

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



**TO EACH MEMBER OF THE
SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

17 December 2010

Dear Councillor

**SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - Monday
20 December 2010**

Following Chairman's Briefing which was held on Friday 17 December, please find attached additional information relating to the above meeting:-

- 10. LINK Update**

Please find attached the update from Bedfordshire LINK on local health matters influencing LINK activity as defined by the Health and Social Care Act 2001.

- 12. Base Budget Build and Savings Proposals**

Please find attached copies of the Executive papers from the meeting held on 7 December 2010.

Should you have any queries regarding the above please contact Democratic Services on Tel: 0300 300 4032.

Yours sincerely

Martha Clampitt,
Democratic Services Officer
email: martha.clampitt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

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Meeting: Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny
Committee

Date: 20 December 2010, 10am

Report of: Max Coleman, Chairman, Bedfordshire Local Involvement
Network (LINK)

Summary: Update of Bedfordshire LINK activity

NOTE: Information only

3 December LA contract review meeting with Host organisation
postponed. Yet to be re-arranged.

10 December LINK visits to SEPT bases:
Whichello Wharf – Leighton Buzzard
Poplars Ward – Houghton Regis
Townsend Court

10 December LINK members meet with Richard Winter,
Director of Operations, NHS Beds Community
Health Services.

16 December Finalising LINK response to Mental Health
Consultation on: Transforming Mental Health
Services in Bedfordshire & Luton

Future meetings

11 January 2011 Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Working group

**14 January 2011 Social Care Working group with guests
Michelle Bradley, Associate Director, MH & Learning
Disabilities, NHS Bedfordshire
Paula Parr, Autism Bedfordshire**

**20 January 2011 Acute, Ambulance, Primary Care Working group with
guest speaker, Elaine Hide, Governance Lead, L&D
Hospital**

**26 January 2011 LINK Board meeting with guests:
Maggie Hannelly, CQC
Cllr C Hegley**

**4 February 2011 LINK Dementia Awareness Training – Dr Johan
Schoeman, SEPT**

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 7 December 2010
Subject: Corporate Budget Strategy Update
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Portfolio Holder for People, Finance and Governance
Summary: The report provides an update to the Corporate Budget Strategy reported to the Executive on 2 November following the Comprehensive Spending Review announcement on 20 October 2010.

Advising Officer: Richard Ellis, Director of Customer and Shared Service
Contact Officer: Matt Bowmer, Assistant Director Financial Services
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision No
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** Not applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The report sets out proposals 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 to its priorities.

Financial:

Set out in the report.

Legal:

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 stipulates that the Council must set an amount of council tax payable for the financial year 2011/12 by 11 March 2011.

Before calculating the level of council tax payable, the Council must consult representatives of non-domestic ratepayers in its area.

The Council's Constitution requires the Executive to publish a timetable for making proposals to the Council in respect of the budget.

The proposals outlined in Appendix A to the report may result in some employees being made redundant. In those circumstances, the Council is required to undertake

consultation with appropriate representatives of the employees who are affected by the proposals. This consultation must begin in good time and, where at least 100 employees are affected, then the consultation must begin at least 90 days before any employees are dismissed.

Risk Management:

Proposed budget reductions of this kind present key risks to the Council:

- Demand: The wider impact of the current economic climate on local residents is placing further demands on the Council's services, at a time when the Council needs to reduce spending due to constraints on public expenditure.
- Reputation: If stakeholder engagement is not managed effectively, the need for the Council to take difficult decisions in response to the contraction of public expenditure will not be understood.
- Delivery: The delivery of the agreed savings proposals will need to be effectively managed to ensure they are realised in practice.
- Priorities & Outcomes: The Council needs to ensure that its spending decisions reflect its priorities and the outcomes it wishes to secure on behalf of its residents.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

The staffing implications are set out in the report.

Equalities/Human Rights:

In developing the Budget Strategy, the Council must ensure that decisions are made in such a way as to minimise unfairness, and that there is not a disproportionately negative effect on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, and men and women. Equality Impact Assessments are being undertaken for all savings proposals, where relevant, and the findings will be reported to Members in the New Year as part of the budget setting process.

Community Safety:

Any potential changes or reductions in budgets may have an impact on the delivery of community safety priorities in the future.

Sustainability:

Key sustainability agenda, such as climate change, represents opportunities for the Council to make efficiency savings by decreasing energy use and the total spend on energy, for 2008/09 this was £3.4 million (including schools). Failure to take action leaves the Council vulnerable to the impact of increasing energy prices.

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committees will consider the savings proposals in their December cycle of meetings.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

that the Executive

- (a) Acknowledge the additional challenges facing the Council in view of the Government’s Spending Review announcement and the expected reduction in funding for local authorities, including its profiling.**
- (b) Invite Overview & Scrutiny and other stakeholders to comment on the supplementary saving proposals in Appendix A (Supplementary Savings Schedule)**

Reason for Recommendation(s): So that the Council is prepared to introduce and implement a budget for 2011/12, through the active engagement of Members, Staff, Customers and Stakeholders.

Executive Summary

The funding assumptions made in the Corporate Budget Strategy were broadly in line with the overall funding settlement for local government set out in the Spending Review announcement on 20 October 2010.

However, more up to date information has shown the profile of the reductions to be front loaded with a greater impact on 2011/12. An early assessment of the impact has been made and further savings proposals are now considered appropriate.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Corporate Budget Strategy report to Executive set out Central Bedfordshire’s response to the Coalition Government’s policy direction and to an anticipated reduction in funding of £36M over the medium term, with £14.5M of this sum impacting on 2011/12.

Spending Review 20 October 2010

Headlines

2. The initial headlines from the Spending Review announcement on 20 October were for a 28% funding reduction over the next four years in contrast to the 25% anticipated. Given the £100M per annum received in Government Grant, the additional 3% reduction is equivalent to £3M over the four year period of the review.
3. However, whilst the headlines were for an average reduction of 7% per annum, the detail of the announcement sets out a ‘front loading’ of the reductions. There will not be complete clarity about the specific implications for each council until the Local Government Finance Settlement. Currently, the following are the profiled reductions in Formula Grant and specific/area based grants reflected in reduced Department Expenditure Limits for the Whitehall spending departments.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2015/16
Formula Grant	-10.7	-6.4	-0.9	-5.6
ABG/Specific Grants	-12.7	-7.6	-1.1	-6.6

4. There is further detail emerging on a daily basis with the position very much complicated by transfers being made between different grant streams.

Other elements of the announcement

5. There are a number of other elements of note in the more recent announcement:
 - Council Tax freeze. There is to be a 2.5% grant to compensate councils freezing their Council Tax increases across the four year review period.
 - There will be a reduction in the number of funding streams, down to ten from 1 April 2011 and there will be no ring fencing, with the exception of the Dedicated Schools Grant and a new Early Years Intervention Grant.
 - The total Formula Grant sum for distribution nationally includes an additional £0.5bn for Personal Social Services.
 - There is to be a new grant – the New Homes Bonus to support housing growth which will match increases in the Council Tax base pound for pound from 1 April 2011.
 - Borrowing rates from the Public works Loan Board (PWLB) will increase by 1% from 1 April 2011.
 - There is a fund of £200M nationally to support ‘internal restructuring’. This will effectively enable redundancy costs to be capitalised but it is a relatively small fund in the context of the overall reductions.
6. At this point in time, the front loading of Formula Grant, Area Based Grant and Specific Grant reductions offset by the 2.5% Council Tax ‘compensation’ puts an additional pressure of £2.7M on the Council’s finances in 2011/12.
7. It should also be remembered that the distribution of Formula Grant has been subject to consultation, with the outcome expected in mid December. There will in all likelihood be ‘floors’ and ‘ceilings’ to dampen any swings in funding. There is an expectation that resources will move from northern to southern authorities but ‘floors’ and ‘ceilings’ will impact on this movement in the short term.

STRATEGIC RESPONSE

8. The policy approach, organisational values and financial management processes adopted by the Council during its first two years of operation will continue to drive the strategic response which will be characterised by rigour, responsibility and realism. The policies outlined in the 2 November Budget Strategy Report will be followed including:
 - Getting the Basics Right – Base Budget Review
 - Driving Efficiencies
 - Collaboration and Partnership
 - Empowering Individuals and Communities
 - Protecting the truly vulnerable

BASE BUDGET BUILD

9. A major component of the budget process for 2011/12 has been the Base Budget Build.
10. This has been a highly valuable undertaking to give greater assurance that the Council’s cost base is accurately reflected in its revenue budget.

11. The build has been based on the forecast outturn position for 2010/11 taking account of the budget management information at 30 September 2010. Whilst the forecast outturn position is much improved, as detailed in the Budget Management report also on this agenda, it reflects a number of one off measures and the holding of vacancies and discretionary spend which is not sustainable in the longer term.
12. The full detail of the Base Budget Build is being presented to the December cycle of Overview & Scrutiny meetings.

OTHER FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

13. The opportunity has been taken to review a number of the funding streams in the Corporate Budget Strategy.
14. The Strategy currently assumes a 0.6% increase in the Council Tax Base for 2011/12. The increase for the current financial year was 1.2% and it is appropriate to build in a similar increase for 2011/12, in view of some improvements in house building as the economy continues to recover from the recession.
15. The Executive harmonised the Empty Homes Discount at its November meeting and this will also have a positive impact on the Council Tax base.
16. Finally, the New Homes Bonus is mentioned above and this new funding stream will broadly match any growth in the Council Tax base. The Budget Strategy has removed the dependence on the demised Housing Planning Delivery Grant, so this new grant will benefit the overall finances of the Council. The latest information here does suggest that the funding will be linked to average precepts nationally rather than those set by Central Bedfordshire which will make forecasts less straightforward.

OVERALL POSITION

17. The table below summarises the latest position for the Council's finances in 2011/12. It cannot be emphasized enough, however, that more information is emerging on an almost daily basis and this position is very likely to change.

	£M
Initial Gap	14.6
Spending Review	2.7
Base Budget Build	6.0
Additional Resources	-2.5
	20.8

18. The overall funding gap for 2011/12 is now £6.2m greater than reported in the November report.

RESPONSE

19. It has therefore been necessary, in a relatively short period of time, to formulate further savings proposals over and above those reported in November to address the increased funding gap. These additional savings amount to a further £8.3M for 2011/12 and are set out in Appendix A (Supplementary Savings Schedule). These include:
- a number of service specific proposals (£5.6M);
 - a general increase in fees and charges in excess of inflation (£0.25M);
 - reduced inflationary provision on supplies and services (£0.5M);
 - a re-evaluation of capital financing costs as a consequence of the Capital Programme Review now approved by Council (£0.4M); and
 - additional income of £1.6M if the Council Tax levels across the authority were not harmonised from 1 April 2011
20. In the Appendix there are several options put forward for a number of the proposals. The higher figure has been taken into account in the total figure in Paragraph 18. Also, these savings are all full year and further work is being undertaken on phasing, as the full year effect is unlikely to be realised in 2011/12. Also underway are:
- a review of the Authority's top ten contracts by value with a review to delivering these at a lower cost ;
 - a review to reduce the number of meetings;
 - a review of all posts which have been vacant for more than six months; and
 - a review of options to consider investment to kick start service delivery through the voluntary sector.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

21. The Corporate Budget Strategy has been proactively communicated to a wide range of individuals, organisations and groups to enable all interested parties to have their say on the proposals.
22. Various communication methods have been used. These include face to face meetings with groups such as the Carers Forum, Older People's Reference Group, the Youth Parliament, School Governors and Headteachers' Forums, the Business Community and Third Sector Assembly. There has also been direct communications to service users and stakeholders. Public communication has been managed through the Central Bedfordshire Council website, News Central (the Council's community magazine) and Let's Talk Central, the Council's social media site.
23. Residents and stakeholders will continue to comment on the proposals through on line and conventional communications. All feedback will be collated and summarised for Member consideration in the January and February Executive reports.

TIMETABLE

24. The key milestones for Council to agree its budget in February are set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Date	Body	Outcome
Early December	CLG	Local Government Finance Settlement
December	Overview & Scrutiny	Consideration of savings proposals and base budget build
11 January 2011	Executive	Draft budget 2011/12
17 January	Overview & Scrutiny	Comment on Draft Budget
8 February 2011	Executive	Recommends final Budget
24 February 2011	Council	Approves Budget

Appendices:

Appendix A - Supplementary Savings Schedule for consultation

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None

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Appendix A

SUPPLEMENTARY SAVINGS PROPOSALS

SOCIAL CARE HEALTH & HOUSING

SCHH19 – Supplementary - Remodelling of the Assessment and Care Management Teams – Efficiency

Background

The current Assessment and Care Management teams arrange adult social care support for older people, people with disability and learning disabilities. They are made up of 67 professionally qualified Social Workers (78%) and 19 Community Support workers (22%). The approach to delivering adult social care is changing with more emphasis on self assessment and personal budgets that will require our workforce to have a broader range of skills.

Rationale for Service Change

Changing the skill mix will reduce the cost of the services. This would mean a reduction in the number of professionally qualified staff and their work would be directed towards more complex cases (e.g. safeguarding and complex needs). We would look to increase the number of Community Support Workers who would focus on assisting customers with support planning to achieve the personalisation agenda.

Financial Implications

An initial proposal (DS64) for this efficiency was included for 2011/12 and would deliver further savings in 2012/13 and 2013/14. This proposal brings forward an additional £0.1M from 2012/13 into 2011/12 which takes the total to £0.3M.

Service Implications and Impact

There would be a need to allow 90 days consultation with the employees concerned and this may cause concern amongst the councils current adult social care customers.

SCHH20 - Supplementary - Remodelling of services for People with Learning Disabilities – Efficiency

Background

The current Domiciliary Care (including Respite Services) and Assessment & Resettlement service supports adults with learning disabilities in supported living environments. The team has 57 full time equivalents with a total salary budget of £1.64M

Rationale for Service Change

Better use of in house staffing resources and more flexible opportunities for customers.

Financial Implications

An initial proposal (DS70) for this efficiency was included for 2011/12 and would deliver further savings in 2012/13 and 2013/14. This proposal brings forward an additional £0.2M from 2012/13 into 2011/12 which takes the total to £0.35M.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no direct impact on our customers although there will be a need to allow a 90 day staff consultation and current customers may be concerned.

SCHH21 – Supplementary - Learning Disabilities Commissioning Transfer – Efficiency

Background

As part of the Campus Closure programme funding of £9.6M has transfer from the PCT to the Council to pay for a number of contracts and care packages for adults with a learning disability.

Rationale for Service Change

The contracts mentioned above were inherited from the PCT and the target is to make contract efficiencies in 2011/12.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that this proposal could deliver £100,000 saving.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no direct impact on our customers although this may result in opposition from current providers.

SCHH22 - Supplementary – Reduction in the Transforming Peoples Lives Service – Efficiency

Background

A project team was established to begin to implement the outcomes of the Transforming Peoples Lives (TPL) agenda. The team has 5 full time equivalents with a total salary budget of £0.2m

Rationale for Service Change

The Council has now passed the project stage of implementing the TPL agenda and there is a need to integrate this practice into the rest of the service.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that £0.12M will be saved by implementing this efficiency.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no direct impact on our customers although there will be a need to allow a 90 day staff consultation.

SCHH23 - Supplementary – Management Review of the Commissioning & Partnership team – Efficiency

Background

The Commissioning and Partnership team provides strategic commissioning, contract monitoring and compliance and service user participation. The team has 19 full time equivalents with a total salary budget of £0.742M

Rationale for Service Change

To undertake a review of the service to ensure the structure and roles are fit for purpose and provide value for money.

Financial Implications

There will be a potential reduction on 2 FTEs which will deliver a saving of £50,000 in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no direct impact on our customers although there will be a need to allow a 90 day staff consultation. This could lead to a lower level of support to the voluntary sector and user representative groups.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CS5a – Remodelling of services to Young People including the Youth Service – Service Reduction

Background

The proposals will move the youth service and all other cross directorate services that support young people towards less Council run provision and more volunteering. A commissioning approach with schools and volunteers will be adopted, focusing on the truly vulnerable.

Rationale for Service Change

The Council will move to supporting young people through external partnership arrangements. To make provision for young people and to listen to their views is a statutory requirement. The Council has discretion over the way it delivers this provision. This change will involve the re-commissioning of youth clubs and other youth provision in consultation with the voluntary and third sector. Services to young people will be brought into a single point of contact within the Directorate with a focus on the truly vulnerable. A review of the cost of the Youth Offending Service will also be undertaken to maximise efficiency.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £1.898M in 2011/12. This can be achieved by the reduction of both full time equivalent and part time posts and the closure of all youth centres unless partners can be obtained to run them at no cost to the Council. The Government may offer some funding for activities for young people in 2011/12. This is as yet unknown. This proposal is challenging as there will be no time for capacity building with schools and the voluntary sector.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

The role of the Council will change towards partnerships and volunteering in line with the "Big Society" initiatives.

Members will notice that local services are delivered increasingly in partnership with the voluntary sector.

CS9a - Music Service – Service Reduction for the financial year 2011/12

Background

The Music Service is a shared service providing support and tuition to pupils across the Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire. The Music Service is currently funded from both Council's budgets and the Standards Fund. This proposal removes Central Bedfordshire Council's contribution by the end of the summer term 2011.

Rationale for Service Change

In light of the review by Government of the Standards Fund and the Council's own savings targets, steps to reshape and refocus the service are on-going. This proposal will remove the Council's contribution to the music service with a view to full cost recharge on all activity offered to schools or parents.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £272K in 2011/12. A music service re-organisation will occur during 2011/2012 building on the 2010/2011 management re-organisation and the number of posts affected will be identified at that time. This review will be informed when the outcome of the national Henley Review on funding for music services is known. It closed the call for evidence in October 2010 but the publication date is unknown.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

Schools and Parents will be asked to buy back at full cost.

CS2a Education Welfare Officers – Efficiency/Service Reduction

Background

Education Welfare Officers work with schools to ensure statutory school age children are in regular attendance. They also provide advice and support on community issues. The work involves liaison with schools and thereafter undertaking of enforcement procedures as required.

Rationale for Service Change

This service is a statutory requirement. This savings proposal is to reduce the service to a minimum statutory requirement. Pupil attendance in our schools is good when benchmarked against our statistical neighbours. Future provision will be focused on the truly vulnerable pupils and schools. The savings proposals set out in 2nd November 2010 consulted upon £100k reduction as efficiency. A further £100k would lead to service reduction as the service would respond to emergencies only.

Financial Savings

This will bring a further saving of £100k. This can be achieved by service restructure and the deletion of 2 full time equivalent posts.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

Some schools may receive reduced levels of support.

DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Division: Economic Growth, Skills and Regeneration

EGRS 1

Title: Merge the Community Involvement and Community Engagement Teams – Service Reduction

Background:

The Community Involvement Team has delivered a central discretionary service in supporting the 3 priority neighbourhoods in Downside, Parkside and Tithe Farm. The work is delivered by a Manager, 4 Community Development posts and one Administrative post. Neighbourhood Improvement Plans have been developed and adopted by the wider LSP.

The team has also led on Town and Parish Planning, Training Community Planners and Community Volunteers in how to undertake and encourage community participation and research. Their expertise in providing the outreach and connection particularly into neighbourhoods and community involvement skills are not replicated anywhere else in the Council. They work with a broad number of community volunteers and agencies particularly those active in the priority neighbourhoods. Without support it is not likely that those relationships will continue.

Rationale for Service Change:

The introduction of the new Community Engagement Strategy encourages a greater role for Town and Parish Councils. Dunstable TC has expressed interest in discussing the support for Downside being led by the Town Council team. Houghton Regis TC has not to date. The corporate community engagement team and the greater emphasis on community and neighbourhood plans requires a different service approach for all our services and perhaps where additional facilitation needs to be considered to be led by the Community and Voluntary sectors.

No external regeneration funding is expected to support community and neighbourhood regeneration.

Financial Savings

The proposal will generate a full year saving of £0.3m (£0.2m in 2011/12) Staff includes one FTE team leader, 1 FTE Admin G3, 2.81 FTE (3 posts) officer plus – total 4.81 FTE (5 posts), Plus one vacant officer post.

Implications

Neighbourhoods Improvement Plans and groups will be unsupported. No dedicated community development work will be carried out in the Council. The expertise and skills in community participation will be lost and when required will need to be procured at potentially higher cost.

This proposal will leave one regeneration officer in the rest of team to lead on the regeneration skills and worklessness agenda in a commissioning role only.

EGRS 4

Title: Remodelling of the Library Service – Service Reduction

Background:

Central Bedfordshire operates 12 libraries. A full and comprehensive review to fully establish the impact and implications will begin as the new Head of Service joins the authority in January 2011.

Rationale for Service Change:

To contribute to the corporate savings target.

Financial Savings:

The service as a whole costs the Council £3.3m. This can be considered under the 3 main headings below:

1. Library professional core operational management and relief staff
£0.880m
2. Library IT system, book stock and Library Link £1.070m
3. 12 Area Libraries costs £1.390m

This proposal sets a full year savings target of £0.350m (£0.225m in 2011/12). The savings will be generated from a review of the service management structure, reductions in the shared hub support and reduction in the level of new book and other resources purchased.

No library closures are proposed. A full review of the library service area operations would continue.

Implications:

The library provides not only the expected book service but also a range of places for public and family use. The review will consider the options for combining public services in our towns and villages. The experience of Arlesey has shown that if managed, the community can successfully operate library services with the access to the hub and professional libraries support at a reduced cost.

As many of these activities from which savings are to be found are provided to the whole of Bedfordshire, including Luton via a shared service agreement, mutual negotiations will be required.

There will be a reduced level of new books and other resources purchased. Staffing implications are to be determined.

Title: CSPPWL 4 Closure of HWRC - 2 days per week – Service Reduction

Background

A saving to reduce hours of operation is currently under negotiation. This proposal is to close 2 days/week. Consideration will be given to cooperating on closures times with HWRCs operated by neighbouring authorities.

Rationale for Service Change

To meet corporate savings target.

Financial Savings

To be negotiated, estimate £60,000 full year saving.

This is an indicative figure, based on cost per year for all 4 sites in Central Bedfordshire.

Service Implications and Impact

Timing – it is logical to bring closure on 2 days/week in at the same time as reduced opening hours. Cost of implementation and contract costs may impact on savings.

Community Safety

Title: CSPPWL 1 Remodelling of the Community Safety Team - Service Reconfiguration

Background

The Community Safety team is key in delivering the Council's Community Safety priorities. It is a major contributor and leads in the statutory Community Safety Partnership.

Rationale for Service Change

Contribution to corporate savings target.

Financial Savings

£30,000 full year saving (£15,000 in 2011/12)

Service Implications and Impact

The current team would be reconfigured to deliver against new priorities to deliver the saving whilst maintaining statutory responsibilities.

Title: CSPPWL 5 Remodelling of Waste Services – Service Reconfiguration/Reduction

Background

Remodelling of the service to enable delivery of key priorities and maintain performance at an acceptable level.

Rationale for Service Change

Savings and vacant Waste Strategy Manager post enable review of minimum requirements to deliver BEaR, maintain reasonable level of performance and reduce financial risks.

This proposal will bring together visible presence team to combine: Waste Minimisation team, (3) Education and Promotions Officers (2), with Environmental Protection team under one Team Leader, reporting to Community Safety Operations Manager under Safer, Cleaner, Greener agenda. Overall reduction of one Waste Services FTE Team Leader post from Waste Services.

Job descriptions to be amended and re evaluated to reflect this.

Financial Savings

£30,000 full year saving (£15,000 in 2011/12)

Service Impact

Further reduction in team resource. Expect overall 1FTE reduction.

Leisure

Title: CSPPWL 6 Sports Development and Play Service – Service Reconfiguration/Reduction

Background

Sport and play development provides a range of sporting and play opportunities across ages. Service outcomes contribute to targets in adult participation in sport, Childhood Obesity in year 6, and the range of Every Child Matters Outcomes.

The Team provides/delivers:

- Develop sports through the leisure management contracts – swimming has been the main sport developed.
- Maximise external funding to increase sport, physical activity and play opportunities.
- Increase participation and performance in sports, physical activity and play via competition, (sports hall athletics) club development, sport and play activity programmes, after school clubs.
- Administer activity programmes and equipment loan schemes.
- Develop and deliver programme for specialised and vulnerable service users eg 'Aiming high for disabled children'.
- Provide training and information in Child Protection, Health and Safety and Sport and Play to partners.

- Provide training and work experience to individuals that enable them to develop careers in play and sport development, and support club and coach development.

Service Implications and Impact

This proposal deletes the Sport Development and Play Service.

This includes 5 FTE posts and temporary seasonal staff who deliver the activity programmes.

There are Specific commitments in 2011/12 that the team is involved in include:-

- Aiming High for Disabled Children.
- Administering and delivering Team Beds and Luton physical activity programme.
- Delivering NHS MEND programme (a childhood obesity programme) 12 schemes over 18 months. £30,000 from NHS to December 2011.
- Play Rangers and natural play activity programme. Lottery Grant ends June 2011, extended to end of summer from 2011 by NHS grant.
- Contribution to 3 year funded post employed by Beds FA and other contributions (Team Beds and Luton)

Financial Savings

This proposal offers a minimum of a full year saving of £200,000, however more work is required to establish what part can be delivered in 2011/12.

Title: CSPPWL 7 Review provision of outdoor education service with a view to increased efficiency – Service Reduction

Background

Central Bedfordshire Council has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Bedford Borough Council for this service to which Central Bedfordshire Council contributes £138,000. This service is already contributing £15,000 as part of the 2011/12 saving proposals which will reduce the budget to £123,000 in 2011/12.

Rationale for Service Change

To contribute to the corporate savings target.

Financial Savings

A further £123,000 full year saving (£70,000 in 2011/12).

Service Implications and Impact

This would remove any subsidy currently being received by schools when participating in outdoor activities at Blue Perris. It would remove the Duke of Edinburgh service. The facility at Kempston currently breaks even. This needs consideration with Bedford Borough council which operates the service.

Title: CSPPWL 8 Sandy Leisure Centre – Service Reduction

Background

A joint use facility at Sandy Upper School. Contract with Stevenage Leisure is coming to a natural end in March 2012. Currently being included as part of an options appraisal on the tendering exercise on the whole of the contract.

Rationale for Service Change

To contribute to corporate savings.

Financial Savings

£143,000 in a full year. The contract comes to an end in March 2012 and the option exists not to include it in the retendering exercise. Early termination of the contract will be explored to give a saving in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

Other providers may consider running the facility, otherwise the facility would close.

There will be an impact on service users who would no longer be able to use this facility.

CUSTOMER & SHARED SERVICES

C&SS16 Reduce Number of Print Rooms to one

Efficiency:

Stage 1: Amalgamate the print two rooms currently located at Priory House and Dunstable.

Stage 2: Seek competitive bids for providing a service based on the outcome of the review.

Background:

The Council operates 2 print rooms – located at Priory House and Watling House, Dunstable. Both operations use a variety of leased copiers at a current annual cost of £74k to produce approximately 5.5million copies annually. . There are 4 FTEs employed to operate both print rooms.

Rationale:

There is a strong external market for the production of high volume reprographics. Benchmarking our costs with local authorities that have externalised their reprographics show that significant annual savings could be achieved.

Current Cost of the 2 Print Rooms – 2010 /2011

Leased Machines: £74k

Staff Costs: £115k

Copy Costs based on 5.5 million copies: £277k – including paper

Total Cost of the 2 Print Rooms 2010/2011: £466k

2011/12 - Move to a single print room model:

Lease costs of copiers: £47k (note: reduction of lease costs due to expiry of 3 leases)

Staff Costs: £63k (based on 55% of 2010/11 of staff costs)

Copy Costs: £277k based on combined throughput of both print rooms in 2010/2011. Copy costs remain unchanged

Total Costs for 2011/ 2012: £387k for a single print room

Savings 2011/12 – single print room model measured against the current 2 print rooms 2010/2011:

Single print room Savings

Lease costs of Copiers: £27k

Staff Costs: £52k

Stage 1

Savings for 2011/2012: £79k by moving to a single print room model

If the Service operated from a single print room were to be outsourced from 1.07.2011, the estimated savings for 2011/2012 would be:

Copier Lease Savings: £35k (based on part year cost July 11 – March 12)

Staff Savings: £47k (based on part year cost July 11 – March 12)

Copy Savings: £208k – (based on part year cost July 11 – March 12)

Total Savings 2011/2012: £290k

Balanced against this would be the copy costs from a new Outsourced Service based on recent estimated benchmarked costs: £144,000

Stage 2

Total savings 2011/12: £146k

Total Savings for:	Stage 1	£79k
	Stage 2	£146k

Combined Total Savings: £225k

Service Implications and Impact

Rationalising the two print rooms will mean that finished work from one of the locations will need to be couriered to office locations.

C&SS 19 Transfer of Provision of Public Conveniences.

Background:

Leighton Buzzard:

The Leighton Buzzard Public Conveniences were refurbished approximately 5 years ago to a five star award winning standard. They are attended and cleaned under contract at a total cost of around £60,000 p.a. The Town Council make a contribution to these costs of £26,150 p.a. The toilets are physically part of the Multi Storey Car Park leading on to Waterbourne Walk a shopping centre the freehold of which is with CBC.

Dunstable:

The Dunstable PC's were refurbished last year and are located in the car park to the rear of Ashton Square shopping centre. They are also attended and cleaned under contract at a total cost of around £50,000 p.a. There is no contribution from the Town Council towards the operation of the toilets and the public consider the location in Ashton Square Car Park is too far from the main shopping area in The Quadrant. Many people are asking for the closed PCs in The Quadrant to be re-opened but they are not ours.

Houghton Regis:

Houghton Regis PCs form part of the new Library, Community Centre and NHS complex that was constructed using EEDA funds at a cost of circa £5,000,000 and they have been short listed for a national five star award. The cost of operating these attended toilets is around £50,000 p.a. with the cleaning contract being part of the larger contract for cleaning the entire building. There is no contribution from the Town Council towards the cost of operating these PCs.

Rationale:

CBC only operates Public Conveniences in the southern half of its area but the old SBDC's policy was to provide one excellent facility in each of its three towns. There are two options available to CBC if it wishes to rationalise its policy across the Council Area and make savings: 1. Close the toilets and have no public facilities available; 2. Ask the Town Councils, or another third party, to undertake the operation of the facilities in their town.

Financial Savings:

The closure, or transfer to the Town Councils, will realise savings of £134,000 per annum.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be strong community led objections to the closure of the Public Conveniences.

C&SS20 – Supplementary – Capital Financing Charges

Background

The authority has recently undertaken a significant review of its capital programme. The result of this review was reported to 2 November Executive.

The review was necessary due to the original capital programme of the authority being based on the activities and spending plans of the three legacy authorities being financially unsustainable in the long term. On approval of the 2010/11 capital programme it was recommended that the authority should look to reduce the borrowing associated with the capital programme by 20%.

