities Security	100			100		100	-
Street Scene Improvements	500	(500)		-		-	(500)
Community Safety	500			500		500	-
<b>Total Community Services</b>	<b>2,853</b>	<b>(827)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,026</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2,053</b>	<b>(800)</b>

**Appendix B – Earmarked Reserves (Cont)**

Description	Opening Balance 2016/17	Spent	Technical Movements	Balance before new transfers	New Proposed transfers	Proposed Closing Balance 2016/17	MEMO: Net movement after proposals
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Regeneration Reserves</b>							
Career Development framework	33			33		33	-
External Funded Regeneration reserve	270			270		270	-
Local Development Framework	327	(79)		248		248	(79)
Minerals and Waste partnership funds	104			104		104	-
NIRAH	49			49		49	-
Business growth grants	40	(40)		-		-	(40)
Flood Defence	555	(25)		530		530	(25)
Building control	327			327	72	399	72
Unauthorised Development	159			159		159	-
Neighbourhood planning grant	65			65		65	-
Food Enterprise Zone	29			29		29	-
Albion Archaeology	25			25		25	-
<b>Total Regeneration</b>	<b>1,983</b>	<b>(144)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,839</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>1,911</b>	<b>(72)</b>
<b>Public Health Reserves</b>							
Public Health Grant Reserve	1,546	(168)		1,378		1,378	(168)
Risk reserve	-			-		-	-
<b>Total Public Health</b>	<b>1,546</b>	<b>(168)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,378</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,378</b>	<b>(168)</b>
<b>Improvement and Corporate Services Reserves</b>							
Pan Public Sector Funding	28			28		28	-
Customer First	13			13		13	-
Elections Fund	132			132	90	222	90
Individual Electoral Registration	59	(59)		-	54	54	(5)
ICT Webcasting	55			55		55	-
ICS - HR Apprentices & Graduates (£0.2m held in Corporate at year end)	297	(28)		269		269	(28)
<b>Total Improvement &amp; Corporate Services</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>(87)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>57</b>

**Appendix B – Earmarked Reserves (Cont)**

Description	Opening Balance 2016/17	Spent	Technical Movements	Balance before new transfers	New Proposed transfers	Proposed Closing Balance 2016/17	MEMO: Net movement after proposals
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Finance</b>							
Housing Benefit Subsidy Audit Reserve	500			500		500	-
NNDR Discretionary Relief & NNDR Bad Debts	946			946		946	-
<b>Total Finance</b>	<b>1,446</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,446</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,446</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Corporate Reserves</b>	<b>-</b>			<b>-</b>		<b>-</b>	
Redundancy/Restructure Reserve	663	(297)		366	500	866	203
Insurance reserve	4,052			4,052		4,052	-
Welfare Reform	400	(90)		310		310	(90)
Teachers' Pensions	241			241		241	-
s31 NNDR Income to offset NNDR discounts	2,532			2,532		2,532	-
Planning Decisions Legal Challenge	300			300		300	-
Weed Spraying	93			93		93	-
Grass Cutting	77	(77)		-		-	(77)
Town Centre jet wash	27			27		27	-
Road Marking Line renewal	35			35		35	-
Rationalisation of Accommodation	243	(243)		-		-	(243)
Community resilience	500	(47)		453		453	(47)
Tackling Safety and Vulnerability	385			385		385	-
New Homes Bonus	2,055			2,055	4,681	6,736	4,681
Impact of Funding Deficits	1,200			1,200		1,200	-
Smoothing MRP payments/Financing Charges	926			926		926	-
Transformation (Invest to save, Transforming service delivery)	700			700		700	-
Transforming lives	250			250		250	-
Independent careers service	250			250		250	-
Planning enforcement	200	(20)		180		180	(20)
Business Operations	200			200		200	-
<b>Total Corporate Reserves</b>	<b>15,329</b>	<b>(774)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14,555</b>	<b>5,181</b>	<b>19,736</b>	<b>4,407</b>
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves (General Fund)</b>	<b>28,395</b>	<b>(3,161)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,234</b>	<b>5,424</b>	<b>30,658</b>	<b>2,263</b>

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## Appendix C - Debtors

- Overall debt in September is £8.0M the same as August. Of this £3.4M is less than 30 days old (£2.3M August). Debt over 61 days is £4.0M (50%). August debt was also £4.0M (50%).

Of the Over 60 days - £3.0M is actively being chased. £0.364M have instalment arrangements in place. £0.544M is being dealt with through legal channels. A further £1.3M is in respect of house Sales.

Sep-16																			
DIRECTORATE	1 to 14 Days		15 to 30 Days		31 to 60 Days		61 to 90 Days		91 to 270		271 to 365		1 year and		Total Debt		Over 61		MoM
	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	
Social Care Health & Housing	379	10%	955	24%	209	5%	284	7%	790	20%	265	7%	1,018	26%	3,900	93%	2,357	60%	237
Children's Services	204	36%	298	53%	10	2%	19	3%	24	4%	2	0%	5	1%	562	100%	50	9%	-9
Community Services	399	35%	194	17%	66	6%	37	3%	72	6%	85	7%	292	26%	1,145	93%	486	42%	25
Regeneration	212	15%	326	24%	214	16%	161	12%	138	10%	86	6%	231	17%	1,368	94%	616	45%	-399
I.C.S	55	6%	387	39%	67	7%	247	25%	71	7%	72	7%	89	9%	988	93%	479	48%	192
Finance	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	3%	12	14%	72	83%	87	86%	87	100%	-24
Public Health	8	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	8	0%	0	0%	0
Unallocated & Non Directorate	0	0%	-5	8%	-2	3%	-1	2%	-10	16%	-2	3%	-42	68%	-62	97%	-55	89%	12
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>1,257</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>2,155</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>1,088</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>1,665</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>7,996</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>4,020</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>PREVIOUS MONTH</b>	<b>713</b>		<b>1,545</b>		<b>1,755</b>		<b>843</b>		<b>1,050</b>		<b>438</b>		<b>1,655</b>		<b>7,999</b>		<b>3,986</b>	<b>50%</b>	
House Sales	5		40		43		29		239		107		885		1,348				

- The largest items of note within the total debt are:

- SCHH debt at the end of September was £3.900M of which £0.062M is HRA related (reported separately in the HRA report). Of the £3.838M General Fund debt (£3.478M for August), £1.812M is Health Service debt (£1.427M for August). Of the remaining general debt of £2.026M, £1.374M (68%) is more than 60 days old. Of this, all is under active management (with solicitors, payable by instalments etc.) with none under query or scheduled to be written off.
- Health Service debt at the end of September was £1.812M of which £0.932M or 51% is more than 60 days. All debts are under active management. A schedule of all outstanding debts is being shared and discussed regularly with the Bedfordshire CCG.
- Total debt for Children's Services is £0.562M (£0.243M in August) of which £0.050M is debt over 61 days.
- Community Services total debt is £1.145M (£0.786M in August) of which

£0.486M is debt over 61 days and is being actively pursued.

- Regeneration total debt is £1.368M (£2.466M in August) of which £0.616M is over 61 days, a reduction of £0.4M on August.
- Overall Corporate debt (ICS & Finance) is £1.075M (£1.033M in August). Of this there is £0.566M is over 61 days old.
- Public Health debt is zero.

### Write offs

#### SUMMARY Q2 July - Sept

WRITE OFF	NUMBER	VALUE
£0 - £5,000	24	£ 16,928.20
£5,000 - £10,000	0	£ -
£10,000 - £50,000	0	£ -
>£50,000	0	£ -
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>£16,928.20</b>

(of which is Legacy £0)

## Appendix D - Treasury management

### Borrowing

- As at 30 September 2016 the Council's total borrowing was £335.2M. Of this amount, £268.7M was with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), £53.0M was short-term temporary debt from other local authorities and £13.5M was market debt from banks. The table below also shows the split between the General Fund and HRA.

	<b>PWLB Fixed £M</b>	<b>PWLB Variable £M</b>	<b>Temporary Debt £M</b>	<b>Market (LOBO) £M</b>	<b>Total £M</b>
General Fund	97.0	6.7	53.0	13.5	170.2
HRA	120.0	45.0	0.0	0.0	165.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>217.0</b>	<b>51.7</b>	<b>53.0</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>335.2</b>

- To manage interest rate risk, the profile of debt is split so that overall the Council has 65% fixed rate PWLB debt, 15% variable rate PWLB debt, 16% short-term temporary debt and 4% fixed rate market (LOBO) debt; this is shown in A1 on the Treasury Management Performance Dashboard.
- Based on the latest available annual benchmark analysis conducted by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), A2 of the Dashboard shows the Council's cost of borrowing is significantly lower than the 4.4% average annual interest rate paid by other local authorities. The average annual interest rate paid by the Council was 2.8% as at 31 March 2016, which is mainly due to a higher proportion of variable rate and short-term temporary debt.
- In line with the Council's borrowing strategy, new short-term temporary borrowing was taken out during Quarter 2 at a cost of between 0.23% p.a. and 0.50% p.a. (inclusive of brokerage fees).
- The Council's underlying need to borrow as measured by its Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) was £475.8M at 31 March 2016. Given external borrowing of £353.8M (inclusive of a £15.7M PFI outstanding liability), deferred borrowing was £122.0M at 31 March 2016 using internal resources to fund the capital programme. In line with the approved treasury strategy, the Council used internal resources in lieu of borrowing to the full extent as this has continued to be the most cost effective means of funding capital expenditure. The CFR is expected to increase to £520.9M at 31 March 2017, with deferred borrowing estimated to be £110.2M (assumes £10M estimated reduction in working capital and no increase in usable reserves).

## **Investments**

6. When investing, the Council prioritises security and liquidity and aims to achieve a yield commensurate with these principles. To diversify the investment portfolio, the Council continues to invest in a range of funds such as notice accounts, call accounts and Money Market Funds as well as using a number of different financial institutions. B1 of the Dashboard shows the breakdown by investment counterparty as at 30 September 2016. It should be noted that as cash investments are maintained at minimal levels for operational purposes, the £5.2M long-term investment in the UK commercial property-based Lime Fund now represents a higher proportion of total investments even though the cash amount invested in it has not changed.
7. The latest available CIPFA Treasury Management benchmarking results are as at 30 June 2016. B2 of the Dashboard shows that the Council's average rate of return on investments was 1.6% which was higher than the benchmarked local authority average of 1.0% – this was due to the relatively high investment return on the Lime Fund (inclusive of capital appreciation).
8. In addition to the Lime Fund investment, the Council has cash deposits placed on varying interest rates ranging between 0.3% and 0.8%. The Council holds the majority of its investments in liquid form so it is available for cash flow purposes. As at 30 September 2016, the Council held cash investments of £11.4M (exclusive of the £5.2M Lime Fund investment). Of the total cash investment balance, £9.4M was held in liquid form in instant access call accounts and Money Market Funds (MMFs); and the remaining £2.0M was equally split between a notice account and a fixed term deposit which matures in October 2016.

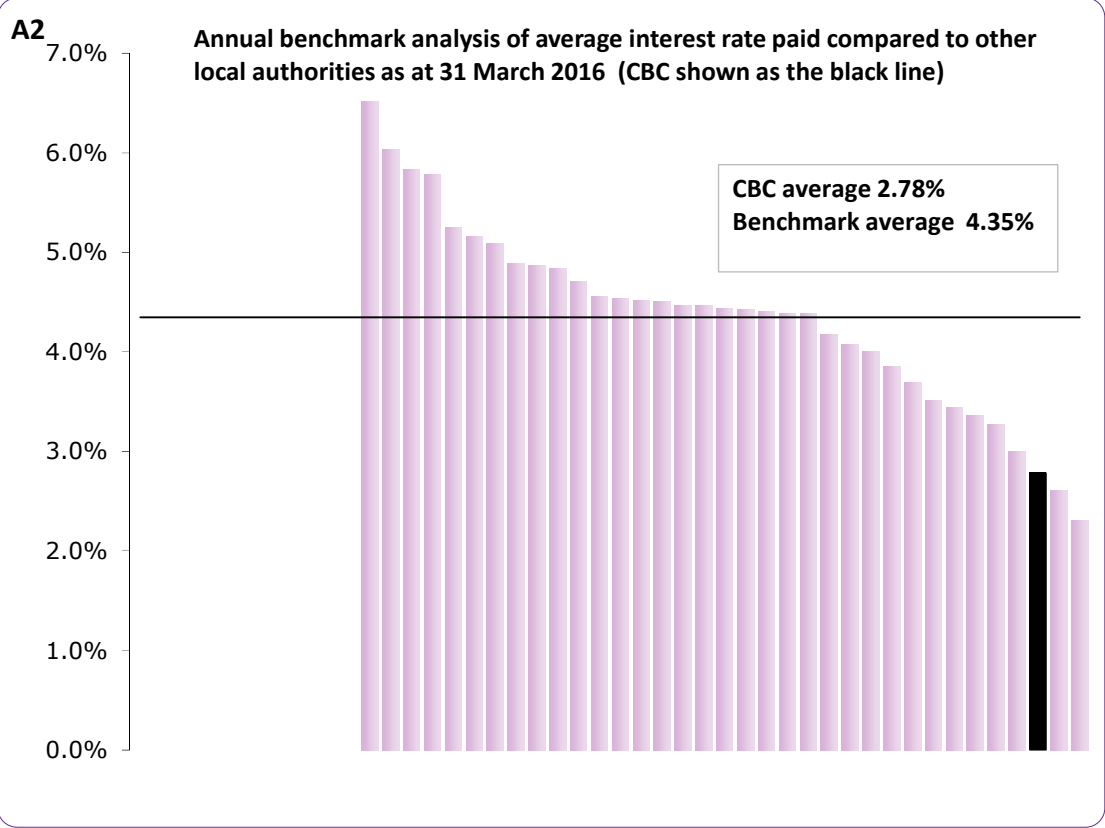
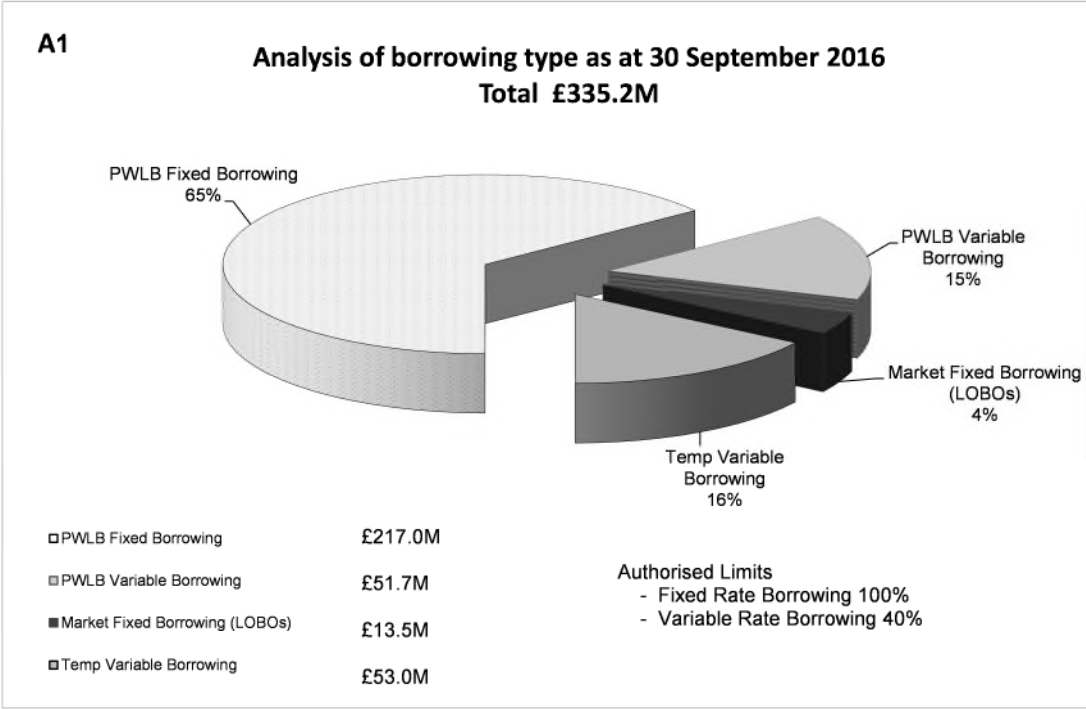
## **Cash Management**

