

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 4 December 2018.

PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)
Cllr R D Wenham (Vice-Chairman)

Executive
Members:

Cllrs I Dalgarno
E Ghent
Ms C Hegley

Cllrs B J Spurr
J N Young

Deputy
Executive
Members:

Cllrs A D Brown
Mrs S Clark
K M Collins
Mrs A L Dodwell
Ms C Maudlin

Cllrs Mrs T Stock
G Tubb
S Watkins
B Wells

Apologies for
Absence:

Cllr S Dixon

Members in Attendance:

Cllrs R D Berry
D Bowater
P Downing
K Ferguson
Ms A M W Graham
P Hollick

Cllrs R W Johnstone
D McVicar
T Nicols
B Saunders
P Smith

Officers in Attendance

Mr R Carr
Mr M Coiffait
Mr A Davie

Mrs S Harrison
Mrs S Hobbs
Mr T Hoyle

Mr S Rix
Mrs M Scott
Mr C Warboys

Chief Executive
Director of Community Services
Assistant Director Development and
Infrastructure
Director of Children's Services
Senior Committee Services Officer
Assistant Director of Strategic
Commissioning
Interim Monitoring Officer
Director of Public Health
Director of Resources

E/18/58

Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/18/59 **Members' Interests**

None were declared.

E/18/60 **Chairman's Announcements**

No announcements were made.

E/18/61 **Petitions**

No petitions were submitted.

E/18/62 **Public Participation**

No members of the public had registered to speak.

E/18/63 **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019 be noted, subject to the inclusion of the award of the contract for the construction of the Potton Road, Wrestlingworth Scheme on the 8 January 2019.

E/18/64 **Gypsy and Traveller Responsiveness**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that proposed the allocation of additional resources to support the Council's response to gypsy and traveller matters in Central Bedfordshire.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Community Services explained that the locations of the proposed temporary stopping sites had yet to be determined. A planning application would need to be submitted before any site was allocated as a temporary stopping site. Further details would be provided to the relevant Member.

Reason for decision: To improve the Council's approach and responsiveness to gypsy and travellers.

RESOLVED

that the proposal set out in the report and the draw down of the Community Safety earmarked reserve, as set out in paragraphs 27-30 in the report, be approved.

E/18/65

The Future of Ampthill Day Centre for Older People

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations that set out the outcome of the consultation into the future of the Ampthill Day Centre and proposed the relocation of the service to Silsoe Horticultural Centre and other community venues as part of a move to a 'hub and spoke' model.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to offer an improved service. The hub and spoke model would offer variety and opportunity that was not deliverable at Ampthill Day Centre and would reduce risk of temporary closures due to building issues.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the outcome of the public consultation on the options for Ampthill Day Centre, as set out in the report and Appendix 5, be noted;**
- 2. that the implementation of the hub and spoke model to replace the current day service provision at Ampthill Day Centre and the subsequent closure of the centre be approved; and**
- 3. to authorise the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Member for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations, to determine the date of the closure of Ampthill Day Centre.**

E/18/66

Discharge of Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Private Sector Home Policy

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations that set out the draft policy to discharge the homelessness duty to a suitable private sector home.

Reason for decision: To help the Council to safeguard homeless applicants when discharging various homelessness duties through the use of private sector accommodation.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee concerning the draft Discharge of Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Private Sector Home Policy be noted; and**
- 2. that the Discharge of Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Private Sector Home Policy be approved.**

E/18/67

Using Compulsory Purchase Orders to bring Empty Homes back into Occupation

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Members for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations and Assets and Housing Delivery that proposed the use of compulsory purchase order (CPO) powers to bring an empty property back into occupation. The details of property A were set out in the exempt section of the Agenda.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to progress a CPO in respect of property A and take all steps to complete the process.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the acquisition of Empty Property A, either voluntarily or using a compulsory purchase order (CPO) be approved in principle;**
- 2. that the disposal of Empty Property A following a successful acquisition and renovation to a habitable standard be approved, and the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Members for Adult, Social Care and Housing Operations and Corporate Resources be authorised to effect the disposal of Property A;**
- 3. if required, to authorise the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Members for Adult, Social Care and Housing Operations and Corporate Resources and the Interim Monitoring Officer, to make a compulsory purchase order to be known as “The Central Bedfordshire [full postal address of the property to be inserted] Compulsory Purchase Order 201x” under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 and any other relevant legal powers, in respect of Property A; and**
- 4. if required, to authorise the Interim 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 Inquiry, including the appointment of Counsel; and**
 - (b) to either service 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 Compulsory Purchase Order.**

E/18/68

East West Rail Western Section (Phase 2)- Central Bedfordshire Council Formal Objection

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Regeneration that sought ratification of the recently submitted Statement of Case made to the Department for Transport by the Council relating to Phase 2 of the Western Section of East West Rail (Bicester to Bedford and Aylesbury to Milton Keynes).