The agreed 2010/11 to 2014/15 capital programme expected the authority to borrow £11M in support of the 2011/12 capital programme. The authority is seeking to maintain the proposed reduction of 20% in borrowing in the longer term.

For context, it should be noted that each additional £1m of borrowing costs adds £0.85M cost to the revenue base budget.

Rationale for Service Change

The authority must instigate a financially sustainable capital programme that is focused on the achievements of its priorities. Maintaining the capital programme above what it can reasonably afford will detrimentally impact on service delivery.

Financial Implications

It is anticipated that the associated reduction in borrowing would generate revenue savings of £0.4M per annum.

Service Implications and Impact

Each capital scheme is assessed against key criteria, the principal items being that these are supporting the achievement of the council priorities and are statutorily required.

Implications of individual schemes will be considered as part of the capital programme build process.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

OCE9 - Supplementary - Review Provision of Performance Management

Background

The proposed OCE structure, following the initial set of budget reduction proposals, left a single 'dedicated' corporate performance officer.

Rational for Service Change

The initial proposals regarding reduced performance management support reflected the abolition of CAA. Since the development of the initial proposals, the Government has also confirmed abolition of LAAs. This presents an opportunity to merge the one remaining corporate performance officer with the current LAA / Partnerships Manager post.

Financial Savings

This post reduction would generate an additional saving of £54k for 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

Further reduction of capacity to support:

- corporate performance monitoring / reporting
- 'servicing' of the Council's Performance Management System (once procured)
- LSP Board / Thematic Partnerships in any 'post LAA' partnership based performance management arrangements (e.g. progress in delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy).
- routine performance reporting for Customer & Shared Services directorate.

OCE10 – Supplementary – Internal Communications

Background

This function includes two generic Internal Communications Officer posts. These posts are largely dedicated to production of regular news products (Members Information Bulletin, Be Inspired, News Review) and organising staff events, such as the Roadshows.

Rational for Service Change

This proposal deletes these posts – and would require a transfer of editorial services to the media team and event management to the Business Support post.

Financial Savings

These post reductions generate an additional saving of £74k for 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

This proposal will reduce internal communications capacity and increase pressure on other teams within Communications.

OCE11 - Supplementary - Customer Relations / FoI (processing transactions)

Background

The Customer Relations team comprises one manager and two officers.

OCE also employs one junior officer to service the transactional side of the Freedom of Information (FoI) requests.

Rational for Service Change

Both are intrinsically linked to the 'customer' and so this proposal merges the transaction element of FoI work with the Customer Relations Team, deleting one post.

Financial Savings

This post reduction generates an additional saving of **22k** for 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

Reduced corporate capacity which may delay response times in peak periods.

OCE12 - Supplementary - Programme Management – Analysts

Background

The initial set of budget reduction proposals included the concept of the business analysts supporting the corporate 'customer management' agenda being self-financing by 2013/14 (i.e. top slicing the efficiencies being made to fund upfront investment costs).

Rational for Service Change

This proposal could be introduced for 2011/12 for two analysts posts – and see the posts transferring to Customer & Shared Services.

Financial Savings

This proposal generates an additional saving of **50k** for 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

This proposal intensifies the need for efficiency savings to be delivered from the Customer Management programme – as, in effect, upfront investment activity will need to be repaid.

The proposal has no impact on corporate Programme Management capacity.

CE13 - Supplementary - Risk Management

Background

OCE recently inherited the responsibility to lead strategic risk management. This responsibility was inherited without funding.

Part of the budget for the recent deletion of the Head of Performance & Risk post had been earmarked to create a lower graded post to support corporate

risk work. (The rest of the budget for the Head of Performance & Risk post has already been declared as a budget reduction).

Rational for Service Change

This proposal moves away from the council having a single 'dedicated' risk officer, but leaves a consultancy budget of 25k for council-wide use, if and when required, to buy in specific expertise.

Financial Savings

This proposal generates an additional saving of **18k**.

Service Implications and Impact

This proposal reduces capacity for corporate risk management work (monitoring / reporting of strategic risks, ensuring some form of consistency of approach to risk management across directorates etc).

CROSS CUTTING

CC6a Passenger Transport Review Increased Target

Background

A comprehensive, holistic review of passenger transport provided by the Council is underway.

Rationale for Service Change

To contribute to the corporate savings target whilst maintaining services to the most vulnerable.

Financial Savings

Additional £0.300 million

Service Implications and Impact

As detailed in reports to Executive on specific changes.

CC30a - Supplementary - Employee Terms and Conditions of Service – Efficiency

Background

Employee costs make up a significant part of the Council's expenditure in delivering a wide range of services. (£90M per annum). A number of "terms and conditions of service" costs within this amount are open to local determination.

Rationale for Service Change

In the extremely challenging context of the Council's financial position it is appropriate to seek to reduce the cost of providing services by reducing this major spend area, rather than reducing an equivalent value of actual services.

Financial Savings

A target saving of £1M is to be achieved. Implementation will be over the two financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

The aim of this proposal is to reduce cost without reducing service levels. The specific measures to achieve the target savings will be the subject of negotiation with recognised trade unions through the collective bargaining arrangements.

CC35 – Delay Harmonisation of Council Tax

Background

The intention of the authority was to consider harmonisation of Council Tax between residents across the former district areas. This was anticipated to be from 1 April 2011.

If a nil increase % increase was put in place for residents in the north of the authority, it would be necessary to go well beyond a freeze in the south to ensure harmonisation with a 2.7% reduction being necessary.

Initial estimates of the impact of this policy were a reduction in the overall resources in 2011/12 of £3.8M; £1.6M of this as a consequence of the commitment to harmonisation.

In view of the overall financial pressures as a result of the CSR, it is necessary to review the appropriateness of this measure. It is therefore proposed that Council Tax is not harmonised in April 2011.

The government have confirmed that they will fund a council tax freeze for 2011/12. The loss to the tax base for 2011/12 will be funded at 2.5% in each year of the Spending Review period. It is understood that this will be paid through an additional Area Based Grant. This will be funded regardless of the decision on harmonisation.

Rationale for Service Change

None

Financial Implications

It is anticipated that the associated reduction in borrowing would generate additional income of £1.595M in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

The additional income will allow additional resources to be targeted towards the council's priorities.

Meeting: Executive
Date: 2 November 2010
Subject: Corporate Budget Strategy
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones - Portfolio Holder for People, Finance and Governance

Summary: The report sets out the Council's response to the Coalition Government emerging policies and puts forward proposals for managing expenditure to address the expected funding reductions.

Advising Officer: Richard Ellis, Director of Customer and Shared Service
Contact Officer: Matt Bowmer, Assistant Director Financial Services
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision No
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** Not applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The report sets out proposals 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 to its priorities.

Financial:

Set out in the report.

Legal:

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 stipulates that the Council must set an amount of council tax payable for the financial year 2011/12 by 11 March 2011.

Before calculating the level of council tax payable, the Council must consult representatives of non-domestic ratepayers in its area.

The Council's Constitution requires the Executive to publish a timetable for making proposals to the Council in respect of the budget.

The efficiency proposals outlined in Appendix A to the report may result in some employees being made redundant. In those circumstances, the Council is required to undertake consultation with appropriate representatives of the employees who are affected by the proposals. This consultation must begin in good time and, where at least 100 employees are affected, then the consultation must begin at least 90 days before any employees are dismissed.

Risk Management:

Proposed budget reductions of this kind present key risks to the Council:

- Demand: The wider impact of the current economic climate on local residents is placing further demands on the Council's services, at a time when the Council needs to reduce spending due to constraints on public expenditure.
- Reputation: If stakeholder engagement is not managed effectively, the need for the Council to take difficult decisions in response to the contraction of public expenditure will not be understood.
- Delivery: The delivery of the agreed savings proposals will need to be effectively managed to ensure they are realised in practice.
- Priorities & Outcomes: The Council needs to ensure that its spending decisions reflect its priorities and the outcomes it wishes to secure on behalf of its residents.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

The staffing implications are set out in the report.

Equalities/Human Rights:

In developing the Budget Strategy the Council must ensure that decisions are made in such a way as to minimise unfairness, and that there is not a disproportionately negative effect on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, and men and women. Equality Impact Assessments are being undertaken for all savings proposals, where relevant, and the findings will be reported to members in the New Year as part of the budget setting process.

Community Safety:

Any potential changes or reductions in budgets may have an impact on the delivery of community safety priorities in the future.

Sustainability:

Key sustainability agendas, such as climate change, represents opportunities for the Council to make efficiency savings by decreasing energy use and the total spend on energy, for 2008/09 this was £3.4 million (including schools). Failure to take action leaves the Council vulnerable to the impact of increasing energy prices.

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committees will consider the savings proposals in their December cycle of meetings.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. that the Executive

- (a) Acknowledge the considerable challenges facing the Council in view of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review announcement and the expected reduction in funding for local authorities.**

- (b) Endorse the strategic response, proposed outcomes and direction of travel as set out in paragraphs 21 through to 40.**
- (c) Endorse the efficiency proposals outlined in Appendix A**
- (d) Invite Overview & Scrutiny and other stakeholders to comment on the Service Reconfiguration and Reduction saving proposals in Appendix B**
- (e) Approve the communications and engagement process**
- (f) Agree the timetable for setting the 2011/12 Budget set out in paragraph 50**

Reason for Recommendation(s): So that the Council is prepared to introduce and implement a budget for 2011/12, through the active engagement of Members, Staff, Customers and Stakeholders.

Executive Summary

The report sets out a direction of travel and specific proposals in response to the significant contraction of public expenditure planned by Government as part of its strategy for tackling the national budget deficit.

RATIONALE

1. The purpose of the report is threefold:

Firstly, it will set out the direction of travel for Central Bedfordshire services over the medium term, taking into account the financial challenges facing the public sector as a whole.

Secondly, it will authorise appropriate consultation with stakeholders over a series of proposals developed in response to the above direction of travel.

Thirdly, it will bring forward outline savings proposals.

INTRODUCTION

2. Central Bedfordshire agreed its 2011/12 Budget Process at its Executive meeting in June 2010. This was a significantly earlier start to the process than for 2010/11 to enable greater opportunity for scrutiny of the proposals and provide sufficient lead in time for the budget to be delivered from 1 April 2011.
3. The financial outlook, including recent Government announcements on public expenditure, requires the Council to review and to reduce spending, whilst protecting key frontline services as far as possible. All local authorities face significant reductions in resources as a consequence of anticipated reduced Government Departmental Spending Limits of between 25 to 40% over four years.

These reductions are further compounded by significant pressures on a number of services including waste management, the safeguarding of vulnerable children, the impact of demographic change on Adult Social Care and a greater call on Council services by residents, most notably benefits, as a consequence of the economic downturn.

4. The much awaited Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR10) in October is expected to provide the national figures, with the detail to follow in the Local Government Finance Settlement in late November or early December. The settlement will possibly cover two financial years. The Formula Grant, of which Central Bedfordshire receives £50 M per annum, is under review by CLG (Communities & Local Government) and the outcome is not expected until late December.
5. There is no doubt that local government is faced with significant funding pressures, with recent unprecedented “in-year” grant reductions as a result of the Emergency Budget and the prospect of further significant reductions in grant income. The Government continues to emphasise the need for further efficiencies in local government with a significant impact on the delivery of services.

As a consequence difficult choices will have to be made about our current activities and the level of services we provide whilst taking into account the Council’s priorities. There is a lack of definitive information at this time but there is, sufficient evidence of the need for the Council to plan ahead for savings for 2011/12 and beyond.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Policy Direction

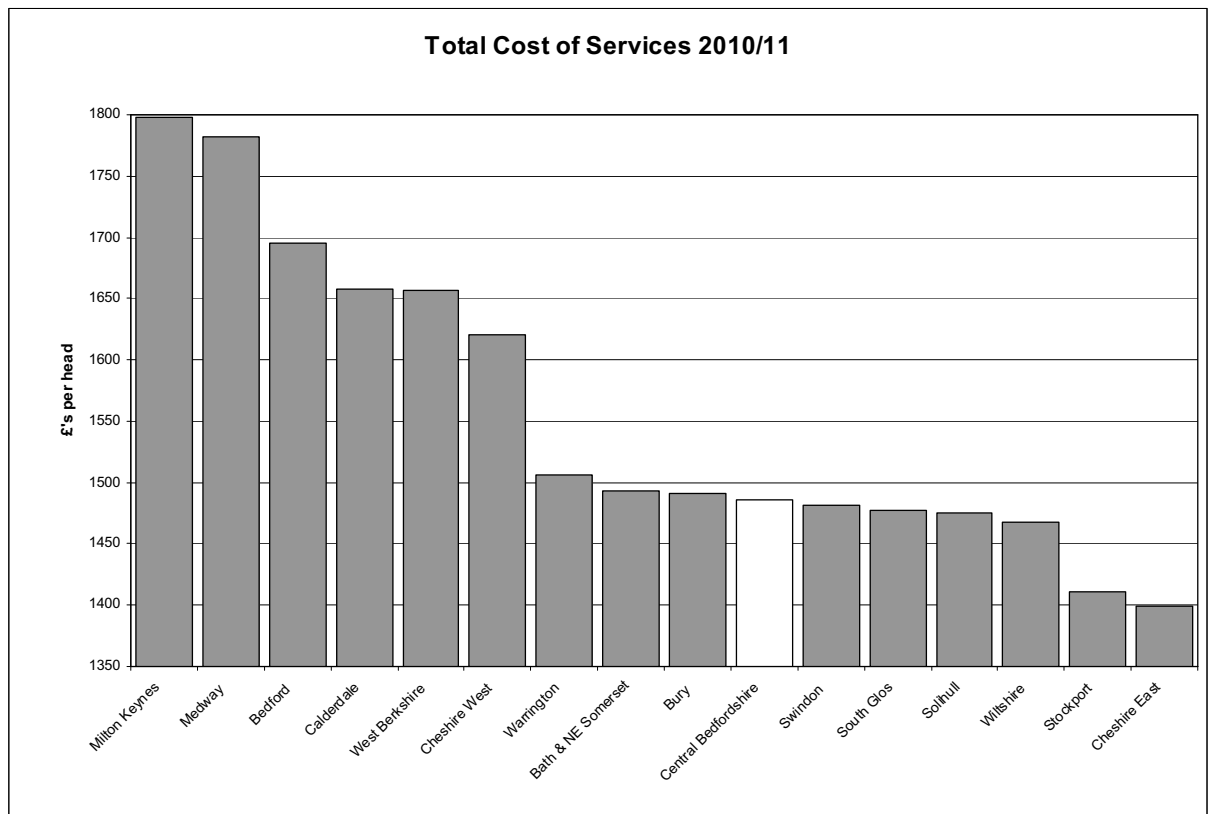
6. The Coalition Agreement is underpinned by the values of fairness, freedom and responsibility. It promises radical reform, a stronger society, a smaller state and power and responsibility in the hands of every citizen. Alongside the primary focus of reducing the country’s budget deficit, the new Government has also set out plans on a number of areas of direct relevance to local government
7. Decentralisation and localism are key themes. A Localism Bill is due in the autumn which will promote the devolution of power and greater financial autonomy to local government and community groups, including a power of general competence. A review of local government finance is also in the programme.
8. A number of changes are already being put into effect in anticipation of legislation. These include the abolition of the Comprehensive Area Assessment and the Audit Commission itself, the development of local enterprise partnerships to replace regional development agencies, revocation of regional strategies, the abolition of the government regional offices and some decentralisation affecting aspects of housing.
9. The Big Society seeks to encourage social responsibility, volunteering and philanthropy, and make it easier for people to come together to improve their communities and help one another. The Government is also keen to support the creation and expansion of co-operatives, charities and social enterprises, and enable these groups to have much greater involvement in the running of public services.
10. The reform of schools is also a key feature of the Government’s programme, designed to ensure that new providers can enter the state school system in response to parental demand, that all schools have freedom over the curriculum and that schools are held properly to account. This includes enabling schools to become academies and the establishment of free schools.
11. There are significant changes planned for the National Health Service. Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) will cease to exist from April 2013 with their role taken on by General Practitioner (GP) Commissioning Groups. Furthermore, the responsibility for Public Health will transfer to local authorities.