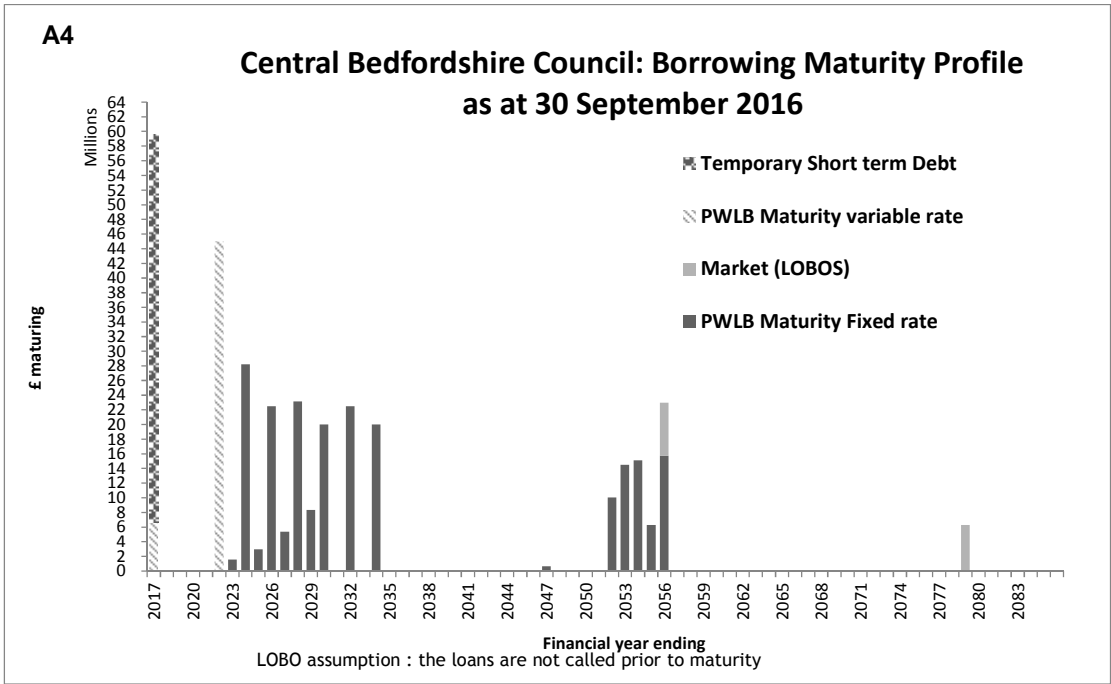
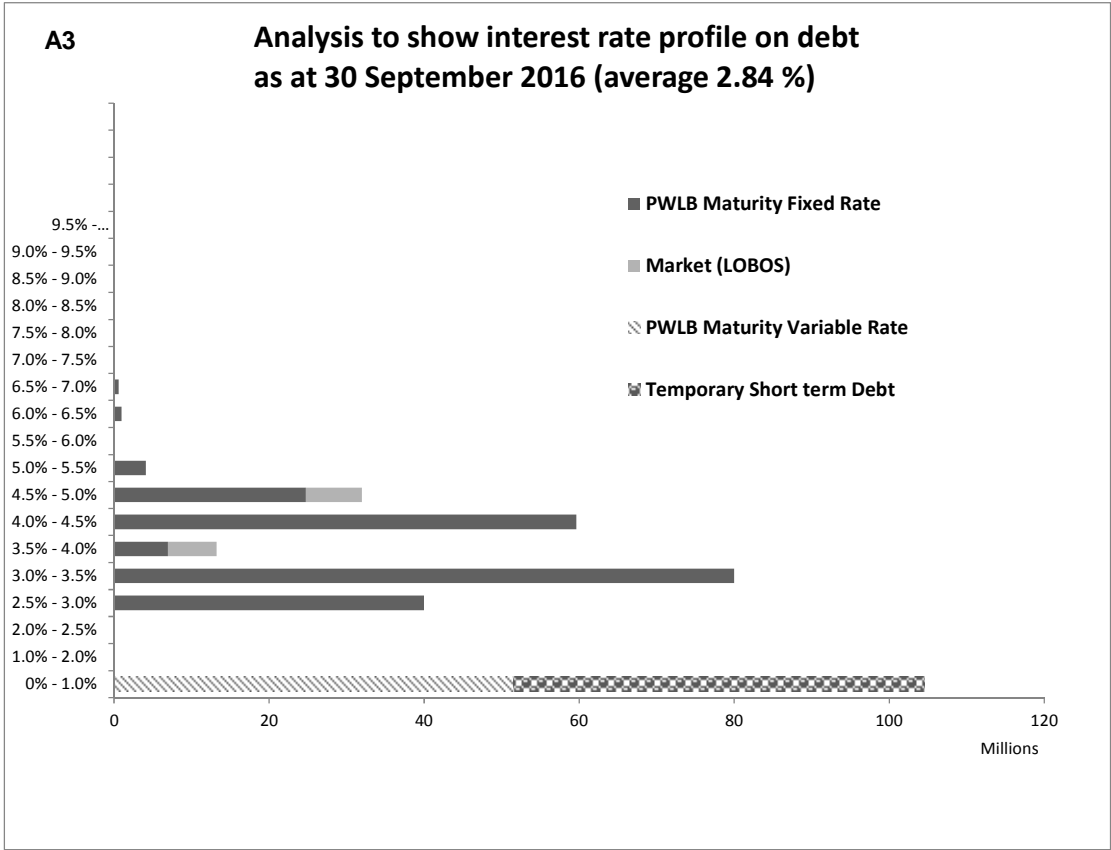
9. The average cash balance the Council holds is considerably lower than other benchmarked authorities. The 12-month rolling average cash balance as at the 30 June 2016 for the Council was £27M compared to a benchmark average of £87M. This reflects the Council's long-standing strategy of holding low cash balances to reduce investment counterparty risk and contain borrowing costs by utilising internal cash balances in lieu of external borrowing to fund capital expenditure.

## Outlook

- 10 The Council's treasury advisers, Arlingclose, do not expect the Bank of England to raise the Bank Rate from its current level of 0.25% over the next three years with risks weighted to the downside, i.e., there is a possibility of a drop to close to zero. Over the financial year, the Council plans to continue to source any borrowing requirements from other local authorities on a short-term temporary basis. The low market interest rates for temporary debt offer revenue cost savings relative to borrowing on a long-term basis from the PWLB. This borrowing strategy assumes that interest rates will continue to remain at historically low levels for the medium term.
- 11 However, the Council advised by Arlingclose will continue to monitor long-term rates with a view to fixing a portion of any borrowing requirement if rates available are viewed as favourable.
- 12 A budget underspend of £700K with a further potential upside of £50K is forecasted in 2016/17 in respect of Treasury Management activities reflecting:
  - the Bank of England Base Rate cut to 0.25% in August 2016, whereas the budget had been based on an assumption of official interest rate rises to commence in the third quarter of 2016 and an average Base Rate of 0.6% in 2016/17;
  - a budget saving arising from the clearance of early debt repayment premia costs;
  - a budget saving on the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for 2016/17;
  - Capital Programme slippage has been higher than originally assumed in the interest payable budget, leading to a lower level of overall borrowing than assumed in the 2016/17 budget; and
  - new borrowing being taken out at short-term fixed rates from other public bodies at very low rates.

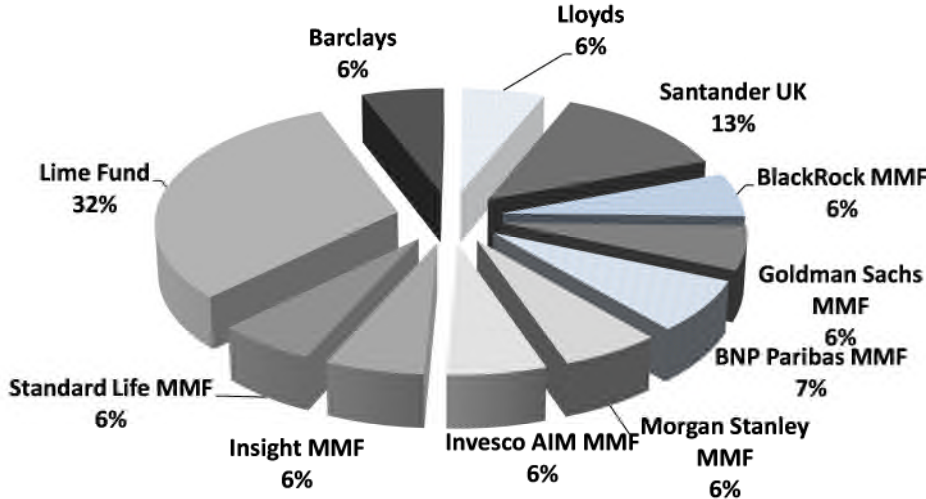
**SECTION A: DEBT INFORMATION**



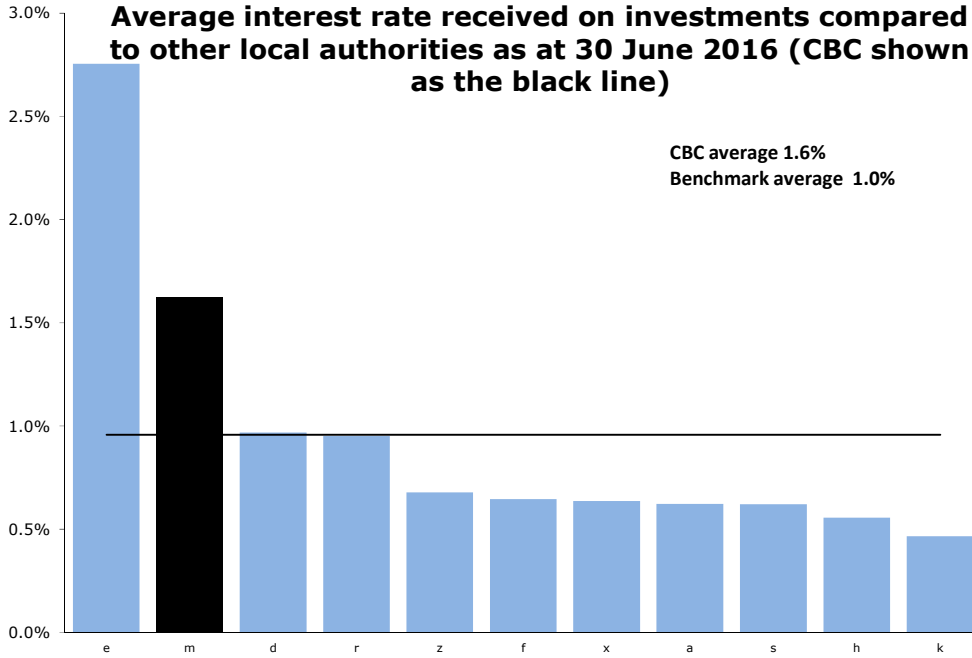


**SECTION B: INVESTMENT INFORMATION**

**B1 Analysis of investments as at 30 September 2016  
Total investments £16.6m**



**B2 Average interest rate received on investments compared to other local authorities as at 30 June 2016 (CBC shown as the black line)**





EXECUTIVE

06 December 2016

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## September 2016 Q2 Capital Budget Monitoring Provisional Outturn Report

Report of Cllr Richard Wenham, Executive Member for Corporate Resources ([cllr.richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officers: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer ([charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**This report relates to a Non Key Decision**

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### Purpose of this report

1. The report sets out the Capital projected outturn for 2016/17 as at the end of September 2016. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. Note that the approved budget excluding HRA but including deferred spend from 2015/16 is £132.6M (gross).  
The gross forecast is below budget by £17.6M, an increase of £1.2M on August (£30.2M below last year against a higher budget of £139.2M). The net forecast is £1.3M below budget (£21.5M below last year).
2. The Executive is asked to approve the budget virement below. There has been a change of scope to the Thorn Turn Waste Park in that the waste transfer element is not being pursued, so the full original budget is no longer required. However, additional costs have resulted from post contract design changes on all three Household Waste Recycling Centres and construction costs on the South Highways Depot project. The proposed budget re-alignment nets off to zero, being transfers between the schemes for the reasons set out above.