Whilst the Council was supportive of East/West Rail overall, the Statement of Case outlined the Council's objection to the proposals, as a result of the proposed closure of footpath crossings across the Bedford-Bletchley line and their impact on Lidlington. Further clarifications were also needed on timescales for detailed design, HGV and construction traffic routes. The Case also raised the omission of the submitted Local Plan strategic allocations in the area, as this had not been factored into the assessment of impact.

Reason for decision: As the Council had not had any formal confirmation that the points of objection could be resolved, it would be necessary to pursue this at Public Inquiry.

RESOLVED

1. **that the content of the Council's Statement of Case (Appendix A to the report) to allow the Council to present evidence verbally at the Public Inquiry, should current issues remain unresolved, be ratified.**

RECOMMENDED to Council

1. ***to oppose the proposed 'Network Rail (East West Rail Bicester to Bedford Improvements) Order' to the extent as set out in the Executive report, to allow the Council to present evidence verbally at the Public Inquiry, should current issues remain unresolved; and***
2. ***that the Council's Statement of Case at Appendix A to the Executive report be ratified.***

E/18/69

Revised Policies for Travel Assistance for Children and Pupils Attending School and Post 16 Students and Post 19 Young People in Education

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children that set out the reviewed Travel Assistance Policies for Central Bedfordshire, following the public consultation. The report also set out the draft post 19 Transport Policy and sought approval to consult on this Policy.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Community Services explained that it was parents responsibility to get their child to school. The transport policies were available on the Council's website and were included as part of the Schools Admissions process.

The Schools for the Future programme was being aligned with future housing developments: the Council would look to build schools close to new homes.

In response to a question, the Deputy Executive Member for Families, Education and Children confirmed that provision of transport for children with special education needs and disabilities was being reviewed, as was the scope to provide special units within mainstream schools.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations and adopts fair, equitable and transparent policies to support all pupils and their families.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the travel assistance policies for the academic year 2019/20 be adopted; and**
- 2. to consult on a post 19 Transport Policy.**

E/18/70

Regional Adoption Agency

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children, Education and Families that proposed the combining of the Council's adoption services with those in Milton Keynes to form a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). Central Bedfordshire Council would host the service.

In response to a question, the Director of Children's Services confirmed that relative contributions to the RAA's budget for the years after 2019/20 would be on the same basis as the initial budget for 2019/20.

Reason for decision: To ensure the Council complied with national policy as well as taking advantage of the benefits of combining the two services.

RESOLVED

- 1. that Central Bedfordshire Council's Adoption Service become part of a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) by merging services with Milton Keynes Council;**
- 2. to authorise the Director of Children's Services to approve the signing of a partnership agreement with Milton Keynes Council to implement the RAA; and**
- 3. to delegate the leadership and management arrangements of the RAA to the Director of Children's Services.**

E/18/71

Consultation on the Council's Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2020

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children that sought approval to commence the consultation on the admission arrangements for the academic year 2020/21. The report also outlined the proposed changes to the admission arrangements for all Central Bedfordshire Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.

The Deputy Executive Member for Families, Education and Children advised that there was an additional change to the admission arrangements to be consulted upon, as well as those set out in the report:

- to reduce the Published Admission Number for Linslade Lower School from 45 per year group to 30 per year group with effect from September 2019.

Reason for decision: The Council was required to consult on changes to its admissions arrangements where these were proposed and was required to consult within the statutory timescales set out in the School Admissions Regulations.

RESOLVED

1. **that the commencement of consultation for the proposed changes to the Council's admission arrangements for the academic year 2020/21 be approved to:**
 - **include priority for children of staff to the following schools' oversubscription criteria; Dunstable Icknield Lower, Fairfield Park Lower, Greenleas School, Heathwood Lower, Shefford Lower, Soutcott Lower and Thomas Johnson Lower;**
 - **include priority for children previously in state care outside of England for all community and voluntary controlled schools; and**
 - **to reduce the Published Admission Number for Linslade Lower School from 45 per year group to 30 per year group with effect from September 2019.**
2. **to authorise the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children, to determine the Council's admission policy for 2020, by 28 February 2019, as required by legislation.**

E/18/72 **Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 2021**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the results of a review of the Council's Equality Strategy and proposed a refreshed Equality Action Plan 2018 – 2021.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council complied with its statutory obligations.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the adoption of the Equality Action Plan 2018-21 be supported.**

RECOMMENDED to Council

- 1. that the Equality Action Plan 2018-21 be adopted.***

E/18/73 **Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2019/20**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the Local Council Tax Support Scheme, including the proposal that the current 50% Empty Homes Premium as applied across Central Bedfordshire should be increased to 100% premium from 1 April 2019.

The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the report on 29 November and recommended the following which was duly supported by the Executive:

'That, as permitted by the new legislation:

- from 1 April 2019, a 100% premium be applied to homes that have been empty and substantially unfurnished for 2 years;
- from April 2020, a 200% premium be applied for homes that have been empty between 5 and 10 years; and
- from April 2021, a 300% premium be applied for homes empty for 10 years or more.'