Economic Analysis

12. The economy moved slowly out of recession and into growth in the final quarter of 2009/10 and continued the improvement in the first quarter of 2010/12. The recovery is still weak, however, and whilst there is generally a reduced expectation of a 'double dip' recession, forecasts of growth are still conservative. A 'double dip' does remain a risk though and reductions in public expenditure will have an adverse impact.
13. Of equal concern is the continued high level of inflation measured both by the Consumer Price Index and Retail Price Indices. If these do not start to come down in the near future, the Monetary Policy Committee might start to raise interest rates.
14. Unemployment is still well short of the three million figure forecast a year ago but there has been an increase in short time and part time work which has contributed to an increased take up of benefits - up 12% between April 2010 and September 2010 in Central Bedfordshire.
15. Data from the Office for National Statistics for Central Beds forecasts continued growth in the 65+ and 85+ populations. The 65+ population is currently 34,400 and is forecast to be 42,300 by 2016, an increase of 23%. The 85+ population is currently 4,900 and is forecast to be 6,500 by 2016, an increase of 33%.

Local Financial Issues

16. There is no fresh evidence to add to the financial position reported in the Budget Strategy report to Executive in August 2010. This report identified a need to reduce expenditure by something of the order of £36M over the medium term with an initial challenge of £14.6M for 2011/12. The Council is well prepared for this challenge with comprehensive saving proposals having been developed.
17. The Council has a positive track record in delivering savings, having reduced its budget by £10M in 2009/10 and the positive progress made with the £12M of savings and efficiencies built into the 2010/11 budget. In addition, the Council has had to make further in year savings in 2010/11 - £1.515M in response to Area Based Grant reductions alone and further reductions as a result of the loss of the Free Swimming Grant and the Harnessing Technology Grant.
18. Financial benchmarking data is now available for 2010/11, taking into account spending plans for this year. In the light of the savings and efficiencies made over the past two years, Central Bedfordshire is spending below the median level of its statistical neighbours. The relatively position of Central Bedfordshire is clearly shown in the bar chart below.



19. Against this financial backdrop, the Council is now able to assess comparative performance through benchmarking data for the 2009/10 National Performance Indicators. When comparing the performance of key services, both nationally and against statistical neighbours, the Council is performing well.
20. It is acknowledged that performance indicators provide only a partial picture of overall service quality and therefore there is no room for complacency as the Council strives to achieve a number of key outcomes over the medium term.

STRATEGIC RESPONSE

21. In the context of reducing resources and increasing responsibilities, the Council faces a particularly challenging budget process. Central Bedfordshire must discharge its statutory responsibilities to deliver a balanced budget and secure those services that we feel are most important, as efficiently and effectively as possible.
22. The policy approach, organisational values and financial management adopted by the Council during its first two years of operation will drive the strategic response which will be characterised by rigour, responsibility and realism.

23 **Getting the Basics Right – A Base Budget Review**

As part of the Budget Process a full review of the Council's cost base is now underway and the 'Base budget build' will be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committees in December. This analysis will ensure that Members have a robust account of all spending pressures for the period ahead.

24 **Driving Efficiencies**

The Council will build on its record for delivering savings. Having significantly streamlined overheads such as the Senior Management structure, further proposals for rationalising the back office will be central to the strategy. Better procurement and the use of technology will also be important.

25. **Collaboration and Partnership**

Having piloted the Total Place model for service delivery last year, the Council is developing expertise in shared service approaches. Whether working in partnership with either the public or private sector, we will actively pursue collaborative working to save money and maximise a return on our investments.

26. **Empowering Individuals and Communities**

The Council has adopted a community engagement strategy that puts a strong emphasis on helping people to help themselves. Whether this is applied at an individual, organisational or community level, the principle of enabling people to exercise greater freedom and responsibility is fundamental to our approach.

27. **Protecting the truly vulnerable**

The Council has already demonstrated a pragmatic and flexible approach to models of service delivery with a priority on outcomes rather than process. Having identified a vision for the area and priorities, it is equally clear that the authority is committed to protect the truly vulnerable members of our society.

28. **Outcomes**

More than ever, the Council needs to be clear about the outcomes it wants to achieve on behalf of its residents and the following nine are proposed for adoption:

Supporting and caring for an ageing population

1. Truly vulnerable adults are safeguarded
2. Residents are enabled to make appropriate choices to meet their own needs and the 'market' is stimulated to respond to those needs where appropriate.

Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people

3. Educational attainment is raised
4. Truly vulnerable children are protected

Managing growth effectively

5. Housing growth is complemented by growth of businesses and jobs
6. A suitable mix/quality of housing is available to meet the needs of current and future communities

Creating safer communities

7. The area remains a safe one
8. The area is kept clean (but with increased emphasis on self help)

Promoting healthier lifestyles

9. Residents are enabled to lead healthier lifestyles

29. Each of the Council's Directorates has been reviewing the future direction that is appropriate for our services taking into account the factors described above.

DIRECTION OF TRAVEL FOR SERVICES

Social Care Health & Housing

30. The care sector will change and better outcomes will result from personal choices over how a person's individual needs are best met. The modernisation of services is predicated on moving "spend" from institutional care to more local solutions, and to personal budgets. Resources will be used more efficiently, to explicitly achieve what people themselves want. In this way, the council is able to Transform People's Lives.
31. Whole system change is envisaged for adult social care, which will necessitate significant change to the social care workforce. The change is contingent on improvement to professional practice being sustained and reflected in better Safeguarding practice. The focus is to complete the Recovery programme for Adult Social Care, in order to strengthen the Council's capacity to manage the scale of change that is envisaged through modernisation and market shaping.
32. To achieve comprehensive change, the Council and Health partners will need to: invest in prevention; maximise the far reaching potential of people making a voluntary contribution and of services across broad ranging activity such as Housing, Leisure and Transport; to yield added benefits as a result of re-alignment; and by thinking differently and having a different approach.
33. For the Housing Service, the main drivers are homelessness prevention and harmonisation of the Housing Needs service currently provided by Aragon and directly by the Council in different parts of the area. For the Landlord role, it is also necessary to examine the Government's detailed proposals for Self Financing, to be set out in the Comprehensive Spending Review, and to determine a future for the stock that accords with the Council's strategic objectives.

Children's Services

34. The Council will reshape its Children's Services in the light of the emergent national agenda which is focused on schools becoming increasingly independent of the Council. Schools may choose to buy back support services from the Council. The relationship of the Council with its schools will change and the role of the Council will be to focus strategically on outcomes in raising standards in schools which are performing less well and in its role to support fair access to schools. Along with school governors, the Council will lead a response to the "Big Society" through strategic commissioning and an enhanced community focus.
35. Specialist services for children offered by the council will focus increasingly on statutory roles and the needs of the most vulnerable children. There will be a continued focus on child protection through children's social care and in developing strategies to alleviate child poverty. Specialist support services that the Council will continue to provide to the most vulnerable will be those that are required as a statutory provision or where there is an opportunity to intervene early to avoid subsequent problems arising in families in order to prevent them accessing statutory services later on. The focus on child protection will remain and the Council will meet its duty to deliver a Child Poverty Strategy by 1st April 2011.

Sustainable Communities

36. Sustainable Communities is a very diverse directorate comprising a wide range of public facing, mainly statutory services. For 2011/12, the savings proposals are underpinned by a focus on further efficiencies through rationalisation, reducing discretionary services and reducing spend in high performing statutory services.

Customer & Shared Services

37. The primary purpose of the Directorate of Customer and Shared Services is to enable and support the frontline services to deliver their objectives. 'Frontline' services are dependent upon effective support services to achieve their efficiency and transformation objectives. In addition, many of the council-wide efficiencies, will be lead by this Directorate, and these include:-
- Procurement
 - Optimisation of income streams
 - Customer Management
 - Administration
 - A review of employee terms & conditions
38. However, this is a relatively new Directorate, which has undergone a number of senior managerial changes, and is still wrestling with many of the issues relating to the transition to the new unitary council. There are also a number of areas where support services are not meeting the requirements or expectations of internal customers, and where performance is inconsistent and unsatisfactory. In order to address this deficit, a Recovery Programme is currently under way which will focus on critical priority areas for improvement, and is expected to deliver significant improvement in the next 12 months.
39. Whilst the immediate focus is on recovery of the key support service areas, all services will undergo a further review to assess the potential service delivery models that could be adopted in the future. This will consider current levels of competence, the needs of internal customers, potential alternative delivery options and the financial implications of the various alternatives. As part of this process, there may be opportunities to share services with others.

Office of Chief Executive

40. The purpose of the Office of the Chief Executive is to support the Council to develop and implement corporate strategy. The savings proposals are focussed on maintaining this role but at a lower cost. At the same time, the Office is providing support to a review of the scope for greater collaboration across the public sector as a whole in Bedfordshire and Luton.

EFFICIENCIES

41. Table 1 below summarises efficiencies of £9.9M across the Council. There are £4.929M of efficiencies proposed across the Council through the maximisation of income, invest to save projects, streamlined processes, better procurement and sharing of services. Additionally, directorates have put forward £4.961M of service based proposals. Full details of these proposals are set out in Appendix A.

Table 1

Cross Cutting	£M
All Directorates	4.347

Directorate Based	
Children's Services	1.445
Customer & Shared Services	1.075
Office of the Chief Executive	0.412
Social Care, Health & Housing	1.555
Sustainable Communities	1.140
	5.627
Total All Efficiencies	9.974

SERVICE RECONFIGURATION AND REDUCTION

42. Table 2 below is a summary of proposed service reconfiguration and reduction savings of £4.5M across the Council's Directorates. Full details of these proposals are set out in Appendix B.

Table 2

	£M
Children's Services	0.798
Customer & Shared Services	0.000
Office of the Chief Executive	0.051
Social Care, Health & Housing	1.700
Sustainable Communities	1.454
	4.003

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNIUCATION

Dialogue with the Public

43. Although concrete information about the comprehensive spending review is not yet available, the Council has been proactive in discussing the financial challenges it faces with local people.
44. A September workshop brought together residents from across the area to take part in a series of focus groups, following an introduction to the Council's finances from the Leader and Chief Executive.

45. The event showed that many members of the public seem ready to see public expenditure reduce significantly and they are aware that services will have to be reduced as a consequence. Whilst some have serious reservations, more participants could see opportunities in terms of making public sector organisations cheaper, more efficient and more accountable. New models of delivery were discussed and welcomed by many, particularly those concerning the joining up of public services and back office functions.

Further Consultation and Communications

46. Over the coming weeks Members will consider a complex set of proposals. Whilst this process is underway, it is proposed that the Council conducts a further round of consultation and communication with its key audiences
47. The Council will fulfil its statutory responsibility to conduct Equality Impact Assessments and consultation with specific service users and staff. Beyond these obligations it is proposed that the public and stakeholders are given maximum opportunity to be informed about and comment on the proposals through a series of conventional and new media communication routes.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

48. Given the proposed scale of required savings, and the likely resulting reduction in the numbers of posts, the Authority will undertake a 90 day consultation period.
49. As part of this consultation, we will explore all options with recognised trade unions, and make every effort to mitigate the number of redundancies required

TIMETABLE

50. The timing of detailed Government funding announcements has necessitated some minor amendments to the overall timetable to deliver the 2011/12 budget. The key milestones are set out in Table 3 below,

Table 3

Date	Body	Outcome
20 October	Treasury	Comprehensive Spending Review
Late November/Early December	CLG	Local Government Finance Settlement
December	Overview & Scrutiny	Consideration of savings proposals and base budget build
11 January 2011	Executive	Draft budget 2011/12
17 January	Overview & Scrutiny	Comment on Draft Budget
8 February 2011	Executive	Recommends final Budget
24 February 2011	Council	Approves Budget

Appendices:

Appendix A - Efficiencies for consultation

Appendix B – Service Reconfigurations and Reductions for consultation

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None

APPENDIX A(i)

SAVING PROPOSALS

EFFICIENCIES

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Children's Services

CS1 Directorate Restructure - Efficiency

Background

The consultation on this proposal has already been started following the Executive decision in August, 2010. This is a reorganisation of Heads of Service, School Improvement, School Support and the Policy and Strategy Team. Staffing reductions, including posts previously funded by the Area Based Grant, will total 66.5 full time equivalent posts. The Executive of the Council agreed in July 2010 to remove Area Based Grant activity from the area it serves and to bring forward this reorganisation to 2010/2011. The savings will be unlikely to be achieved until the financial year 2011/12.

Rationale for Service Change

- The reduction of posts reflects the Council's new role in supporting schools.
- Policy and strategy will be delivered through operational managers.
- In line with the Council's education vision, schools will support each other increasing through Trusts, Federations and Partnerships

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £915K in 2011/2012, with a further saving of £200K in 2012/2013.

Service Implications and Impact

- The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.
- Policy and Strategy work will be included as part of the role of operational Heads of Service.
- Reduction in support for schools particularly where they are good or excellent thus reflecting a model of targeted support.

CS2 Education Welfare Officers - Efficiency

Background

Education Welfare Officers work with schools to ensure statutory school age children are in regular attendance. They also provide advice and support on community issues. The work involves liaison with schools and thereafter undertaking of enforcement procedures as required.

Rationale for Service Change

This service is a statutory requirement. This savings proposal is to reduce the service to a minimum statutory requirement. Pupil attendance in our schools is good when benchmarked against our statistical neighbours. Future provision will be focused on the truly vulnerable pupils and schools.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £100K. This can be achieved by service restructure and the deletion of 2 full time equivalent posts.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

Some schools may receive reduced levels of support.

CS3 Removal of processes supporting regulatory activity - Efficiency

Background

This removes work on performance monitoring that will become, or has already become, deregulated. This will be a cross directorate saving as there are regulatory systems across the directorate.

Rationale for Service Change

This efficiency builds on the Government's intention to deregulate activities on performance reporting and some work done currently in Youth Justice reporting. There will be a reduction of support for some assessment procedures that schools and partners are now using more consistently as good practice is embedded. The cancelling of the Contact Point programme gives early evidence of deregulation. Some technology based applications will also be disappplied.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £100K. This can be achieved by service restructure and the deletion of 4 full time equivalent posts and some rearranging the work of other part time staff.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

Information currently collected will no longer be part of the Council's performance management information.

CS6 Strategic Commissioning of Social Care Placements and Interventions - Efficiency

Background

Strategic commissioning contracts for providing social care interventions are subject to on-going review. Whilst these contracts are monitored to secure high quality child protection practices, value for money challenge can still be applied.

Rationale for Service Change

The focus of the re-commissioning of contracts will be to ensure best value and continued high quality. In 2012/13, we will work through early intervention strategies to seek to replace high cost interventions with more preventative work earlier in the cycle of difficulty.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £230K in 2011/12 and £500K in 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

Those contracts for providing social care interventions subject to renewal will be subject to a re-commissioning approach.

