

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



please ask for Mel Peaston
direct line Senior Democratic Services Officer
date 29 July 2009

NOTICE OF MEETING

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date & Time

Thursday, 13 August 2009 10.00am

Venue at

Room 14, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford

Jaki Salisbury
Interim Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

Cllrs Miss A Sparrow (Chairman), A M Turner (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Freeman, P Freeman, Mrs R B Gammons, Ms A M W Graham, J Kane and P Rawcliffe

[Named Substitutes:

R A Baker, Dr R Egan, Mrs S Goodchild, Mrs D B Gurney, P Hollick and B J Spurr]

All other Members of the Council - on request

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

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of any substitute members.

2. **Minutes**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2009.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive from Members any declarations and the nature thereof in relation to:-

- (a) personal interests in any agenda item
- (b) personal and prejudicial interests in any agenda item
- (c) any political whip in relation to items on the agenda.

4. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

To receive any announcements from the Chairman and any matters of communication.

5. **Public Questions, Statements and Deputations**

This is an opportunity for questions, statements and deputations from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure set out in section A4 of the Council's Constitution.

6. **Disclosure of Exempt Information**

To consider proposals, if any, to deal with any item likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 prior to the exclusion of the press and public.

7. **Call-in**

To consider any matter referred to the Committee in relation to the call-in of a decision.

8. **Empty Dwellings Management Orders (EDMOs)**

To consider the enforcement options available to Central Bedfordshire Council in the management of long term empty private sector properties.

9. **Substantial Variations and Developments of Health Services**

To consider a framework for discussion with local NHS bodies and the Local Involvement Network to assist in reaching agreement on what constitutes “substantial” in the local context and how such consultation should be carried out.

10. **Review of the Work Programme**

To consider the Committee’s Work Programme for 2009/2010.

11. **Executive's Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

To consider the Executive’s Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period starting 1 August 2009, attached.

12. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 10 September at the Council Offices, Dunstable in Committee Room 1 starting at 10.00am.

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in on Thursday, 16 July 2009

PRESENT

Cllr Miss A Sparrow (Chairman)
Cllr A M Turner (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs Mrs J Freeman
P Freeman
Mrs R B Gammons
Mrs S Goodchild

Cllrs Ms A M W Graham
J Kane
P Rawcliffe

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs

Substitutes: Cllrs

Members in Attendance: Cllrs Mrs R J Drinkwater
Mrs C Hegley,
M Gibson

Officers in Attendance: –

Others in Attendance

Daisy Bogg	– Director, BPLT
Bernard Harrison	– Vice Chair, BPLT
Andrew Macpherson	– NHS East of England
David Levitt	– NHS Bedfordshire
Jean O’Callaghan	– Chief Executive, Bedford Hospital Trust
Bob Smith	– LINK
Nicola Bell	- NHS Bedfordshire

SCHHOSC/08/1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

SCHHOSC/08/2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

SCHHOSC/08/3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest nor of the existence of a political whip.

SCHHOSC/08/4 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The following announcements and communications were received:-

- (i) The Chairman advised that with the agreement of the Committee she proposed to change the order of the agenda to achieve good time management for the attendant guests. It was agreed to take item 11, Bedfordshire and Luton Mental Health and Social Care Partnership NHS Trust, immediately after item 8.
- (ii) The Chairman advised that the recent meeting of the East of England Scrutiny Chairs' Forum had been advised that Bedfordshire was in the first tranche of receiving dialysis stations with 20 stations to be introduced in Bedfordshire and 8 in Luton. Nicola Bell, NHS Bedfordshire, advised that the Committee would receive a report on this in due course.
- (iii) The Chairman advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee had expressed the intention of requiring strategies to come to Overview and Scrutiny Committees before being agreed by the Executive. Councillor Drinkwater, Portfolio Holder for Housing spoke in support of this approach.

SCHHOSC/08/5 **Petitions**

No petitions had been received.

SCHHOSC/08/6 **Public Questions, Statements and Deputations**

Bob Smith of LINK (Local Involvement Networks) advised the Committee that Arthur Dennis had resigned as Chairman of LINK locally although he would remain a member of the body. Mr Smith also commented that in view of there being no regional LINK, it was hoped that the local LINK would be permitted to provide input to the specialist commissioning group looking at the high spend required on rare health conditions.

The Chairman commented that the minutes of the regional Overview and Scrutiny Chairs meetings may be of interest to members of the Committee and she would liaise with Bernard Carter, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, regarding making these available.

SCHHOSC/08/7 **Disclosure of Exempt Information**

There were no matters anticipated as involving the disclosure of exempt information.

SCHHOSC/08/8 **Call-in**

No call-ins had been received.

SCHHOSC/08/9 Directorate Presentation - Overview/Key Issues & Challenges

Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing gave a presentation setting out an overview of performance and key issues for adult social care and housing.

The presentation included explanations on Central Bedfordshire Council's legacy, views of the Regulator and Government Office concerns about Adult Care; safeguarding of adults, matters in relation to Mental Health services; delivery of the national agenda including transformation of care and services, partnership arrangements and the care market and the need for specific strategies to be in place.

It was noted that a work programme was currently being established for the Directorate. This would be brought to the Committee at the next meeting to assist with identifying appropriate items for the Committee's work programme. The performance management basis was also being established and monitoring reports would be brought to the Committee on a regular basis.

The Director commented on the importance of the Council understanding that social care was at the heart of priorities and transformation for the Council. Achieving excellent social care services would be a journey taking between three to four years. Performance needed to be embedded so that it did not slip when focus shifted to other priorities.

RESOLVED:-

1. to note the presentation and thank the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing for her unambiguous explanations;
2. that the Directorate's Work Programme would be brought to the next meeting to consider how the Committee's Work Programme would dovetail with it.

SCHHOSC/08/10 Suggested Work Programme

Following on from the presentation given by the Director under the last item, a number of items were identified for inclusion in the Work Programme together with the dates when they could appropriately be considered.

The Chairman indicated that the lists of matters for the Committee to consider, including items identified by Councillor Male, the Chairman of the Committee in the interim period prior to the June elections, would be amalgamated and brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Goodchild asked that Wheelchair Services should be a matter looked into by the Committee.

The Chairman reported that the National Audit Office had identified failures in the NHS regarding Rheumatoid Arthritis and asked for this to be added to the list of future items for consideration by the Committee.

A request was made for an update from NHS Bedfordshire on estates management regarding those in Steppingley, Dunstable, Sandy and Biggleswade.

RESOLVED that the lists of items for the Committee to consider be amalgamated into one list to be brought to the next meeting, and that list would include the following items:

- Regular performance monitoring reports (quarterly)
- Position statement on Adult Social Care – September meeting
- Empty Homes – August meeting
- Transformation Strategy – October meeting
- Key Performance Indicators – August meeting
- Challenges Facing NHS Bedfordshire – no date set
- Amalgamated list of items for the Work Programme – August meeting
- Wheelchair Services – no date set
- Rheumatoid Arthritis Care – no date set
- NHS Bedfordshire estates management – Stepney, Dunstable, Sandy, Biggleswade – no date set

SCHHOSC/08/11 Bedfordshire and Luton Mental Health and Social Care Partnership NHS Trust

Members considered a report which had been circulated prior to the meeting setting out the next steps in the Bedfordshire and Luton NHS Trust tender process. The report provided an explanation of the impact of the “as is” transfer and the principal benefits of the project. It was noted that the tender process provided a ground-breaking opportunity for people living locally and for the commissioners of Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough Councils to seek a new provider of the mental health and learning disability services. It was anticipated that this would enable the quality of the services and value for money to be improved.

The Committee welcomed Bernard Harrison (Vice-Chairman) and Daisy Bogg (Director) from Bedfordshire and Luton Mental Health and Social Care Partnership NHS Trust and also Andrew Macpherson, NHS East of England and Nicola Bell, NHS Bedfordshire.

The Committee was given a presentation which provided details of the project handover following the decision taken earlier in the year that the Bedfordshire and Luton Mental Health and Social Care Partnership would merge with another Trust to achieve Foundation Trust status. This included information on priorities to be secured through the Foundation Trust status, wide membership of an inclusive Project Board, a competitive NHS process and the process and timetable.

The Director of Social Care, Health and Housing gave a presentation on delivering world class mental health services through partnership. This

addressed the requirements to be provided by the mental health services, priorities for mental health tendering for social care services, joined-up services and delivering across boundaries to an excellent standard; consistent and safe transformational services, governance and innovative service delivery; and using needs analysis and user feedback to plan and deliver partnership services.

It was noted that Central Bedfordshire Council was working closely with key players, attending weekly and fortnightly meetings. Andrew Macpherson indicated that this collaborative approach was very much welcomed. The Director commented that the Council was keen to ensure an outcome of excellent services.

Nicola Bell then gave a presentation on NHS Bedfordshire and NHS Luton developing world class services through partnership. Issues which were covered included priorities for achievement, ambitions, and existing partnerships; and also NHS Bedfordshire's future commitment to the scrutiny process.

A suggestion was made that Bedfordshire Police Authority should be included within the joined-up partnership working. A comment was made that it was important to reach out to vulnerable parts of the community, for example people with an illness or a condition such as autism who behaved in unexpected ways.

An observation was made that the National Dementia Strategy provided an opportunity for Overview & Scrutiny Committees nationally to invite PCTs to explain how they were working to achieve its aims. In response, it was noted that Bedfordshire PCT was working with the Council in accordance with the national strategy. The Director indicated that matters which needed addressing included insufficient community provision, access to services over 24 hours a day and 7 days a week and improving the range of options for people. She also commented that supported housing for people with mental health problems should be a priority for the Council.

RESOLVED:-

1. to note the contents of the report;
2. to include this matter on the Committee's Work Programme to ensure that it had the opportunity to review progress in relation to new management arrangements for local mental health services later in the year.

SCHHOSC/08/12 Joint Scrutiny of "A Healthier Bedfordshire", NHS Bedfordshire's Strategic Plan 2009-2013

The Committee considered a report setting out the next steps regarding the scrutiny of NHS Bedfordshire's draft Strategic Plan 2009-2013.

RESOLVED:-

1. to note the report;
2. to appoint the following as the Council's members of the Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Councils' Joint Health Scrutiny Committee undertaking the scrutiny of NHS Bedfordshire's draft Strategic Plan entitled *A Healthier Bedfordshire*:-
 - Councillors Sparrow, Andrew Turner and Rawcliffe (Conservative Group)
 - Councillor Goodchild (Liberal Democrat Group).

SCHHOSC/08/13 Forward Plan

The Committee considered the Executive's Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period starting 1 July 2009. It was noted that the Executive would be considering the Empty Dwellings Management Orders Review at its meeting on 21 July 2009, and a request was made that this be brought to the August meeting of the Committee. It was also noted that Local Transport Needs which would be considered by the Executive was a matter which related to more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee's remit. The Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee would be considering where this would be best placed for review.

RESOLVED that the Committee consider the Executive's decision on the Empty Dwellings Management Orders Review at its August meeting.

SCHHOSC/08/14 Date of the Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on 13 August 2009 at Priory House, Chicksands starting at 10.00am. Members also noted that meetings would be held at Priory House and at the Dunstable Council Offices and would alternate between the two locations.

The Committee also considered the need for a change of date in October as there was conflict with the dates of the Conservative Party conference.

RESOLVED that the October meeting be held on 15 October 2009 at Priory House, Chicksands starting at 10.00am.

Chairman.....

Date.....

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.45 a.m..)

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Agenda Item:

Meeting: Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny
Date: 13 August 2009
Subject: **Empty Homes in Central Bedfordshire – Use of Empty Dwelling Management Orders**
Report of: Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
Summary: The report proposes the use of enforcement powers available to the council in respect of problematic long term empty private sector homes in the district. In particular the report recommends the forming of a partnership with Pathmeads Housing Association, which will enable the council to use Pathmeads' expertise to manage any properties that are brought back into occupation through the use of Empty Dwelling Management Orders.

Contact Officer: Nick Costin, Head of Service, Private Sector Housing
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Committee support a recommendation to the Executive to extend (and amend where appropriate) the Empty Homes Policy and Protocol, previously adopted by South Bedfordshire District Council , to apply to all of Central Bedfordshire.