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to endorse the Local Council Tax Support Scheme. If the Scheme was not approved by the 11 March 2019, the Council would have to award Local Council Tax Support in accordance with the Government's default scheme which would result in the cost of the scheme significantly exceeding that of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

RECOMMENDED to Council

- 1. That the current scheme be extended for a further year (2019/20), as set out in paragraph 21 in the Executive report.***

2. That, as permitted by the new legislation:

- ***from 1 April 2019, a 100% premium be applied to homes that have been empty and substantially unfurnished for 2 years;***
- ***from April 2020, a 200% premium be applied for homes that have been empty between 5 and 10 years; and***
- ***from April 2021, a 300% premium be applied for homes empty for 10 years or more.***

E/18/74

Voluntary and Community Sector Funding Review – Phase 1

The Executive received a report from the Task Force Chairman, Councillor Chatterley that set out the outcome of the scrutiny task force review into voluntary and community infrastructure funding in Central Bedfordshire.

Reason for decision: To enable the Executive to review the recommendations emerging from the enquiry before determining its response.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the report and recommendations of the enquiry, attached at Appendix A to the report, be noted; and**
- 2. that the Executive respond to the report within two months indicating what actions, if any, it proposes to take and if it decides to take no action, the reasons for that decision.**

E/18/75

Procurement of Facilities Management Contracts

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Assets and Housing Delivery that set out a proposal to procure new Facilities Management Contracts with the intention to rationalise the number of these to allow more time to be invested in developing supplier relationships to improve the value and quality of services delivered.

Reason for decision: To re-procure the Facilities Management contracts to support the implementation of the Corporate Landlord model for 1 April 2019.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the procurement of the Facilities Management contracts be approved; and**
- 2. that the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Assets and Housing Delivery, be authorised to award the Facilities Management contracts.**

E/18/76 Award of Contract – The Repairs, Maintenance and Capital Works Programme

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations that sought approval to award the contract for the repairs, maintenance and capital works programme relating to the Council's housing stock.

Reason for decision: To ensure the Council's housing stock was maintained to an acceptable condition.

RESOLVED

that the award of the most economical advantageous tender to Contractor A for delivery of the repairs, maintenance and capital works programme to the Council's housing stock be approved.

E/18/77 Revenue Budget Monitoring - September 2018 (Quarter 2)

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the forecast outturn position as at September 2018.

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

RESOLVED

- 1. that the revenue forecast outturn position of an overspend of £1.6M (before the release of the contingency), be noted;**
- 2. to note that the budget includes £2.1M of contingency against which no call has been made as yet. If this contingency is released then this results in an underspend of £0.5M; and**
- 3. to request officers to continue to look for compensatory savings in order to deliver a balanced budget.**

E/18/78 Capital Budget Monitoring Report - September 2018 (Quarter 2)

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the projected outturn position as at September 2018.

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

RESOLVED

1. that the capital gross forecast outturn position is a spend of £101.5M (£63.2M in 2017/18), demonstrating the continued significant capital investment being made by Central Bedfordshire to support its community; and
2. that an increase of £200,000 be included within the 2018/19 Capital Programme for work required at Biggleswade Skate park.

E/18/79

Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring - September 2018 (Quarter 2)

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the Housing Revenue Account projected outturn revenue and capital position as at September 2018.

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

RESOLVED

1. that the revenue forecast of a balanced budget with a contribution to HRA Reserves of £6.660M, be noted thus strengthening the Council's ability to invest and improve its stock of Council Houses;
2. to note that the capital forecast position indicates a net outturn of £22.838M, representing a positive variance against budget of £2.292M, with proposals for slippage of £2.265M;
3. that the proposal that principal debt repayment, budgeted at £0.200M for 2018/19, should not occur, due to the recent announcements concerning the scrapping of the HRA debt cap and the potential to take out additional borrowing to build more homes; and
4. that Right to Buy (RtB) sales be monitored for the possible impact on predicted surpluses in the medium to longer term.

E/18/80

Performance Report - September 2018 (Quarter 2)

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the 2018/19 Quarter 2 performance update for the Council's Medium Term Plan indicator set.

Reason for decision: To ensure a rigours approach to performance management across Central Bedfordshire.

RESOLVED

1. that performance against the indicators currently being used to help support the monitoring of progress against the Medium-Term Plan priorities, be noted;
2. that officers be requested to further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators as appropriate.

E/18/81 Using Compulsory Purchase Orders to bring Empty Homes back into Occupation

Minute E/18/81 related to exempt business. See minute E/18/67.

E/18/82 Award of Contract – The Repairs, Maintenance and Capital Works Programme

Minute E/18/82 related to exempt business. See minute E/18/77.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.15 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated