

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



**TO EACH MEMBER OF THE  
EXECUTIVE**

02 December 2010

Dear Councillor

**EXECUTIVE - Tuesday 7 December 2010**

Further to the Agenda and papers for the above meeting, previously circulated, please find attached the following report that was marked "to follow" on the main agenda:-

**17. Response from Overview & Scrutiny to the Savings Proposals  
Contained within the Corporate Budget Strategy**

The consider comments made by the Council's four Overview & Scrutiny Committees during their examination of saving proposals .

Should you have any queries regarding the above please contact Devina Lester, Senior Democratic Services on Tel: 0300 300 6258.

Yours sincerely

Devina Lester  
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**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 7 December 2010  
**Subject:** **Response from Overview & Scrutiny to the Savings Proposals Contained within the Corporate Budget Strategy**  
**Report of:** **The Chairmen of the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committees**  
**Summary:** The report invites the Executive to respond to the comments made by the Council's four Overview & Scrutiny Committees during their examination of the savings proposals outlined in the Executive's Corporate Budget Strategy report.

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**Advising Officer:** Ian Porter, Assistant Director of Strategy & Performance  
**Contact Officer:** Bernard Carter, Overview & Scrutiny Manager  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Executive  
**Key Decision** No  
**Reason for urgency/  
exemption from call-in  
(if appropriate)** n/a

#### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Council Priorities:**

The report sets out comments designed to help the Council respond to the financial challenges facing the public sector as a whole but, at the same time, enable it to deliver on its priorities.

**Financial:**

n/a

**Legal:**

n/a

**Risk Management:**

n/a

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

n/a

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

n/a

**Community Safety:**

n/a

**Sustainability:**

n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **that the Executive considers and responds to the comments and recommendations of Overview & Scrutiny regarding the savings proposals contained within the Corporate Budget Strategy report, as set out in Appendices A to D of this report**

<i>Reason for Recommendation(s):</i>	<i>So that the Executive can take account of the comments and recommendations made by Overview &amp; Scrutiny before it makes final recommendations to Council regarding the savings proposals outlined within its Corporate Budget Strategy report.</i>
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1. As Members will be aware, at its meeting of 2 November 2010, the Executive considered the report of its Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance & People regarding the Council's Corporate Budget Strategy. The report set out the Council's response to the Coalition Government's emerging policies and put forward proposals for managing expenditure to address the expected funding reductions.
2. The Executive endorsed the strategic response, proposed outcomes and direction of travel contained within the report and noted the efficiency proposals outlined in Appendix A. It also invited Overview & Scrutiny to comment on the service reconfiguration and reduction savings proposals detailed in Appendix B (as amended).
3. This report captures those comments and associated recommendations (at appendices A to D), all of which were made and agreed during the November cycle of Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings.
4. The Executive is therefore invited to consider and respond to these comments and recommendations before making final recommendations to Council regarding the savings proposed.

**Appendices:**

- Appendix A – Customer & Central Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee Comments
- Appendix B – Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee Comments

Appendix C – Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
Comments

Appendix C – Children’s Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee Comments

**Background Papers:** (open to public inspection)

Corporate Budget Strategy report presented to Executive at its meeting on 2 November  
2010

**Location of papers:** Priory House, Chicksands

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**Customer & Central Services Committee: 15 November 2010**

**Comments Regarding Savings Proposals contained within the  
Corporate Budget Strategy Report presented to Executive on 2  
November 2010**

At its meeting of 15 November 2010, the Customer & Central Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee assessed all savings proposals for financial robustness and considered the viability and suitability of specific proposals relating to the Customer & Shared Services Directorate and the Office of the Chief Executive. Detailed below are the outcomes flowing from this meeting.

1. General Comments re Financial Robustness

a. Supplementary Savings Proposals

Members were made aware of the supplementary savings proposals (in the order of £5 - £6M) that would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee and requested that the Executive consider submitting proposals to a value greater than that required in the form of options so that Members were able to exert an element of choice over the matter.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive considers submitting proposals to a value greater than that required in the form of options so that Members are able to exert an element of choice over the matter.**

b. CS1 Children's Services Directorate Restructure

In terms of financial robustness, Members queried the size of the savings that would be generated by this proposal i.e. c. £1M p.a. given that a total of 66.5 full time equivalent posts would be deleted as a result of the restructure. It was Members' opinion that this saving seemed low when compared against the reduction in posts proposed and requested the Executive re-examine the issue.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive re-examines this proposal to assure itself that the savings to be generated are accurate.**

c. Overheads

With regard to the significant reduction in staff numbers proposed within the Corporate Budget Strategy report Members expressed concern that the Council would not immediately benefit financially through the removal of associated overheads such as accommodation, IT and other central support services. It was Members' opinion that the Executive should expedite the removal of these overheads at the earliest possible opportunity and requested a

report from the relevant Portfolio Holders in due course outlining how this would be achieved.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive expedites the removal of overheads associated with proposed redundant posts at the earliest possible opportunity and submits a report to the Customer & Central Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee in due course outlining how this will be achieved.**

d. Budget Management & In Year Savings

Members acknowledged the magnitude of the savings proposals contained within the Corporate Budget Strategy report and the impact these would have on front line services. The Committee was therefore keen to ensure that the Executive captured as many in year savings (i.e. budget underspends) as possible from areas of discretionary spend in order to minimise this impact. A Council-wide culture of robust financial management was required to facilitate this, supported from the centre by the finance division of the Customer & Shared Services directorate.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive captures as many in year savings (i.e. budget underspends) as possible from areas of discretionary spend in order to minimise the impact that savings proposals will have on front line services.**

e. Vacancies

Members were keen to minimise compulsory redundancies wherever possible by for example reducing the use of agency staff and consultants and by taking full advantage of the Council's redeployment and retraining opportunities. In this context, Members' were also aware of the continuing and relatively high turnover of staff within the organisation and the opportunity this presented in terms of the management of staff vacancies and associated budgets.

It was Members' opinion that when a vacancy exceeded 3 months in length, the budget associated with it should be eliminated from the Council's base budget unless there was strong justification from the Director concerned that the post was still required by the organisation in order to meet its key objectives.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive agrees to eliminate from the Council's base budget all posts vacant in excess of 3 months unless there is strong justification from the Director concerned that the post is still required by the organisation in order to meet its key objectives.**



f. Administrative Costs

There was a perception from Members of the Committee that much more could be done to extract greater efficiencies from the organisation with regard to the provision of generic administrative support. A corporate approach to the provision of administrative support was required, which would remove directorate boundaries and deliver a reconfigured and rationalised service providing more for less, and the committee called upon the relevant Portfolio Holder to submit a report to its next meeting, which would set out in detail the total cost to the Authority of its administrative support and begin to explore opportunities for greater efficiencies.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the relevant Portfolio Holder submits a report to the next Customer & Central Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting setting out in detail the total cost to the Authority of its administrative support and which begins to explore opportunities for greater efficiencies.**

g. CC1 Income Revenue

Whilst Members were supportive of the need to identify opportunities for income growth, the Committee felt unable to support this particular proposal without further information. Members were informed by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance & People that greater detail would be forthcoming as part of the Council's Fees & Charges report, which would be presented to the Committee at its 17<sup>th</sup> January 2011 meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance & People submits further details regarding this proposal to the 17<sup>th</sup> January meeting of the Customer & Central Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as part of his Fees & Charges report.**

h. CC22 to CC29 Energy Efficiency Programme

Whilst Members were supportive of the need to identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency, the Committee felt unable to support this particular proposal without further information. Members acknowledged however that further information would be forthcoming, with specific measures being set out in the Carbon Management Plan. It was the Committee's opinion however that this Plan would be more appropriately received by the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee considers reviewing the Council's Carbon Management Plan at a future meeting.**

2. Specific Comments Regarding Customer & Shared Services Directorate and the Office of the Chief Executive

*Office of the Chief Executive*

a. OCE1b Reduction of Staffing – Overview & Scrutiny Team

Members expressed concern over this proposal, which in their opinion would reduce support for Overview & Scrutiny to an unacceptably low level. Whilst Members acknowledged the need to realise the savings identified, it was argued that this should not be at the expense of effective, independent Overview & Scrutiny support and every effort should be made to identify compensatory savings from elsewhere within the organisation and in this respect, particular mention was made of the need to consider this proposal alongside the review of Legal & Democratic Services (see Item 2e below).

**RECOMMENDATION: That this proposal be put on hold and the Executive be requested to consider it in the round alongside the review of Legal & Democratic Services (and other such reviews elsewhere within the organisation) in order to ensure the retention of effective, independent, support for Overview & Scrutiny.**

b. OCE7 Non-renewal of Credit Union Funding

Members were provided with further context regarding this issue and noted the low demand for the service.

**RECOMMENDATION: That this proposal be endorsed.**

c. OCE8 10% Cut to Core Voluntary & Community Sector Grants

There was a general feeling amongst Members of the Committee that cuts to Voluntary & Community Sector grants should mirror the Council's own i.e. a 28% cut over 4 years. It was also Members' opinion that such cuts should be targeted intelligently rather than applied evenly across all organisations i.e. a more surgical approach was required through the review of funding for each organisation.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the relevant Portfolio Holder re-examines funding to the Voluntary & Community Sector with a review towards making savings beyond 10% over 2 years and that any such savings be made on a targeted basis through the review funding for each organisation.**

*Customer & Shared Services Directorate*

d. C&CS2 Ampthill Customer Services Closure

There was a general feeling amongst Members that this proposal was being considered in isolation and without reference to the Council's overarching Customer Services Strategy or the drive towards Total Place/Place-Based Budgeting. In this respect, mention was made of the potential for more efficient use of existing facilities and/or collaborative development opportunities with partners in the town and Members cited Parkside Hall, the CAB and the library as prime examples of such.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive considers delaying this proposal by one year whilst investigating the opportunities for greater collaboration and/or rationalisation of existing/new facilities and services.**

- e. C&CS9 Legal & Democratic Services Review

Please refer to Item 2a above.

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**Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 16 November 2010**

**Comments Regarding Savings Proposals contained within the Corporate Budget Strategy Report presented to Executive on 2 November 2010**

At its meeting of 16 November 2010, the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the viability and suitability of the specific savings proposals relating to the Sustainable Communities Directorate. Detailed below are the outcomes of this meeting.

*Sustainable Communities Directorate*

a. EG, S&R1 Reduce External Enterprise and Marketing Activity

The Committee queried whether the full £200k budget could be saved in relation to external enterprise and marketing activity. Members were informed that the £100k in funding which would remain after the proposed savings was essential to help support the creation of an additional 27,000 new jobs in Central Bedfordshire.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to reduce external enterprise and marketing activity in order to achieve £100k savings.**

b. EG, S&R2 Stop Grant to Luton Gateway Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV)

The Committee asked how Central Bedfordshire Council would continue to promote economic regeneration in the absence of the Luton Gateway and discussed the other available levers to promote economic growth.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to cease the grant to Luton Gateway Local Delivery Vehicle in order to achieve £50k savings.**

c. EG, S&R3 Town and Parish Planning Support Activity Stopped

The Committee was told that there were very few Town and Parish Plans still to be produced. Members discussed the plans currently under development for Houghton Regis and Sandy and were informed that if savings proposals were implemented the support to develop these would cease on 1 April 2011. Town and Parish Plans were not statutory documents and where they were considered to be necessary the local Town or Parish Council would be expected to develop these from their own resources.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to stop town and parish planning support activity in order to achieve £45k savings.**

d. EG, S&R4 Mobile Library Service to be Stopped. However, Library Link will Continue to be Provided

The Committee discussed the implications of this proposal and the current cost and usage of the Library Link and Mobile Library services. Members were mindful of the ePetition received on this matter which asked the Council to

reconsider the proposed removal of the Mobile Library Service. The Committee considered the effect on users of the Mobile Library service if it was to stop.

The Committee raised various concerns relating to the accessibility of static libraries in the absence of the Mobile Library service, which would be affected by the rural nature of Central Bedfordshire. It was suggested that some residents would not be able to access static libraries and may also not meet the criteria to receive the Library Link service.

The Committee discussed the total cost per user of the Mobile Library and Library Link services and agreed that costs needed to be reduced whilst also seeking to address what Members saw as additional capacity in both services. It was suggested that a merger of these services might be more appropriate in order to utilise their benefits whilst also achieving savings.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive reconsider these proposals in order to explore an alternative combination of the services whilst avoiding cost creep and still achieving the estimated £55k savings set out in the report.**

- e. EG, S&R5 Libraries Homework Centres for Five Areas to be Discontinued from 1 July 2011

The Committee was informed that the Library Homework Centres were not a statutory service and that schools and colleges might be able to support the users of this service. It was agreed that Members who were also school Governors should encourage schools to consider whether they can support users of this service.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to discontinue the Library Homework Centres for five areas from 1 July 2011 in order to achieve £30k savings.**

- f. EG, S&R6 European Development Programme Fund Stopped

The Committee was told that this fund was non-statutory.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to cease the European Development Programme fund in order to achieve £20k savings.**

- g. EG, S&R7 Reduction in Arts Development Service and Refocus to Support the Most Vulnerable

The Committee queried the total size of the budget for the Arts Service and the amount of funding that was attributed to Leighton Buzzard Theatre. Members commented that the proposal needed to be considered in the context of the proposed changes to the Music Service and taking into account the total size of the arts budget queried whether it may be possible to achieve a greater level of savings.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive reconsider these proposals to seek further options for reducing funding to the Arts Service by a greater extent than the £65k identified in the report in the context of the £450k total budget.**

h. HT1 Replace Illuminated Bollards with Reflective Ones and Turn Off Street Lighting Between 2400 and 0600 Daily

The Committee raised no objection to the use of reflective bollards but expressed concerns relating to the turning off or dimming of street lighting and the impact this would have on the effectiveness of CCTV. It was felt that due regard needed to be given to public safety and interested parties should be consulted locally before the proposal was implemented.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive:**

1. **adopt the proposals to replace illuminated bollards with reflective ones in order to achieve the proposed savings; and**
2. **adopt the proposals to turn off or dim street lighting between 2400 hours and 0600 hours daily in order to achieve the proposed savings having due regard to public safety and having first undertaken consultation with interested parties locally before the lights are switched off or dimmed.**

i. HT4 Cease Support for the Provision of School Crossing Patrols

The Committee discussed concerns relating to the removal of school crossing patrols at schools where there were no urban design measures, such as pedestrian crossing, to improve safety. The Committee stressed the importance of health and safety and ensuring that children and young people were safe whilst walking to school. Where a patrol had been put in place on road safety grounds the Council should seek alternatives to ensure these patrols remained, including the schools taking responsibility for funding.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive seek to transfer the support for the provision of school crossing patrols to schools wherever possible. Where schools were not able to support the provision of the patrol the Council should seek to implement pedestrian crossings where they do not already exist and only remove the patrol following a safety audit indicating that it was felt safe to do so.**

j. CSPPWL3 Community Safety Team

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to reduce the number of posts in the Community Safety Team in order to achieve an estimated £90k savings.**

k. CSPPW4 Closed Circuit Television Surveillance System (CCTV) Reduced Monitoring, Reduction of CCTV Operator Posts and Changes to Terms and Conditions

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to reduce monitoring, reduce CCTV operator posts and change terms and conditions in order to achieve an estimated £95k savings.**

l. CSPPW5 Waste and Street Cleansing: Rationalise a Range of Waste Services

Rationalise Fly Tip Resource

The Committee discussed the use of tidy tips and asked if their use and that of PREEN could be extended. The Portfolio Holder was asked to consider schemes similar to that which had been in operation in Milton Keynes as a means of reducing the level of fly tipping.

Street Cleansing in the South

The Committee noted that this was currently a very high performing service. The Committee accepted that street cleansing standards may be impacted by the proposals but accepted this on the grounds that a reasonable standard would be maintained in the town centres.

Household Waste Recycling Area

The Committee discussed the operating hours of the Household Waste Recycling Centres and accepted that these services should be rationalised. Members stressed it was important that the Centres remain open at weekends and at other times where usage was at its highest.

Food Waste Collection

Members commented that several residents had complained about the proposal to cease the supply of biodegradable bags for use with the scheme. It was also commented that this proposal would have a negative 20% impact on recycling targets.

The Committee requested that if the Council ceased to supply biodegradable bags residents should be made aware of where they can be purchased. Residents should also be made aware that food waste could be wrapped in newspaper.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to rationalise a range of waste and street cleansing services in order to achieve approximately £400k savings.**



m. CSPPWL6 Biggleswade Recreation Centre

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to reduce the service at Biggleswade Recreation Centre in order to achieve approximately £65k savings.**

n. CSPPWL7 Clouse of Leisure Centre – Houghton Regis Leisure Centre

The Committee discussed the age of the facility and the necessary investment to raise it to standard. Members were mindful of the ePetition received on this matter which asked the Council to keep the Leisure Centre open until a new facility was provided in the town. It was noted that two paper based petitions in support of the Leisure Centre's retention were also in circulation.

Members queried whether an alternative provider could be sought to continue operation of Houghton Regis Leisure Centre beyond 2011. The Portfolio Holder provided an undertaking that he would seek to discuss alternatives with other providers before the proposed closure in December 2011.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to close Houghton Regis Leisure Centre in order to achieve approximately £172k savings and that the Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles discuss with alternative providers how the facility could be retained post December 2011.**

o. P1 Housing Strategy and Support for new Affordable Housing Provision

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to reduce support for the Housing Strategy and support for new affordable housing provision in order to achieve £67k savings.**

p. P2 Sustainable Growth Advice and Support

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to reduce the level of sustainable growth advice and support in order to achieve £35k savings.**

q. P6 Reduction in Small Grants/ Commissions

The Committee queried whether there were other fiscally neutral proposals that had been considered to maintain the Marston Vale Trust and whether the Council could match the £10k funding proposed to be contributed by Bedford Borough Council.

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to reduce CBCs £25k contribution towards the core resource costs of the Trust. Having adopted the proposal the Executive should seek to provide fiscally neutral support to the Marston Vale Trust.**

r. P10 Countryside Services Restructure

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to restructure Countryside Services in order to achieve £145k savings.**

s. P11 Reduction in Transport Strategy Team Resource and Transport Surveys Reduced from Six Monthly to Annual

**RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to reduce the Transport Strategy Team resource and produce transport surveys annually in order to achieve £60k savings.**

<b>Social Care, Heath and Housing Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee: 22 November 2010</b>	
<b>Comments Regarding Savings Proposals contained within the Corporate Budget Strategy Report presented to Executive on 2 November 2010</b>	
At its meeting of 22 November 2010, the Social Care, Heath and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the viability and suitability of the specific savings proposals relating to the Social Care, Heath and Housing Directorate. Detailed below are the outcomes of this meeting.	
<i>Social Care, Heath and Housing</i>	
a.	<u>SCHH6 More Effective deployment of council resources across the reablement service and extra care housing</u>
	The Committee were informed that the Council currently provides a service of which unit costs are in excess of what is expected. It was noted that the service reconfiguration would provide the Council with an estimated saving of £200k during 2011/2012. Members queried if the negative aspects of this proposal reported in the press were refuted and if staff were informed of the various stages in the process. The Director informed members of the Committee that all staff have been encouraged to attend the road shows which could be used as a means of raising concerns from staff about service delivery.
	<b>RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to save the Council an estimated £200k based on the need to continue to inform staff of the varied proposals associated with the service reconfiguration.</b>
b.	<u>SCHH16 LuDun</u>
	The Committee were informed of the financial implications of the £300k subsidy referred to in the Executive Report. This is largely staffing related costs. The Trustees had determined that the current workshop was not meeting the objectives of the Trust Deed and that the building was not fit for purpose. The trustees are considering how in the future the objectives of the Trust can be achieved. The Trustees and the Council are willing to talk with other interested parties alternatives for LuDun. The Council has commenced consultation with employees and the other funders of LuDun on its proposals to remove the subsidy.
	<b>RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal to make the saving of £300k</b>
c.	<u>SCHH 15 Modernisation of Day services for adults with Learning Disabilities</u>
	The Director informed the Committee of the changing make up of the learning disability population and therefore consideration needs to be given to whether the current investment in services is meeting current and future needs. The Committee were advised that there is increasing evidence that younger adults taking up personal budgets are not content with the current day services on offer in Central Bedfordshire. It was noted that the conventional day centre approach was rapidly becoming the

	<p>least preferred option. The Director informed the Committee that the Council can achieve the savings of £100,000. during the period 2011/2012, with further savings over the following two years. This would include consultation with our customers, carers, families and staff and would be a gradual move to more appropriate day opportunities. Customers would continue to receive care and support and that we would move away from one of the Council's current day services.</p>
	<p><b>RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal in order to achieve £100,000 saving</b></p>
d.	<p><u>SCHH17 Reduction in the usage of residential care services</u></p>
	<p>The Committee discussed the implications of this proposal and the current cost and usage of the Care Placements for older people as the Council invests significantly more than its family group in residential care. The Director advised that the range of alternatives to residential care needed to be enhanced and investment targeted around support to older people with dementia. Customers would continue to be receive care and support in their own homes or sheltered accommodation as alternative to residential home admission.</p>
	<p><b>RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal in order to achieve £1.050m savings.</b></p>
e.	<p><u>SCHH 18 Develop a joint approach to improved care and reablement services</u></p>
	<p>The Committee was informed that other Local Authorities and partner organisations had worked in partnership for a number of years and it would be a common sense approach for Central Bedfordshire Council to consider this way of working.</p>
	<p>It was noted that governance arrangements would need to be robust when working with partner organisations to avoid any hidden costs incurred by the Council.</p>
	<p><b>RECOMMENDED that the Executive adopt the proposal in order to achieve £250k savings. The Committee also requested that the phrase "service reduction" be changed to read "service reconfiguration"<sup>1</sup></b></p>

<sup>1</sup> Ref: <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=19925>  
Corporate Budget Strategy SAVING PROPOSALS SERVICE RECONFIGURATION AND REDUCTIONS  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PAGE 8, APPENDIX B(iii), Social Care, Health & Housing: SCHH18 Develop a joint approach to improved care and reablement services – Service Reduction

**Children's Services Committee: 30 November 2010**

**Comments Regarding Savings Proposals contained within the Corporate Budget Strategy Report presented to Executive on 2 November 2010**

At its meeting of 30 November 2010, the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the viability and suitability of specific proposals relating to the Children's Services Directorate. Detailed below are the outcomes flowing from this meeting.

1. CS4 – Special Education Needs – Service Reductions

Whilst the Committee reluctantly endorsed (by majority vote, 6 for, 2 against & 2 abstentions) the general direction of service delivery as set out in this proposal, it also requested the Director of Children's Services to take on board the following comments and refer such to the Executive. The Committee also requested that the Executive feedback its response to such comments to the next meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- (i) The Committee found it very difficult to assess the implications of the proposal without a concise definition of the phrase "truly vulnerable" and suggested that without such a definition an informed decision could not be reached.
- (ii) It was the Committee's opinion that there was insufficient detail contained within the proposal to assess its full consequences on service delivery.
- (iii) As a result of the two previous comments, it was the Committee's opinion that the saving proposed in year 2 (i.e. 2012/13) of £272k should not proceed without a much more detailed report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, which would describe the implications of the proposal on service delivery (the Committee was content however to support the Director of Children's Services in implementing the saving proposal of £128k in 2011/12).

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive notes the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's reluctant endorsement of the general direction of service delivery as set out in the proposal, whilst responding to the comments set out in Items 1(i) to 1(iii) above.**

2. CS5 – Remodelling of Services to Young People including the Youth Service – Service Reduction

Whilst considering this proposal, the Portfolio Holder drew Members' attention to a supplementary savings proposal regarding this service, which would be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 7 December. In essence, this supplementary proposal recommended

accelerating service reductions so that all were achieved in 2011/12, rather than the phased approach over 2011/12 and 2012/13 as originally planned.

Members were particularly dismayed at this latest initiative, which in their opinion would not allow sufficient time to build capacity and provide training and support to the voluntary sector and schools that a move away from council run provision to a commissioning approach would require.

The Committee therefore agreed to urge the Executive to consider adopting the original 2 phased approach to the remodelling of services to young people.

**RECOMMENDATION: Whilst reluctantly acknowledging the need to support the remodelling of services to young people, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee urges the Executive to adopt a 2 phased approach to the proposal, as originally outlined (i.e. a saving of £570k in 2011/12 and a further saving of £1.328M in 2012/13).**

3. CS8 – Parenting Support – Service Reduction

The Committee was content to endorse in principle this saving proposal.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive implements the saving proposal outlined.**

4. CS9 – Music Service

The Committee was content to reiterate and endorse the recommendations agreed at its meeting on 23 November regarding this particular savings proposal, which are outlined within the Executive's report at Item 9 of today's agenda.

**RECOMMENDATION: Please refer to the Summary of Overview & Scrutiny Comments detailed within Item 9 of the Executive's agenda of 7 December 2010.**