HWRC Redevelopment	110
Thorn Turn Waste Park	(1,981)
Depot - South	1,871
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

2. This report is based on the 2016/17 budget approved by Council at its 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016 meeting. The reported budget also includes deferred spend from 2015/16 which was approved by the Executive on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and a further £8M approved at Council in July 2016 for Strategic Acquisitions. The approved budget excluding HRA and including deferred spend from 2015/16 is £132.6M (gross).

**ISSUES:** None

**FINANCIAL AND OTHER OPTIONS:** These are covered in the report

3. **Forecast Outturn**

- Community Services are only forecasting £1.3M spend against the £7M budget for the A421 project until the position regarding the external funding of the remaining £6M is clearer. Luton & Dunstable Busway is currently forecast to be £3.6M under budget.
- The Woodside Link is over budget for the 2016/17 financial year, as it is ahead of schedule, however it is within the overall build cost for delivering the road. The scheme as a whole remains within gross budget.
- Thorn Turn Waste Park is currently £5.7M under budget and the North Depot and Salt barn is £3.7M under budget. It is proposed that both will be slipped into 2017/18.
- Children's Services are also expecting to spend £3.1M (net) more than the DfE allocation in January 2016 on New School Places. This is due to a combination of less than expected S106 contributions and a £2.0M reduction to the budget which was due to be mitigated through value engineering but that has not yet identified cost reductions.
- The £8M budget for new acquisitions is currently forecast to be spent. However, there are no current plans for new acquisitions, so this may become additional slippage into 2017/18.

**Year to Date**

- YTD Gross Spend is £12.4M below budget (£14.5M last year). Actual spend is £41.1M (£37.7M last year).

**Capital Receipts**

- The overall budget for Capital receipts is £10.5M. The current forecast is £10.9M. The major anticipated receipts are Fairfield c.£4.0M and c.£6.0M from Bedford Borough Council for Bell Farm and County Hall as part of the disaggregation agreement.
- To date we have received £0.802M which is the balance of £0.109M for the properties that were auctioned at the end of the last financial year and Deposits of £0.618M in respect of Stratton Phase 5 development.

- There has been a delay in the receipt for land at Ivel Rd, Sandy worth £0.230M due to an issue with Land Registry & Highways which has now been resolved and due to complete in October 2016. A deposit of £0.400M for Stratton has also been delayed due to complications in securing sufficient electricity supply capacity.

i) A summary of the position is in the table below.

Directorate	Year to Date P6			Full Year 2016/17 Gross			Year to Date P6			Full Year 2016/17 Net		
	Gross Budget £m	Gross Actual £m	Gross Variance £m	Gross Budget £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Gross Variance £m	Net Budget £m	Net Actual £m	Net Variance £m	Net Budget £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Net Variance £m
CS	14.0	14.4	0.5	21.7	24.7	3.1	0.3	2.4	2.1	1.7	4.8	3.1
Community Services	29.9	22.6	(7.3)	90.9	75.7	(15.1)	14.1	16.5	2.4	60.6	58.7	(1.9)
Improvement & Corporate Services	2.0	2.2	0.2	5.0	5.0	0.0	2.0	2.2	0.2	5.0	5.0	0.0
Corporate Resources	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Regeneration	2.8	0.4	(2.3)	5.7	3.5	(2.1)	1.7	0.4	(1.4)	3.5	1.8	(1.7)
ASCHH	4.8	1.5	(3.3)	9.4	6.1	(3.4)	2.9	0.0	(2.9)	5.0	4.2	(0.8)
Total Exc HRA	53.5	41.1	(12.4)	132.6	115.0	(17.6)	21.0	21.5	0.5	75.7	74.4	(1.3)

(Note: Any minor rounding differences are due to linking to detailed appendices)

### Reasons for decision

4. To complete schemes currently underway and facilitate effective financial management and planning.

### Council Priorities

5. Sound financial management contributes to the Council's Value for Money and enables the Council to successfully deliver its priorities. The recommendations will contribute indirectly to all 6 Council priorities.

### Corporate Implications

### Legal Implications

6. None.

### Financial Implications

7. The financial Implications are contained in the appendix to the report.

### Equalities Implications

8. Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken prior to the allocation of the 2016/17 budgets and each Directorate was advised of significant equality implications relating to their budget proposals.

**Appendices**

Appendix A – Detailed Directorate Commentary

**Appendix A - DIRECTORATE COMMENTARY**

**Social Care Health and Housing**

1. The directorate outturn forecast is under budget by £3.560M (gross) and under budget by £0.822M (net).
2. The tables below highlights the areas of spend :

<b>SCHH Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast</b>					
Scheme Categories	Gross Budget	Gross Forecast	Variance	Deferred Spend	Over / (Under) spend
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme	2,380	2,380	0	0	0
Empty Homes	302	200	(102)	110	8
Renewal Assistance	281	281	0	0	0
Additional Gypsy and Traveller Sites	1,575	88	(1,487)	1,525	38
MANOP Care Home Reprovision	2,000	2,000	0	0	0
MANOP Non-HRA Extra Care Schemes	50	50	0	0	0
NHS Campus Closure	638	121	(517)	517	0
Old Peoples Homes-Capital Repairs	0	200	200	0	200
Adult Social Care ICT Projects	280	0	(280)	280	0
BCF capital	0	732	732	0	732
Review of Accommodation/Day Support, "New Approaches to Outcome"	1,906	0	(1,906)	1,706	(200)
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,412</b>	<b>6,052</b>	<b>(3,360)</b>	<b>4,138</b>	<b>778</b>
<b>% of Budget</b>		<b>64.3%</b>			

<b>SCHH Full Year Net Budget and Forecast</b>					
Scheme Categories	Net Budget	Net Forecast	Variance	Deferred Spend	Over / (Under) spend
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme	1,712	1,712	0	0	0
Empty Homes	292	182	(110)	110	0
Renewal Assistance	181	181	0	0	0
Additional Gypsy and Traveller Sites	675	50	(625)	625	0
MANOP Care Home Reprovision	2,000	2,000	0	0	0
MANOP Non-HRA Extra Care Schemes	50	50	0	0	0
NHS Campus Closure	143	0	(143)	143	0
Old Peoples Homes-Capital Repairs	0	0	0	0	0
Adult Social Care ICT Projects	68	0	(68)	68	0
BCF capital	0	0	0	0	0
Review of Accommodation/Day Support, "New Approaches to Outcome"	(124)	0	124	(124)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,997</b>	<b>4,175</b>	<b>(822)</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>% of Budget</b>		<b>83.6%</b>			

3. **Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)**

The grants provided to residents through the DFG programme assist some of the poorer and most vulnerable members of the community. Without these grants in many cases the properties involved would be unsuitable for the needs of the occupiers who may then be unable to remain in their own homes. This also reduces pressure on health service resources and residential care, as without these improvements more residents would require emergency or longer term care solutions. In 2015/16 185 DFG cases were completed which resulted in 372 major adaptations.

Q2 2015/16 saw 173 adaptations compared to 191 this year.

4.

Type of adaptation	Total Q2 15/16	Total Q2 16/17
Level access shower/wet room	56	67
Straight stair lift	12	16
Curved stair lift	13	12
Toilet alterations	24	18
Access ramps	13	14
Dropped kerb and hard standing	2	0
Wheelchair/step lift	1	3
Through floor lift	1	3
Major extension	8	6
Kitchen alterations	2	5
Access alterations (doors etc)	26	25
Heating improvements	0	2
Garage conversions/minor additions	2	3
Safety repairs/improvements	4	5
Other	9	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>191</b>

5. Expenditure on **Empty Homes** relates to Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) and Empty Homes Loans. A number of Empty Homes loans are being considered for long term empty homes. Empty Homes Loan assistance is an alternative for owners of empty homes willing to work with the Council. There are 8 Empty Homes Loan cases at enquiry stage and 10 approved and in progress. There is one major scheme in Dunstable that might provide several units of accommodation.

6. Work has completed on one property in Houghton Regis at a cost of £0.048M. Work is in progress on one property in Leighton Buzzard. If the final EDMO is approved the total cost is expected to be tendered at around £0.084M.

7. Most **Renewals Assistance** is provided as Loan Assistance. The repayment of Loan Assistance is on change of ownership of the property that has been

improved with such assistance.

For the year to date, repayment is £0.052M allowing the Council to progress some of the cases being held on the waiting list. The net renewals budget of £0.181M includes slippage from 2015/16 of £0.031M. Current forecasts suggest an outturn on budget.

8. **Gypsy & Travellers** - A full planning application for Biggleswade South was determined and approved at the 29 June 2016 Development Management Committee meeting.

The decision was referred to DCLG and final notification of granting of planning permission was received on 20 July 2016. This approval will provide for a new Gypsy and Traveller site at Biggleswade South (12 pitches). This will be part funded by the General Fund and Housing Community Agency financial contributions.

9. The proposed scheme is now subject to a judicial review submission, made by a local resident in August. A robust defence is being prepared by the Council's legal team to block the request for a judicial review. If this is unsuccessful there will be high court hearing, which could take up to 6 months to be heard. Given this uncertainty the current forecast assumes that only contract preparation work of circa £0.050M will occur in this financial year, with a net balance of £0.625M to be deferred to 2017/18. However this position will be carefully monitored as the judicial review process progresses.
10. The **MANOP** programme includes strategic acquisitions to develop the care home market and facilitate the provision of new modern residential homes for older people. It is also expected that work will commence this year to increase the supply of extra care sites and providers.
11. The **NHS Campus Closure programme** has one potential remaining project for Central Bedfordshire. This is subject to the release of capital receipts by the NHS area team. This scheme which will be 100% externally funded.
12. The **Adult Social Care ICT** project comprises a number of schemes, the major one being the next phase of development of the Social Care case management system – the authority has now entered into a procurement process for an adult social care case management system that will be the right technology solution to better serve CBC needs both now and in the future.
13. The **Review of Accommodation/Day Support project** relates to the Older People's Care Homes Re-provision project and any capital equipment and maintenance requirements for the seven older people's home transferred to local authority management in August 2014. The current forecast includes £0.2M relating to the fabric and furniture within the homes, capital enhancements, repairs to extend the useful life of boilers and lifts.
14. **Single Capital Pot.** Additional capital grant of £0.732M has been provided in 2016/17 through the DFG route to allow authorities to invest in broader strategic capital projects allied to the Better Care Fund (BCF) plan. Capital Grant for BCF

of £0.482M has also been carried forward from 2015/16. Further work to determine the use of this funding will take place through the BCF Programme Delivery Team. At this point it is expected to be spent in 2016/17.

### Children's Services

15. The directorate outturn forecast is above budget by £3.080M (gross) and above budget by £3.111M (net).
16. The forecast expenditure outturn position for 2016/17 is £24.7M, £3.1M above the budgeted capital programme. The forecast income has reduced to £20M, requiring a net contribution of £4.76M, £3.1M above planned Council contributions for 2016/17. The increased contribution is as a result of the annual review of projects within the New School Places programme.
17. All but three projects within Children's Services; New School Places, Schools Access and Temporary Accommodation, are funded wholly by grant receipts that have no expenditure deadline.
18. The table below highlights the areas of spend :

Children's Services Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast					
Scheme Categories	Gross Budget	Gross Forecast	Variance	Deferred Spend	Over / (Under) spend
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
New School Places	18,601	18,261	(340)	0	(340)
Schools Capital Maintenance	2,000	2,268	268	0	268
Schools Devolved Formula Capital	450	450	0	0	0
Special Schools Provision	0	2,402	2,402	0	2,402
Temporary Accommodation	400	400	0	0	0
Schools Access Initiative	200	200	0	0	0
LPSA & LAA Grant payout	0	750	750	0	750
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,651</b>	<b>24,731</b>	<b>3,080</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,080</b>

% of Budget

**114.2%**

Children's Services Full Year Net Budget and Forecast					
Scheme Categories	Net Budget	Net Forecast	Variance	Deferred Spend	Over / (Under) spend
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
New School Places	1,054	4,165	3,111	0	3,111
Schools Capital Maintenance	0	0	0	0	0
Schools Devolved Formula Capital	0	0	0	0	0
Special Schools Provision	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary Accommodation	400	400	0	0	0
Schools Access Initiative	200	200	0	0	0
LPSA & LAA Grant payout	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,654</b>	<b>4,765</b>	<b>3,111</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,111</b>

% of Budget

**288.1%**



19. **New School Places (NSP)**

This programme provides the capital investment to deliver new school places required by population growth in areas of limited surplus capacity within our schools. The Council's School Organisation Plan is the evidence base that supports the commissioning of these new school places over a rolling five year period. The programme is funded by a combination of sources including Department for Education basic need grant, developer contributions and Council borrowings and capital receipts.

20. The rolling five year programme is dynamic with perpetual changes in forecasts of income and expenditure across financial years including those arising from variances in S106 totals and trigger points and in the timing and therefore cost profile of many projects.
21. In February 2016 the Council approved the programme for 2016/17 to 2019/20 with gross expenditure of:
- £18.2M (£0.7M net) in 2016/17
  - £25M (net nil) in 2017/18
  - £17.2M (net nil) in 2018/19
  - £15M (£3.4M net) in 2019/20.
22. The 2016/17 NSP programme includes expenditure on 20 separate capital projects, most of which span more than a single financial year.
23. These projects include the provision of 1,695 new lower school places, 720 new middle school places and 1,000 new upper school places as expansions to existing schools or new school sites. These places have been commissioned to serve the communities of Leighton Linlade, Fairfield, Stotfold, Arlesey, Ampthill, Flitwick, Marston, Cranfield, Biggleswade, Barton and Silsoe.
24. All of the Council's New School Places are commissioned from Ofsted Good and Outstanding schools and academies. All of these new places have been provided local to the area of demographic demand, ensuring a sense of community belonging, supporting community use and promoting sustainable modes of transport. The addition of these new places as expansions to existing schools ensures their financial and therefore educational viability. All have been briefed and designed by Council officers and school leaders to provide teaching and non teaching school facilities that are recommended by DfE guidance and complement good and outstanding teaching.
25. The forecasts of income and expenditure across 2016/17 to 2019/20 that were provided to inform the MTFP were taken from a snapshot of the programme's cashflow as at October 2015 that actually indicated gross expenditure of:
- £20.2M (£2.7M net) in 2016/17
  - £25M (net nil) in 2017/18

- £19M (£1.9M net) in 2018/19
  - £17.1M (£5.5M net) in 2019/20.
26. S106 has contributed significantly to the programme as one source of income in the past. However, S106 income will fall short of the MTFP target by £1.1M. This is due to a combination of factors that include the removal of contributions below £0.010M due to changes in the CIL regulations, the removal of a number of planning permissions that have now expired and most significantly a number of large developments that have been delayed, or have disputes over S106 contributions. Given the volatility in forecasts of S106 income the School Organisation Team will now meet each quarter with the Regeneration team and the outcome of these reviews and the impact on established forecasts within the MTFP will be reported through this capital monitoring report.
27. The revised forecast for the NSP programme for 2016/17 is gross expenditure of:
- £18.3M (£4.2M net) in 2016/17
  - £10.0M (net nil) in 2017/18
  - £12.6M (net nil) 2018/19
  - £37.5M (£15.2M net) in 2019/20.
28. A key point to note is that in 2017/18 the programme will be holding an in year unallocated balance of £15.7M and in 2018/19 it will be £13.9M. This could be utilised to offset the Council's borrowing requirements in those years.

Also, the DfE will not announce its allocation of Basic Need for 2019/20 until February 2017 at the earliest so the forecast net contribution in that year could be revised significantly.

### **Schools Capital Maintenance**

29. This rolling programme is externally funded by DfE grant but does require schools to contribute to the cost of works, as set out in a formula contained within the Central Bedfordshire Council's Scheme for Financing Schools. These contributions are invoiced once planned works are complete. The initial indications are that income from schools contributions will be circa £0.180M in 2016/17.
30. In February 2016 the DfE announced the 2016/17 allocation of school condition funding to the Council for strategic capital maintenance of its school buildings. The allocation for 2016/17 is £1.994M. In addition to the grant, £0.268M unallocated funds from 2015/16 are to be utilised, making a total confirmed budget of £2.27M for the 2016/17 Schools Capital Maintenance Programme.
31. The schools capital maintenance programme for 2016/17 is funding projects including kitchen ventilation and gas safety improvements; roof repairs, boiler

and heating replacement; emergency lighting, fire alarms, window replacements and renewal of electrical distribution boards. The 2016/17 Programme is also funding identified works at Leighton Middle School in collaboration with the new schools places programme.

32. The results of the Councils schools condition surveys in 2015 and the multi year indicative allocation of the DfE grant have enabled a three year programme of works to be developed, improving the ability to prioritise and communicate those priorities to schools for their own asset management planning.

To date, seven projects are complete and the remaining projects have progressed as programmed, with anticipated completion dates for the end of October. One project has been postponed as a result of a feasibility study. Replacement projects have been identified, approved and programmed for completion by February 2017.

**33. SEND Capital Programme (Special Schools Provision)**

The Council's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Capital Programme has been approved by Executive.

In 2016/17 this will be funding projects at Toddington St Georges Lower School and Parkfields Middle School to provide new spaces for children with hearing impairments. It is also funding the expansion of Oak Bank special school in Leighton Buzzard and also providing a new Autistic Spectrum Condition provision at Ardley Hill Academy in Dunstable.

34. The Secretary of State approved the application to capitalise the final underspend in the 2015/16 High Needs block of £0.784M in order to provide funding to expand the Academy of Central Bedfordshire on its Stotfold site and Ivel Valley Special School's primary phase, on its secondary site in Biggleswade. The forecast spend for 2016/17 is £2.4M.

**Community Services**

35. The directorate outturn forecast is below budget by £15.140M (gross) and below budget by £1.899M (net).

The table below highlights the areas of spend.

Community Services Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast					
Scheme Categories	Gross Budget	Gross Forecast	Variance	Deferred Spend	Over / (Under) spend
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Assets	18,285	18,285	0	0	0
Environmental Services	18,109	11,365	(6,744)	4,777	(1,967)
Libraries	0	0	0	0	0
Leisure	1,781	1,856	75	92	167
Transport	52,697	44,226	(8,471)	11,202	2,731
<b>Total</b>	<b>90,872</b>	<b>75,732</b>	<b>(15,140)</b>	<b>16,071</b>	<b>931</b>
<b>% of Budget</b>		<b>83.3%</b>			

<b>Community Services Full Year Net Budget and Forecast</b>					
Scheme Categories	Net Budget	Net Forecast	Variance	Deferred Spend	Over / (Under) spend
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Assets	17,362	17,362	0	0	0
Environmental Services	16,140	10,112	(6,028)	4,010	(2,018)
Libraries	0	0	0	0	0
Leisure	(1,290)	1,236	2,526	(2,526)	0
Transport	28,377	29,980	1,603	4,798	6,401
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,589</b>	<b>58,690</b>	<b>(1,899)</b>	<b>6,282</b>	<b>4,383</b>
<b>% of Budget</b>		<b>96.9%</b>			

### Assets

36. The major projects are;

- 2016/17 Corporate Property Rolling Programme (£2.135M)
- Thorn Turn Infrastructure (£2.000M)
- Stratton Park Phase 5 Infrastructure (£3.012M)
- Enhancement work for disposals (£0.972M)
- Strategic Acquisitions (£0.200M)
- Energy Efficiencies (£0.300M)
- Farm Compliance (£0.302M)
- Westbury Phase 2 Industrial Units (0.175M)

37. The full year forecast outturn is to come in on budget.

### Environmental Services

38. Environmental Services are forecasting a £6.028M variance under net budget. This is due to spend below budget £2.018M and proposed slippage of £4.010M.

39. Thorn Turn Waste park is forecasting a variance below budget of £5.706M of this £3.725M is being slipped into 2017/18 which is due to delays in the scheme going forward, the remaining £1.981M is an underspend which is being used to offset an overspend on HWRC and the South Depot within Transport.

40. CCTV is forecasting a variance of £0.185M of which £0.137M is being slipped as the project is not expected to start this year, the remainder is being utilised to offset the forecast overspend on Parking Equipment in Transport.

41. The HWRC is forecasting an overspend of £0.110M which is being offset by the underspend against Thorn Turn Waste Park.

### Major Achievements - Environmental Services (updated quarterly)

42. Sundon Landfill Restoration – Haul Road removal completed with land surrendered to land owner. Final trimming of levels and creation of footpaths

and tracks completed. Landscaping works are ongoing.

43. Waste & Recycling Containers, provision of replacement Bins & Containers – 6608 bins (both domestic and public realm) and caddies of various sizes have been replaced.
44. Thorn Turn Waste Park. Earthworks complete. Statutory undertakers engaged and the supply of utilities underway. Many of the sites features are now clearly visible. Groundworks phase now started.
45. HWRC Redevelopment – The Ampthill site has been completed and is now open and alterations were made to Biggleswade site to remove the kerb on the customer deck and install bollards for pedestrian protection. The pre-loading exercise at Leighton Buzzard is complete and construction has started.
46. Houghton Hall Park – Landscape restoration works have progressed well with the construction of the kitchen garden walls and raised beds now complete. The formal garden path layout is in place and planting has commenced in the kitchen garden area. The accessible paths around the park are now all in place and are being well used. All of the landscape works have been undertaken to a very high standard. Approval was received from the Heritage Lottery Fund at the end of September for the construction of the new visitor centre so this contract has now been awarded and works will commence on site shortly.
47. Outdoor Access & Greenspaces Improvements. Works at Southern Meadows (installation of connecting footpath and replacement bridge) are being value engineered to reduce costs. This may have an impact on delivery timelines.
48. Countryside Sites Health & Safety – Tree safety and fence works have begun now the bird nesting season has ended. Safety Surface works have been completed at Marston Thrift.

### **Leisure**

49. Leisure is forecasting a £2.526M variance over budget, this is due to the external funding of 3.037M for the old Flitwick leisure centre now not expected until the next financial year and £0.511M of slippage against Dunstable leisure centre due to reprofiling of the project as construction is not expected to start until summer 2017.

### **Major Achievements – Leisure (updated quarterly)**

50. Library & Leisure Centre Renewal Dunstable – the design is ongoing and a Building contractor has been appointed. The tender is being planned.
51. Leisure Strategy – Implementation – the Shefford play area equipment was replaced following arson attack. Supply and fit a hammer/throwing cage for Sandy Athletics Track.

### **Transport**

52. Transport is forecasting a £1.603M net variance over budget. This is due to an overspend of £6.401M and £4.798M of net expenditure being slipped to the

next financial year.

- Woodside Link are forecasting £2.826M over budget which relates to an in year overspend which we will be seeking formal approval to bring forward budget from 2017/18.
- Luton and Dunstable Busway is forecasting slippage of £3.695M into 2017/18. A board meeting is due in February 2017 which is when final figures for the project should be known.
- South depot is forecasting a £1.871M overspend this is being funded by the underspend within Environmental Services on the Thorn Turn Waste Park project.
- North Depot is forecasting to slip £3.673M as the bulk of the work is not expected to start until the next financial year.
- Stratton Street Railway Bridge is forecasting a £0.836M overspend which was covered in a report to Executive in October.
- Parking Equipment is forecasting a £0.147M overspend which is offset by underspends within Environmental Services.
- Leighton Buzzard Interchange is forecasting an underspend of £0.151M
- Biggleswade Transport Interchange is forecasting slippage of £0.236M into 2017/18

### **Major Achievements – Transport (updated quarterly)**

53. Woodside Link – Earthworks are substantially completed, surfacing operations are ongoing and street lights are being erected. The roundabouts at Sundon Road and Porz Avenue are both partially open. The scheme is on track for a completion prior to Christmas.
54. Stratton Street Railway Bridge – The bridge deck has been replaced and the bridge is open to traffic. Temporary barriers remain in place as the final work required on the parapets has yet to be completed.
55. Structural Maintenance – 37 carriageway resurfacing schemes have been completed covering 36.74 kms and 7 footway resurfacing schemes completed covering 1.97 kms.
56. Southern Highways Depot (Thorn Turn) – During financial year 2016/17 funds have enabled the continuation of the Earthworks phase and the ongoing discharge of planning conditions. There has also been significant testing on the fill material to ensure suitability for build. Land drains have been created to divert surface and ground water away from the site and into adjacent water courses. Capping layer now installed. Earthworks complete. Statutory undertakers engaged and the supply of utilities underway. Many of the sites features are now clearly visible. To date, £9K has been spent on staff costs.

This includes time spent by the Quantity Surveyor in achieving a satisfactory contract price and terms. The contract has now been sealed by CBC, allowing subcontractors to be procured. Groundworks phase now started.

57. Northern Highways Depot (Sandy) – Concept Feasibility Addendum 4c Design Approved by Board. Pre Construction Service Agreement for a Design and Build Solution of Depot issued circa £174K to Morgan Sindell. Depot Layout Value Engineering brought back "in house" optimism efficiency to deliver project within Detailed Business Case. Salt storage capacity agreed at 3500 Tonnes. Budget set aside circa £650K for Highways Team to deliver Access Road via direct management of Ringway Jacobs. Project Reprofiled in SAP to reflect agreed movement in completion date.
58. M1 to A6 Link Road – A decision is awaited on funding for the M1-A6 Relief Road from the Local Growth Fund round 3 (LGF3). Ministers are expected to make an announcement for this in the Autumn statement on the 23 November 2016.
59. A421 – Funding: The Department for Transport (DfT) have agreed to pay £1M (2016/17) front funded development costs. Work on the Transport Business Case, to release the remaining £21.5M from DfT, is ongoing with our consultants in dialogue with DfT to get the model accepted and economic case approved.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed by CBC/Milton Keynes Council (MKC) to provide £3M each towards the total project cost estimated currently £29.134M

Land: negotiations are progressing with landowners, via an external agent acting on CBC's behalf, to secure land required for the project, a twin track approach via Compulsory Purchase Orders is currently under consideration. MKC are negotiating with land owners within MKC,

60. Fleet Replacement Programme – We have purchased two diggers for Environmental services and the tenders are out for vehicles for Community Safety, Fleet Services and Libraries.

### **Regeneration & Business Support**

61. The directorate outturn forecast is under budget by £2.132M (gross) and under budget by £1.679M (net).
62. The table below highlights the areas of spend :

<b>Regeneration &amp; Business Support Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast</b>					
Scheme Categories	Gross Budget	Gross Forecast	Variance	Deferred Spend	Over / (Under) spend
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Broadband	1,946	1,422	(524)	(524)	0
Market Towns Programme	1,068	1,100	32	(32)	0
Land Drainage Work Flood Defence (includes Non-Highways)	140	140	0	0	0
Development Site Promotion (Strategic Infrastructure Investment)	140	0	(140)	0	(140)
Dunstable highway De-Trunking and Redevelopment	250	100	(150)	150	0
Digitising Aerial Photographs	123	123	0	0	0
Flitwick transport Interchange	300	0	(300)	300	0
Flitwick Station Area Car Park	1,131	81	(1,050)	1,050	0
Development (includes Flitwick Land Purchase Further Land Assembly for the Town Centre Regeneration Scheme)					
Cranfield Technology Park Acceleration	100	100	0	0	0
Dunstable Town Centre Regeneration Phase 2	449	449	0	0	0
Rolling Social & Community Infrastructure Fund	0	0	0	0	0
Historic Building Grant Aid Scheme	8	8	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,655</b>	<b>3,523</b>	<b>(2,132)</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>(140)</b>
<b>% of Budget</b>		<b>62.3%</b>			

<b>Regeneration &amp; Business Support Full Year Net Budget and Forecast</b>					
Scheme Categories	Net Budget	Net Forecast	Variance	Deferred Spend	Over / (Under) spend
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Broadband	237	(51)	(288)	288	0
Market Towns Programme	1,068	1,068	0	0	0
Land Drainage Work Flood Defence (includes Non-Highways)	120	120	0	0	0
Development Site Promotion (Strategic Infrastructure Investment)	140	0	(140)	0	(140)
Dunstable highway De-Trunking and Redevelopment	0	0	0	0	0
Digitising Aerial Photographs	123	123	0	0	0
Flitwick transport Interchange	200	0	(200)	200	0
Flitwick Station Area Car Park	1,131	81	(1,050)	1,050	0
Development (includes Flitwick Land Purchase Further Land Assembly for the Town Centre Regeneration Scheme)					
Cranfield Technology Park Acceleration	0	0	0	0	0
Dunstable Town Centre Regeneration Phase 2	449	449	0	0	0
Rolling Social & Community Infrastructure Fund	1	0	(1)	0	(1)
Historic Building Grant Aid Scheme	8	8	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,477</b>	<b>1,798</b>	<b>(1,679)</b>	<b>1,538</b>	<b>(141)</b>
<b>% of Budget</b>		<b>51.7%</b>			



63. The net underspend relates mainly to the Flitwick station area car park £1.05M where options for delivering a commercial and residential scheme are currently being developed; the Flitwick transport interchange £0.200M which is being developed alongside the Station Area Car Park and the current broadband scheme of £0.288M.

**Major Achievements (updated Quarterly)**

64. Dunstable Town Centre Regeneration Phase 2 – The final Dorchester Close property was acquired on 22nd June 2016 and the complete Dorchester Close land and premises is now in the control of CBC.
65. Cranfield Technology Park Acceleration – Negotiations to acquire two pieces of land in Cranfield to enable highway improvements to be carried out are progressing well with one site agreed and with Legal Services.
66. Broadband – The second BDUK project has now commenced. This will support 8,247 premises in Central Bedfordshire to receive superfast services, taking us to 96.5% superfast coverage by 2018/19. As part of this, four new cabinets have been upgraded enabling 427 premises to receive superfast broadband services.

When combined with the BDUK 1 projects this now means 16,672 premises have been supported by the Council.

When considering the wider Central Superfast second project (covering Luton Milton Keynes and Bedford a total 13 cabinets have been enabled supporting with 1015 premises.

A national pilot testing new forms of delivery of Fibre to the Premise (offering speeds over 300 Megabits per second) has been completed in Campton and Meppershall, connecting over 200 premises..

67. Market Towns Regeneration Fund – A total of 7 bids from Ampthill, Dunstable, Flitwick, Leighton Linlade, Sandy and Shefford Town Council are progressing in the MTRF programme.

Houghton Regis declined to continue in August. Business Cases are in the final stages of sign off, and then the Grant Agreements for each of the town councils will be signed and returned.

These agreements will include an updated schedule for delivery/financial milestones, and a Measuring Success schedule to monitor impact. The town councils have started to get quotes and advice for their deliverables, including initial Highways conversations for Sandy, Flitwick, Shefford, and also Potton with our Planning Team for their new car park.

68. High Street Improvement Scheme – With the exception of Arlesey and Houghton Regis, all Town Councils confirmed they will be participating by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU lays out their roles in the process and the terms of engagement. The first round for businesses to apply for the fund (via an Expression of Interest form) was 1st September 2016. A local panel for each town met, and the applicants scoring above 75%

in this process have been invited to submit a full application for funding.

The first round attracted 24 Expression of Interest forms, with 15 businesses moving on to the next stage of full application.

There will be two further dates for applying on the 1st November 2016 (round two) and 1st February 2017 (round three).

### **Improvement & Corporate Services**

69. The gross and net budget for ICS is £5.011M. The forecast outturn position is on budget.

The table below highlights the areas of spend :

<b>Improvement &amp; Corporate Services Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast</b>					
<b>Scheme Categories</b>	<b>Gross/Net Budget</b>	<b>Gross/Net Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Deferred Spend</b>	<b>Over / (Under) spend</b>
	<b>£k</b>	<b>£k</b>	<b>£k</b>	<b>£k</b>	<b>£k</b>
Information Assets	4,523	4,523	0	0	0
Other	488	488	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,011</b>	<b>5,011</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>% of Budget</b>		<b>100.0%</b>			

(Note gross and Net are the same as all internally funded)

70. The budget includes £3.5M of funding for new 2016/17 schemes and deferred expenditure of £1.511M from previous years. There is £4.523M of budget allocated to Information Technology (IT) projects.
71. There are three major projects which are Digitisation (£2.0M), ICT Strategic Investment (£1.695M) & IT Infrastructure Rolling Programme (£0.828M). All are forecasting to achieve budget.
72. The Working Smarter project is forecast to achieve budget.

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

6 December 2016

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## September Q2 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring

Report of **Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing** ([cllr.carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)) and **Cllr Richard Wenham, Executive Member for Corporate Resources** ([cllr.richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officers: **Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing** ([julie.ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:julie.ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)) and **Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer** ([charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**This report relates to a Non Key Decision.**

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### Purpose of this report

1. The report provides information on the 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projected outturn revenue and capital position as at September 2016.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to note and approve:

1. **That the Revenue forecast position is to achieve a balanced budget with a contribution to HRA Reserves of £6.075M, thus strengthening the Council's ability to invest and improve its stock of Council Houses.**
2. **That the Capital forecast position indicates a net outturn of £11.620M, against a budget of £15.589M. It is proposed that £2.184M of future investment works are deferred to 2017/18.**
3. **That £1.2M of the budget allocated to the Croft Green project in 2016/17 is vired to enable the purchase of further properties throughout the Council area; in order to avoid temporary accommodation costs.**
4. **That RtB sales will be monitored for the possible impact on predicted surpluses in the medium to longer term.**

### Issues

2. The revenue forecast position as at the end of September 2016 projects a year end surplus of £6.075M compared to a budgeted surplus of £5.363M, an increase of £0.712M.

3. There is a forecast of reduced expenditure within Maintenance (£0.456M), due to a combination of procurement and contract efficiencies, and an under spend in Housing Operations (£0.193M), due to reduced spend on electronic file management, stock analysis and savings from tenancy sustainment, resulting in lower costs. The forecast under spend in the Financial Inclusion service (£0.116M) is due to reduced spend on downsizing and the slower than anticipated roll out of Universal Credit.
4. The forecast position for the HRA capital programme indicates a net outturn below budget at £11.620M; this includes deferred works of £4.280M from 2015/16. It is proposed that £2.184M of future investment works are deferred to 2017/18, whilst Executive approval is sought to vire £1.2M of the budget currently allocated to the Croft Green project to enable the continuing purchase of properties which will be used to mitigate demand for temporary accommodation, and therefore save expenditure in the General Fund.
5. The £1.2M is still required for the Croft Green project, and this will be reflected in the HRA's forthcoming MTFP report and Business Case supporting the HRA's Future Investment programme. The HRA's Business Plan can accommodate this additional expenditure due to in year revenue savings, a windfall from the reduction in interest rates, and efficiency savings achieved in relation to the Maintenance programme.
6. The additional properties acquired will mainly be occupied as HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation), by single person households aged under 35 years; and also to be used as supported housing for vulnerable persons, as part of the Independent Living offer. The strategic approach is to create 'System Resilience', which will enable the Council to avoid the high level of costs relating to temporary accommodation that is being seen in other local authority areas. As part of the approach, the Housing Service is creating an Intensive Property Management Team (within the HRA) that will manage all of the properties and rooms that are used for Supported/Temporary Accommodation on a hotel style basis, in part to maximise income; but more importantly, to avoid cost to the General Fund at the level seen in neighbouring local authorities.
7. The 2016/17 budget for the HRA anticipates a contribution to the Independent Living Development Reserve (ILDR) of £5.2M and contribution to the strategic reserve of £0.163M. The year end forecast suggests a contribution to reserves of £6.075M, an increase of £0.712M, with a contribution of £6.075M to the ILDR. This equates to a predicted total reserve balance of £23.028M (not including the proposed additional expenditure on new homes).

### **Council Priorities**

8. Sound financial management contributes to the Council's Value for Money and enables the Council to successfully deliver its priorities. The recommendations will contribute indirectly to all 6 Council priorities.

### **Corporate Implications**

9. None

### **Legal Implications**

10. None

### **Financial Implications**

11. The financial implications are contained in the report.

### **Equalities Implications**

12. Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken prior to the allocation of the 2016/17 budgets and each Directorate was advised of significant equality implications relating to their budget proposals.

### **Conclusion and next Steps**

13. The report presents the 2016/17 HRA financial position as at the end of September 2016. It sets out spend to date against the profiled revenue and capital budgets, the forecast financial outturn, and provides explanations for any variations. This report enables the Executive to consider the overall financial position of the HRA.

### **Appendices**

**Appendix A – Housing Revenue Account Detailed Commentary**

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**APPENDIX A**

**HRA REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)**

1. The HRA annual expenditure budget is £23.561M and income budget is £28.924M, which allows a contribution of £5.363M to reserves to present a net budget of zero.
2. As a result of a restructure within the Housing Service, the Asset Management service has being split to create a new team called the Housing Investment Team. Capital related works are now managed within Housing Investment whilst the management and maintenance of properties and tenants, forms the Housing Operations Team. A subjective breakdown of budget, year to date position and forecast outturn is shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

	2016/17 Budget	Budget YTD	Actual YTD	Variance YTD	Full Year Forecast	Variance Full Year Forecast to Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>Total Income</b>	(28.924)	(14.473)	(14.378)	0.095	(28.815)	0.109
Housing Operations	6.851	3.439	3.305	(0.134)	6.658	(0.193)
Financial Inclusion	0.596	0.298	0.193	(0.105)	0.480	(0.116)
Housing Investment	0.107	0.054	0.027	(0.027)	0.147	0.040
Corporate Resources	2.047	1.021	1.021	0	2.043	(0.004)
Maintenance	5.506	2.606	2.280	(0.326)	5.050	(0.456)
Debt related costs	0.119	0.059	0.059	0	0.119	0
Direct Revenue Financing	5.121	2.561	2.561	0	5.121	0
Efficiency Programme	(0.853)	(0.427)	(0.427)	0	(0.853)	0
Interest repayment	4.067	2.033	1.987	(0.046)	3.975	(0.092)
Principal repayment	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL Expenditure</b>	23.561	11.644	11.006	(0.638)	22.740	(0.821)
Surplus	(5.363)	(2.829)	^(3.372)	(0.543)	(6.075)	(0.712)
Contribution to / (from) reserve (at year end)	5.363	2.829	^3.372	0.543	6.075	0.712
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
^ Included for balancing and illustrative purposes only						

3. Income received in the year to date is £0.095M behind profile, with a full year forecast adverse variance of £0.109M. As part of the General Fund's efficiencies for 2016-17 it was agreed that a reduced Supported Housing contribution to the HRA would be made, saving the General Fund £0.150M. The Housing Service set itself the target of balancing this pressure within the HRA by achieving an efficiency of the same value. Work is underway to explore new charging methods for the Supported Housing service provided by HRA staff. Savings are not likely to fully materialise in this financial year resulting in a forecast reduction in income, and under achievement of this efficiency of £0.116M.
4. The Housing Operations Team is under spent in the year to date by £0.134M, with a full year forecast under spend of £0.193M. The project to transfer information on to an electronic file management system completed earlier than expected, saving £0.084M. There have also been efficiency savings achieved in relation to tenancy sustainment work, resulting in an under spend of £0.034M. Reduced spend on stock analysis work is also predicted, leading to a forecast under spend of £0.070M.
5. The Financial Inclusion service is forecast to deliver an under spend of £0.116M. The roll out of Universal Credit has been slower than anticipated, so additional provision made in the budget build has not been required. In addition the Council has not spent as much enabling people to Rightsize to new homes, or incentivising tenants to move, as it did in the early years of the welfare reform, when more tenants were subject to the Spare Room Subsidy.
6. Maintenance expenditure is forecast to outturn at £5.050M compared to a budget of £5.506M, delivering a saving of £0.456M. The reprocurement of the Central Heating Maintenance Contract including domestic and commercial appliances has led to an expected outturn of £0.6M, providing a positive variance of £0.125M. Fire Safety works are forecast to outturn at £0.185M yielding a saving of £0.082M from controls introduced in previous years.
7. Placing more specialist maintenance work through the electrical and day to day contractors has resulted in a full year forecast positive variance of £0.029M. Working closely with the routine maintenance contractor to reduce the number of maintenance visits to each property will provide a further saving of £0.217M against the full years forecast. Overall, good progress is being made and the efficiency savings being achieved will feature within the HRA Efficiency programme for 2017/20, with a view to creating a new Repairs Delivery model by bringing together several contracts and considering a range of delivery options.
8. The starting point is to implement a 'self serve' customer interface using First Touch apps aligned to 'end to end' system integration between contractor and Council systems, all of which is in progress. By 2018, the aim is to create a Repairs Delivery model that is better able to respond to the problems within the labour market, so as to retain a sustainable, skilled workforce, in terms of repair and maintenance type operations. The project is therefore 'two stage'; to create a lean, fit for purpose, mainly self service, customer interface across all repairs type operations; aligned to the creation of a sustainable model to



deliver high quality repairs and servicing in tenants and leaseholders homes.

### HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

9. The HRA Capital budget is £15.589M which includes slippage from 2015/16 of £4.280M. Across the HRA Capital Programme there is a year to date positive variance of £0.521M.
10. The full year forecast within the Stock Protection projects is for an outturn of £6.871M, a positive variance of £0.272M. Projects relating to Future Investment are forecast to outturn at £4.749M, an under spend of £3.697M.
11. An analysis of forecast spend, and variance to year to date profile, for each HRA scheme is presented at Table 2. The proposed funding of the programme is shown at Table 3.

**Table 2**

	Budget 2016/17	Full Year Forecast	Variance	Monthly Budget Monitoring September 2016		
				Profiled YTD	Actual YTD	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Stock Protection</b>						
General Enhancements	100	100	0	50	87	37
Lift Replacement	100	108	8	0	2	2
Fire Safety & Alarm Systems	194	194	0	97	54	(43)
Garage Refurbishment	109	109	0	27	3	(25)
Paths & Fences siteworks	110	110	0	55	21	(34)
Estate Improvements	200	260	60	24	28	4
Green Space Improvement	60	0	(60)	0	0	0
Energy Conservation	750	750	0	150	224	74
Roof Replacement	550	550	0	437	412	(25)
Assisted Living Technology	65	0	(65)	0	0	0
Central Heating Installation	710	710	0	355	351	(4)
Rewiring	565	465	(100)	282	218	(65)
Kitchens and Bathrooms	900	900	0	126	90	(36)
Central Heating communal	25	25	0	12	1	(12)
Door Replacement	292	292	0	146	109	(37)
Structural repairs	250	175	(75)	125	23	(102)
Aids and adaptations	450	450	0	225	190	(35)
Drainage and Water Supply	35	45	10	18	45	28
Capitalised salaries	500	500	0	250	250	(0)
Asbestos management	360	310	(50)	180	129	(51)
Communal/PIR Lighting	660	660	0	285	278	(7)
Targeted door Replacement	20	20	0	20	45	25
Window Replacement	138	138	0	0	0	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>7,143</b>	<b>6,871</b>	<b>(272)</b>	<b>2,865</b>	<b>2,559</b>	<b>(306)</b>

	Budget 2016/17	Full Year Forecast	Variance	Monthly Budget Monitoring September 2016		
				Profiled YTD	Actual YTD	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Future Investment</b>						
Stock remodelling	130	130	0	65	105	40
Parking Schemes	125	125	0	0	(1)	(1)
Investment Panel Programme	69	69	0	0	0	0
Houghton Regis Central	295	295	0	118	210	92
Garage Site Assembly	229	100	(129)	93	9	(84)
Garage Site Development	318	130	(188)	162	31	(131)
Croft Green	3,639	384	(3,255)	46	2	(44)
Sheltered Refurbishment	400	400	0	0	(2)	(2)
New Homes	2,110	2,110	0	1,056	1,796	740
Major Renewal Schemes	125	0	(125)	60	0	(60)
Priory View	1,006	1,006	0	504	(260)	(764)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>8,446</b>	<b>4,749</b>	<b>(3,697)</b>	<b>2,104</b>	<b>1,889</b>	<b>(215)</b>
<b>TOTAL HRA</b>	<b>15,589</b>	<b>11,620</b>	<b>(3,969)</b>	<b>4,969</b>	<b>4,448</b>	<b>(521)</b>

**Table 3**

**Proposed Funding of HRA Capital Programme**

Source	£'000
Revenue Contributions	5,121
Useable Capital Receipts	4,000
Independent Living Development Reserve	1,301
Strategic Reserve	1,198
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,620</b>

**STOCK PROTECTION**

12. Within Stock Protection there is a year to date underspend of £0.306M; this is primarily due to out of profile expenditure relating to Structural Repairs (£0.102M), Rewiring (£0.065M), Asbestos Management (£0.051M) and other minor under spends. Full year under spends are forecast for the Rewiring programme (£0.100M), Structural Repairs (£0.075M), Assisted Living Technology (£0.065M), and Asbestos Management (£0.050M).
  
13. Savings have been made during the year by undertaking partial rewires and repairs to installations in order to bring the installation up to standard and increase the life of the installation rather than undertaking full rewires. A decision was made to replace existing technology and door entry systems only on failure, while we review the "offer" from the Council in relation to Assisted Living Technology (Telecare).
  
14. While Asbestos and Structural works are both capital expenditures, they

are not based upon a planned programme and therefore expenditure is called off when works of this nature are required. To date, this year has seen a significant reduction in the need for these type of works compared to previous years.

## **FUTURE INVESTMENT**

15. Major construction work at the Croft Green Development is forecast to commence in late 2016/17 with completion forecast for the spring of 2018. A preferred bidder has been identified and the decision to award Part A of the contract was taken at the June 2016 Executive. The contractor has now been appointed to progress the Part A works. When complete, the development will provide 24 self-contained apartments and communal facilities. Current forecasts suggest that, from a budget of £3.639M, an outturn of £0.384M will occur with the balance being deferred to 2017/18.
16. The combined Garage Site Development/Assembly programmes have identified 30 sites that have the potential to deliver 123 new homes of mixed type and tenure. The budget will be used to progress land and garage buy-backs and planning consent on those sites. A financial business case for alternative uses will be prepared for consideration as part of the scheme development. Current forecasts suggest an outturn of £0.230M with proposed slippage of £0.129M to 2017/18.
17. The Housing Service has worked with colleagues in other areas of the Council to identify land that is suitable for housing and within the Council's ownership. The objective is to extend the supply of affordable housing throughout the authority area, rather than just in the south of the area. Land with the potential to deliver 2 units, previously owned by Corporate Assets, has been identified at Havelock Road, Biggleswade. Corporate Assets have claimed the Capital Receipt for the agreed land value of £75,000 that has been paid by the Housing Service. A planning application has been submitted in September 2016 for two new semi detached properties
18. The purchase of dwellings within the New Homes North Central Beds project is progressing ahead of profile with the completion in the current year of 6 properties. These properties will be used to help address the demand for Temporary Accommodation and supported accommodation. By creating additional tenancies in the HRA, the cost to the Council of supplying emergency accommodation is significantly reduced as the rent falls within Housing Benefit levels, compared to expensive Bed and Breakfast or 'Nightly Lets' accommodation where the Council has to bridge the cap between the rent and the amount that Housing Benefit will fund.
19. To date £1.796M has been spent against a total budget of £2.110M. Given the savings delivered to the Council's General Fund (GF) by purchasing these properties, it is proposed that £1.2M of the budget allocated to the Croft Green project in 2016/17 is vired to enable the purchase of further properties throughout the Council area. This will

enhance the asset base of the HRA, offset the increase in Right to Buy sales (please see the section on HRA Capital Receipts), and reduce revenue expenditure in the GF.

20. The Priory View development achieved practical completion on 22 April 2016. The Council's employer's agent (Arcadis) recommended withholding monies from the contractor relating to outstanding snagging works, resulting in a year to date underspend of £0.764M. Some of the snagging and non compliant works are still outstanding, and a final account is pending from the main contractor. Works to the value of £1.006M were deferred from 2015/16 and are forecast to outturn on budget. The contractor has not yet submitted a final account.

### HRA EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME

21. Since 2010 the Housing Service has been using Housemark to provide a benchmarking service. The analysis provided has assisted in identifying the areas where HRA expenditure is high relative to other stock retained authorities. Benchmarking has indicated, for example, that we should review the Repairs Delivery model, the result of which has been the achievement of 'in year' savings and further proposals within the HRA Efficiency programme going forward.
22. The HRA revenue budget for 2016/17 was reduced by £0.853M, as part of the Council's efficiency programme.
23. This year's HRA efficiency target comprises mainly of reduced Day to Day and Void maintenance costs (£0.680M). The overall efficiency target for 2016/17 is forecast to be fully achieved.

### HRA ARREARS.

24. Table 4 shows a breakdown of the HRA debt position at September.

**Table 4**

<b>Debt Analysis - Tenant Arrears</b>						
Description of debt	0-4 weeks	4-8 weeks	8-13 weeks	13-52 weeks	Over 1 yr	TOTAL
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
Current Tenant	0.167	0.146	0.090	0.075	0	0.478
Former Tenant	0.011	0.012	0.013	0.109	0.537	0.682
						<b>1.160</b>
<b>Debt Analysis - Other Arrears</b>						
Description of debt	From 1 to 30 days	From 31 to 60 days	From 61 to 90 days	From 91 to 365 days	Over 1 yr	TOTAL
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
Leaseholders	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.003	0.004
Shops	0.011	0.000	0.000	0.007	0.010	0.028
Void recoveries	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.007	0.019	0.026
Misc recoveries	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.002	0.004
	<b>0.011</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.017</b>	<b>0.034</b>	<b>0.062</b>

25. Total tenant debt amounted to £1.160M compared to £0.907M at the end of August 2016. Current Tenant Arrears (CTA) are £0.478M or 1.53% (£0.413M or 1.32% at August) of the annual rent debit of £31.328M, against a target of 1.8%, whilst Former Tenant Arrears (FTA) are at 2.18% with a balance of £0.682M against a target of 1% (1.59% with a balance of £0.494M at August). £0.029M of tenant debt was written off in the financial year to September. Housing Benefit payments account for 55% of the rent and service charge income received.
26. In light of welfare reform housing management have implemented a proactive approach to managing the impact on rent arrears. This includes early intervention, downsizing where necessary, increased contact with our residents, supporting tenants in making the right decisions regarding payment of rent and strong enforcement action when all other options have been exhausted.
27. Contacts with other Registered Providers of social housing have enabled us to benchmark, research good practice, and ensure genuine unrecoverable debts are presented for write off quarterly. This ensures the FTA officer is concentrating their time on cases with the highest probability of recovery. Since 2015 recovery of FTA debt has taken on a completely different approach from previous years as research has shown that the probability of recovery can actually increase with the age of the debt. For example, if a family is evicted from one of our properties it can take between 3 to 12 months for the family to resettle, enabling a trace to be made and thus the debt can be pursued.
28. Debt recovery plans may be put in place and take several years to settle. An affordable payment plan reviewed on a regular basis increases the probability of full recovery. Where contact is maintained, debt can be recovered up to 6 years after becoming an FTA, however where a period of 2 to 3 years has elapsed and no contact or trace has been possible the debt will be put forward for write off.
29. The current approach to FTA debt has resulted in recovery in the previous year exceeding £0.130M, compared to the previous two years total recovery not exceeding £0.020M. The service is confident with the current approach and anticipates further improvements in recovery rates.
30. There are currently £0.062M of non tenant arrears (£0.052M August), which comprises the following: rents at shops owned by the HRA, service charges and ground rent relating to leaseholders who purchased flats via the Right to Buy scheme, and property damage relating to existing and former tenants.

#### **PROMPT PAYMENT INDICATOR**

31. The performance target for payment to suppliers, where there is no dispute over the amount invoiced, is 90% of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt date. The HRA performance for September was 70% of 281 invoices paid on time. Work is ongoing to create 'end to end' system integration between SAP and the QL system, so as to improve performance overall. There is known as the Self Billing project, the aim being to automate (or

minimise manual processes) to pay our invoices. This project is progressing well and will significantly improve timescales for making payment.

32. Actions are being implemented to improve this aspect of the service but have not yet taken full effect. It is apparent that some delays are caused by the way invoices are sent to the Council and how they eventually get to Housing. Managers and team leaders are reviewing the late payment list each month to investigate whether the service is at fault and what remedial action is necessary to improve performance.

## **HRA CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

33. New Right to Buy (RtB) discounts and proposals for re-investing the capital receipts came into effect from April 2012, which increased the maximum discount available to tenants from £0.034M to their current level of £0.078M.
34. Up to the end of September 2016, 41 RtB applications were received with 14 properties being sold, compared to 46 Applications and 15 sales over the same period in 2015/16. It is currently projected that the number of RtB sales will be between 25 and 30 for the year, resulting in a residual receipt for the year of approximately £2M.
35. The Council has a balance at Quarter 2 2016/17 of useable capital receipts of £7.461M, of which £2.817M is reserved for investment in new social housing. The Council has entered into an agreement with the Secretary of State to invest these receipts in new social housing. The use of these receipts is restricted to schemes that do not receive Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) funding.
36. The retained receipt from RtB sales can represent no more than 30% of the cost of the replacement properties. Since the agreement was signed in 2012, £3.065M has been spent on replacement properties up to 30 September 2016. The Council is committed to spend a further £9.39M on replacement properties by 30 September 2019.
37. The HRA's Budget proposals for the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) propose significant investment in new build (in excess of £11.0M by 30 September 2019).
38. Current projections suggest RtB sales will **not** have a negative impact on the Business Plan, particularly if the number of new build properties exceeds the properties sold. However if annual RtB sales were to make up a significant percentage of the Housing Stock, such that it diminished by 10% (equivalent to approximately 500 properties) or more over the period to 30 September 2019, then this would pose a threat to the surpluses predicted both in the medium and longer term.
39. If additional sales continue to represent a small percentage of the Council's stock, there is a significant benefit as retained receipts will provide the Council with additional funds for reinvestment.
40. The sale of apartments at Priory View commenced in Quarter 1 and has

generated £3.261M of capital receipts up to September. In total it is anticipated that the sales will generate a total of circa £3.9M during 2016/17, with these funds being available to fund further new build projects in the years to follow.

41. As at 1 April 2016 the balance of HRA Usable Capital receipts was £2.996M. It is anticipated that £2.0M of RtB receipts will be retained in the current year and an additional £3.9M from sales at Priory View making a subtotal of £8.896M. It is proposed to use £4.0M of usable receipts to part fund the Capital programme, so the balance carried forward is forecast to be £4.896M.

## RESERVES

42. The total reserves available as at year end 2015/16 were £19.452M, comprising £2.0M in HRA Balances, £9.004M in the Independent Living Development Reserve, £8.248M in the Strategic Reserve and £0.2M in the Major Repairs Reserve.
43. The current position indicates a year end balance in reserves of £23.028M. HRA Balances are projected to remain at a contingency level of £2.0M, with the Independent Living Development Reserve increasing to £13.778M, the Strategic reserve reducing to £7.050M, and the Major Repairs Reserve (MRR) remaining at £0.2M. (Should the proposed virement be accepted, the Strategic Reserve balance would drop to £5.850M and total reserves would equate to £21.828M.)
44. In total this equates to a forecast contribution to reserves for the year of £6.075M, offset by spend from reserves of £2.499M to result in a net increase of £3.576M.
45. An Investment Strategy has been formulated, that sets out proposals for the use of the reserves that are forecast to materialise in the short to medium term. This strategy was referred to in the HRA Budget Report that was approved by Council in February 2016, and continues to be refined as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

**Table 5**

Reserves	Month: September 2016				
Description	Opening Balance 2016/17	Spend against reserves	Release of reserves	Proposed transfer to Reserves	Proposed Closing Balance 2016/17
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
HRA Balances	2,000	-	-	-	2,000
Independent Living Development Reserve	9,004	(1,301)	-	6,075	13,778
Strategic Reserve	8,248	(1,198)	-	-	7,050
Major Repairs (HRA)	200	-	-	-	200
	<b>19,452</b>	<b>(2,499)</b>	-	<b>6,075</b>	<b>23,028</b>

**Table 6**

**Net Revenue Position Full Analysis**

Month: September 2016	Year to date				Year				
Director	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Provisional Outturn	Variance	Transfers to/(from) reserves	Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Assistant Director Housing Service	9,053	9,019	-	(34)	17,815	18,062	247	-	247
Housing Operations	(12,187)	(11,991)	-	196	(24,374)	(24,178)	196	-	196
Repairs and Business Management	2,836	2,531	-	(305)	5,965	5,558	(407)	-	(407)
Financial Inclusion	244	192	-	(52)	487	411	(76)	-	(76)
Housing Investment	54	27	-	(27)	107	147	40	-	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(222)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(222)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

December 2016

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## 2016/17 Quarter 2 Performance Report

Report of Cllr Richard Wenham, Executive Member for Corporate Resources ([Richard.Wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.Wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officer: Richard Carr, Chief Executive ([Richard.Carr@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.Carr@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

### This report relates to a non-Key Decision

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#### Purpose of this report

1. To report Quarter 2 2016/17 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council's Medium Term Plan (MTP) indicator set.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

- Note performance against the indicators currently being used to help support the monitoring of progress against the Medium Term Plan priorities, and to ask officers to further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators as appropriate.

2. Since the Council was created in 2009, it has strived to strengthen Central Bedfordshire as a great place to live and work. This means delivering great value and services to our residents, making sure that both businesses and individuals have great prospects for the future, in terms of education, skills and employment and enhancing Central Bedfordshire as a place.
3. In 2015, the Council updated its plans for delivering its ambitions. This culminated in the new Five Year Plan 2015-2020 being adopted by Council in November 2015, based on six key priorities:
  - Enhancing Central Bedfordshire
  - Delivering Great Resident Services
  - Improving Education and Skills
  - Protecting the Vulnerable; Improving Well-being
  - A More Efficient and Responsive Council
  - Creating Stronger Communities
4. This report represents the second view of a new suite of indicators that will be reported throughout the lifetime of this Plan. As this is still a new set of measures, over time, comparative data will be made available in order that the Executive can monitor progress.

## The Council's Five Year Plan

Since the Council was created in 2009, it has strived to strengthen Central Bedfordshire as a great place to live and work. For the council this means delivering great value and services to our residents, making sure that both businesses and individuals have great prospects for the future, in terms of education, skills and employment and enhancing Central Bedfordshire as a place.

In 2015, the Council updated its plans for delivering its ambitions. This culminated in a Five Year Plan 2015-2020 being adopted by Council in November 2015, based on six key priorities:

### Enhancing Central Bedfordshire

	Performance will be reported	Last Reported	Latest Data	Direction of Travel	Current Status	
Percentage of Central Bedfordshire residents satisfied with the local area as a place to live	Res./Staff Survey	Sep 15	89 %	n/a	★	of respondents
% feel safe when outside in their local area during the day	Res./Staff Survey	Sep 15	96 %	n/a	██	of respondents
% feel safe when outside in their local area after dark	Res./Staff Survey	Sep 15	75 %	n/a	██	of respondents
Number of new jobs	Annual (Dec)	Dec 14	3,400	↓	★	new jobs
People in employment aged 16 to 64 (% above national average)	Quarterly	Jun 16	3.4 %	↓	▲	above national average
Average Earnings for Workers	Annual (Dec)	Dec 15	£478.5	→	██	average earnings
New Homes completions (cumulative)	Quarterly	Sep 16	925	↑	★	new homes
Town Centre Vacancy Rates	Quarterly (Feb,May,Aug,...	Aug 16	7.7 %	↑	██	town centre vacancies

### Enhancing Central Bedfordshire Summary

The Council will retain the character of Central Bedfordshire whilst continuing to improve the prosperity of residents by:

- Investing in core infrastructure
- Supporting the creation of jobs
- Providing the quantity and type of housing we need
- Improving Central Bedfordshire's town centres

It is also important that Central Bedfordshire's residents feel safe and are happy living in their local areas. The Council will therefore monitor how satisfied residents are with their local areas as places to live, and also that they feel safe, both during the day and after dark, through the annual Residents Survey.

The measure of **new jobs** created in Central Bedfordshire is a statistic obtained from the British Register and Employment Survey (BRES), and indicates the level of increase in prosperity of the Council's residents. The latest data reported 3,400 **new jobs** were created during 2014, which is more than double the Council's target of 1,350 new jobs per annum, and represents a long term job growth rate of 1,700 new jobs each year (2009-14).

In June 2016 there were 135,600 **people aged 16-64 in employment**. Central Bedfordshire remains above comparator areas, and is 3.4% above the national rate of employment, which has fallen slightly below the Council's target of remaining 5% above comparator areas. This decrease is well within the statistical confidence intervals of the indicator and this could explain the fall. Furthermore, a corresponding increase in the levels of claimant count and modelled unemployment has not been witnessed. The Council also monitors average earnings for workers, which was reported at £478.50 in December 2015, and has remained stable over the last two years.

A vital element of ensuring the enhancement of Central Bedfordshire is to facilitate the provision of quality homes. The number of **new homes** completed in Central Bedfordshire has consistently increased year-on-year, with 1,625 new homes completed in 2016/17. By September 2016, there has been 925 new homes completed, which is set to exceed the Council's annual target of 1475 new homes.

A thriving town centre is vital for Central Bedfordshire communities, and the Council is working hard to improve town centres across Central Bedfordshire, with many plans already being carried

## Enhancing Central Bedfordshire Summary

out to support this. **Town centre vacancy rates** are a good way of indicating their success and prosperity, and will be monitored closely so that the Council can be certain the work it is doing is effective. The vacancy rate in Central Bedfordshire town centres currently stands at 7.7%, which is an improvement on 9.1% that was reported at the end of Q1 2016/17.

To support the Council's commitment to enhancing Central Bedfordshire, it is actively working to encourage the growth of suitable businesses, influencing this through effective use of its assets, sector development and a package of support from Central Bedfordshire Council aligned to its key businesses, sectors and potential investors.

## Delivering Great Resident Services

	Performance will be reported	Last Reported	Latest Data	Direction of Travel	Current Status	
Perception of Council - Good quality services	Res./Staff Survey	Sep 15	73 %	n/a		of respondents
Percentage of Central Bedfordshire residents satisfied with living environment	Res./Staff Survey					New
Kg/household of black bin waste	Quarterly	Mar 16	134			kg of waste per household
Satisfaction with highways maintenance	Annual (Oct)	Oct 15	54 %			of respondents
CBC's relative position re condition of roads (principal)	Annual (March)	Mar 15	99 %			not requiring maintenance
CBC's relative position re condition of roads (non principal)	Annual (March)	Mar 15	97 %			not requiring maintenance
Leisure facility usage rates	Quarterly	Sep 16	474,424			visitors
Libraries facility usage rates	Annual (March)	Mar 16	925,041			visitors
Customer Services - numbers of service failures reported	Quarterly					New

## Delivering Great Resident Services Summary

The Council will make sure that Central Bedfordshire's universal services, such as rubbish collection and recycling, road maintenance, Libraries and Leisure are of great quality.

It will do this by:

- Increasing access to parks and open spaces
- Revamping household waste recycling centres
- Improving the condition of roads and pavements
- Transforming leisure centres.

The Council are currently making progress with all of these services, but to make sure improvement continues a number of new measures have been developed that the Council will monitor closely.

The amount of **Black Bin Waste per Household** is a measure that has been developed to show how well the Council is doing with reducing waste to landfill and increasing the amount recycled. The latest data reported in March 2016 showed each household produced an average of 134kg of black bin waste, which is slightly less than reported in Q1.

Work has been underway to improve Household Waste Recycling Centres across Central Bedfordshire to ensure they are easy to use and equipped to meet future demands of a growing population. Biggleswade Household Waste Recycling Centre reopened to the public in February after a 6 month redevelopment to provide a modern split-level design, allowing residents to more easily dispose of their waste into containers from an elevated platform. Feedback from residents using the new site has been very positive. Ampthill, which was the second site to be redeveloped, was reopened in July. The redevelopment of Leighton Buzzard is currently in progress and is due to be reopened in January 2017.

**Satisfaction with highways maintenance** will be determined through the National Highways & Transport annual survey, which will allow Central Bedfordshire to compare its performance with other local authorities. The satisfaction rate published in October 2015 was 54.1%, which is an increase from 52% in 2014, and the Council will strive to improve this further over the next five years.

The Council will also monitor the condition of its roads. **Road condition statistics** were most recently published by the Department of Transport in March 2016 (for the year 2014/15). This showed that principal and non-principal roads in Central Bedfordshire requiring maintenance were reported as 1% and 3% respectively.

**Libraries facility usage rates** in 2015/16 have remained stable, even with the introduction of more opportunities for residents to use remote access, for example through library and theatre apps or online bookings. Quarterly figures for **leisure facility usage rates** are not yet available, but the annual figures for 2015/16 topped 2.4m.

## Improving Education and Skills

	Performance will be reported	Last Reported	Latest Data	Direction of Travel	Current Status	
School readiness - % of children achieving a good level of development at the Early Years Foundation	Annual (Sept)	Sep 16	68.5 %	↑		of children
Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English & Maths -ranking	Annual (Dec)	Dec 15	57	↑	▲	out of 151
% of Schools rated Good or Better (Quarterly)	Quarterly	Sep 16	89 %	↑	●	of 136 schools
% of young people aged 16-18 who are in education, employment or training (EET)	Annual (Feb)	Feb 16	90.4 %	↑	■	of 16-18 year olds in EET
Employer Skills Gaps	Annual (Dec)	Dec 15	29 %	↑	■	of businesses reporting skills gaps

## Improving Education and Skills Summary

The Council will support the academic and social success of Central Bedfordshire's children and young people as well as their physical wellbeing. And the council will support adult learning too, so that everyone will have access and incentives to work, either in Central Bedfordshire or elsewhere.

It will do this by:

- Working in partnership with schools, parents and communities
- Building new schools and expanding existing ones
- Creating a range of routes to work such as apprenticeships and specialist schemes for older employees

The Council's education measures help it to consider whether there are good outcomes for younger children (aged 4-5), and as they develop (aged 15-16).

The 2016 results for Central Bedfordshire show that 69% of children were classed as having a **'Good Level of Development'**. This is a 5% improvement from 2014 but Central Bedfordshire remains below the National (69%) and Statistical Neighbour (71%) averages. Positive action is being taken to ensure that children in Central Bedfordshire are ready for learning.

The provisional 2016 results show that 57.3% of Central Bedfordshire young people achieved **5 or more A\*-C grades or equivalent including English and Maths**. This is a 1% reduction from 2015.

Central Bedfordshire remains below 1.7% below the statistical neighbour average (59%) but above the national average of 52.8%. The Council is 69/150 local authority areas nationally compared to a ranking of 57/151 last year. The Council remain in the 2nd quartile nationally.

Performance with regard to schools in Central Bedfordshire judged to be **'Good or Outstanding'** has improved to 89% (from 85% this time last year). Ofsted publish a similar indicator which does not include sponsored academies yet to be inspected.

The **percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are in education or employment or training (EET)** in 2015/16 in Central Bedfordshire has improved to 90.4% (from 88.5% in 2014/15). This is as a result of effective support and interventions from the Council.

And learning new skills doesn't stop when we leave school, so the Council will support adults to obtain the skills they need to succeed, and will also ensure that it matches the provision of skills with those that are needed by employers.

A new measure looks at **Employer skills gaps** so that the Council can be sure people have the right skills, linked to employment sectors. Data reported in December 2015 showed an 8% decrease in employer skills gaps compared to the previous year, down from 37% to 29%.

## Protecting the Vulnerable; improving well-being

	Performance will be reported	Last Reported	Latest Data	Direction of Travel	Current Status	
Children's Safeguarding - Referrals as a percentage of the child population	Quarterly	Sep 16	1.6 %	↑	n/a	referrals
Percentage of referrals of children leading to the provision of a social care service	Quarterly	Sep 16	90.2 %	↓	★	provision of social care service
LAC - School attendance (when entering care and registered at school)	Annual (July)	Jul 16	92.7 %	↓	n/a	attendance
% of care leavers at age 17-21 who are engaged in education, training or employment	Quarterly	Sep 16	70.7 %	↑	★	care leavers in EET
Proportion of adults subject to a safeguarding enquiry of those known to adult social care	Quarterly	Sep 16	1.94 %	↓	●	adults with a safeguarding enquiry
Total non-elective admissions in to hospital (general & acute), all-age, per 100,000 population	Quarterly	Jun 16	2,401.0	↑	●	admissions
Avoiding admissions to Care Homes	Quarterly					New
Average age of customers admitted to a residential care home	Quarterly	Sep 16	85.70	↓	★	average age
Delivery of new dwellings suitable for older people	Quarterly	Sep 16	164	↑	n/a	dwellings
Premature Deaths (persons per 100,000)	Annual (Dec)	Dec 14	283	↑	●	out of 100,000
Hate Crime incidents reported	Quarterly	Sep 16	33	↓	n/a	incidents reported
No. of Domestic Abuse incidents reported	Quarterly	Sep 16	955	↑	n/a	incidents reported

## Protecting the Vulnerable; improving well-being Summary

The Council will strive to protect anyone who may be at risk of exploitation, abuse or suffering, regardless of their age or disability. And the council will work to improve the health and wellbeing of all Central Bedfordshire residents.

It will do this by:

- Identifying children and families who may be in vulnerable situations and intervene early where necessary to make sure Central Bedfordshire's youngsters have the best start in life
- Developing social care and housing services so that people are able to live independently for as long as possible
- Working beyond organisational boundaries, particularly with the Council's partners in the health service, to offer joined up services that are available in the right place and at the right time

The **referrals as a % of the child population** and **% of referrals leading to the provision of a social care service** are in line with expectations based on previous activity. These measures give the Council an indication of the volume of referrals to social services that come from partners and the public.

**Looked After Children (LAC) school attendance** is at 92.7% as at the end of July 2016. A new methodology has been developed to provide this information therefore any comparisons to historic measures would not be accurate.

The Council's Virtual School is working with young people to re-engage them in learning.

Attendance in 2015/16 from Reception to Year 9 (age 5-14) is as good and in some year groups better than children who are not looked after. The area for improvement remains with children in Years 10 and 11.

Attendance can be low where pupils have moved placement or have spent some time waiting for a school place in other authorities, or where they have had periods on part-time timetables. All pupils where attendance has been identified as a concern are being closely monitored by both the Council's Virtual School and Social Care staff.

The **% of care leavers engaged in Education, Employment or Training** has continued to improve (from 50% in June 2015) to 70% in September 2016. This performance remains in the top quartile nationally.

This shows that the Council is supporting vulnerable young people to continue to gain new skills and qualifications and long term employment as they become young adults.

**Proportion of adults subject to a safeguarding enquiry** - little change in this measure between the first quarter (April to June), and the second (July - September). 1.94% of people have a safeguarding enquiry on-going in September.

This illustrates the small proportion of safeguarding issues as a proportion of all adult social care work. The majority of safeguarding enquiries relate to people living in their own home and concerns about family or friends.

The reduction of **non-elective admissions** in to hospital remains challenging. The required target reduction of 1.5% as set out in the Better Care fund (BCF) Plan was not achieved. The additional projects which were mobilised as part of the 2015/16 BCF Plan around management of long term conditions, end of life care, Falls and Care Homes are beginning to have an impact on non-elective admission. This work will continue as part of the BCF 2016/17. The overarching ambition remains reduction of non-elective admissions in line with targets set for 2015/16.

**Avoiding admissions to Care Homes** measure is presently being set-up. The measure will help the Council to understand how its work is contributing to people remaining at home rather than having to move to a Care Home.

85.7 years represents the **average age admitted to a residential home**. This is a decrease of 2 years on the previous quarter. 4 admissions related to an admission with dementia and 35 admissions were not related to dementia. The main change within the different age groupings occurred in the 85-89 age range where there were 8 fewer clients in this age group than the previous quarter. This has had the effect of reducing the average age.

The opening of Greenfields Extra Care Scheme in Leighton Buzzard by Aldwyck HA has added 81 **affordable dwellings** this quarter. No new specialist schemes are now expected to be delivered during the remainder of 2016/17.

The Council is working hard to tackle **domestic abuse** in Central Bedfordshire, and levels have remained fairly stable. A total of 955 incidents were reported during the second quarter of 2016/17, up by 13% on the total number (845) reported for Q1 2016/17. This is mainly due to a rise in reported incidents during July and August, but this was followed by a significant drop in September. The Council encourages the reporting of domestic abuse and monitors numbers as part of its commitment to protecting the vulnerable.

A new performance indicator to measure **hate crimes** has also been developed and will be closely monitored to support the Five Year Plan priority of protecting the vulnerable and improving well-being. During the second quarter of 2016/17, a total of thirty-three hate crimes were reported, three more than the same period last year.

### A more efficient and responsive Council

	Performance will be reported	Last Reported	Latest Data	Direction of Travel	Current Status	
Perception of Council - Value for money	Res./Staff Survey	Sep 15	53 %	n/a	★	of respondents
Perception that Council acts on the concerns of residents	Res./Staff Survey	Sep 15	40 %	n/a	■	of respondents
Time taken to process Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, new claims & change events - Days	Quarterly	Sep 16	32.3	↓	▲	days
Call wait times average - (seconds)	Quarterly	Sep 16	157	↓	★	seconds
% of Customer contact by the web	Quarterly	Jun 16	3.2 %	↓	■	of customer contact
Repeat issues (2nd calls or more to contact centre)	Quarterly					New

### A more efficient and responsive Council Summary

The Council will be focused on cost effectiveness and efficiency in all that it does. Customers, the residents and businesses of Central Bedfordshire, will help to determine whether it is successful in this ambition. The Council will listen to their opinions, views and preferences in shaping its plans.

It will do this by:

- Maximising the value for money achieved for every pound of Council Tax payer's money that is spent
- Improving the productivity of its workforce by continuing to listen and engage with them in developing the organisation
- Making use of technology to make it easier for customers to contact and do business with the council on line
- Modernising its way of working so that organisational costs are reduced on overheads such as office accommodation, travel costs and paper

The Council recognises the need to ensure that vulnerable residents are paid their benefit entitlements as quickly as possible. This is why the average **speed of processing claims** is important. In line with being an efficient Council, it has introduced a number of e-claims which will enable it to speed up the Council's processing times. Claimants will be supported in making their claims in this way. Already 35% of new claims are coming into the Council via this route. The benefits of this approach are beginning to be seen and the speed of processing new claims improved by 1.2 days from August to September. Recruitment of trainee benefits processors took place in September and October and the Council expect to have 7 new staff joining the service in early November. Whilst intensive training will be required the Council should begin to see the impact of this additional resource on its performance late in Quarter 4.







**Customer wait times** - The time a customer waits for their call to be answered within the Contract Contact Centre, continues to hold steady at 2 ½ minutes.

The technology refresh within the Centre was completed in August and will bring further enhancements including a customer call back function which will reduce call wait times and in the future will allow the capturing of **Resident repeat calls**.

Please note that July data was not available for '**Call wait time average**' due to a change in the telephony system. Therefore this information is only partial.



### Creating stronger communities

	Performance will be reported	Last Reported	Latest Data	Direction of Travel	Current Status	
Perception that people can influence decisions in their own area	Res./Staff Survey	Sep 14	36 %			of respondents
Perception that people in the local area pull together to improve the local area	Res./Staff Survey	Sep 15	68 %	n/a		of respondents
Volunteering measure	Res./Staff Survey					New
Number of volunteers engaged within the community (currently the village care schemes)	Quarterly	Jun 16	925			people
Number of customers supported within the community (currently by the village care schemes)	Quarterly	Jun 16	767			people
Town and parish survey satisfaction	Res./Staff Survey					New

### Creating Stronger Communities Summary

The Council will do all it can to strengthen community spirit in Central Bedfordshire's towns and villages, nurturing a sense of place and belonging to build resilience and reduce social isolation.

It will do this by:

- Creating more opportunities for community participation in local affairs and services
- Supporting voluntary activity so that local people are helped to help themselves
- Making all of the assets the Council owns in Central Bedfordshire's towns and villages (parks, open spaces, buildings etc.) more available to local people for community events and activities
- Working with town and parish councils so that more services are provided at a local level

Small increase in the number of **people being supported within the community**. The figure of 767 can be broken down further: Chiltern Vale - 224, Iver Valley - 250, Leighton Buzzard 73, West Mid Beds - 220. This compares to 703 for quarter 4 2015/16.

Small increase in the number of **volunteers engaged within the community**. The total number of 925 is 28 more than the quarter 4 2015/16. The Council have a net gain of 1 volunteer compared to the previous quarter. It is interesting to note that there tends to be a greater number of volunteers in villages with modest populations compared to larger towns.

**Quarter 2 Summary**

5. There are 46 indicators in the MTP suite and the majority of these are reported in the accompanying scorecard. There are however 6 indicators which are in development and once the necessary development work has been completed data for these will be included in future reports.
6. The information includes an indication of when data is due to be reported. For those indicators that are identified as 'Res./Staff Survey' these are reported every even numbered year eg. 2012, 2014, 2016, etc.
7. This report includes the latest available data for all the Council's MTP indicators (except for those where data is unavailable at this time), even if new data is not being reported this quarter, so that a complete picture of overall performance is given.
8. In this report performance against agreed targets is shown and the direction of travel where data has become available.
9. Arrows in the scorecard show the performance 'direction of travel' and the RAG symbols shows whether or not agreed targets are being met.

Performance Judgement			
Direction of travel (DoT)		RAG score	
↓	Performance is reducing	▲	Target missed – Performance at least 10% below the required level of improvement
→	Performance remains unchanged	●	Target missed – Performance less than 10% below the required level of improvement
↑	Performance is improving	★	Target achieved

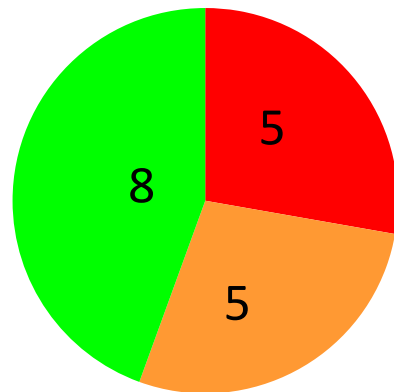
10. Work is continuing to consider the presentation of measures on the Council's website. This has the potential to deliver improvements that will help residents to see current performance at a glance and view progress to date.

**Performance Against Targets and Direction of Travel**

11. Of those measures that currently have targets set:
  - 8 are reporting as green
  - 5 are reporting as amber
  - 5 are reporting as red

Commentary is provided in each section of the scorecard to explain performance against target

Diagram – RAG status including totals



12. Of those measures that currently have a Direction of Travel (DoT) set:

- 19 are reporting DoT in a positive direction
- 2 are reporting DoT as neither positive or negative
- 11 are reporting DoT in a negative direction

Commentary is provided in each section of the scorecard to explain performance against Direction of Travel.

13. As historic information is built up for this relatively new set of indicators, further analysis of performance compared to previous data will be made available.

## **Council Priorities**

14. The measures selected for the reporting of performance reflect the Council's priorities. Measures are reported under the headings in Central Bedfordshire Council's 5 year plan.

## **Corporate Implications**

### **Legal Implications**

15. None directly, however any areas of on-going underperformance would reflect a risk to both service delivery and the reputation of the Council.

### **Financial Implications**

16. None directly, although the Medium Term Plan indicator set provides a view of the value for money delivered by the council.

### **Equalities Implications**

17. This report highlights performance against a range of indicators which measure how the Council is delivering against its Medium Term Plan priorities. It identifies specific areas of underperformance which can be highlighted for further analysis. Whilst many of the indicators deal with information important in assessing equality, it is reported at the headline level in this report.
18. To meet the Council's stated intention of tackling inequalities and delivering services so that people whose circumstances make them vulnerable are not disadvantaged, performance data for indicators in this set is supported by more detailed performance data analysis at the service level and this is used to support the completion of equality impact assessments. These impact assessments provide information on the underlying patterns and trends for different sections of the community and identify areas where further action is required to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups.

### **Public Health**

19. The Medium Term Plan indicator set includes measures on premature deaths and use of leisure centres.

### **Sustainability:**

20. A broad range of indicators relating to sustainability including those covering employment, library usage, active recreation and waste are included in the Medium Term Plan indicator set.

### **Community Safety:**

21. The measures included cover perception of safety both during the day and at night.

### **Risk Management:**

22. Effective monitoring of performance indicators mitigates the risk of failing to deliver the Council's priorities, reputational risks and the risk of failing to deliver statutory responsibilities.

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