In particular, that the Committee supports the following specific recommendations to Executive:

- (a) That Executive approve the general use of Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO's) where the homes blight neighbourhoods and satisfy the selection criteria proposed at Appendix B, page 3.
- (b) That Executive approve the use of selection criteria set out in Appendix B to identify properties in the district suitable for Empty Dwelling Management Orders or where appropriate, Compulsory Purchase.
- (c) That Executive approve the progression of Empty Dwelling Management Orders in respect of four properties previously identified to South Bedfordshire District Council Executive in 2008 in order to develop a reliable process for the use of EDMO's.

2. **That the Committee (subject to agreeing the recommendations above) recommends to the Executive that the Council signs the Pathmeads Framework Agreement, to provide management services for the Council in respect of properties which are brought back into occupation through the use of Empty Dwelling Management Orders.**
3. **That the Committee notes that lessons learned from progressing four initial Empty Dwelling Management Orders will be incorporated within Central Bedfordshire Council's Empty Homes Strategy, to be presented to this Committee for Overview consideration in Spring 2010.**

Introduction to Empty Homes in Central Bedfordshire

1. The number of empty homes in Central Bedfordshire has been growing in recent years. As at 1st April 2009 there were in total 2,620 empty homes in the area. This compares to 2,421 in 2008 and 1,947 in 2007. In fact there has been a steady increase since 2005 (1,791). Of the 2,620 (at 1st April 09) 1,467 had been empty for more than 6 months. This is the highest number since records from 2003. Worryingly, 477 have been empty for more than 2 years. A graph showing the trend in long term empty homes is included as Appendix A.
2. This Council and also the legacy Councils regularly received complaints of longer term empty homes from concerned neighbours, primarily due to the deteriorating condition of the properties and effect on the immediate residential environment. Poor condition properties can attract fly tipping, unauthorised entry, risk of fire, and fear of crime in general.
3. The demand for affordable housing in the district continues to be high. In light of the current economic situation, there is continued uncertainty in the housing market and the demand for affordable housing is likely to remain high and potentially increase due to economic recession. In these circumstances, the council has a responsibility to examine all options for increasing housing supply, in particular the wasted resource of empty homes.

Addressing higher priority Empty Homes

4. In August 2008, a report on the use of enforcement action, in particular Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) was presented to South Bedfordshire District (SBDC) Executive. The report recommended the use of EDMO's in general, together with a policy of how long term vacant homes would be prioritised for such action. Executive approved the use of EDMO's and Compulsory Purchase Orders; approved the criteria for selecting/prioritising properties for such action; and approved enforcement action on 5 identified long term vacant properties that had been prioritised using the criteria in the proposed policy.

5. Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) are a power contained within the Housing Act 2004, which enable local authorities to “compulsorily lease” long term empty dwellings. The local authority does not gain ownership of the property, but obtains management rights for up to a maximum of 7 years under a successful EDMO application. This power is intended to be used where other options and attempts to bring the property back into use have not been successful, primarily where the owner has not co-operated with the Council. Any costs associated with bringing the property back into use are recoverable through the rent obtained during the lifetime of the EDMO. Any surplus is returned to the owner, who is presented with annual financial reports.
6. The Executive report presented in August 08 also included a reviewed and updated empty homes policy protocol, to reflect the provisions with the Housing Act 2004 and associated Government guidance. This policy and protocol, which was agreed by South Bedfordshire District Council’s Executive in August 08 is attached as Appendix B. The proposal within this report is that this document is amended in order to be applicable as a working policy for all of Central Bedfordshire. This policy is not a proposed Empty Homes Strategy (which will be presented to this committee in Spring 2010) but forms a basis for a consistent approach by Council officers when responding to complaints about longer term empty homes.

Progression of Empty Dwelling Management Orders

7. Since the South Bedfordshire District Council’s Executive approval of the use of EDMOs, 4 properties have been identified for EDMO action and the owners have been given formal Notice that the Council intends to take such action. The cases are being compiled in readiness for application to the Residential Property Tribunal (RPT) for the first stage of the process, an Interim EDMO (which provides a “last chance” for the owner to co-operate with the council).
8. However, before the cases can be taken to the RPT it is prudent for the Council to be able to demonstrate the proposed future management arrangements for the properties, in case the Interim EDMO is not successful, and a Final EDMO sought instead. This is where the Council actually gains management of the property.
9. Management (and other) costs should be covered by the rent obtained during the lifetime of the EDMO. Consequently there should be no overall, lifetime cost to the Council in respect of a property subject to an EDMO. There are, however, revenue and resource implications, which are examined in detail in Appendix C.

Management Options for properties

10. There are essentially three options in terms of management of properties subject to EDMO's. The options are: to manage the property and tenants ourselves (but on a private sector basis), pay a private Letting Agent to manage, or work with a suitable Housing Association with experience in such management. In respect of the last option, work has been undertaken by the Herts, Beds and Bucks Empty Homes Forum (a group made up of Council Officers dealing with empty homes) to create a partnership and framework agreement with Pathmeads Housing Association to manage any properties subject to EDMOs and other forms of Management Order.
11. The management options were presented in an Evaluation Report to this Council's Procurement Team, for consideration of a waiver to a full tendering process. This Evaluation report is attached as appendix C and the waiver was agreed by the Procurement Team on 19th June 09. The Evaluation report recommends the option of forming a partnership agreement with Pathmeads for the reasons given below.
12. The benefits of forming the Pathmeads agreement include:
 - (a) Pathmeads have the experience of managing short term and private leasing schemes.
 - (b) Pathmeads are willing to provide initial capital funding of up to £20,000 to make each property habitable.
 - (c) Pathmeads option is most cost effective in respect of impact upon council staff resources.
 - (d) Pathmeads will provide the annual financial statement to the owner on behalf of the Council.
 - (e) Pathmeads can offer tenancy support to help sustain the tenancy.
 - (f) Pathmeads will also provide a management service where conditions warrant that the Council has to undertake a Management Order in respect of a House In Multiple Occupation (Housing Act 2004); and in any future Private Sector Leasing scheme, where we work in partnership with private landlords.
13. Pathmeads is a part of the Genesis Housing Group and specialises in the management and maintenance of property under contract from Local Authorities, other organisations, and private landlords. Pathmeads currently manages over 22,500 properties across London and is expanding its operations out from this base.
14. To date, only a small number of EDMO's have been approved nationally and the Government Office for East of England is following the progress of Central Bedfordshire Council in undertaking these EDMOs.
15. The lessons learned from progressing EDMOs on the 4 properties that are in the former South Bedfordshire area, will be reviewed and incorporated in the Central Bedfordshire Council's Empty Homes Strategy, which is to be presented to this Committee in the Spring of 2010.

Conclusion and Next Steps (optional)

16. For the reasons given above, Council Officers are seeking to harmonize the approach when dealing with cases of empty homes throughout Central Bedfordshire. The policy and protocol adopted by former South Bedfordshire District Council provides a logical policy tool to use until the whole strategy for dealing with empty homes can be reviewed and presented later in the year. This will be amended to include references to Central Bedfordshire Council rather than South Bedfordshire District Council, when presented to Executive.
17. The use of EDMOs provides particular benefits to the Council, particularly in terms of reduced costs and risks from ownership in comparison to Compulsory Purchase orders. The four previously identified properties that might be suitable for EDMOs will provide good pilot studies for the effectiveness of this relatively new enforcement power as a tool throughout Central Bedfordshire, as well as providing useful information to Government Offices in this region.
18. In conclusion, the Pathmeads management option appears to offer the Council most benefits in managing private sector properties, whether subject to enforcement action or as part of a future voluntary Leasing Scheme with private sector landlords

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Bringing long term empty properties back into use supports the Council priority "Creating Safer Communities". Most long term empty homes attract unwanted attention leading to refuse accumulations, unauthorised entry, property damage or potential squatting, adversely affecting the immediate community living near the properties concerned.

Financial:

The Pathmeads option includes an offer of up to £20,000 capital funding to go towards the renovation costs needed to make each property habitable. This will save the equivalent amount from the Council's own capital programme (the capital budget for 2009/10 is £200K towards Empty Homes action)

Legal:

The Housing Act 2004 contains the provisions relating to the use of Empty Dwelling Management Orders. The proposals within this report comply with the legislation and accompanying Government Guidance issued in July 2006.

Risk Management:

The risks associated with the management options are included in the Evaluation Report at Appendix C. The risks of not proceeding with Empty Dwelling Management Orders for the four priority dwellings identified will include severe dissatisfaction from the neighbouring residents of these properties, who have been given previous reassurance from South Bedfordshire Council that this action, approved by South Bedfordshire District Council's Executive in August 2008, would progress.

All potential risks associated with developing a new partnership will aim to be minimised through examining the work undertaken to date between Pathmeads and those local authorities in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire, who have signed and progressed agreements. In effect, there is a transfer of financial risk to Pathmeads from the Council.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

The Pathmeads option will have least implications on staff resources.

Equalities/Human Rights:

The proposal broadly supports Equality and Human Rights legislation by helping to increase the availability of housing stock.

Community Safety:

The Pathmeads framework proposal includes standards of management to be provided to prevent likelihood of crime or disorder in relation to tenants. The agreement specifically refers to responsibility for dealing with noise nuisance, harassment, and neighbour disputes.

The properties concerned are often a source of criminal or unsociable behaviour when they are empty, including the dumping of refuse, attempts to break in and cause damage, thefts etc. Consequently, the proposals of this report will progress action to bring these properties back into occupation and consequently improve community safety.

Sustainability:

The proposals aim to progress the return of empty properties back into use. This has been shown to compare favourably with new build housing as an environmentally sustainable approach to meeting housing need, even where remedial works are required. It will also enhance the immediate residential environment and good management will help ensure that the initial improvements are maintained by Pathmeads.

Any improvements required will normally include energy efficiency works, resulting in a more affordable home for prospective tenants.

Appendices:

Appendix A Graph showing trend in longer term empty homes in Central Bedfordshire

Appendix B Empty Homes Policy and protocol 2008

Appendix C Evaluation of options for Management of Empty Dwellings under Housing Act 2004 – Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO's).

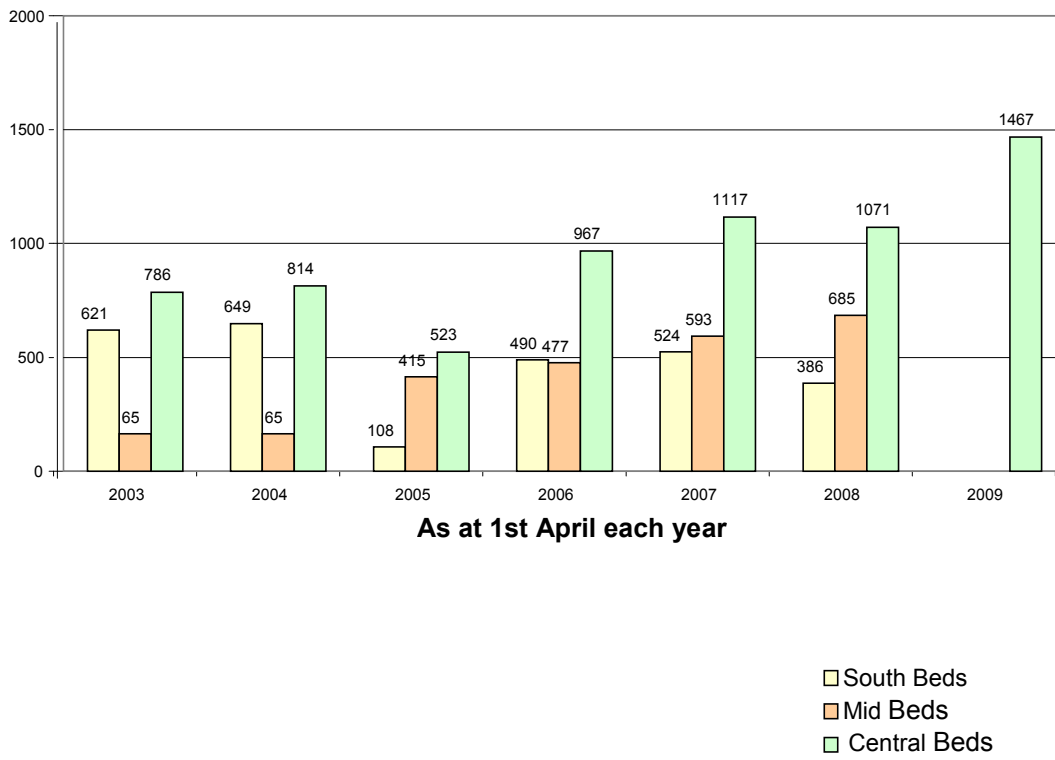
Appendix D Empty Homes Case Studies

Background Papers (open to public inspection):

Report to South Bedfordshire District Council Executive Committee, 19th August 2008
“Empty Homes in the Private Sector”.

Location of papers: District Offices, Dunstable

Total Long Term Empty Homes 2003 - 2009



(For each year shown SBDC is on the left, MBDC is in the middle and Central Bedfordshire is to the right. Only Central Bedfordshire is represented in 2009.)

South Bedfordshire District Council

Housing Standards Empty Homes Policy and Protocol 2008

Introduction

This document sets out the Council's policy and general protocols for dealing with long term empty homes within the private sector housing stock.

A long-term empty property is defined as one that has been vacant for 6 months or more.

The document provides a structure for partnership working and the use of various enforcement powers aimed at returning long term empty properties back into use that satisfy the criteria of any relevant national indicators.

The general benefits of bringing an empty property back into use are:

- Older buildings can be brought up to modern standards, improving housing stock and retaining property that is of architectural and community value.
- Existing buildings are fully used, promoting sustainable development.
- Increased supply for housing is available to people on the Housing Register, therefore, reducing the levels of housing need.
- Reducing crime and disorder and the fear of crime through improvements to buildings and its impact on the environment.
- Enhances the vitality of the town centres by bringing town centre homes back into use, such as accommodation over shops.
- Contributes to strong, balanced housing markets and community sustainability.

Background

Empty homes occur for a variety of reasons. Some are empty for short periods whilst they are being sold or let and tend to come back into use relatively quickly. Others may be empty for significant periods of time and are not likely to come back into use until the underlying reason for the vacancy is addressed, for example, if ownership is unresolved, the property has been abandoned, or it is subject to inheritance holding etc.

A property that is left for extended periods of time may begin to impact on its surroundings and deny housing opportunities to others. Long term empty homes may also exacerbate problems of anti-social behaviour, accumulations of refuse, rodents and reduce income for Council Tax, thus reducing market values in an area and adversely affecting the local community.

South Bedfordshire as with many other Authorities has pockets of mixed residential, commercial, light and heavy industrial processes and cottage industries. As a consequence, zoning in terms of town planning may be indistinct and not clearly defined. Empty dwellings are usually considered to be of a domestic nature. Redundant buildings of a non-domestic nature can blight an area with substantially the same effect as a domestic dwelling in poor condition. Therefore, as a part of the policy, high profile blight of non residential classification should be considered where appropriate and action taken.

Identifying Empty Properties

Housing Standards can obtain a list of empty properties from Council Tax. The “empty property list” is continually changing as people’s circumstances change and requires updating and monitoring on a regular basis. It must also be remembered that Empty Properties are usually empty for a host of genuine reasons some of which follow: *prior to sale, after sale and prior to occupation; upon the death of a sole owner; in between tenants; whilst being renovated; after a “disaster” such as flooding or fire and also as a second home.* To keep our database up to date Housing Standards will carry out a regular review.

It is also important to determine area demand when considering options to address empty property issues. A range of information and a clear identification of needs and forecasts of possible future trends underpin this policy. The range and sources of information include; Housing Needs and Demand Study, the 2001 Census and other market data provided by Housing Association partners, Letting Agents and colleagues within the Council.

Housing Standards may eventually establish a steering group consisting of colleagues from other departments within the Council and external partner agencies to provide a single steering and overview group to better co-ordinate effort and avoid duplication.

Options Available to Help Bring Empty Properties Back into use

Through partnership working and negotiation with owners of vacant and underused properties, landlords, lending organisations and housing associations, Housing Standards intend to increase the availability and choice of housing in the district by bringing empty properties back into use where it is practical to do so.

Housing Standards firstly provide advice on the options available to help the owners of empty properties to bring them back into use.

These include:

- Open market sale.
- Empty property grants will be available via the Housing Renewal Assistance Policy and also grants to landlords to improve existing properties either in full or part of completion costs. The Council will retain an interest in lieu of grant aid equating to a 5 or 10 year nomination rights agreement. This arrangement will be a legal requirement as a pre-condition to grant aid.

- Private sector leasing via a private sector managing agent or Housing Association Partner.
- Temporary social housing via a leasing arrangement with a Housing Association Partner – temporary social housing is where social housing grant is allocated by the Housing Corporation to a Housing Association partner to cover the capital costs of bringing properties into temporary use i.e. more than two years, but less than thirty years.
- Free of charge advisory visits to assess condition, the extent of the works required for elimination of significant hazards, and the possibilities for extension, alteration change of use and/or adaptation depending on future use of the property. How to choose building professionals, contractors and project management, also advice on statutory permissions concerning planning and building control. Advice also given on Landlord's duties and Tenancy matters.

Enforcement Criteria

Prior to taking enforcement action as detailed below, Housing Standards will have due regard to the following:

1. The property **MUST** be residential.
Action will **not** be taken by Housing Standards against non-residential properties. Where possible, however, non-residential properties will be referred to Development Control.
2. The property must have been empty for a minimum of 6 months.
Proactive action will not be considered for houses empty for less than 6 months and a priority system for action will be used based upon length of time empty, general condition and the effect on the immediate neighbourhood – coupled with the attitude of the owner / responsible person towards re-use.
3. Has the owner responded to attempts to broker re-use?
At any time in the enforcement procedure, should the owner seriously broker for re-use; any enforcement procedure being either considered or in progress will be held in abeyance until such time that it is apparent that the owner has either completed the re-use or abandoned the attempt.
4. Impact on the neighbourhood.
Is there a recorded history of statutory action regarding refuse removal in default, nuisance, Anti Social Behaviour being drawn to the property (or other criminal uses) or the condition of the property having a direct detrimental effect on the neighbouring properties.
5. Has the property been registered with the Land Registry?
Some choices of enforcement are made more time consuming if the property is not registered.
6. Urgency of necessary works.
If the work required to the property is of an urgent nature (see item 4), the enforcement choices should be weighted in favour of quickest action.
Compulsory Purchase would be unsuitable for immediate action, as the average

time for CPO completion is 18 months, and it is MUCH longer if the owner is resistant and appeals each attempt at action. A CPO may eventually finish its journey at a public hearing convened by Secretary of State.

Enforcement Options

- **Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs)** – Introduced by the Housing Act 2004. Where informal action does not bring success, Landlord Services may use EDMOs. The process is fairly involved as sufficient evidence must be gathered to demonstrate to the Residential Property Tribunal (RPT) (if the owner refuses to agree to the renovation and re-occupation of the property) that the Council has done all in its power to persuade, cajole, advise, warn and assist the owner to bring the property back into use. In actual fact, this action may vary enormously dependant on the owners' attitude, level of comprehension and financial ability. The Owner is formally notified of the Council's intent to seek authority from the RPT for an Interim EDMO and given 14 days to respond positively.

If no response is received to the notification of intent and the proposals, the Council submits an application to the RPT for the power to serve an Interim EDMO – which has a maximum validity of 12 months. During those 12 months the Council seeks to get the property re-occupied, but if it becomes obvious that the landlord is still recalcitrant, a Final EDMO may be issued at any time during that period, with a maximum validity of 7 YEARS.

When the Final EDMO is served, the Council may begin renovating the property as though they are carrying out work in default, culminating in arranging for the property to be rented, managed and kept in a decent condition, insured and (when a market rent is charged) to recoup the renovation costs from the rental income. Any rental income after debts and continuing management costs have been repaid would then be paid to the property owner.

- **Enforced Sale** – Landlord Services can force the sale of an empty property where abatement notices have been served but the owner has not carried out the work. Where the owner is clearly in default of the notice the work is carried out at the cost of the Council. An enforced sale can only be pursued if the cost of the works is comparable to the market value of the property.
- **Prohibition Order** - Served under Housing Act 2004 if the property is so defective due to significant category 1 Hazards as defined by part 1 Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This action may be “fine tuned” to suit the future use of the property or land or area. It may be suspended for a period.
- **Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 80** - Nuisance – if the property is a nuisance as defined under statute, abatement notices can be served. If the notice is ignored the Council must do the works in default and re-charge the owner.
- **Compulsory Purchase Order** – Available in extreme circumstances under Section 17 Housing Act 1985. This can be a very expensive option and takes an average of 18 months to complete, subject to appeals, public enquiries and dependant upon the final approval of the Secretary of State should the owner be reluctant to sell or recalcitrant.

- **Environmental Health Action** (Public Protection) can be taken on the following site conditions:
 - Defective drainage.
 - Accumulations of soft materials that are likely to cause nuisance or attract vermin infestations.
 - Open and accessible by vagrants.

- **Planning enforcement** officers can take action as follows: -
 - Property is structurally unsound and dangerous.
 - Property is compulsory purchased for clearance, road widening etc.
 - Or is obstructive to development within the district development plan.

Procedure for the Investigation of Empty Homes

Stage 1:

All empty property investigations will be undertaken following notification to Housing Standards:

- Investigating officer checks database for any previous involvement (enforcement history etc) and visits to neighbours in the same street for owner information.
- Inter departmental contact within the Council to check last known owner / responsible person data (if any) and category of empty property.
- Land Registry Search & Voters Roll check for prior ownership/occupation details.
- Building Control & Planning Dept enquiries for recent activity.
- (Last resort) Tracing Agencies may need to be considered where owner details are not easily forthcoming from conventional means, however the high cost of such action would need to be taken into consideration.
- Standardised questionnaire sent to owner (where known), requesting information and offering encouragement to bring the property back into use. Direct Dialogue with owner if successful.
- Site visit to empty property by Housing Standards Officer with owner (if possible) to carry out property assessment and categorise – short medium or long term timeframe for action.
- 2nd letter to owner, reminder, if no response.
- Consider enforcement options, depending on individual circumstances – condition of property, surrounding area, planning proposals, regional and sub-regional planning policy.
- 3rd letter (with copy to be sent to the same address by Recorded Delivery or “served” by hand); advising of the options available to the owner and the ultimate possibilities of formal action if nothing is done voluntarily to bring the property back into use.
- Visit to owner or request that owner comes to Council Offices by formal appointment, if refused or denied – Stage 2 Formal Action.

NOTE

If the ownership of the property cannot be traced after reasonable efforts made by the Council (see above) it is still possible to carry out both CPO and EDMO action, however the likelihood of CPO being approved by the Secretary of State is reduced. EDMO action can be terminated at any time and does not affect the owner’s ultimate power to dispose of their interest at any time.

Stage 2:

- WHERE POSSIBLE a schedule of work should be drawn up of the works necessary to bring the property to a lettable standard (Decent Homes Standard).
- Copies of the proposed schedule of work or a list of main defects should be sent to the owner to formally inform them of the amount of works considered to be necessary (not just desirable).
- Photographs of the property – updated as required over time – all evidence of general state should be collated in the gathering file of evidential proofs.
- Report prepared to critically compare the options available to bring the property back into use.
- CPO cost estimate with proposed purchasers vs EDMO works cost estimate and rental return.
- Decision made on best option by manager.
- Action progressed.

Cost Comparison of Enforcement Options

EDMO

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

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

Remedial Works

7 Years Management cost (@15% of rental income)	£
Maintenance (estimated at 2% of rental income)	£
Fee for Residential Property Tribunal	£
Insurance (@ £200 p.a)	£
Total Cost	£

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

LRR as at *DATE* for empty property £ per month

Monthly Rental £ X 7 Years (assuming no increase) £

Shortfall or Surplus (repaid to owner if surplus) £

CPO

Budget costs for an *uncontested* CPO

Property Cost (<i>independent valuation</i>)	£
Basic Loss Payment (<i>7.5% of purchase cost</i>)	£
Vendors' Agent Fees	£
Vendors' Legal Fees	£
Stamp Duty Land Tax (@1%)	£
Insurance	£
Legal Costs (<i>Gt Yarmouth Legal Services</i>)	£ 1,500:00
Land registry	£ 500:00
Miscellaneous costs (<i>p c sum</i>)	£ 1,000:00
Officer cost general admin and advertising	£ 1,000:00
--Additional cost £4,000 to £7,000 if contested--	

Also to be taken into account would be either short-term loan costs

or else loss of interest if purchase monies used from reserves

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

Criteria to be applied to properties for the determination of more formal action of EDMOs, CPO and Enforced Sale.

- The property must have been wholly unoccupied for at least 6 months.
- The property must not fall into the prescribed exemption codes for an EDMO.
- The Local Authority has received complaints concerning the property.
- The property has a negative impact on the neighbourhood. Fly tipping; refuse problems, nuisance, anti social behaviour occurs at the property, evidence of vandalism. The property is having a detrimental effect on surrounding properties in the neighbourhood.
- Attempts at contacting the owner have been undertaken.
- All informal measures to get the property reoccupied have been exhausted with the owner, or informal measures are not appropriate.
- The owner (if found) has not been responsive, or attempted to make efforts to get the property reoccupied, with or without the assistance from Local Housing Authority (LHA).
- The property can be appropriately used, if brought back into use. The property has appeal to the rental market.
- Comparison exercise to be undertaken to determine CPO, EDMO and enforced sale based on economic viability.

Appendix C

Evaluation of options for Management of Empty Dwellings under Housing Act 2004 – Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO’s)

Following a meeting with Central Bedfordshire Council Procurement Team on 20th April, the following is a summary of the options open to the council regarding management of empty dwellings under the above legislation. In terms of cost comparison, it should be noted that the intention of an EDMO is that the Council/manager recoups all initial costs paid out to make a property habitable through collection of rents during the maximum 7 year EDMO period. So cost comparison of the options in total lifetime costs to the council is a little irrelevant. However, there are other cost considerations, which are included in the comparison summary below.

The 3 options for management are:

- 1. In House Management of EDMO’s**
- 2. Specialist management by Pathmeads (part of Genesis Housing Association)**
- 3. Management by local commercial letting agents**

Comments in italics are disadvantages to the council

Criteria	In-House Management	Pathmeads	Local commercial lettings agent
Experience of property management	Housing services has the necessary experience to be able to manage rental property. The management of the property would be locally run and more accountable for tenants placed in the properties. <i>In-house management would have to cover the north of the</i>	Pathmeads is an experienced housing association with 26 years experience of managing short term leases and temporary accommodation. Pathmeads would be able to determine the levels of rent and ensure they are at a market level.	A letting agent would be experienced in the provision of Assured Shorthold tenancy agreements, and collection of rent. <i>It may be difficult to find a letting agent who is prepared to provide an EDMO service to the large geographical area of Central</i>

	<p><i>district where previously landlord services did not operate.</i></p> <p><i>Not great experience in assured short hold tenancies (different to council house tenancies)</i></p>		<p><i>Bedfordshire. Most letting agents cover smaller geographical areas.</i></p>
<p>Provision of capital</p>	<p><i>The council would have to fund the initial capital costs to make the property habitable. Although this could be recouped, it would require initial capital funding from council budgets.</i></p>	<p>A maximum of £20,000 capital will be supplied by Pathmeads to fund any renovation work required to properties.</p> <p>The council does have the option to top up this funding if renovation work would exceed this amount.</p> <p>There would be little impact on staffing resources to administer and operate the EDMO.</p> <p>The council can decide on the level of service they wish to sign up to with Pathmeads.</p> <p>Pathmeads will give the option for Interim EDMO management as well as final management.</p> <p>Pathmeads will not charge the Council for the management service, and it will not cost the council to sign up to the services and not use them.</p>	<p><i>The council would need to fund the capital for the renovation work.</i></p>
<p>Revenue costs to the council</p>	<p><i>There is a cost implication in terms of staff resources from both Housing Management and Private Sector Housing (PSH) Officers.</i></p> <p><i>Risk that if the EDMO is not successful over its lifetime the council will incur the financial loss.</i></p> <p><i>Council would be liable for any damage caused by tenants placed in the property and it would be the council's responsibility to claim for those damages from tenants.</i></p>		<p><i>The Council would still have to project manage any renovation work of the property.</i></p> <p><i>The Council may still have to arrange for any repair and maintenance work required to the property to be completed dependent on the level of service agreed with the agent.</i></p>

	<p><i>Council would be responsible for finding and placing tenants in the property and managing the assured short hold tenancies. Any lengthy void period would impact on whether the council would be able to recoup all the capital spent out on a property within the 7 year EDMO period.</i></p> <p><i>Costs could be incurred by the council if an interim management order property was not successfully let.</i></p> <p><i>The Council would be required to do provide annual financial statements to the owner concerning the management of the dwelling.</i></p>	<p><i>All of Pathmeads management costs would be taken from the EDMO's rental income.</i></p> <p><i>The Council could incur the cost of paying rent on void properties if the council fails to nominate a tenant to a property within the agreed timescale from Pathmeads.</i></p> <p><i>The Council could incur fees from Pathmeads if it used the interim management service, these fees may not be recoverable from the EDMO if it was <u>not</u> let out within the 12 month period.</i></p> <p><i>Pathmeads will charge for management of the EDMO and an administration charge for the management of capital works, repairs, decoration, or maintenance to the property, and in addition any management charge. This would be recoverable from rental income over the lifetime of the EDMO</i></p>	
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<p>Partnerships / synergy with other parties / providers</p>	<p>Support could be offered by Bromford Support subject to the demand on the service by implementation of the EDMO.</p>	<p>Pathmeads will provide the service of finding tenants to the property if the council decides to not to nominate tenants to the property, but will provide nomination rights to the council as partner. Pathmeads is working in partnership with other local authorities in Herts, Beds and Bucks providing EDMO and private sector leasing services for the authorities <i>Pathmeads would determine which properties it would be prepared to take onto an EDMO scheme</i></p>	<p>The agent would be able to market the property nationally and locally for tenants.</p>
<p>Management and tenant services</p>	<p>Central Bedfordshire would have full control over the management and Housing services is able to offer tenancy support and assistance with benefit applications for housing benefit. A 24 hours out of hours repair service would be available for the tenant.</p>	<p>Pathmeads is able to offer tenancy support if required such as assistance to the tenants in accessing benefit and tenancy support such as debt management, anti social behaviour etc. Pathmeads will undertake quarterly visits to the properties Pathmeads would provide the annual financial statement to the owner on behalf of the Council.</p>	<p>The letting agent will provide a tenant finding service and management service of the property. The agent would be able to do quarterly visits during the tenancy agreement and arrange the setting up of accounts with the utility companies for the tenants. A local agent would provide a local management presence, if a local one were appointed.</p>

		<p><i>Pathmeads is presently located in Wembley, the service is not local to the area but is hoping to establish a local presence.</i></p>	<p><i>The letting agent would not be able to offer tenancy support services such as assisting with benefit claims, management of antisocial behaviour, and debt counselling etc. The agent will not provide a 24 hours out of hours repair service.</i></p>
<p>Additional benefits / disadvantages to the council</p>		<p>The Council will also have access to the Pathmead's management services for management orders on HMO's and access to their Private Sector leasing scheme.</p> <p>Pathmeads would be able to nationally market the property for letting if the Council decided not to nominate tenants to the property.</p>	<p>Dependent on the level of agreement with the agent, the agent may offer an insurance back scheme to cover in rental arrears etc</p> <p><i>The Council would still need to provide the annual financial statement to the owner. The Council would still need to make provision to in house manage any management orders on HMOS.</i></p> <p><i>At present no research has been undertaken with local letting agents in the district to see if there would be any letting agents prepared to manage EDMOS, so this is really a theoretical option.</i></p>

Head of Service conclusions

Weighing up the pro's and con's of the above options, the Pathmeads option would appear to be best for the Council for the following reasons:

Pathmeads have the experience of managing short term and private leasing schemes; the council has no direct experience.

Pathmeads are willing to provide initial capital funding of up to £20,000 to make the property habitable.

Pathmeads option is most cost effective in terms of impacts upon council staff resources.

Pathmeads will provide the annual financial statement to the owner on behalf of the Council.

Pathmeads can offer tenancy support to help sustain the tenancy.

Empty Home Case Studies

Two adjacent houses on Hockliffe Road, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 3FL

Property Description – Property A Hockliffe Road is a 2 storey, 2 bedroom end terraced property constructed in the early 1900's. It has brick walls, timber and solid floors and timber framed sash windows. It has been empty for the last 14 years.

Property Description – Property B Hockliffe Road is a 2 storey, 2 bedroom mid terraced house constructed at the same time as A Hockliffe Road. It has timber and solid floors and the ground floor original timber sash windows have been replaced with metal framed casement windows. This property has been empty for the last 15 years.

Both properties have very large rear gardens approximately 5 x 60metres in size. The end of the gardens back onto the bungalows in Miles Avenue. Both gardens are very overgrown and in poor maintenance.

These two properties along with their immediate neighbours on Hockliffe road are being held in trust by a firm of local solicitors who are trying to trace the descendents of the original owner of the property in Brazil. The original owner passed away in the 1920's. The solicitors have no funds to refurbish the properties and have no power to dispose of the properties for sale themselves.



Background

Condition - Both properties are in poor repair, although at present are weather tight. Slates have started to slip from the roof and the timber frame windows on "A" are rotten and require overhauling. "A" does not have an internal bathroom, or kitchen. "B" has an internal bathroom, which requires overhauling, but does not have a kitchen. Neither property has fixed point heating and it is suspected that both properties will need to be rewired. There is no fire separation wall in the lofts of any of the 4 houses and there is no appropriate access to the loft in "A" and "B".

"A" has suffered from penetrating damp to the gable wall and rising damp to the front ground floor of the property. The rising damp is caused by a breach in the DPC from the overgrown vegetation to the front.

“B” has slight penetrating damp to the ground floor front bay window area, again most likely caused by the overgrown vegetation.

Works required – The properties are in poor internal repair and in order to bring the properties back into residential use, some significant repair work is required. Window repair / replacement. Overhaul of the slate roofs paying attention to the flashings. Installation of new kitchens, and bathrooms to the properties. The installation of a bathroom to “A” will require taking some of the space from the second back bedroom, which will make the rear bedroom suitable as a single bedroom only. Some replastering will be required to “A” on the first and ground floor.

Both properties will require the installation of a central heating system and provision of insulation to the roof, once firewalls are installed in the loft.

Both properties will need decoration throughout.

Both rear gardens will need to be cleared of the overgrown vegetation and it is suspected that there is rubble from the demolished outhouses in the garden as well.

Complaints - numerous enquiries have been made to the Council over the years from members of the public wanting to buy the properties. The front of the properties is starting to become overgrown and disrepair to the properties is more evident.

Action taken to resolve – Investigations into the property began in 2006. In the last year contact has been made with the solicitors of the properties and a survey was undertaken of both properties at the beginning of this month. The solicitor has explained that as the properties stand currently there is no reasonable likelihood of them ever being occupied, due to the lack of the funds the solicitor has in the estate and being unable to sell the properties.

Owner's intention The solicitor is keen to work with the Council on either solution of an EDMO or CPO in order to get the properties reoccupied. There may be some difficulty and additional delay to CPOs for the properties, as the owners of the property cannot be traced.

Likelihood of property worsening - Whilst the solicitors manage the properties to a small extent and ensure that they are secure there appears to be little likelihood that the property will be improved to a condition where it is habitable. It is likely that they will deteriorate further without proper maintenance.

Cost Comparison of Enforcement Options for “A” Hockliffe Road, Leighton Buzzard.
EDMO

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

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

Remedial Works (estimation)	£38,900.00
7 Years Management cost (@15% of rental income)	£8,127.00
Maintenance (estimated at 2% of rental income)	£150.00
Fee for Residential Property Tribunal	£1,083.60
Insurance (@ £200 p.a)	<u>£1,400.00</u>
Total Cost	£49,660.60

Rental Income (estimation of market level)

As at July 2008 for a 2 bedroom property = £645 per month
Local housing allowance for a 2 bed property £650 per month

Monthly Rental £645 X 7 Years (assuming no increase)	£54,180.00
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Shortfall or Surplus (repaid to owner if surplus)	£4,519.40
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CPO

Budget costs for an *uncontested* CPO

Property Cost (independent valuation)	£145,000.00
Basic Loss Payment (7.5% of purchase cost)	£10,875.00
Vendors' Agent Fees	£2,000.00
Vendors' Legal Fees	£1,000.00
Stamp Duty Land Tax (@1%)	£1,450.00
Insurance	£100.00
Legal Costs (Gt Yarmouth Legal Services)	£1,500.00
Land registry	£500.00
Miscellaneous costs (p c sum)	£1,500.00
Officer cost general admin and advertising	<u>£1,000.00</u>
TOTAL	£164,925.00

Additional cost £4,000 to £7,000 if contested—

Also to be taken into account would be either short-term loan costs or else loss of interest if purchase monies used from reserves

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

Priority assessment for CPO, EDMO action

Address of property	"A" Hockliffe Road, Leighton Buzzard										
Criteria	Low								High		Score
Voluntary agreement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10
Length of time empty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8
Cost – low cost = High priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	3
Impact on neighbourhood	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5
Level of complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7
Trace ability of owner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8
Staffing resource	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5
Housing Demand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4
Previous enforcement action	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1
TOTAL											51

Cost Comparison of Enforcement Options for “B” Hockliffe Road, Leighton Buzzard.

EDMO

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

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

Remedial Works (estimation)	£36,700.00
7 Years Management cost (@15% of rental income)	£1,083.60
Maintenance (estimated at 2% of rental income)	£8,127.00
Fee for Residential Property Tribunal	£150.00
Insurance (@ £200 p.a)	<u>£1,400.00</u>
Total Cost	£47,460.60

Rental Income (estimation of market level)

As at July 2008 for a 2 bedroom property = £645 per month
Local housing allowance for a 2 bed property £650 per month

Monthly Rental £645 X 7 Years (assuming no increase)	£54,180.00
Shortfall or Surplus (repaid to owner if surplus)	£6,719.40

CPO

Budget costs for an *uncontested* CPO

Property Cost (independent valuation)	£145,000.00
Basic Loss Payment (7.5% of purchase cost)	£10,875.00
Vendors' Agent Fees	£2,000.00
Vendors' Legal Fees	£1,000.00
Stamp Duty Land Tax (@1%)	£1,450.00
Insurance	£100.00
Legal Costs (Gt Yarmouth Legal Services)	£1,500.00
Land registry	£500.00
Miscellaneous costs (p c sum)	£1,000.00
Officer cost general admin and advertising	<u>£1,000.00</u>

TOTAL **£164,925.00**

Additional cost £4,000 to £7,000 if contested—

*Also to be taken into account would be either short-term loan costs
or else loss of interest if purchase monies used from reserves*

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

Priority assessment for CPO, EDMO action

Address of property	"B" Hockliffe Road, Leighton Buzzard											
Criteria	Low										High	Score
Voluntary agreement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10	
Length of time empty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	
Cost – low cost = High priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4	
Impact on neighbourhood	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5	
Level of complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7	
Trace ability of owner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	
Staffing resource	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5	
Housing Demand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4	
Previous enforcement action	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	
TOTAL											52	

“C” The Green, Caddington, Bedfordshire, LU1 4HF

Property Description - “C” The Green is a 2 storey 2 bedroom terraced cottage that was built in the early 1900’s. It has brick walls, timber floors and wood framed sash windows. It was reported to us as empty seven years ago.



Background

Condition - The property is in poor repair with slates missing from the roof, rotten frames and missing panes from windows. The garden at rear is overgrown and full of rubble from the old outhouse and the rear of the property which has collapsed leaving a hole approximately 4sqm. An internal inspection of the house was carried out 2 years ago.

Works Required - In order to bring the property up to standard and return to residential use significant repair work is required including, window repair/replacement, rebuild defective rear elevation including new roof, fascias and gutters, installation of a working kitchen and bathroom, NICEIC and CORGI checks and subsequent work. The property has been open to the elements for a number of years and will require walls re-plastering, floor timbers replacing and decoration throughout.

Complaints - This property is in a conservation area and is an eye sore for local residents. Over the last 10 years they have dealt with people gaining unauthorised access to the property, theft and criminal damage occurring, rats entering residence through unused soil pipe, mice infestation and damage to the neighbours car from roof slates falling.

Action Taken to resolve - Over the last seven years the Private Sector Housing and Building Control Teams have been called out to this property on numerous occasions due to its failing structural stability. The owner has been met on site, and has been offered advice and even financial assistance in the form of a grant.

Notices Served - Notice to provide support at rear of property as structurally unstable was served in January 2002.

Requisition for Info served August 2003.

Requisition for info served April 2004.

Notice to demolish outhouse served August 2004.

Notice to secure property April 2005

Owners intention - The owner has always stated his intention is to move back to the property but has never given any timescales or shown any interest in funding to carry out repairs. Minimal repairs required to prevent us taking legal action have been completed. Since August 2005 no further work as been carried out at the property, the owner hasn't been seen and we have had no response to letters.

Likelihood of property worsening - Problems that could occur in the next 12 months - More slates have come off of the roof this year and fallen onto the footpath, which runs along the front of the property, it is possible for a member of the public to be injured by a falling slate. The property is not watertight and both neighbours are suffering damp problems due to this. One neighbour shares the kitchen roof elevation and the risk of the rear collapsing completely and bringing down her kitchen walls and roof increases every year the property is left open to the elements.

Cost Comparison of Enforcement Options for “C” The Green, Caddington.

EDMO

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

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

Remedial Works (estimation)	£34,200.00
7 Years Management cost (@15% of rental income)	£8,820.00
Maintenance (estimated at 2% of rental income)	£1,176.00
Fee for Residential Property Tribunal	£150.00
Insurance (@ £200 p.a)	<u>£1,400.00</u>
Total Cost	£45,746.00

Rental Income (estimation of market level)

As at July 2008 for a 2 bedroom property = £700 per month
Local housing allowance for a 2 bed property £634.99 per month

Monthly Rental £700 X 7 Years (assuming no increase)	£58,800.00
Shortfall or Surplus (repaid to owner if surplus)	£13,054.00

CPO

Budget costs for an *uncontested* CPO

Property Cost (independent valuation)	£150,000.00
Basic Loss Payment (7.5% of purchase cost)	£11,250.00
Vendors' Agent Fees	£2,000.00
Vendors' Legal Fees	£1,000.00
Stamp Duty Land Tax (@1%)	£1,500.00
Insurance	£100.00
Legal Costs (Gt Yarmouth Legal Services)	£1,500.00
Land registry	£500.00
Miscellaneous costs (p c sum)	£1,000.00
Officer cost general admin and advertising	<u>£1,000.00</u>
TOTAL	£169,850.00

Additional cost £4,000 to £7,000 if contested—

*Also to be taken into account would be either short-term loan costs
or else loss of interest if purchase monies used from reserves*

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

Priority assessment for CPO, EDMO action

Address of property	"C" The Green, Caddington										
Criteria	Low					High					Score
Voluntary agreement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1
Length of time empty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4
Cost – low cost = High priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8
Impact on neighbourhood	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10
Level of complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8
Trace ability of owner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10
Staffing resource	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7
Housing Demand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5
Previous enforcement action	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7
TOTAL											60

“D”, Totternhoe, LU6 2AN

Property Description - “D” is a 2 storey 3 bedroom semi-detached house built in the early 1930’s. It has tiled roof, cavity walls and double glazed windows. It has been empty for fourteen years.



Background

Condition - The house fails to meet any current fitness standards due to lack of heating and hot water as there is no working boiler. The house is structurally sound but there are various repairs required.

Works Required - In order to bring the property up to standard and return to residential use the following work would be required; unblock guttering, replace rotten soffit boards, new tiles to ground floor bay window, new soil vent and down pipe, pointing to brickwork on side elevation, new window panes, new rear door, NICEIC and CORGI checks and subsequent work and cleaning and decoration throughout.

Complaints - The gardens of the property are being kept in order by the next-door neighbour after years of them being overgrown and being home to rats and mice. The adjoining property did suffer with some damp problems before roof repairs were carried out on the empty property by enforcement action in December 2005.

Action Taken to resolve

We have been in contact with the owner since July 2003 and we were allowed access to the property in order to carry out a survey in October 2005. We carried out works in default to the roof with the owner’s agreement. Grant assistance and advice on how to bring the property back into residential use has been offered, but no attempts have been made to do so.

Notices Served - Notice to execute roof repairs December 2005.

Owners Position - The owner has not informed us of intentions for the property and does not respond to correspondence.

Likelihood of property worsening

Whilst the owner lives nearby there appears to be little likelihood that the property will be improved to a condition where it is habitable and it is likely that it will deteriorate further without proper maintenance.

**Cost Comparison of Enforcement Options for “D”,
EDMO**

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

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

Remedial Works	£45,100.00
7 Years Management cost (@15% of rental income)	£9,450.00
Maintenance (estimated at 2% of rental income)	£1,260.00
Fee for Residential Property Tribunal	£150.00
Insurance(@ £200 p.a)	<u>£1,400.00</u>
Total Cost	£57,360.00

Rental Income (estimation of market level)

As at July 2008 for a 3 bedroom property = £750 per month
Local housing allowance £725.01 per month

Monthly Rental £750 X 7 Years (assuming no increase)	£63,000.00
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Shortfall or Surplus (repaid to owner if surplus)	£5,640.00
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CPO

Budget costs for an *uncontested* CPO

Property Cost (independent valuation)	£160,000.00
Basic Loss Payment (7.5% of purchase cost)	£12,000.00
Vendors' Agent Fees	£2,000.00
Vendors' Legal Fees	£1,000.00
Stamp Duty Land Tax (@1%)	£1,600.00
Insurance	£100.00
Legal Costs (Gt Yarmouth Legal Services)	£1,500.00
Land registry	£500.00
Miscellaneous costs (p c sum)	£1,000.00
Officer cost general admin and advertising	<u>£1,000.00</u>

TOTAL	£180,700.00
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Additional cost £4000 to £7000 if contested—

*Also to be taken into account would be either short-term loan costs
or else loss of interest if purchase monies used from reserves*

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

Priority assessment for CPO, EDMO action

Address of property	"D", Totternhoe											
Criteria	Low									High		Score
Voluntary agreement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	
Length of time empty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	
Cost – low cost = High priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	
Impact on neighbourhood	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	6	
Level of complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10	
Trace ability of owner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10	
Staffing resource	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	
Housing Demand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10	
Previous enforcement action	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10	
TOTAL											65	

“E”, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EP

Property description - “E” is a 2 storey 3 bedroom, mid terraced house constructed in the mid 1970’s. The dwelling is of a timber frame construction, with tiled roof and single glazed timber framed casement windows. It has been empty in excess of 20 years.



Background

Condition and works required – The house is in reasonable structural condition and is still weather tight to the elements. The timber frame windows have started to rot and decay and most of the windows will need to be replaced. The soffits and fascias to the front and rear of the property are in disrepair and will require replacement. The bathroom and kitchen will require refurbishment, as they have been damaged some time ago when the property was squatted. Gas fires heat the property; these will not be compliant with current standards. New central heating will need to be supplied to the property.

Complaints – There have been numerous complaints concerning the property over years from the public and members. The property is blighted by fly tipping to the rear garden and suffered from vandalism and squatters, the most recent of which occurred in January 2008.

Action taken to resolve

We have been in contact with the owner since 1999; the most recent response from the owner was in 2005. We boarded up and secured the rear of the property following a break in, January 2008. Grant assistance has been offered to the owner, but no response has been received from the owner for either the notice or offer of grant.

Notices served – Notice to execute the securing of the property.

Owners intentions - The owner has stated his intention is to move back to the property but has never given any timescales or shown any interest in funding to carry out repairs. The owner claimed that he is fearful to return to the property for fear of harassment from the neighbours. Both neighbours either side of the property has changed twice since the property became vacant. We have had no responses to recent letters.

Likelihood of property worsening

Within the next 12 months it is possible that the property may no longer be weather tight as there is evidence from external surveys that, the flashing on the roof requires repointing and refixing. No repairs are likely to be undertaken by the owner as no effort has been made with the property since it was abandoned. Without intervention from the Council the property will continue to remain empty.

**Cost Comparison of Enforcement Options for “E”, Houghton Regis,
EDMO**

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

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

Remedial Works (estimation)	£27,900.00
7 Years Management cost (@15% of rental income)	£9,450.00
Maintenance (estimated at 2% of rental income)	£1,260.00
Fee for Residential Property Tribunal	£150.00
Insurance (@ £200 p.a)	<u>£1,400.00</u>
 Total Cost	 £40,160.00

Rental Income (estimation of market level)

As at July 2008 for a 3 bedroom property = £750 per month
Local housing allowance for a 3 bed property £725.01 per month

Monthly Rental £750 X 7 Years (assuming no increase)	£63,000.00
 Shortfall or Surplus (repaid to owner if surplus)	 £22,840.00

CPO

Budget costs for an *uncontested* CPO

Property Cost (independent valuation)	£115,000.00
Basic Loss Payment (7.5% of purchase cost)	£8,625.00
Vendors' Agent Fees	£2,000.00
Vendors' Legal Fees	£1,000.00
Stamp Duty Land Tax (@1%)	£1,150.00
Insurance	£100.00
Legal Costs (Gt Yarmouth Legal Services)	£1,500.00
Land registry	£500.00
Miscellaneous costs (p c sum)	£1,000.00
Officer cost general admin and advertising	<u>£1,000.00</u>
 TOTAL	 £131,875.00

Additional cost £4000 to £7000 if contested

*Also to be taken into account would be either short-term loan costs
or else loss of interest if purchase monies used from reserves*

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

Priority assessment for CPO, EDMO action

Address of property	"E", Houghton Regis										
Criteria	Low					High					Score
Voluntary agreement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1
Length of time empty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10
Cost – low cost = High priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10
Impact on neighbourhood	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8
Level of complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10
Trace ability of owner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10
Staffing resource	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7
Housing Demand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10
Previous enforcement action	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10
TOTAL											76

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Agenda Item:

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

Date: 13 August 2009

Subject: Substantial Variations and Developments of Health Services

Report of: Cheryl Powell, Overview & Scrutiny Officer

Summary: NHS bodies are required to consult this Committee on any proposals for “substantial” variations or developments of health services.

Contact Officer: Cheryl Powell

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: n/a

Key Decision n/a

Reason for urgency/
Exemption from call-
in (if appropriate) n/a

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee note the contents of this report for information.**
- 2. That the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee suggests a framework for discussion with local NHS bodies and the Local Involvement Network to assist in reaching agreement on what constitutes “substantial” in the local context and how such consultation should be carried out.**

Reason for Recommendation: The Committee is requested to comment on the issues raised in paragraph 11 and to agree to consult Bedford Borough and Luton Borough Council's, the LINK, the Strategic Health Authority, the NHS Trusts and the Children, Families and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a continual basis.

Introduction

1. Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and the National Health Service (Consequential Provisions) Act 2006 and Regulations made thereunder place a duty on each local NHS body to consult the relevant local OSCs on any proposals it may have under consideration for any “substantial” development of the health service or on any proposal to make any “substantial” variation in the provision of services (subject to certain exceptions which require an urgent decision to be made because of a risk to safety or welfare of patients or staff).
2. This is additional to the discussions that NHS bodies will have with the local authority, as distinct from OSCs, about service developments, especially where they link to services provided or commissioned by the local authority. The duty to consult OSCs is also additional to the duty placed upon NHS bodies to consult and involve patients and the public as an ongoing process under section 11 of the 2001 Act and Section 242 of the NHS Act 2006.
3. This Committee has requested a report on development of a shared understanding of the process undertaken by local NHS bodies for assessing whether or not health service developments and variations are “substantial” so that it is possible to distinguish proposals that require formal consultation with the Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee from proposals that do not.

Current position in Central Bedfordshire

4. Since its inception on the 1st April, Central Bedfordshire Council continues to work with NHS Bedfordshire, Luton and Dunstable Hospital, Bedford Hospital NHS Trust, Bedfordshire & Luton Mental Health & Social Care Partnership Trust and the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust to raise the profile of health overview and scrutiny and develop a mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities of Central Bedfordshire Council. Work is also underway to be more collaborative with neighbouring Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees in Bedford Borough Council and Luton Borough Council
5. There are no formally agreed criteria between Central Bedfordshire’s OSCs and the Trusts for identifying whether an issue is in fact “substantial” in the local context. Ideally there should be an agreed method of evaluating the need for consultation to avoid uncoordinated and ineffective scrutiny and the potential for overload.
6. Such an agreement could assist NHS managers who are dealing with OSCs for the first time and would also assure the Committee is being consulted properly and in good time on important changes affecting patients, service users and the public in Central Bedfordshire. The benefit of adopting a protocol is that there are a wide variety of options and models to draw on in developing an approach in Central Bedfordshire many of which have been tried and tested over a number of years in other areas

Established best practice and models in use elsewhere

7. The Department of Health guidance and good practice indicate that in deciding whether a proposal is substantial, the following issues should be considered:
- Is there a changes in the accessibility of the service;
 - What is the impact of the service on the wider community and other services, including economic impact, transport and regeneration;
 - How many patients/service users will be affected¹ which may be the whole population of a geographical area or a small group. If a change affects a small group of patients or service users it may still be “substantial”; and
 - Methods of service delivery e.g. moving a particular service into a community setting from an acute hospital setting.
8. The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) published a guide to the scrutiny of substantial variations and developments of health services in 2005 which encouraged OSCs and NHS bodies to reach agreement on what constitutes “substantial” within their local context. The CfPS acknowledges it is difficult to have a standard rigid definition but has undertaken research showing that those NHS bodies and OSCs with agreed protocols or procedures have found them very useful in determining whether proposed variations or developments in services are “substantial”. At the time of writing, Overview & Scrutiny Officers from Bedford Borough and Luton Borough as well as Central Bedfordshire Council are negotiating a definition of what constitutes substantial collectively across their boundaries.
9. **Definitions have been commended by the CfPS include:**
- (i) Use of an impact assessment tool. This scores the potential consequences of a proposal and addresses issues such as
 - changes in accessibility;
 - effect on the wider community; the patient population affected; and
 - methods of service delivery.
 - (ii) Establishment of a framework and signposting document for Health Overview and Scrutiny agreed between the OSCs, NHS Trusts, PCTs and SHA.

This approach is in use in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire where the NHS has accepted that OSCs may decide whether a proposal requires formal consultation and that the NHS bodies will accept this decision. This approach can also require a score from representatives of people affected by the proposal i.e. patients, service users or carers.

¹ This may be the whole population of a geographical area or a small group. If a change affects a small group of patients or service users it may still be “substantial”

10. A model in use in the South West of England involving an agreed process that officers and managers should follow when considering whether an issue is substantial and how to address such issues. Partner organisations meet regularly to identify potential issues. The agreement identifies basic information that OSCs need to consider and a key part of the process is asking some patient groups for their opinion about whether an issue is substantial.

Substantial Variations and Developments of Health Services

11. National guidance encourages OSCs and NHS bodies to agree a method of evaluating the need for formal consultation. In line with guidance issued by the Department of Health, CfPS and the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP) the Committee can expect the relevant NHS Trust to address the statements set out below when evaluating whether or not a proposed service development or variation should be defined as "substantial" and thereby subject to formal consultation with the relevant OSC. The following are areas the Committee should consider when presented with a potential substantial variation or development.

Failure to brief the OSC on the proposed change and the range of options considered

Lack of evidence of adequate consultation with patients and the public in planning and developing the proposals for change

Lack of evidence of adequate consultation with other key stakeholders (such as voluntary sector and social services)

Particular communities will experience greater adverse effects of change than others and in particular vulnerable people (now and in the future)

Disagreement about assumptions made on catchment areas for new national or regional centres of excellence and future patient flows particularly for specific groups of patients eg children, people with particular conditions

Insufficient indication of whether the proposed change will generate a significant decrease or increase in demand for a service arising from patient choice, payment by results and practice based commissioning

Insufficient information to satisfy OSC that the proposal will lead to just as good or preferably improved outcomes and experiences for Central Bedfordshire patients supported by robust clinical evidence

Failure to consider how patient pathways across health and social care will improve to provide a more "seamless service" as a consequence of the change.

Lack of information about how the proposed change will contribute to NHS Bedfordshire's achievement of targets relating to health improvement and reduction in health inequalities

Failure to consider transport and infrastructure issues in the context of sustainable transport policies, public transport routes and frequency of transport services

Conclusion

12. Members are therefore asked to note the contents of this report for information and consider the process undertaken by local NHS bodies for assessing whether or not health service developments and variations are “substantial” so that it is possible to distinguish proposals that require formal consultation with OSCs from proposals that do not.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Under its terms of reference, the Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme will support the following Council priorities: supporting & caring for an aging population and promoting healthier lifestyles.

Financial:

n/a

Legal:

A Health OSC has the right, now enshrined in the NHS Act 2006 and Regulations to refer proposals to the Secretary of State for Health if it is not satisfied:

- with the content of the consultation
- with the time that has been allowed or
- that the proposals are in the interests of the health service in its area

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 abolished Patient and Public Involvement Forums and replaced them with Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) in every local authority area with social services responsibilities. Key roles for the LINK are to gather the views and experiences of local people using local health and social care and to promote and support the involvement of local people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of health and adult social care services.

In October 2008 the Department of Health published statutory guidance for NHS organisations on carrying out their duty to involve. This includes a section explaining the difference between the duty to involve users and the duty to consult OSCs.

Risk Management:

n/a

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

n/a

Equalities/Human Rights:

n/a

Community Development/Safety:

n/a

Sustainability:

n/a

Agenda Item:

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

Date: 13 August 2009

Subject: Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny
Committee Work Programme 2009 / 2010

Report of: Cheryl Powell, Overview & Scrutiny Officer

Summary: The report provides Members with information of the key strategic plans and priorities originating from the Social Care Health and Housing Directorate and NHS Bedfordshire.

Contact Officer: Cheryl Powell

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: n/a

Key Decision n/a

Reason for urgency/
Exemption from call-
in (if appropriate) n/a

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee note the contents of this report for information.**
- 2. That the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee begin to identify the areas of work that it wishes to scrutinise during the coming municipal year.**

Reason for Recommendation: Members are asked to identify issues that they would wish to consider during the coming year at this meeting so that officers can develop a detailed work programme.

Introduction

1. Setting the Work Programme for the Scrutiny Committees is an important stage in the scrutiny process. An effective work programme will identify the key topics that scrutiny will consider over the coming year. A well planned work programme will also help both officers and members plan their workloads as well as providing a clear picture to the public of planned scrutiny activity. It is vital that scrutiny members take responsibility for both drawing up and managing their own work programme.
2. At its meeting on the 16th July 2009, the Committee received presentations from officers representing the Primary Care Trust (PCT); Local Involvement Network (LINK) and internally from Central Bedfordshire Council's Director of Social Care Health and Housing. Each presentation enabled Committee to decide on which items they felt would be appropriate to receive at their meetings throughout the 2009 / 2010 municipal year.
3. Within its terms of reference, the Committee discussed relevant items from Executive's Forward Plan as well as the Policy and Planning Framework (PPF).

Scrutiny Work Programme 2009-10

4. Some of the key principles for members to consider in setting the future Work Programme include:-
 - Topics included in the Work Programme must add value to the work of the authority
 - Where appropriate involve partners, stakeholders and the public.
 - Allow some flexibility to enable topics to be included as and when they arise
 - Ensure that the Work Programme reflects the priorities of the Council as laid out in the Strategic Plan
 - The Work Programme should represent the views and concerns of the Community
5. Some of the areas that Members may wish to consider as part of developing a work programme for the coming year include:
 - Updates from senior officers on the priorities and developments within the remit of the Committee so that the Committee can identify issues that it could constructively become involved with.
 - Consultation on policies and developments arising from the Forward Plan that the Scrutiny Panel could have a constructive input into.

- Single issue scrutiny events where the Committee invites senior officers and external witnesses to explore a particular issue in depth. (Appendix 2, items 21 - 25)
 - Exploring performance objectives and the achievement of performance targets with senior officers.
 - The monitoring of the outcomes of previous scrutiny recommendations and impact that these have had on the organisation and importantly the people and communities of Central Bedfordshire.
6. Members of the Scrutiny Committee now have the opportunity to re-visit the current Work Programme and consider whether the issues identified on it remain appropriate work programme items as well as considering any additional items for inclusion onto the future Work Programme. For example Members may wish to consider some of the items from the LINK work programme, or indeed devising cross organisational Task Forces with the LINK to avoid duplication and to share resources. Members will no doubt bear in mind that the Work Programme needs to be manageable both from the Committee's perspective and resourcing work by Officers.

Conclusion

7. Members are therefore asked to note the contents of this report for information and consider the items suggested for scrutiny.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS
<p>Council Priorities: Under its terms of reference, the Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme will support the following Council priorities: promoting healthier lifestyles; and supporting & caring for an aging population.</p>
<p>Financial: n/a</p>
<p>Legal: n/a</p>
<p>Risk Management: n/a</p>
<p>Staffing (including Trades Unions): n/a</p>
<p>Equalities/Human Rights: n/a</p>

Community Development/Safety:

n/a

Sustainability:

n/a

Appendices:

- 1** Draft Work Programme for Social Care Health and Housing
Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2009 – 2010
- 2** Local Involvement Networks (LiNs) Work Programme 2009 / 2010
- 3** Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Legacy Draft Work Programme

Draft Work Programme for Social Care Health and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2009 – 2010

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
1.	Empty Dwellings Management Orders (EDMOs)	Members are asked to comment on a "pilot" EDMO with a view to being presented with a comprehensive Empty Homes Strategy	13 th August 2009	The committee may wish to consider a presentation and complementary report setting out the Council's position and a way forward.
2.	Substantial Variations and Developments of Health Services	NHS bodies are required to consult the Committee on any proposals for "substantial" variations or developments of health services.	13 th August 2009	The Committee may wish to consider a report suggesting a framework for discussion with local NHS bodies and the Local Involvement Network (LINK) to assist in reaching agreement on what constitutes "substantial" in the local context and how such consultation should be carried out
3.	Performance report Q1	The quarterly performance report	13 th August 2009	

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
4.	Progress Report on Adults Social Care Improvement Plan	The quarterly update on improvement	13 th August 2009	
5.	Review of the Work programme		13 th August 2009	
6.	Key pressures effecting NHS Bedfordshire	Key pressures and drivers for improvement	10 th September 2009	This will be a presentation and a complementary report from NHS Beds Chief Executive
7.	Provision of services for people with Rheumatoid Arthritis - NHS Bedfordshire's response to NAO Report.	Current service provision does not always match the Government's vision of a "systematic patient-centred approach".	10 th September 2009	The majority of Primary Care Trusts are not commissioning as effectively as they could as they do not know the numbers of people in their area with rheumatoid arthritis. Members will receive a report on the PCT's priorities for providing this service county wide.

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
8.	Homecare Re-ablement	Homecare Re-ablement work seeks to improve choice and quality of life for adults who need care. Evidence shows that focused therapy, intermediate care or homecare can either prevent hospital admission or post hospital transfer to long-term care, or appropriately reduce the level of ongoing home care support required.	10 th September 2009	Members will receive a report on other initiatives such as telecare services which may also play a significant part in supporting people in their 'home', whether it is an individual residence, sheltered or extra care housing.
9.	Establishing an Arms Length Trading Organisation (ALTO) for the PCT's Provider Services	As part of the Operating Framework for the NHS for 2008/09, all PCT's were asked to create, from 1 April 2008, an internal separation between their provider and commissioning functions.	10 th September 2009	The Committee may wish to receive a report and presentation explaining Provider Services as an Arms Length Trading Organisation (ALTO) and the outcomes of the spring Accountability Reviews with PCT's in May/June 2008.

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
10.	Principles for determining strategic locations for health infrastructure	The facilities currently used to provide health services in Bedfordshire vary widely. The PCT is in the process of assessing its owned and leased premises, many of which have known issues relating to their capacity and quality.	8 th October 2009	<p>The facilities used and controlled by NHS providers and independent contractors vary widely, with many accommodated within premises that do not meet the PCT's aspired. In this instance the Committee may wish to better understands the PCT's provision for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning for communities • determining locations for an integrated health infrastructure
11.	Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy		8 th October 2009	The Committee may wish to establish a Task Force to review this policy prior to it's receipt at Executive in February 2010

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
12.	National Dementia Strategy	<p>The strategy launched in February 2009 provides a framework within which local services can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deliver quality improvements to dementia services and address health inequalities relating to dementia; • provide advice and guidance and support for health and social care commissioners and providers in the planning, development and monitoring of services; and • Provide a guide to the content of high-quality services for dementia. 	8 th October 2009	The Committee may wish to receive a report discussing Central Bedfordshire's response to commissioning services in line with their residents and relative to the national dementia strategy's framework
13.	Performance report Q2	The quarterly performance report	8 th October 2009	
14.	Progress Report on Adults Social Care Improvement Plan	The quarterly update on improvement	8 th October 2009	

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
15.	Annual health check	<p>The Social Care, Health and Housing Committee's annual commentary on the performance of NHS bodies as part of the Care Quality Commission's annual health check. As part of its third party commentary the Committee will need to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of services Is the trust getting the basics of healthcare right - in other words, is it meeting the Government's core standards and existing commitments for the NHS? <p>is the trust making and sustaining ongoing improvements in its services?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of financial management When looking at how well a trust is managing its financial resources, the Committee will need to consider the work carried out by the Audit Commission and by Monitor, the regulator of NHS foundation trusts. 	5 th November 2009	Members may wish to consider items on the LINKs work programme in conjunction with the Care Quality Commission's Framework.
16.	Homelessness Strategy	This strategy sets out how we are going to develop Homelessness strategy locally	3 rd December 2009	The Committee may wish to establish a Task Force to review this policy prior to it's receipt at Executive in March 2010

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
17.	Social Care Health & Housing - Renewal (Housing Asset Management) Strategy	This strategy sets out how we are going to develop the Social Care Health & Housing - Renewal (Housing Asset Management) Strategy locally	7 th January 2010	The Committee may wish to establish a Task Force to review this policy prior to it's receipt at Executive in March 2010
18.	Performance report Q3	The quarterly performance report	7 th January 2010	
19.	<i>Progress Report on Adults Social Care Improvement Plan</i>	The quarterly update on improvement	7 th January 2010	
20.	Housing Strategy	This strategy sets out how we are going to develop the Housing Strategy locally	4 th February 2010	The Committee may wish to establish a Task Force to review this policy prior to it's receipt at Executive in March 2010

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
Other strategies the Committee may wish to consider as part of this year's work programme include:				
21.	Mental Health Plan / Strategy	The Committee may wish to receive a report discussing Central Bedfordshire's response to commissioning services in line with their residents.		The government's current mental health strategy should commit to outlawing discrimination, providing key public sector workers with mental health training and setting a high-level target for improving outcomes. The 'New Horizons' strategy aims to take forward the work carried out under the national service framework for mental health, which comes to an end this year.

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
22.	Learning Disabilities Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee may wish to receive a report discussing Central Bedfordshire's response to commissioning services in line with their residents 		<p>The DoH has launched the <i>Valuing people now: a new three-year strategy for people with learning disabilities strategy</i> for the next three years, which takes account of the responses to the consultation which ended in March 2008. In particular, this strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses what people have told us about the support people with learning disabilities and their families need reflects the changing priorities across Government which impact directly on people with learning disabilities
23.	Older People Strategy	CBC's Older People's Strategy will aim to challenge stereotyping of older people and provide a framework to develop a county in which older people have the support they need to lead active, healthy and independent lives.		

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
24.	Social Care Work Force Strategy	The Committee may wish to receive a report discussing Central Bedfordshire's response to providing an effective workforce		Working to Put People First: The Strategy for the Adult Social Care Workforce in England outlines the workforce implications of Putting People First and provides a high-level framework to support the transformation of the adult social care workforce.
25.	Healthier Communities Strategy	Government health policy is placing a greater emphasis on the prevention of ill-health and addressing health inequalities as health Improvement is intertwined with other priorities and activities.		

Executive Dates:

21st July 2009

18th August 2009

15th September 2009

13th October 2009

10th November 2009

8th December 2009

12th January 2010

9th February 2010

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) Work Programme 2009 / 2010

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
1.	Discharge planning	Many instances of failed discharge reported involving Hospital planning, Primary care, Social care and the coordination between them. Who has what area of responsibility?	TBC	
2.	Infection control at Bedford Hospital		TBC	
3.	Catering system at Luton & Dunstable Hospital	The Committee may wish to receive a presentation and a complementary report to map pathway from receipt of meals to presentation	TBC	The Committee may wish to receive a presentation and a complementary report to map pathway from receipt of meals to presentation
4.	Community nursing	The Committee may wish to consider and monitor new model of care as it affects patients	TBC	
5.	Provision Out of Hours care	The Committee may wish to consider and monitor model of provision as it affects patients	TBC	
6.	Access to specialist dentists for patients with complex needs.	There would seem to be lack of dentists to carry out this work leading to long waits for treatment. The treatment is excellent when actually obtained.	TBC	The Committee may wish to establish a Task Force to review this policy
7.	Lack of access to culturally sensitive counselling and therapy services.		TBC	The Committee may wish to receive a presentation and a complementary report to map pathway from receipt of meals to presentation

Ref	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Indicative Overview & Scrutiny Meeting Date	Comment
8.	Standards of care provided by Care Agencies	The Committee may wish to consider the continuity of carer sent to client, standards expected of carer and who monitors them, standards laid down in contracts	TBC	
9.	Wheelchair and Chiropody Services	The Committee may to find out current provision.	TBC	The Committee may wish to establish a Task Force to review this policy

Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Legacy Draft Work Programme

This suggested work programme has been compiled by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Social Care, Health & Housing OSC in consultation with NHS representatives and council officers (using as a starting point the outstanding work programme from the former Bedfordshire County Council's Adult Social Care & Health OSC).

(E = Early, M = Medium Term, L = Long Term)

Adult Social Care:

	ITEM	TIMESCALE (E/M/L)
1.	Performance Monitoring Agreements i.e. agreement of indicators and targets (LAA & Council related)	E
2.	Review of Drugs Strategy (this review will need to involve the Sustainable Communities OSC)	M
3.	Receiving inspection report on safeguarding vulnerable adults	E
4.	Personalisation of care, including managing budgets	E
5.	Changes in Continuing care and their likely impact	M
6.	Review of the future of residential care	M
7.	Scene setting presentation/induction covering the national agenda as it relates to Adult Social Care, Health & Housing (including issues such as Older People, Mental Health, Safeguarding & Deprivation of Liberty)	E
8.	Domiciliary care	E
9.	Support for carers and efficacy of measurement	M

Health:

	ITEM	TIMESCALE (E/M/L)
1.	Beds and Luton Partnership Trust – implications of any change in service	E
2.	Review of Intermediate Care (e.g. bed capacity at hospitals)	M
3.	Continence services	M
4.	Report on the outcomes of the Care Quality Commission inspections (Oct/Nov annually)	M
5.	Dentistry – update on progress of strategy (i.e. is it meeting its objectives?)	L
6.	Healthy Communities Strategy	M
7.	Performance indicators from the PCT as an assurance mechanism (including health comparisons with statistical neighbours)	E
8.	Health inequalities in Bedfordshire (chapters are produced on a 2-year cycle – suggested biennial report to Committee, which provides an	L

	opportunity for the OSC to question the Director of Public Health)	
9.	Services to be provided at GP surgeries – the vision for primary care	M
10.	A watching brief on the future of Bedford Hospital – any reductions in services it delivers and the impact on its long-term viability	Ongoing

Housing:

	ITEM	TIMESCALE (E/M/L)
1.	Choice Based Lettings	L
2.	Housing Strategy (a review of this strategy will need to involve the Sustainable Communities OSC)	M
3.	Homelessness Strategy	M
4.	Treasury review of Council Housing Finance	M
5.	Discussions around how Central Bedfordshire effectively brings 2 legacy Councils together in terms of common practices, procedures & systems	M
6.	Empty Dwelling Management Orders – driving up standards	M

**Central Bedfordshire Council
Forward Plan of Key Decisions
1 August 2009 to 31 July 2010**

- 1) During the period from **1 August 2009 to 31 July 2010**, Central Bedfordshire Council plans to make key decisions on the issues set out below. “Key decisions” relate to those decisions of the Executive which are likely:
- to result in the incurring of expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant (namely £200,000 or above per annum) having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
 - to be significant in terms of their effects on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the area of Central Bedfordshire.

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

Member	Portfolio
Cllr Mrs Tricia Turner MBE	Chairman of the Executive and Leader of the Council
Cllr Richard Stay	Vice-Chairman of the Executive and Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Business Transformation
Cllr Rita Drinkwater	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Cllr Carole Hegley	Portfolio Holder for Social Care and Health & Portfolio Champion for Business Transformation
Cllr Maurice Jones	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources
Cllr Anita Lewis	Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services
Cllr Steve Male	Portfolio Holder for Culture and Skills & Portfolio Champion for Business Transformation
Cllr Ken Matthews	Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Regeneration
Cllr David McVicar	Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities
Cllr Tom Nicols	Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development & Portfolio Champion for Business Transformation

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

4) The agendas for meetings of the Executive will be published as follows:

Meeting Date	Publication of Agenda
12 May 2009	01 May 2009
23 June 2009	15 June 2009
21 July 2009	13 July 2009
18 August 2009	10 August 2009
15 September 2009	7 September 2009
13 October 2009	5 October 2009
10 November 2009	2 November 2009
8 December 2009	30 November 2009
12 January 2010	4 January 2010
9 February 2010	1 February 2010
9 March 2010	1 March 2010
6 April 2010	25 March 2010

Central Bedfordshire Council

Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2010

Key Decisions

Date of Publication: 15 July 2009

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
1.	Street Lighting & Bridge Maintenance Strategies - This paper is to gain a steer from Executive on how best to manage an ageing street lighting stock and to advise Members on how essential maintenance work will be carried out to ensure safe usage of the Council's bridge structures.	18 August 2009	Police Community Groups	Report	Cllr Tom Nicols Comments by 02/08/09 to Contact Officer: Basil Jackson, Assistant Director Highways basil.jackson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01234 228477
2.	Property Acquisitions and Disposals Monitoring - Standing item for key decisions and quarterly basis monitoring and reporting of all property transactions	18 August 2009	Items will have been reviewed and assessed by the CBC Capital Assets Management Group (CAMG).	Report	Cllr Maurice R Jones Comments by 22/07/09 to Contact Officer: Mark Bassett, Specialist Advisor - Property mark.bassett@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01234 276889 / 07939 038105

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
3.	<p>Medium Term Accommodation Plan - To review the strategy for CBC office accommodation.</p>	18 August 2009	<p>Management Team CAMG All Service Areas</p>	Report	<p>Cllr Maurice R Jones Comments by 22/07/09 to Contact Officer: Mark Bassett, Specialist Advisor - Property mark.bassett@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01234 276889 / 07939 038015</p>
4.	<p>Albion Archaeology - That all historic environment work of Albion Archaeology should be carried out in accordance with the Code of Conduct and other by-laws of the Institute of Archaeologists (IfA). Resolution required in order that Albion can maintain registration under the scheme.</p>	18 August 2009		IfA Code of Conduct IfA By-Law (Regulations for the Registration of Organisation)	<p>Cllr Tom Nicols Comments by 22/07/09 to Contact Officer: Gary Worth, Assistant Director Development Management gary.worth@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5177</p>
5.	<p>Update of Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire - To approve the updated Design Guide.</p>	18 August 2009		Report	<p>Cllr Tom Nicols Comments by 22/07/09 to Contact Officer: Fiona Webb, Team Leader, Conservation Project Design fiona.webb@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4405</p>

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
6.	Review of Historic Building Grant Aid Scheme and Listed Buildings At Risk - To approve the Scheme.	18 August 2009		Buildings at Risk Survey (North Area) 2008 Buildings at Risk Survey (South Area) 2005	Cllr Tom Nicols Comments by 22/07/09 to Contact Officer: Robin Uff, Principal Planning Officer robin.uff@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01462 611339
7.	Rushmere Park - acquisition of land in partnership with the Greensand Trust - Approval to the commitment of external funding resources (registered in the capital programme) to the purchase of land for open access part of the provision of new green infrastructure for the Growth Agenda.	18 August 2009	Ouzel Valley Park Partnership (a consortium of representatives from the Leighton Linlade Town Council, The Greensand Trust, British Waterways, SUSTRANS, the Environment Agency, Buckinghamshire County Council and Council officers from Planning and Culture.) Councillors Peter Rawcliffe, Peter Snelling, Alan Shadbolt and Brian Spurr (Chairman of the Council) who attended a site meeting with the Portfolio Holder and the Greensand Trust on 25 June 2009.	Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 02/08/09 to Contact Officer: Roy Waterfield, Assistant Director Leisure and Culture, Libraries, Adult and Community Learning roy.waterfield@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4239

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
8.	Children and Young People's Plan - To agree the Children and Young People's Plan.	15 September 2009	Stakeholders, members of the public children and young people	Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 21/08/09 to Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Interim Assistant Director, Policy, Planning and Commissioning sylvia.gibson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5522
9.	Community Engagement Strategy - To approve the Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council.	15 September 2009	Portfolio Holder (Business Transformation) LSP Partners	Report	Cllr Richard Stay Comments by 21/08/09 to Contact Officer: Ian Porter, Assistant Director Service Policy, Partnerships & Performance ian.porter@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01234 276067
10.	Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan 2009 - 2010 - This is the first Children and Young People's Plan. Thereafter it will be refreshed annually.	15 September 2009	Consultation has already taken place with children and young people. Further stakeholder consultation will take place in May, June and July through a variety of mechanisms such as workshops, information published on our website and meetings with key partners.	Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 21/08/09 to Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Interim Assistant Director, Policy, Planning and Commissioning sylvia.gibson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0845 849 6092

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
11.	Customer Services Strategy - To approve the Strategy.	15 September 2009		Report	Cllr Richard Stay Comments by 21/08/09 to Contact Officer: Clive Jones, Assistant Director Business Transformation & Customer Services clive.jones@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01462 611168
12.	Licensing Policy and Framework - To approve the Policy and Framework.	15 September 2009	Licensing Trade Portfolio Holder (Safer and Stronger Communities) Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Licensing Committee Three month period commencing 1 April 2009, meetings, publication on website and in other media	Report	Cllr David McVicar Comments by 21/08/09 to Contact Officer: Susan Childerhouse, Head of Public Protection (North) susan.childerhouse@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01462 611394
13.	Property Services Review - To report on the process for reviewing future delivery of property services for CBC.	15 September 2009	CAMG All Service Areas Stakeholders	Report	Cllr Maurice R Jones Comments by 19/08/09 to Contact Officer: Mark Basset, Specialist Advisor - Property mark.basset@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01234 276889 / 07939 038105

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
14.	<p>Specialist Provision for Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders at Holmemead Middle School, Biggleswade -</p> <p>To approve the proposal to set up a Specialist Provision for Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders at Homemead Middle School, Biggleswade.</p>	15 September 2009	Statutory Consultees - consultation carried out in April/May 2009 and Statutory Notices published June 2009.	Report	<p>Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis</p> <p>Comments by 21/08/09 to Contact Officer: Helen Redding, Head of SEN and Inclusion helen.redding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01234 228148</p>
15.	<p>Business Transformation Strategy -</p> <p>To approve the Strategy.</p>	13 October 2009		Report	<p>Cllr Richard Stay</p> <p>Comments by 22/09/09 to Contact Officer: Clive Jones, Assistant Director Business Transformation & Customer Services</p> <p>clive.jones@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01462 611168</p>
16.	<p>Commissioning Policy -</p> <p>To agree the policy</p>	13 October 2009	Stakeholder and the Children's Trust	Report	<p>Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis</p> <p>Comments by 22/09/09 to Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Interim Assistant Director, Policy, Planning and Commissioning</p> <p>sylvia.gibson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 0300 300 5522</p>

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
17.	Medium Term Property Strategy Update - To report on the progress of the implementation of the strategy.	13 October 2009		Report	Cllr Maurice R Jones Comments by 13/10/09 to Contact Officer: Mark Bassett, Specialist Advisor - Property mark.bassett@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01234 276889 / 07939 038105
18.	Property Acquisitions and Disposals Monitoring - Standing item for key decisions and quarterly basis monitoring and reporting of all property transactions.	10 November 2009	Items will have been reviewed and assessed by the CBC Capital Assets Management Group (CAMG).	Report	Cllr Maurice R Jones Comments by 14/10/09 to Contact Officer: Mark Bassett, Specialist Advisor - Property mark.bassett@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01234 276889 / 07939 038105
19.	Harmonisation of Waste Management Services - To provide Members with the opportunity to comment on suggested service changes.	10 November 2009		Report	Cllr David McVicar Comments by 14/10/09 to Contact Officer: Steve Whittaker, Contract Services Manager steve.whittaker@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4344

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
20.	Lord Laming Action Plan - To agree the plan.	10 November 2009	Stakeholders and the Local Safeguarding Children Board	Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 14/10/09 to Contact Officer: Martin Pratt, Assistant Director Specialist Services martin.pratt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4484
21.	Eligibility for payments policy - To agree the policy	8 December 2009		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/11/09 to Contact Officer: Martin Pratt, Assistant Director Specialist Services martin.pratt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4484
22.	Raising Achievement Policy - To agree the policy	8 December 2009		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/11/09 to Contact Officer: Patrick Shevlin, Head of School Standards and Improvement patrick.shevlin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6821
23.	Luton-Dunstable Guided Busway - To receive the Tender Returns and recommendations to progress the scheme.	8 December 2009		Report	Cllr Tom Nicols Comments by 10/11/09 to Contact Officer: John Austin, Interim Head of Transport Strategy john.austin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01234 228687

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
24.	<p>Development of a Uniformed Presence for Central Bedfordshire - To consider the options available for Central Bedfordshire to undertake enforcement of a range of environmental and community safety legislation (including the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (CNEA)) and exploring the role that a uniformed team has in that respect.</p>	12 January 2010	Relevant Portfolio Holders	Report	<p>Cllr David McVicar Comments by 10/12/09 to Contact Officer: Jeanette Keyte, Community Safety Manager jeanette.keyte@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0845 849 6252</p>
25.	<p>Children's Workforce Development Strategy - To agree the strategy.</p>	12 January 2010	Stakeholders and the Children's Trust	Report	<p>Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/12/09 to Contact Officer: Patrick Shevlin, Head of School Standards and Improvement patrick.shevlin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6821</p>

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
26.	Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention Policy - To agree the policy	12 January 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/12/09 to Contact Officer: Glen Denham, Assistant Director Integrated Services 0-19 glen.denham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6125
27.	Cultural Strategy - To agree the policy.	12 January 2010		Report	Cllr Stephen F Male Comments by 10/12/09 to Contact Officer: Roy Waterfield, Assistant Director Leisure and Culture, Libraries, Adult and Community Learning roy.waterfield@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 3004239
28.	CCTV Service Options - To consider options available to move to a common approach to the provision of a CCTV service within Central Bedfordshire.	9 February 2010	Portfolio Holder (Safer and Stronger Communities) Key Stakeholders	Report	Cllr David McVicar Comments by 15/01/10 to Contact Officer: Jeanette Keyte, Community Safety Manager jeanette.keyte@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0845 849 6252

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
29.	Property Acquisitions and Disposals Monitoring - Standing item for key decisions and quarterly basis monitoring and reporting of all property transactions.	9 February 2010	Items will have been reviewed and assessed by the CBC Capital Assets Management Group (CAMG)	Report	Cllr Maurice R Jones Comments by 13/01/10 to Contact Officer: Mark Bassett, Specialist Advisor - Property mark.bassett@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01234 276889 / 07939 038105
30.	Play Strategy - To agree the strategy	9 March 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 to Contact Officer: Roy Waterfield, Assistant Director Leisure and Culture, Libraries, Adult and Community Learning roy.waterfield@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4239
31.	Child Poverty Strategy - To agree the strategy	9 March 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 Glen Denham, Assistant Director Integrated Services 0-19 glen.denham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6125

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
32.	Transitions Policy - To agree the policy	9 March 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 to Contact Officer: Martin Pratt, Assistant Director Specialist Services martin.pratt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4484
33.	Safeguarding Policy - To agree the policy	9 March 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 to Contact Officer: Martin Pratt, Assistant Director Specialist Services martin.pratt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4484
34.	Child in Need Policy - To agree the policy	9 March 2010		None.	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 to Contact Officer: Martin Pratt, Assistant Director Specialist Services martin.pratt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4484
35.	Looked After Children and Young People Policy - To agree the policy.	9 March 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 to Contact Officer: Martin Pratt, Assistant Director Specialist Services martin.pratt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4484

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive (and intended decision)	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date / Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact Members and Officer (Method of Comment and Closing Date)
36.	Fostering Policy - To agree the policy	9 March 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 to Contact Officer: Martin Pratt, Assistant Director Specialist Services martin.pratt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4484
37.	Adoption Policy - To agree the policy.	9 March 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 to Contact Officer: Martin Pratt, Assistant Director Specialist Services martin.pratt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4484
38.	Private Fostering Policy - To agree the policy.	9 March 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 to Contact Officer: Martin Pratt, Assistant Director Specialist Services martin.pratt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4484
39.	Children Missing Education Policy - To agree the policy	9 March 2010		Report	Cllr Mrs Anita M Lewis Comments by 10/02/10 to Contact Officer: Patrick Shevlin, Head of School Standards and Improvement patrick.shevlin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6821

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

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

The following table sets out the dates on which the Central Bedfordshire Council Forward Plan will be published in 2009/10:

Date of Publication	Period of Plan
08.05.09	1 June 2009 – 31 May 2010
15.06.09	1 July 2009 – 30 June 2010
15.07.09	1 August 2009 – 31 July 2010
13.08.09	1 September 2009 – 31 August 2010
10.09.09	1 October 2009 – 30 September 2010
08.10.09	1 November 2009 – 31 October 2010
05.11.09	1 December 2009 – 30 November 2010
03.12.09	1 January – 31 December 2010
07.01.10	1 February 2010 – 31 January 2011
04.02.10	1 March 2010 – 28 February 2011
04.03.10	1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011
31.03.10	1 May 2010 – 30 April 2011