The voluntary and third sector may gain or lose contracts.

CS7 Workforce Strategy - Efficiency

Background

The Workforce Strategy concentrates on the recruitment, retention, status and training of the wider workforce involved in service provision for Children. The team will be refocused to provide the statutory minimum service.

Rationale for Service Change

This is a statutory requirement. This proposal reduces activity to statutory minimum with a focus on child protection. Less work will be undertaken directly with schools. In line with the Council's Education Vision schools will be encouraged to support each other through their Trusts, Federations and Partnerships. The Council will retain a strategic leadership role by brokering partnerships. Partners such as Health professionals will have joint responsibility with the Council, through the Children's Trust or its replacement partnership arrangements, to ensure workforce development needs are met.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £100K in 2011/12 and £100K in 2012/13. This will be achieved by a reduction of 4 full time equivalent posts.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

Schools and partners are likely to see a reduction in levels of support but will still receive statutory support.

APPENDIX A(ii)

SAVING PROPOSALS

EFFICIENCIES

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Customer & Shared Services

C&SS1 SAP Licensing– Efficiency

Background

SAP licences are on a named user basis. There are approximately 951 licences in use at this time. With a complete change to the process of procurement on SAP the current 279 SAP procurement users could be reduced down to around 60. Each licence saved will reduce our fees to SAP on an annual basis.

Rationale for Service Change

Procurement via SAP being reduced to around 60 key individuals will maximise skills and deliver efficiency savings.

Financial Savings

Estimated savings of £86,000 are anticipated from this change of SAP procurement.

Service Implications and Impact

Procurement specialists may not be able to cope with the number of procurements required.

C&SS2 Ampthill Customer Services Closure– Efficiency

Background

Customer Service Centres were opened in Biggleswade and Ampthill in March 2006 as part of the Mid Bedfordshire Council's move to Priory House, maintaining a presence in the 2 major towns in the area. Customer Service Centres were opened in Leighton Buzzard in April 2007 and Houghton Regis in September 2009. The Council offices in Priory House and Dunstable also have a Customer Service Centre.

Footfall at Houghton Regis has been low, averaging 224 customers per calendar month and is being replaced with a Customer Access Point during the financial year 2010/11.

Ampthill Customer Service Centre also does not have a high footfall, averaging approximately 478 customers per calendar month.

Amphill Customer Service Centre is staffed by 3FTE Customer Service Advisors and the Team Manager has responsibility for the Customer Service Centres at Amphill, Biggleswade and Priory House.

Rationale for Service Change

Closure of Amphill Customer Service Centre would enable cost savings in respect of staff costs and release the majority of the building for other use by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Amphill is equi-distant between Priory House and Dunstable offices allowing customers access to face to face service within 10 miles.

This closure would not prevent the longer term ambitions of Total Place to create a Community hub in the Flitwick area.

Financial Savings

A reduction of 2 FTE CSA. 1 FTE CSA would be retained to manage expected increased footfall at Priory House.

Year 1 savings £50K

Service Implications and Impact

This should be considered in conjunction with the Total Place agenda of co location with DWP in the longer term.

C&SS4 Mouchel Contract

Background

The previous County Council contract with Mouchel for design and related services came to a natural end on 30th September 2010.

Rationale for Service change

Mouchel staff had a right to transfer to the Council at the end of the contract under the TUPE employment regulations.

Financial Savings

Full year savings, inclusive of a £150,000 reduction in the property maintenance budget are now estimated at £450,000.

Service Implications and Impact

None in the short term, pending decisions about the provision and management of the Assets Division.

C&SS5 Finance : Business Support to Schools – Efficiency

Background

The Council is required to provide a statutory finance function to schools in respect of issuing, monitoring and adherence to guidelines and financial regulations, managing the Dedicated Schools Grant to be allocated via a locally determined formula to provide individual school budgets as well as

financial reporting (e.g. S251). This is provided by the school's finance team in Business Finance .The team totals 7.9 FTE. The DSG totals £147M and Formula Capital Grant £5M.

Rationale for Service Change

Currently the Council supports two systems for banking and financial reporting arrangements for schools. By moving all schools to being fully funded and maintaining their own bank accounts this will reduce workload in the team allowing for the reduction of 1 School Financial adviser post.

Financial Implications

An estimated saving of £18k 20011/12 (£38k full year) can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a reduction of 1 FTE post requiring application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

C&SS6 Finance Strategy Team - Efficiency

Background

The Financial Strategy Team provides key support to the business in all aspects of financial accounting including budget strategy, preparation of the annual accounts, capital accounting, income services, insurance services and financial controls. The team totals supports financial accounting of the Council's net revenue budget of £177M and £30M annual capital budget.

Rationale for Service Change

On transition to Central Bedfordshire Council as from 1 April 2009, the authority inherited a number of control and suspense accounts from the predecessor authorities, including the maintenance of the bank accounts associated with Bedfordshire County Council. The authority has subsequently invested a large amount of time and effort in reducing the number of control and suspense accounts it maintains and improving the procedures that support the reconciliation and justification of the balances held. Where the authority is able to gain adequate additional assurance over the reconciliation procedures it is recommended that the frequency of reconciliations is reduced according to risk and value / volumes of transactional activity within the accounts.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £38k in 2011/12 (£38k full year) can be achieved by reducing the number of financial advisers by 1 FTE.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a reduction of 1 FTE posts requiring application of the Council's Management of Change Policy. There will be a reduction in the frequency of control and suspense accounts, where appropriate, and the authority must effectively manage the risk of failing to maintain adequate financial control.

C&SS8 HR: Review of payroll provision - Efficiency

Background

Provision of the payroll service to the Authority is outsourced to Serco. The current contract with Serco requires 12 months notice of termination, and early contract termination incurs a financial penalty.

There are a range of options in terms of the future delivery model - e.g. re-negotiated contract with current external provider; bring in-house and deliver at reduced cost; re-tender; shared service arrangements.

Rationale for Service Change

Any proposal for change needs to support the HR delivery model, and create efficiencies. The current contract is expensive, and there is a resulting high charge to schools for payroll provision which does not recover full costs.

Financial Savings

Depending on the model of delivery to be followed, there is a possible partial offsetting of the contract termination penalty during 2011/12, but full year savings can only be achieved in 2012/13.

Savings are estimated as £18,000 in 2011/12, and £107,000 in 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

Alternative or renegotiated arrangements will mean a reduction in headcount, a reduced charge to schools, and a more streamlined service.

C&SS9 Legal and Democratic Services: Review of Legal & Democratic Services - Efficiency

Background

Following the departure of two senior members of staff the structure of Democratic Services has been reviewed. The posts of AD Governance and Head of Democratic Services have been removed and their roles and responsibilities have been re-allocated to other senior managers.

Changes are also proposed to team structures so that the Committee Services will have a "flattened" structure and Electoral Services and Local Land Charges will be merged.

Rationale for Service Change

The proposals will allow for greater flexibility to take account of significant peaks and troughs in workload at certain times. Staff will also be expected to undertake work in different disciplines as the demand dictates.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £150,000 can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a reduction of 4.2 fte posts requiring the application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

C&SS10 Legal and Democratic Services: Members Allowance - Efficiency

Background

Reduction in number of Members from 66 to 59 will result in a reduction in the allowances payable.

Rationale for Service Change

The change is a result of the decision made by the Electoral Commission to reduce the number of elected members.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £80,000 can be achieved by this proposal based on a reduction of 7 basic allowances @ £11,000 each.

Service Implications and Impact

The change will result in an increase in the size of wards in some areas and may mean increased workload for remaining members.

C&SS12 Finance :Business Support – Efficiency

Background

The Financial Management Team supports the Service Directorates in all aspects of financial management including budget preparation, budget strategy and financial planning, budget monitoring and final accounts. The team totals 21.3 FTE and supports financial management of the Council's net revenue budget of £177M and £63M annual capital budget.

Rationale for Service Change

The production of the annual Statement of Accounts is a statutory function and sound financial management and financial control of the organisation is imperative in the provision of these accounts. The cessation of financial support to the service directorates, although a discretionary service, would severely put at risk the financial standing of the organisation.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £37k in 2011/12 (£113k full year) can be achieved by reducing the number of financial advisers by 4 FTE.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a reduction of 4 FTE posts requiring application of the Council's Management of Change Policy. There will be a reduction in service to the Directorates and is dependent on improved business processes, self sufficiency and improved financial competencies of cost centre managers.

C&SS 13 Review of Service Provision in Assets - Efficiency

Background

Assets Division in Customer and Shared Services now includes the ex-Mouchel contract team.

Rationale for Service Change

There is an opportunity to undertake an initial rationalisation and consolidation of staffing in Assets, pending strategic decisions about delivery mechanisms for the service as a whole.

Financial Savings

Full year annual savings of the order of £140,000 from April 2011, in relation to staffing (approx 5 FTE's).

Service Implications and Impact

The consolidation process is a reflection of the fact that short term efficiencies can be identified following the TUPE transfer of the ex-Mouchel staff to the existing CBC Assets team.

C&SS 15 Registration Services – Efficiency

Background

Central Bedfordshire manages the shared Registration Service on behalf of both Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Councils. It provides Register Offices in Ampthill, Bedford, Biggleswade, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard for taking of notices and conducting ceremonies.

Rationale for Service Change

Dunstable Register Office in Grove House, Dunstable is leased from Dunstable Town Council. The rental costs are not covered by the income generated from ceremonies performed in the marriage room.

The lease expires in March 2011, providing an opportunity to move the Registrar to the Council offices in Dunstable to undertake the taking of notices for Births, Marriages and Deaths. Due to the requirement to provide 12 months notice to the General Register Office of a change in ceremony venue, the

Financial Savings

An annual saving of £20,000 is expected to be achieved through relocation of the Registrar to the Council Offices in Dunstable. This is reduced in 2011/12 to £8,000 due to partial occupancy in this year

Service Implications and Impact

There is no legal requirement for the Council to provide a ceremony venue in Dunstable. However, it may be considered as a reduction in service to the residents of Dunstable and the surrounding area. Consideration is being given to licensing the Registrars office in the Council offices in Dunstable to perform ceremonies at the statutory fee of £40 (2 witnesses and the couple) to mitigate this.

Dunstable Town Council would be able to license the marriage room in Grove House as an Approved Venue. This would allow the facility to be retained, but the fees would be set by the Town Council.

There is no impact on the Registrar by moving location to the Council office.

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SAVING PROPOSALS

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Office of the Chief Executive

OCE1 Reduction of staffing - Efficiency

Background

This proposal relates to a reduction in staffing across the Office of the Chief Executive. Specifically:

- 2 posts from the Overview and Scrutiny Team
- Performance Improvement Manager
- Performance Officer
- Programme Management Team Leader
- Designer
- Project Support Officer
- Business Support Officer

Rationale

The proposed staffing reductions are made in the context of the streamlining of back office services. Whilst the office has taken on additional responsibilities, such as the Council's strategic risk management function with no additional resources, other developments such as the abolition of the CAA proposal have released capacity.

The proposal relating to a reduction in the Overview and Scrutiny Support Team is based on a shift towards the Directorates providing support to their respective Overview & Scrutiny Committees with forward planning and Democratic Services bring responsible for arranging and administering all meetings. In addition, the Chief Executive and AD Strategy and Performance will continue to provide strategic input.

Financial Savings

The estimated savings for 2011/12 are £0.338m.

Service Implications and Impact

The internal impact of the reduction to the Overview and Scrutiny Team will be on Directors or nominated directorate leads, who will need to have a close involvement with O&S forward planning, and Democratic Services who will be fully managing agendas and production of minutes etc for all aspects OSCs. The impact to Members will be a reduction in officer capacity to undertake research and to support the development of items for OSCs.

The proposed reduction in the Council's in-house design capability reflects the Council's plans to reduce significantly the volume of professionally designed publications through a series of measures, including a drive toward on line publishing and the use of templates. Where design is required, it will be outsourced to an approved list of external suppliers.

In addition, the proposals entail a reduction in general corporate capacity.

OCE2 Reduction of miscellaneous Non-Pay items - Efficiency

Background

This proposal relates to a reduction of spend on miscellaneous non-pay items.

Rationale

This is a simple cost saving initiative within the Office and factors in corporate savings initiatives in, for example, Procurement.

Financial Savings

The estimated savings for 2011/12 are £0.024m.

Service Implications and Impact

There are no staffing implications as this will reduce levels of spend on items such as printing, training, events, development of e-learning materials, stationery etc.

OCE3 Further rationalisation of senior management arrangements in OCE - Efficiency

Background

This proposal relates to further rationalisation of senior management arrangements in the office and specifically a reduction from three Heads of Service to two.

Rationale

This proposal is in response to general reduction in corporate capacity.

Financial Savings

Part of this resource will be used to create some capacity to undertake corporate risk management work, a responsibility recently transferred to the Office without resource. However, £0.030m savings will be achieved in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no need for a redundancy process as one of the Heads of Service has since taken up another position in another Directorate. This has provided the opportunity to activate the office's further planned contribution to the Council's Senior Management Review and the 'Partnerships and Insight' team and 'Performance, Risk and Customer Relations' team have now been merged into a single Partnerships and Performance team.

APPENDIX A(iv)

SAVING PROPOSALS

EFFICIENCIES

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Social Care, Health & Housing

SCHH1 Review of Management Posts – Efficiency

Background

The current directorate management structure consists of four Assistant Directors (AD) and eleven Heads of Service (HoS).

Rationale for Service Change

Reduce the Adult Social Care management structure by one FTE.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that reducing the structure will deliver £60,000 of savings in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

This should lead to more efficient use of management resources. There would be a need to allow 90 days consultation with the employees concerned.

SCHH2 Harmonisation of Housing Needs - Service Efficiency

Background

The Housing Needs service i.e. homelessness advice, housing options and the housing register are currently provided by Aragon Housing Association in the north of the Central Bedfordshire area and by the in-house team in the south of the area.

Rationale for Service Change

Bringing this provision together under one provider will deliver efficiencies and a consistent approach across Central Bedfordshire.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a total efficiency of £90,000 can be made in 2011/12 if this service is delivered by one provider. Initial estimations were made when setting the 2010/11 budget and as a result £70,000 was projected to be achieved in 2011/12. Subsequent discussions have added a further £20,000 to that target to make the full £90,000. It is estimated that further efficiencies will be achieved in 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

A major reorganisation may involve tendering the service. There will be staffing implications and TUPE could apply to both the internal or Aragon employees.

SCHH3 Review of Management resources in Housing – Service Efficiency

Background

The current Housing management structure consists of thirteen managers below Head of Service (HoS).

Rationale for Service Change

A skill mix exercise will be undertaken to ensure that there are appropriate management arrangements in place to deliver the Council's housing agenda. As a result the Council would look to reduce the number of managers by 2 FTEs.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £75,000 could be made in 2011/12 with potential further savings over the next two years.

Service Implications and Impact

This should lead to more efficient use of management resources. There would be a need to allow 90 days consultation with the employees concerned.

SCHH4 Change the 'skill mix' in Assessment and Care Management Teams – Efficiency

Background

The current Assessment and Care Management teams arrange adult social care support for older people, people with disability and learning disabilities. They are made up of 67 professionally qualified Social Workers (78%) and 19 Community Support workers (22%). The approach to delivering adult social care is changing with more emphasis on self assessment and personal budgets that will require our workforce to have a broader range of skills.

Rationale for Service Change

Changing the skill mix will reduce the cost of the services. This would mean a reduction in the number of professionally qualified staff and their work would be directed towards more complex cases (e.g. safeguarding and complex needs). We would look to increase the number of Community Support Workers who would focus on assisting customers with support planning to achieve the personalisation agenda.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a total efficiency of £150,000 will be made in 2011/12 and further efficiencies will be achieved in the following years.

Service Implications and Impact

There would be a need to allow 90 days consultation with the employees concerned and this may cause concern amongst the Council's current adult social care customers.

SCHH5 Efficiencies in Care Management – Efficiency

Background

The current Assessment and Care Management teams are made up of 67 professional Social Workers, 19 Community Support workers and a number of support staff including administration and brokers.

Rationale for Service Change

Introduction of changes to the customer pathway and a greater use of ICT based systems should result in a lower number of assessments undertaken with a greater emphasis on self-assessment.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £50,000 will be made in 2011/12 by reducing staff numbers by 2 FTEs. Further efficiencies are anticipated over the next two years.

Service Implications and Impact

There would be a need to allow 90 days consultation with the employees concerned and this may cause concern amongst the Councils current adult social care customers.

SCHH6 More effective deployment of council resources across the reablement service and extra care sheltered housing – Efficiency

Background

We currently have home care teams at Quince Court, St Georges Court, Red House Court and Lavender Court with a total salary budget of £1.07m. Unit cost analysis suggests it is a costly service and that staff could be more effectively redeployed within the council's reablement service. The council will then consider alternative forms of support in the Courts.

Rationale for Service Change

Better use of staffing resources.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £200,000 will be made in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be a need to consult with customers, partners and relatives and allow 90 day staff consultation. Current customers may well be anxious about the potential change.

SCHH7 Streamline the in-house services for People with Learning Disabilities – Efficiency

Background

The current Domiciliary Care (including Respite Services) and Assessment & Resettlement service supports adults with learning disabilities in supported living environments. The team has 57 full time equivalents with a total salary budget of £1.64m

Rationale for Service Change

Better use of in house staffing resources and more flexible opportunities for customers.

Financial Implications

There will be a potential reduction on 6 FTEs which will deliver a saving of £150,000 in 2011/12. There are also potential efficiency savings in future years.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no direct impact on our customers although there will be a need to allow a 90 day staff consultation and current customers may be concerned.

SCHH8 Streamline the Management Structure at Linsell House – Efficiency

Background

There are five managers in the current structure at Linsell House which is a care home and residential respite centre for adults with learning disabilities.

Rationale for Service Change

Reduce the number of managers from five to three to make better use of management resources.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £70,000 will be made in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be no direct impact on our customers. Staff consultation has been completed and the restructure is in progress as some savings were attributed to 2010/11.

SCHH9 Maximise use of block purchase home care services – Efficiency

Background

There are four block contracts covering most of Central Bedfordshire costing £12.57m.

Rationale for Service Change

Maximise the use of these block contracts as the block price is advantageous to the council.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £50,000 will be made in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

New customers will be encouraged to use block contractors rather than a provider of choice. This may result in opposition from current providers and reduced choice for our customers.

SCHH10 Increase the use of block purchased care – Efficiency

Background

The Council currently has residential care block contracts to the value of £22.8m for older people and adults with a learning disability. The latter were inherited as part of the learning disability commissioning funding transfer from the PCT.

Rationale for Service Change

The council will encourage, as first option, its customers to use the block contracts. Where this is not possible, in that an individual's need would not be met, then the council will make use of a homefinder service. This homefinder service will also secure residential respite care placements and there will be a consistency of fees payable.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that an efficiency of £150,000 will be made in 2011/12 if there is an increase the use of these contracts. Future savings are anticipated in future years.

Service Implications and Impact

This will lead to a reduction in choice for customers, who with their families may challenge the council. Additionally other local care home providers may challenge the council.

SCHH11 Renegotiation of high cost residential placements – Efficiency

Background

The residential placement budgets for Physical Disability and Learning Disability are £16.57m. A number of these placements are outside of Central Bedfordshire and have been negotiated on an individual basis. The Council will continue to commission an agency, with a national database, to effectively challenge the individual placement costs. The agency will commence with the highest 50 cost placements and over the next 2-3 years will consider all of the high cost placements.

Rationale for Service Change

Reduce the high cost residential placements and introduce changes to block purchasing for these groups.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £500,000 will be made in 2011/12. Future savings are anticipated but not in the same order.

Service Implications and Impact

There should be no impact on the quality of care to customers although this may result in opposition from current providers. Contract negotiations need to be carried out.

**SCHH12 End the Service level Agreement for Business Support–
Efficiency**

Background

A Service Level Agreement is in place with Bedford Borough Council to provide some business and administration support to the directorate around its adult social care services especially its care services.

Rationale for Service Change

By terminating the shared service, local managers will manage the business and administrative support to the services.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £80,000 will be made in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

Need to formally terminate the Shared Service Agreement with Bedford Borough Council. The TUPE implications are currently being investigated. This will not impact on the Council's Customers.

APPENDIX A(iv)

SAVING PROPOSALS

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Sustainable Communities

HT1 Replace illuminated bollards with reflective ones and turn off street lighting between 2400 and 0600 daily - Efficiency

Background

The Council is responsible for the maintenance of 21,000 street lights and 2,000 illuminated bollards.

Rationale for Service Change

Replacing illuminated bollards with high reflective versions will reduce energy consumption and maintenance costs. Approximately one third could be replaced per year as part of the routine lamp change and cleaning process.

Turning off or dimming street lights between 24:00 and 06:00 will reduce the Council's energy costs.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £55,000 can be achieved each year by this proposal. There will be implementation costs of approximately £135k per annum for 3 years associated with this saving – which would come from the existing capital allocation budget.

Service Implications and Impact

If illuminated bollard replacements are made they would comply with Department Transport standards to maintain road safety. Switching off street lighting would need community support. There may be issues around fear of crime in some locations.

There are no staffing implications.

HT2 Car Parking and Resident Permit Scheme – Efficiency

Background

The current cost of a resident Parking Permit is £20. The issue of the permits is subject to criteria being met but there is no restriction on the number of permits per household for those living in the specified area.

Dispensations are issued at no charge – which (for certain activities) permit vehicles to remain lawfully in places where parking restrictions would not normally allow.

No visitor permits are available to residents within the Residents' Parking Zones.

Rationale for Service Change

Realignment of the permit charging structure to more closely match neighbouring authorities by increasing the permit charge to £50 per annum. Also, an incremental increased fee charged for permits in respect of 2nd and 3rd vehicles registered to an address - £70 fee for a second vehicle and £90 fee for a third vehicle.

A charge for dispensations at £20 per week, or £5 daily.

A book of 25 visitor's day tickets for £50.

Financial Implications

An estimated saving of £70,000 can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

Parking policy would be more consistent with other Councils.

There are no staffing implications.

HT3 Reduce lump sum allocations in the Highways 'Managing Agent Contract' – Efficiency

Background

The Council's highway services are provided by a private company through a Managing Agent Contract.

Rationale for Service Change

The contract contains a payment structure including lump sum revenue payments for a wide range of activities. It is proposed to work with the contractor to find savings from these.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £50,000 can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

The savings will be sought from the professional and administrative services of the contractor – rather than frontline activity such as road repairs. Staff employed directly by the Council will not be affected.

CSPPWL1 Public Protection – reconfiguration and restructure of management, licensing and administrative support - Efficiency

Background

Public Protection provides a wide range of statutory services in support of local businesses and protection of public health. This includes environmental health, trading standards, licensing, emergency planning and business continuity and the financial investigations unit.

Administration posts support this activity.

Rationale for Service Change

To contribute to the corporate savings target.

In respect of licensing and administrative support the harmonisation of legacy authority arrangements, commissioning of a new computer system and business process re-engineering enable a rationalisation of licensing and administrative support without compromising on front line delivery.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £230,000 can be achieved.

Service Implications and Impact

The deletion of four team leader posts for Public Protection, replaced with two Service Manager posts. 4 full time employees reduced to 2.

There is capacity within the service to manage the licensing and administration functions by technical staff and specialist administrators. There will be a reduction from 12.1 to 7.5 full time employee posts.

CSPPW2 Leisure Services: a combination of removal of security and cleaning in vicinity of Grove Theatre in Dunstable, deletion of two posts and reduction in SLA recharge for Leisure Outdoor Education - Efficiency

Background

Leisure Services provides a range of leisure and sports development activities. These include management of Leisure Centres and Grove Theatre, sports development, play and open space to help support people access and participate in sports, play and leisure activities.

Rationale for Service Change

The service contract for security and cleaning in the Grove Theatre area in Dunstable is being removed (£50k annual cost).

The Sports Development post and the Open Spaces Technical Officer posts can be deleted with limited impact.

To reduce the subsidy provided by CBC to the Leisure Outdoors Education SLA (Blue Peris, Kempston Activity Centre and Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme).

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £120,000 could be made by this proposal in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

Reduction in or loss of cleaning and security services around the Grove Theatre area may impact on other businesses in this area. Staff directly employed by the Council will not be affected.

Sports Development post is deleted and CBC uses £8,500 per year for 3 years (£25,000 required) to a Football Development post hosted by Bedford

FA. Sports development continues via external funds. Reduction in one full time employee.

Open Spaces Technical Officer post is deleted, this provides technical support, site visits and monitoring and can be absorbed by other officers in the team. Reduction in one full-time employee.

Reduction in SLA recharge – options include increasing income from school groups and other users to reflect cost of running centre.

P3 Joint Technical Unit (JTU) office relocated from rented offices in Luton to Technology House saving on rental payments - Efficiency

Background

The Joint Planning Committee currently oversees LDF preparation for Luton and Southern Central Bedfordshire. This arrangement ends on 31/03/12. The JTU services the Committee and currently operates from rented offices in Luton. However, there is a break clause in the rental agreement which allows the rental to cease in May 2011. From an efficiency perspective, a saving can be made by providing staff the space to relocate with the CBC Development Plan Team in Technology House. Both CBC and Luton Borough Council will save money through this arrangement.

Rationale for Service Change

This is an efficiency saving which can be actioned without any substantial change in the level of service being offered. Office rental is currently £86,000 per annum (split 50/50 between the partnering authorities, equates to £43,000). Taking account of the ongoing costs of relocating staff (Appendix E mileage payments), annual savings of £35,000 can be achieved.

Financial Savings

£35,000

Service Implications and Impact

None, though the team would be less conveniently located to the Luton/Southern Central Bedfordshire area, increasing travel to occasional site visits.

P4 Reduction in resource to input into Regional/Sub-Regional Planning - Efficiency

Background

The new Coalition Government announced its clear intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies earlier in the summer. In response to this announcement, work on the East of England Plan Review ceased immediately and in future local authorities will rely on preparing their local development frameworks against locally agreed housing targets etc.

Rationale for Service Change

In the past the Development Plan Team has contributed significantly to regional planning and strategy development work, but moving forward, whilst cross-authority liaison and local joint working will continue, there will be very little formal regional work which the team would be expected to contribute to. In this light, it is considered that officer resource can be reduced in area by 1 FTE.

Financial Savings

£50,000

Service Implications and Impact

Specialist regional planning knowledge will be lost from within the team, though its role in future is likely to be very limited in light of the move towards localism.

1 FTE Reduction

P5 Reduction in Biodiversity Officer and Countryside Officer resource as a result of dissolution of shared funding arrangements. - Efficiency

Background

The Biodiversity Officer and the County Countryside Officer are jointly funded between Central Beds, Bedford, Luton, Natural England and the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Service (FWAG) and deliver on a range of functions across the County.

Rationale for Service Change

Both Bedford and Luton have recently confirmed they will not be contributing to the posts next year and funding from Natural England is presently uncertain. FWAG have confirmed that they will continue to contribute funding at the same level. Without contributions from Bedford and Luton, CBC can no longer afford to fund this post.

Countryside Officer: This post helps to bring in significant grant income to the Council and local farming community through Environmental Stewardship etc. Some of that grant is important in helping the Council manage its own land assets. Without partner funding, it is proposed that this post only deal with Central Beds issues and it is therefore proposed to reduce the hours to 3 days a week.

Financial Savings

£10,000

Service Implications and Impact

None in Central Bedfordshire.

1.4 FTE Reduction

P7 Development Management Restructure - Efficiency

Background

Development Management provides a wide range of statutory and non statutory services associated with the determination of planning applications, planning control and the delivery of high quality and sustainable development.

Rationale for Service Change

Bringing together the legacy authorities in a single location, business process re-engineering work currently underway, introduction of a new computer system and the appointment of a single Head of Development Management will allow the realignment of the structure below management/team leader level without compromising this essential frontline service. Re-prioritising some elements of work will assist in maintaining quality and timeliness of determining planning applications.

Financial Savings

£210,000 estimated.

Service Implications and Impact

It is considered that if properly managed, a net reduction in FTE can be accommodated without a reduction in the level of service to customers or the quality of development delivered.

4FTE Reduction

P8 Increasing of fees for range of services – Efficiency

Background

There are a number of planning services for which an administration fee can be levied. These include, S106 (Statutory Planning Obligations), S38 (Highway Agreements (Adoption)), S278 (Highway Agreements by Highways Development Control) and the ability to charge for pre-application advice.

Rationale for Service Change

The statutory fees that are levied were reviewed in comparison to neighbouring authorities and found to be low compared to the regional average. Increasing these fees would bring Central Bedfordshire Council in line with the region.

Financial Savings

£260,000

Service Implications and Impact

The additional income will help maintain levels of service provision and will have no negative impact on the service. The charge for 'pre-app' advice could lead to increased expectations of timely and comprehensive advice supplied. Customer care and management will need to be managed.

P9 Building Control Restructure - Efficiency

Background

Building Control provides a wide range of statutory services in support of local business including Building Regulations, Dangerous Structures, Demolitions, Accessibility, Street Naming and Land Drainage.

Rationale for Service Change

The economic downturn has resulted in reduced income for building control and the level of resource the team is currently able to support. Bringing together the two legacy teams within a single location and the introduction of a new computer system also enables efficiencies to be made.

Financial Implications

£50,000 saving in 2011/12 to the Council, majority of the saving to the trading accounts.

Service Implications and Impact

The restructure will deliver a reduction of 3.0 FTEs.

APPENDIX A(vi)

SAVING PROPOSALS

EFFICIENCIES

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CROSS CUTTING EFFICIENCIES

CC1 Income Revenue - Efficiency

Background

A recent high level benchmarking exercise suggested CBC's income levels against expenditure are generally lower than our peers. The Corporate Management Team have commissioned a fast-paced project in partnership with PwC to identify opportunities for income growth.

Rationale

This project will focus on "Revenue Income Optimisation (RIO)" which aims to maximise current and new sources of income for the Council through the identification of a range of income opportunities across Council services. The project will therefore look to work with all Directorates to identify any cost-effective income opportunities to:-

- Restructure existing fees
- Agree new income streams
- Enhance commercial cost recovery
- Maximise trading services opportunities
- Better target concessions to those who need them

Financial Savings

Based upon PwC's experience of successfully delivering these types of projects with 16 other LA's, and 9 more currently, their initial estimate is that the Council should be able to generate business cases with a net benefit of several £m savings over the next three years, £1.5m is anticipated for 2011/12.. Where possible, the project will aim to deliver some quick wins that generate some extra income in 2010/11.

The implementation costs associated with delivering the income opportunities resulting from this project will be detailed within the individual business cases.

Service Implications and Impact

The project costs to develop opportunities and associated Business Cases are split between a £40k flat fee, plus a variable fee (based upon the amount of additional income that is identified over a 3 year period).

The services that will be impacted by this project will be identified during the income opportunity workshops (being run in October 2010) and prioritised by the Income Board before being developed into business cases.

CC6 Passenger Transport Review - Efficiency

Background

The Council funds home to school transport; transporting of vulnerable adults; and the maintenance of uneconomic public bus services to enable residents to access a wide range of services and facilitates.

Rationale for Change

This comprehensive review of all the Council's passenger transport services as well as some transport services provided by the NHS and voluntary and community sector organisations, will both

- inform the service plan element of Local Transport Plan 3; and
- recommend changes that will deliver passenger transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose, within controlled budgets and an up-to-date policy framework.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £1.050M in 2011/12 can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

These will be identified through a range of detailed policy review reports being considered by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for decision by Executive.

CC7 Procurement - Efficiency

Background

This theme involves streamlining the number of staff who are able to requisition goods and services from circa 400 to around 50. This will improve compliance with corporate procurement contracts and ensure more efficient and effective procurement practices.

It also focuses on seven key corporate procurement contracts where there are opportunities to reduce unit costs and manage the demand more effectively hence, reducing overall expenditure. These include:- Distributed Printing Managed Service; Advertising Services; Consultancy; Travel, Hotel Accommodation and Venue Hire; Stationery; Temporary Staff and Corporate Print Services.

Rationale for Service Changes

The changes include: streamlining requisitioning, improving specification practice, sourcing, demand management, contract compliance and contract management of generic corporate supplies and services.

Financial Savings

Savings across all the elements of this initiative are projected at £1m per annum.

Service Implications and Impact

The procurement and contract management initiatives will improve supplies and services and lower costs across all directorates. No FTE reductions are assumed within this proposal.

CC2 & CC14 to CC21 Customer Management & Web Transformation – Efficiency

Background

This cross cutting programme is to develop a council-wide approach that shifts inbound and simple transactions to preferred and more cost effective channels, supported by a single view of the customer. The objective is to ensure that wherever, whenever and however customers seek to access our services they get the right level of service, first time and as efficiently and effectively as possible. It consists of four primary work streams.

- Web Strategy Channel Migration: Transform capability to offer services and deliver business processes online
- Migration of Services into Customer Services: Continue to develop, design and implement a standard approach to the migration of services into Customer Services.
- Improve process efficiency and consistency of delivery by the implementation of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
- Process Transformation: To enable the whole organisation to provide our customers with the service they require, how, when and where they want to access it. Office processes will have to be re-designed to meet the customer requirements and aid self service delivery.

Rationale for Service Change

This will deliver efficiencies through avoidance of process duplication and fragmentation. It will reduce processes that require multiple hand offs and drive increased first point resolution. It shift transactions to lower cost access channels (Web & Telephone). It will improve the Customer 'journey' - increasing customer satisfaction and lead to a reduction in avoidable contact. The council will be able to have a single view of the services consumed by the customer.

Financial Savings

The programme is estimated to save approximately £1.2M over a five year period.

Service Implications and Impact

The implications on staffing if all four work streams deliver as expected is difficult to predict at this time but assuming that the savings are made as anticipated in 2011/12 this equates to a reduction of 12 FTE across the Council.

CC22 to CC29 Energy Efficiency Programme – Efficiency

Background

The Council is a major user of energy which has a direct cost and which also means that the Council is compulsorily required to participate in the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme which includes financial incentives for organisations to become more energy efficient. This is aimed at reducing the carbon footprint of organisations.

Rationale for Change

The Council has adopted a Climate Change Strategy to reduce its carbon footprint for the wider benefit of society and to put the Council in a strong position to perform well in the Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme. Specific measures will be set out in the Carbon Management Plan to follow.

Financial Savings

The estimated savings are to be confirmed and will be set out in the Carbon Management Plan.

Service Implications and Impact

These will be set out in the Carbon Management Plan

CC30 Employee Terms and Conditions of Service - Efficiency

Background

Employee costs make up a significant part of the Council's expenditure in delivering a wide range of services. (£90M per annum). A number of "terms and conditions of service" costs within this amount are open to local determination.

Rationale for Service Change

In the extremely challenging context of the Council's financial position it is appropriate to seek to reduce the cost of providing services by reducing this major spend area, rather than reducing an equivalent value of actual services.

Financial Savings

A target saving of £1M is to be achieved. Implementation will be over the two financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

The aim of this proposal is to reduce cost without reducing service levels. The specific measures to achieve the target savings will be the subject of negotiation with recognised trade unions through the collective bargaining arrangements.

CC32 Assets Rationalisation - Efficiency

Background

Consideration is being given to rationalisation of 53 existing corporate buildings. 13 leased buildings have been identified which can be vacated over the next four financial years.

Rationale for Service Change

Revenue saving efficiencies can be maximised by vacating leased properties, this is considered achievable for these 13 leases linked to optimising flexible working and staff reductions.

Financial Savings

£900k per annum by end of year 4 (£500k from Technology House). Similarly at least £100k revenue can be saved by declaring surplus and disposing of freehold properties. Actual costs of flexible working will have to be set against these savings.

Service Implications and Impact

The rationalisation process is primarily limited to a major move to flexible working by the Authority.

APPENDIX B(i)

SAVING PROPOSALS

SERVICE RECONFIGURATION AND REDUCTIONS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Children's Services

CS4 - Special Education Needs – Service Reductions

Background

The Government has published a Green Paper on Special Education Needs. Building on this, the Council will be expected to target resource on the truly vulnerable pupils and families. The Council will focus on its statutory obligations and where services are not statutory, will arrange for decreased monitoring of schools and delegation of as many special needs services where possible.

Rationale for Service Change

The Council will retain a small core team to discharge statutory duties with schools taking greater responsibility for provision of services to pupils with special educational needs. With the support of the reduced core team, schools will be asked to deliver collaborative services through Trusts, Federations and Partnerships.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £128K in 2011/12 with a further £272K in 2012/13. This can be achieved by service restructure and the deletion of 5 full time equivalent posts. The role of other staff may change and be refocused. In 2011/2012 there will be savings gains in individual pupil support packages and support packages for schools when they are not considered to be the truly vulnerable or in need of statutory provision.

Service Implications and Impact

Parents will need to be informed of the change and the revised arrangements will need to be clear.

The most vulnerable pupils will have statements of special educational need and this statutory requirement will remain.

CS5 – Remodelling of services to Young People including the Youth Service – Service Reduction

Background

The proposals will move the youth service and all other cross directorate services that support young people towards less Council run provision and more volunteering. A commissioning approach with schools and volunteers will be adopted, focusing on the truly vulnerable.

Rationale for Service Change

The Council will move to supporting young people through external partnership arrangements. To make provision for young people and to listen to their views is a statutory requirement. The Council has discretion over the way it delivers this provision. This change will involve the re-commissioning of youth clubs and other youth provision in consultation with the voluntary and third sector. Services to young people will be brought into a single point of contact within the Directorate with a focus on the truly vulnerable. A review of the cost of the Youth Offending Service will also be undertaken to maximise efficiency.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £570K in 2011/12 and £1.328 in 2012/13. This can be achieved by the reduction of 13 full time equivalent posts and some refocusing of other posts. Some part time and temporary sessional posts may also be affected as the proposals are developed. The 2012/13 proposal is more challenging but will build on the capacity building with schools and the voluntary sector undertaken in 2011/12.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

The role of the Council will change towards partnerships and volunteering in line with the "Big Society" initiatives.

Members will notice that local services are delivered increasingly in partnership with the voluntary sector.

CS8 - Parenting Support – Service Reduction

Background

Parenting support is activity aimed at providing information, advice and support to parents and carers to help them in bringing up their children. The proposal is to raise the threshold for accessing all types of parenting support across the Directorate to include only those families that are considered truly vulnerable. The strategy for those who are not considered to be the truly vulnerable will be developed as part of the approach to use more volunteers.

Rationale for Service Change

Provision of support to Parents is a statutory requirement. The Council has discretion over the level and delivery of the provision. Work will be undertaken to encourage volunteering in local communities via Sure Start and Children's Centres. When the Government's early intervention strategy is announced, expected in January 2011, there may be some external financial support available for these initiatives. Parenting support across the Directorate will be brought into a single point of contact.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £100K in 2011/12. This will be achieved by a mix of reduction of grant supported activity and the reduction of 2 full time equivalent

posts. There will be some rationalisation of the roles of other part time and sessional post holders.

Service Implications and Impact

Parents and families may note that they may be referred to volunteers for support.

Schools will notice provision focuses only on the truly vulnerable.

CS9 - Music Service – Service Reduction for the financial year 2012/2013

Background

The Music Service is a shared service providing support and tuition to pupils across the Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire. The Music Service is currently funded from both Council's budgets and the Standards Fund. This proposal removes Central Bedfordshire Council's contribution by 2012/2013.

Rationale for Service Change

In light of the review by Government of the Standards Fund and the Council's own savings targets, steps to reshape and refocus of the service is on-going. This proposal will remove the Council's contribution to the music service with a view to full cost recharge on all activity offered to schools or parents. The proposal and the consequential re-organisation will have a long lead time hence the proposal is for 2012/2013.

Financial Savings

This will bring a saving of £272K in 2012/13. A music service re-organisation will occur during 2011/2012 building on the 2010/2011 management re-organisation and the number of posts affected will be identified at that time. This review will be informed when the outcome of the national Henley Review on funding for music services is known. It closed the call for evidence in October but the publication date is unknown.

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of posts will require application of the Council's Management of Change Policy.

Schools and Parents will be asked to buy back at full cost.

APPENDIX B(ii)

SAVING PROPOSALS

SERVICE RECONFIGURATION AND REDUCTIONS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Office of the Chief Executive

OCE7 Directorate Reprovision / Non Priority Services: Non- renewal of 'Credit Union' funding

Background

This proposal relates to the non-renewal of Credit Union funding when the current contract expires at the end of 2010/11. The Credit Union is a body that Mid Beds previously funded in the sum of £100,000 over 3 years, to help support local people with, for example, small scale, low interest loans.

The scheme initially targeted 500 members – at the end of 2009/10 there were only 94.

Rationale

As 2010/11 is in the last year of the 'legacy' funding commitment, there is an opportunity to simply not renew it in 2011/12.

Financial Savings

The estimated savings for 2011/12 are £0.031m savings.

Service Implications and Impact

With low demand the implications of this budget reduction will be minimal.

OCE8 Directorate Reprovision / Non Priority Services: 10% cut to core Voluntary and Community Sector grants

Background

10% cut to core VCS Grants over 2 years (5% each year). This proposal is in the context of the core funding provided to 7 organisations - totalling £400,000 per annum.

Rationale

The current arrangements are a carry over from the legacy authorities. There is an opportunity to review the levels of grant, identify any efficiencies and ensure outcomes fully contribute to our priorities.

Financial Savings

The estimated savings for 2011/12 are £0.020m. A further £0.020m will be saved for 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

There will be less resource for key voluntary sector organisations across Central Bedfordshire provided by the Council.

The impact on residents will be a potential reduction in service from Citizens' Advice Bureaus, Bedford Race Equality Council, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, Community & Voluntary Service Mid and North Bedfordshire, and Voluntary & Community Action Central Bedfordshire.

APPENDIX B(iii)

SAVING PROPOSALS

SERVICE RECONFIGURATION AND REDUCTIONS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Social Care, Health & Housing

SCHH16 LuDun – Service Reduction

Background

LuDun works is a sheltered workshop based in Dunstable where 24 adults with disabilities are employed in picture framing, logistics and milling activities. This service was originally established in 1956 to provide training, accommodation and other services and facilities for people with disability or learning disabilities who were incapable in obtaining normal employment.

Rationale for Service Change

Following a feasibility study, the trustees have concluded that the current activity does not support the purpose of the trust and it is not financially viable. As a result it has given written notice to the council to vacate the LuDun premises.

The model of employment does not deliver the outcomes required by the trustees and is not considered to be a core activity of the council.

The outcome of the feasibility study carried out by officers and the trustees demonstrated that LuDun works is not financially viable or sustainable.

There is also uncertainty in the future funding arrangements with DWP and Luton Borough Council.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a total saving of £300,000 will be made in 2011/12 if the operation is closed from April 2011.

Service Implications and Impact

A 90 day consultation process with staff will need to be undertaken. Staff and their families are likely to challenge the council decision to close the works. The council will seek to support its employees in their search for alternative employment and opportunities.

SCHH15 Modernisation of Day Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities – Service Reduction

Background

We currently provide day services at Biggleswade, Silsoe Horticultural and the Townsend Centre with a number of community cafés for adults with learning disabilities. The cost of these services is £1.53m.

Rationale for Service Change

Younger people are choosing other options rather than this more institutional approach to care. The Council will seek to provide more community based opportunities in keeping with the personalisation agenda and a gradual withdraw from this institutional approach. This will result in a reduction in the use of the number of buildings. The council will focus and target the use of its buildings to provide support to customers with challenging and complex needs.

Financial Implications

A reduction in 3 FTEs and other facility related costs should deliver savings of £100,000 in 2011/12. Further savings should be delivered over the next two years.

Service Implications and Impact

The potential closure of a facility is likely to meet with current customer, family and local opposition. There will be a need to consult with customers, partners and relatives and allow 90 day staff consultation.

SCHH17 Reduction in the usage of residential care services – Service Reduction

Background

The current costs of Care Placements for older people are £16.69m. The council invests significantly more than its family group in residential care. This means that the people in residential care could be supported to live at home longer.

Rationale for Service Change

Reduce the usage of residential care service placements but continue to support people in their own homes and ensure there is access to residential care for people with dementia.

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £1.050m will be made in 2011/12 which is the equivalent of approximately 55 placements. Future savings will be made in the following years.

Service Implications and Impact

The Council will be investing money to support more people but reduce expenditure on residential care. It is likely that some customers, their families and local care home providers may challenge the council.

SCHH18 Develop a joint approach to improved care and reablement services – Service Reduction

Background

The Council and local NHS partners collectively provide a number of services to facilitate greater independence for customers at critical times in their lives, For instance intermediate care following a fall and hospital admission to return the customer to their previous way of living.

Rationale for Service Change

The council needs to develop a joint approach with the health service to deliver an improved care and reablement service which will lead to more positive outcomes for customers and reduce the dependency on the council and NHS for care. These services are currently dispersed and uncoordinated. National studies indicate a reduction in service needs by over 40% where services are coordinated and jointly delivered

Financial Implications

It is estimated that a saving of £250,000 will be made in 2011/12 and is likely that future savings will be realised in following years.

Service Implications and Impact

Improved outcomes for customers and may lead to future report to the Executive to consider integrating services with the Health Service.

APPENDIX B(iv)

SAVING PROPOSALS

SERVICE RECONFIGURATION AND REDUCTIONS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Sustainable Communities – Reductions

EG,S&R1 Reduce External Enterprise and Marketing Activity – Service Reduction

Background

Enterprise and Marketing activity is delivered through a number of contracts as part of the Business Growth and Marketing team. A review proposes three areas of service reduction. They are as follows:-

Innovation activity has been provided by our University partners. The innovation facilitation enables ideas to be commercialised and support business creation and growth. The proposal reduces the funding available by £30,000 leaving £50,000 to be contracted.

Rural Enterprise and Research has been provided by BRCC (Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charities), this agreement for £20,000 would be stopped from April 2011. The funding supports rural enterprise activity and research. Inward Investment and Marketing by a number of specific commissions totalling a reduction of £50,000 leaving a similar sum to support this activity in the area in 2011/12.

