

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



please ask for Helen Bell
direct line 0300 300 4040
date 9 February 2012

REVISED NOTICE OF MEETING

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL BUDGET SETTING MEETING

Date & Time

Thursday, 23 February 2012 6.30 p.m.

Venue at

Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

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

Prayers will be held immediately before the Council meeting begins for those Members who wish to take part.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence to be received.

2. **Minutes**

To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 January 2012.

(Attached pages 5 to 12)

3. **Members' Interests**

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

(a) Personal Interests in any agenda item

(b) Personal and Prejudicial Interests in any agenda item.

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

The Chairman to announce any matters of communication.

5. **Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications**

The Leader of the Council to announce any matters of communication.

6. **Questions, Statements and Deputations**

To receive any questions, statements and deputations from members of the public relating to budgetary matters, and presentation and discussion of petitions relating to budgetary matters in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of part A4 of the Constitution. (This session will last no longer than 30 minutes.)

7. Recommendations from the Executive

To consider recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 14 February 2012 and answer questions asked under Rule No. 13.1.

(a) Budget 2012/13 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2012 to 2016
(attached pages 13 to 14)

(b) Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2015/16 (attached page 15)

(c) Budget report for the Landlord Services Business Plan 2012/13 under the new Self Financing Regime (attached pages 16 to 17)

and to present the Council Tax Resolution (papers to follow)

Note: The papers for (a) (b) and (c) above may be seen at the following link:-

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=577&MId=3721&Ver=4>

8. Recommendations from General Purposes Committee

To consider recommendations from the meeting of General Purposes Committee on 9 February 2012 relating to the Pay Policy Statement 2012/13 and answer questions asked under Rule No 13.1.

(Attached page 19)

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL** held in the Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 19 January 2012.

PRESENT

Cllr P Hollick (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs R B Gammons (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs	P N Aldis	Cllrs	Mrs D B Gurney	Cllrs	J A G Saunders
	A R Bastable		Mrs C Hegley		A Shadbolt
	R D Berry		D J Hopkin		N J Sheppard
	L Birt		J G Jamieson		I Shingler
	M C Blair		K Janes		M A Smith
	D Bowater		R W Johnstone		Miss A Sparrow
	A D Brown		D Jones		B J Spurr
	Mrs C F Chapman MBE		M R Jones		R C Stay
	Mrs S Clark		D J Lawrence		A M Turner
	J A E Clarke		Mrs J G Lawrence		Mrs P E Turner MBE
	N B Costin		I A MacKilligan		M A G Versallion
	I Dalgarno		K C Matthews		N Warren
	A L Dodwell		Ms C Maudlin		B Wells
	Mrs R J Drinkwater		D McVicar		R D Wenham
	P A Duckett		J Murray		P Williams
	Dr R Egan		Mrs M Mustoe		J N Young
	C C Gomm		T Nicols		A Zerny
	Mrs S A Goodchild		R B Pepworth		
	Mrs D B Green		B Saunders		

Apologies: Cllr Mrs A Barker Cllr P F Vickers

Officers:	Mr G Alderson	–	Director of Sustainable Communities
	Mr J Atkinson	–	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
	Mr R Carr	–	Chief Executive
	Mrs M Clampitt	–	Committee Services Officer
	Ms D Clarke	–	Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation)
	Mrs E Grant	–	Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services
	Mrs J Ogley	–	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
	Ms M Peaston	–	Committee Services Manager
	Mr C Warboys	–	Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer

C/11/64 **Prayers**

Prayers were taken by Reverend Michael Trodden.

C/11/65 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:-

- C/11/52 insert the words “by Mr George Konstantinidis” after the words “the representations” so the sentence reads “The Council took into account the representations made by Mr George Konstantinidis under the Public Participation Scheme”.
- C/11/56 question 13 remove the ‘e’ from Cllr Mrs S Clark’s name.

C/11/66 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

Cllr P N Aldis declared an interest under item 13 Housing Strategy, by virtue of being a member of the Aragon Housing Board.

Cllr Mrs R Drinkwater declared an interest under item 13 Housing Strategy, by virtue of being a member of Aragon Housing Board.

Cllr Dr R Egan declared an interest under item 13 Housing Strategy, by reason of being a Council tenant.

(b) **Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-**

Cllr R Wenham declared an interest under item 8, Recommendation from the Executive - Metal Theft Prevention - due to the nature of his employment.