Rationale for Service Change

During 2010/11 new ways to deliver enterprise and encourage business start ups are being introduced by strengthening joint working with the private sector, colleges and Universities.

The Council will strengthen business engagement and encourage business ambassadors to champion our area to new investors at low cost and high return to the community. The economic development rural support activities will be delivered directly by the Council.

BRCC has been successful in securing European Rural Development Funding to promote rural enterprise and diversification replacing in part the need for additional grant funding until 2013.

Financial Savings

£100,000 in total

Service Implications and Impact

The reduction of innovation and enterprise funding could be mitigated by closer delivery with our neighbouring authorities, the private sector and University and Enterprise activities.

Removal of the grant may affect the availability of the European funds match funding to draw on the Rural Development Programme of England (RDPE) Leader Greensand Ridge Programme.

A marketing activity reduction may have an impact on jobs attracted to the area and a reduced profile with investors, if the alternative provision cannot be achieved.

There are no staff reductions.

EG,S&R2 Stop Grant to Luton Gateway Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV) – Service Reduction

Background

Luton Gateway, currently part of our delivery structure supported by a grant towards the core costs of the company. The decision has been taken by the company board to wind down following the withdrawal of the major part of the funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) from March 2011.

Rationale for Service Change

The grant is no longer required given the intended company closure following the withdrawal of funding from the Homes and Communities Agency.

Financial Savings

£50,000

Service Implications and Impact

Local capacity supporting the delivery of growth will be reduced and the lobbying and independent developer facilitation role may be reduced. Some aspects may be superseded by the proposed South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership.

Contact with key stakeholders, developers, house builders is likely to be weakened.

Inward investment activity carried out by Luton Gateway will be picked up internally with re-profiling of work streams within the service.

This does not affect staff employed directly by the council.

EG,S&R3 Town and Parish Planning Support Activity Stopped – Service Reduction

Background

Currently, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charities facilitate the production and review of Town and Parish Plans. Small grants are also available from CBC to support some of the costs of this activity to prepare and review Parish/Town Plans. The work is managed by one Community Development Officer.

Rationale for Service Change

Town and Parish plans will only continue where the Town or Parish Council supports this from their own resources. The use of the community based parish plans will continue to be a valued reference tool within the Council.

Financial Savings

£45,000

Service Implications and Impact

Number of parish and town plans completed each year will be reduced. One full time employee post will be deleted.

EG,S&R4 Mobile library Service to be stopped. However, Library Link will continue to be provided – Service Reduction

Background

The mobile library visits 54 locations over a two week period and is based at Biggleswade Library. This service supplements the 12 fixed libraries located across the district with a focus on village communities. There is a separate Library Link service, based at Flitwick Library, supported in part by volunteers visiting homebound users and sheltered housing schemes.

Rationale for Service Change

This is a discretionary service area. The cessation of the mobile library contributes to corporate savings target, whilst maintenance of the Library Link protects service to the most vulnerable and builds on principle of volunteerism.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £55,000 can be achieved by ceasing the Mobile Library Service.

Service Implications and Impact

Distance to library services will increase for a number of communities. Library Link will continue.

EG,S&R5 Libraries Homework Centres for five areas to be discontinued from 1/7/11 – Service Reduction

Background

There are five homework centres operated from libraries in Biggleswade, Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Flitwick and Leighton Buzzard. They are free of charge to 8-13 year olds who receive homework support, access to computers and free print-outs and photocopying. Dedicated staff are available to support the children. The reduction will be mainly in respect of savings on staff costs.

Rationale for Service Change

It is a discretionary service and not a statutory requirement. Schools and colleges may be able to support the users of this service.

Financial Savings

£30,000

Service Implications and Impact

Dedicated homework support-(children will still have free PC access), and free access to photocopying and print-outs will cease. However, schools and colleges may provide these services.

The service is delivered on a part time basis of 2 staff at each of the 5 homework centres each operating on 4 hours per week basis.

EG,S &R6 European Development Programme Fund Stopped – Service Reduction

Background

The European Revenue Programme supports the development of new European funding opportunities for the area. It is used to fund basic research and capacity to identify, raise awareness and support access to European funds.

Rationale for Service Change

The ending of the regional bodies engaged in European programmes will be from March 2011. The facilitation and operation of European programmes will be at national level only. The local capacity to continue is limited and the potential to recover full costs from available programmes and European Interventions is increasingly challenging and is likely to be at additional cost to the Council. This local development activity will therefore cease.

Financial Savings

£20,000

Service Implications and Impact

Potential reduced access to European funds to support economic development could reduce opportunities for business enterprise and growth. No staff reduction is proposed.

EG,S&R7 Reduction in Arts Development Service and refocus to support the most vulnerable – Service Reduction

Background

This is a discretionary service that seeks to use the arts to increase participation of many vulnerable people in our community. This aspect will remain but the wider use an arts development and grant giving in the community will stop.

Rationale for Service Change

Arts Development will be refocused to four priority work areas supporting vulnerable people in 2011/12 with a saving of £65,000.

Financial Savings

£65,000

Service Implications and Impact

Funds to annual Orchestras Live and Arts Aloud cancelled. Arts development work with the wider community will cease. Work will be focussed on vulnerable people. One full time employee post to be deleted.

HT4 Cease support for the provision of school crossing patrols – Service Reduction

Background

The Council provides 28 school crossing patrols to a minority of schools across the district.

Rationale for Service Change

This is a discretionary service area. Those schools benefitting from this service will be asked to take on the responsibility for them from 1st April 2011.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £95,000 can be achieved by this proposal.

Service Implications and Impact

Schools and community volunteers would have the option to take up this service.

There are 36 individuals (part time Council staff) that will be affected – equivalent to 4 full time employees.

CSPPWL3 Community Safety Team – Service Reductions

Background

Community Safety and Public Protection provide a range of services that help to support safer communities and protect the environment and public. This includes responding to environmental crime eg fly tipping, fly posting, noise and a rapid response on 'no cold calling' and rogue trader enquiries.

Rationale for Service Change

There will be a change in existing practices so as to provide an increased visible presence in communities through the improved co-ordination of teams undertaking statutory duties under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and associated legislation, across Central Bedfordshire. The proposal is a reduction of 3 posts in this area of work.

To contribute to the corporate savings target.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £90,000 can be achieved.

Service Implications and Impact

Reduced capacity will mean a greater need to target available resources.
Reduction in one full-time employee.

The deletion of 2 enforcement officer posts will mean there is no dedicated resource to provide an immediate response and to deal with incidents linked to 'no cold calling'.

Reduction in 3 full-time employees.

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

Background

CCTV supports the Council priority to create safer communities with regard to detecting crime, disorder and anti social behaviour and by supporting the prevention and detection of crime and disorder and support the prosecution of offences through the provision of evidence. The CCTV service is under review with a report considered by the Council Executive in September.

Rationale for Service Change

To contribute to corporate savings target.

Financial Savings

An estimated saving of £95,000 can be achieved.

Service Implications and Impact

CCTV Operator posts would reduce from 7.5 full time employees to 4.

Proactive CCTV monitoring by CCTV Operators would stop during periods when demand is low. Cameras would switch to a recording only operation during these times.

Existing terms and conditions for the CCTV Team will be reviewed and amended in line with the changes to the operation of the service.

CSPPW5 Waste and Street Cleansing: Rationalise a range of Waste Services – Efficiency

Background

The Council provides high performing waste and street cleansing services through a range of contracts provided by the private sector including refuse and recycling collection, street cleansing, household waste recycling centres and food waste collection.

Rationale for Service Change

In a time of austerity, reducing performance to a lower level is proposed to contribute to the corporate savings target.

Financial Savings

Estimated saving from a range of measures will be £400K.

Service Implications and Impact

Rationalise fly tip resource - there are two resources for fly tipping clearance, covering the north and south, this proposal would mean having a single resource for the whole area.

There will be an increased response time for clearance of large fly tips. Response rates for smaller fly tips should be maintained.

Street Cleansing in the south - reductions in frequency of street cleansing in the south area by moving higher frequency roads/areas in to lower frequency brackets.

We are currently a high-performing service, the reduction in street cleansing standards may impact on this. There may be an increase in complaints and reduced flexibility to be reactive.

Household Waste Recycling Area - There are currently 4 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) operating 7 days (9am-5pm winter, 9am -7pm summer). This proposal would see the reduction of opening hours of HWRCs depending on discussions with contractor regarding busy periods.

Communication and publicity regarding revised opening times is essential.

Food Waste Collection - There is currently a weekly food waste collection from the kerbside in the north, introduced to improve recycling rates and avoid waste going to landfill. Residents are currently supplied with biodegradable bags for use with the scheme. The resupply of biodegradable bags will cease, but collections continue.

This change may result in some reduced participation in the food waste scheme and will impact on recycling performance, which has been factored into the savings estimates.

All the proposals above do not directly affect staff employed by the Council.

CSPPWL6 Biggleswade Recreation Centre - Service Reduction

Background

CBC has a leisure management contract that includes a joint use facility at Stratton Upper School called Biggleswade recreation centre. The contract cost for Biggleswade recreation centre costs £65,000.

Rationale for Service Change

The contract for this centre ends on 31 March 2012, negotiations will include bringing this forward to October 2011.

Financial Savings

On current contract costs, an estimated saving of £65,000 can be made - £35,000 in 2011/12, £30,000 in 2012/13.

Service Implications and Impact

The facility may be replaced by an extension to Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre in Biggleswade via developer contributions and CBC funds. Developer contributions have been agreed but are not anticipated to be received before March 2012. The school or town council may determine the future continuation of the service.

This does not affect staff employed directly by the Council.

CSPWL7 Closure of leisure centre - Houghton Regis Leisure Centre – Efficiency

Background

The contract for Houghton Regis Leisure Centre costs £172,000. It is a small, former joint use facility attached to a former school which was closed a number of years ago and requires significant investment in its infrastructure.

Rationale for Service Change

The contract comes to an end on 31st December 2011.

Financial Implications

An estimated saving of £42,000 in 2011/12 can be made by the proposals at Houghton Regis Leisure Centre. £130k further savings would be made in 2012/13

Service Implications and Impact

Closure of the centre may have an impact on the users and local community, but the facility at Dunstable is being maintained

At Houghton Regis a leisure centre could be re-provided through S106 developer contributions in the future.

This does not directly affect staff employed by the Council.

P1 Housing Strategy and support for new affordable housing provision - Reduction

Background

The Housing Strategy function works to identify local housing needs, better understand housing related issues such as fuel poverty and grant fund the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) to identify local housing needs in rural areas. It prepares the Council's Housing Strategy and enables the delivery of new affordable housing locally through direct negotiation and advice to developers and partners to ensure new affordable housing is built.

Rationale for Service Change

To contribute to the corporate savings target.

This budget currently funds the carbon action network £5,000 per year to carry out national survey to inform NI 187. In future, this will be done in house. The BRCC is currently funded to £11,000 which part funds a post to undertake localised affordable housing needs surveys. In future, this will be carried out by in-house support, advice and a toolkit approach which helps local communities undertake local surveys.

Financial Savings

£52,000 through removal of 3 posts;
£15,000 through service budget reduction.
£67,000 in total.

Service Implications and Impact

The effect of this proposal will be mitigated by the efficiencies gained by the co-location of teams and a reprioritisation of activity. However, the level of resource will limit the number of housing needs surveys which can be delivered at a time and the number of developer negotiations. The resource level will have to be kept under review should the housing market significantly increase.

This proposal will lead to the deletion of 3 FTE posts.

P2 - Sustainable Growth advice and support - Reduction

Background

The Housing Strategy Team promotes and advises on the delivery of sustainable growth. Working on the Council's Climate Change Strategy and carbon reduction commitment.

Rationale for Service Change

The development industry and the public have become more familiar with the national commitment to reduce carbon emissions and deliver more sustainable forms of growth. Pending changes to the Building Regulations in particular will bring increasingly tight regulations to help deliver on that commitment and therefore will reduce the need for support. However, there remains the need for a level of advisory resource moving forward along with the delivery of new initiatives.

Financial Savings

£35,000

Service Implications and Impact

The loss of 1 FTE will reduce the number of new projects we will be able to initiate and the level of support/advice we are able to offer on certain issues.

P6 Reduction in small grants/commissions - Reduction

Background

The Marston Vale Trust is a successful organisation with many partners in both public and private sector whose purpose is to repair damaged and degraded landscape in the Marston Vale. Approximately 2 thirds of trust's area is in CBC the rest in BBC. CBC currently contributes £25,000 towards the core resource costs of the Trust.

Rationale for Service Change

The Trust has established a very strong partner and financial base and continues to achieve a great deal in improving the environment of the vale. Much of that work is funded from a variety of sources, including developers whose contributions through S106 agreements are helping to deliver a number of key projects in the vale. Given the strength of the financial base of the Trust, it is considered that the Council's historic annual contribution to project core costs can cease without undue detriment to the Trust's work. Bedford Borough Council is similarly reviewing its contribution towards these core costs. The Council's strong support for the project, including that through negotiation of S106 contributions on behalf of the project will continue.

Financial Savings

£25,000

Service Implications and Impact

The Trust will need to assess, but it is considered unlikely that the cessation of grant will lead to a reduction in what the Trust is able to achieve in the area.

P10 - Countryside Services Restructure - Reduction

Background

The Countryside Service team undertake statutory work, such as rights of way duties, the definitive map, rights of way orders and determining new commons and village greens applications.

Rationale for Service Change

Evidence indicates that site maintenance can be delivered more cost effectively through a more flexible management approach. Since much of this work is carried out in partnership with the voluntary sector, in practice this will mean either a reduction in payments to the voluntary sector or bringing some of the service in-house, where it can be delivered more efficiently. It is anticipated that this will result in a saving up to £35,000.

It is also proposed to reduce the level of work carried out on the definitive map, GIS support, rights of way orders, commons and village greens as well as that for marketing and promotion. This will result in a net reduction of 3.5 FTE posts and a further saving of £110,000.

Financial Savings

£145,000,

Service Implications and Impact

A reduction in resource will reduce the number of new greenspace projects which this team will be able to lead and deliver. The value for money of existing partnership arrangements will be reviewed and new partnerships may need to be considered to deliver on some of those projects. Reduced promotion of activities and service will affect the level of visits to some greenspace assets.

Deletion of core funding to any partner may impact on the resources of that partner and the programme of greenspace work that they themselves can pursue.

Reduced working budgets will affect the delivery of outputs in the Outdoor Access Improvement Plan. The only remaining funding available will be that used for the provision of core services.

3.5 FTE Reduction

P11 Reduction in Transport Strategy Team resource and transport surveys reduced from six monthly to annual - Reduction

Background

The Transport Strategy Team provides support to the Transport Strategy function, taking account of the need to deliver ongoing Local Transport Plan work etc. The team also commission traffic surveys and traffic counts

Rationale for Service Change

The team re-prioritised or put on hold its support relating to some non-statutory areas of transport strategy and delivery work. However, delivery work on the Local Transport Plan will increase next year and it is important that there is sufficient resource to undertake that work. The removal of one post will maintain a reasonable level of support and momentum for that work.

Carrying out traffic surveys once per annum instead of in the spring and autumn will continue to give the council annually updated information as regards meeting its transport targets.

Financial Savings

£60,000

Service Implications and Impact

The removal of a full time role in providing support to public transport will mean that the council will have to scale down its involvement on rail issues. Specifically, this will mean a reduced input into the East West Rail scheme and no input into supporting community rail groups or bespoke rail partnerships.

The reduction in traffic survey frequency will mean that the council's ability to recognise and respond to changes in traffic patterns will be reduced.

1 FTE Reduction