C/11/67 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman reported the recent sudden death of Mrs Celia Hanbury, wife of the former High Sheriff Daniel Hanbury. The Council stood in silent tribute to her memory.

The Chairman also reported the following matters:

- there would be a trial process under ‘Leader’s Announcements’ whereby two Executive Members would provide a five minute update on recent matters of interest in their areas. Members would then be invited to ask questions for up to ten minutes of each Executive Member on their reports. In view of this trial, the Open Questions session would be reduced to 30 minutes. The trial would be reviewed at the Constitution Advisory Group meeting to be held on 27 January 2012.

- the order of the agenda would be varied to consider item 12 – Motions - after Item 8 – Recommendations from the Executive.
- a charity concert billed as 'Let's Face the Music' would be held on Sunday 29 January at the Grove Theatre in Dunstable. The concert would be in aid of the Chairman's declared charitable interests.

C/11/68

Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications

The Leader asked the Executive Members for External Affairs and Social Care, Health & Housing to report to the Council on recent matters within their portfolios.

Cllr Stay, Executive Member for External Affairs provided an oral update on activities with which he had been involved recently.

Cllr Stay responded to questions.

Cllr Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health & Housing, provided an update on recent developments within her portfolio.

Cllr Hegley answered a number of questions and undertook to circulate to Members information on the Step Up Step Down pilot project.

C/11/69

Questions, Statements and Deputations

Questions and statements were put by a member of the public under the Public Participation provisions set out at Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

- Mr G Konstantinidis made a statement in relation to questions he had raised previously where he remained dissatisfied with the answers he had received.
- In addition, Mr G Konstantinidis asked for clarification on a Freedom of Information request that he had submitted.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources responded to Mr Konstantinidis.

C/11/70

Petitions

No petitions had been received.

C/11/71

Recommendations from the Executive

(i) Treasury Management Strategy (including the Treasury Management Policy)

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 10 January 2012, seeking adoption of the Treasury Management Strategy and the Treasury Management Policy, as set out in the Executive report.

RESOLVED

that the Treasury Management Policy and the Treasury Management Strategy, as set out in the Executive report, be adopted as part of the Council's Treasury Management Framework.

(ii) Metal Theft Prevention

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 10 January 2012, seeking support for an initiative designed to tackle metal theft, as set out in the Executive report.

The Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services proposed an amendment to the recommendation which was seconded and duly agreed.

RESOLVED

that the Local Government Association be asked to develop a national scheme for the licensing of scrap metal dealers to which Central Bedfordshire Council, among others, could subscribe and to explore all options for a local licensing solution if that can be achieved.

C/11/72

Motions (if any)

Notice had been received from Councillor Mark Versallion of a Motion under Procedure Rule 17 as follows:-

“This Council, with unanimous support across all parties and independent Members, expresses its deep concern at the very low level of per pupil funding received by Central Bedfordshire schools.

In support of the efforts already made by the Executive Member for Children's Services to redress this inequity, this Council requests both the Leader and Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State for Education seeking an urgent review of Central Bedfordshire's schools funding.”

Further to debate the motion was duly amended by the deletion of the word unanimous and it was:

RESOLVED

that this Council, with support across all parties and independent Members, expresses its deep concern at the very low level of per pupil funding received by Central Bedfordshire schools.

In support of the efforts already made by the Executive Member for Children's Services to redress this inequity, this Council requests both the Leader and Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State for Education seeking an urgent review of Central Bedfordshire's schools funding.

C/11/73 **Questions on the Functions of Bedfordshire Police Authority and the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority**

Councillor Hollick, representative for the Police Authority, answered questions about matters relating to the functions of the Bedfordshire Police Authority.

There were no questions on the functions of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority.

C/11/74 **Written Questions**

No written questions had been received from Members of the Council under Rule No 13.2.

C/11/75 **Open Questions**

The Chairman presided over Open Questions asked of Executive Members and Deputy Executive Members under Procedure Rule 13.7:-

1. Councillor McVicar asked for confirmation that the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera cars were now operational and about the effect on the volume of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued.

The Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development confirmed that the ANPRs began working since 11th January and on average, six times more PCNs could be issued each day than by traffic wardens.

2. Councillor Dr Egan asked why the salaries of Senior Officers working through agencies were not published on the website.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources indicated that he would provide a written reply.

3. Councillor Blair asked for an update on the BEaR project. Prior to the answer being provided Councillors Hegley, Matthews and Stay withdrew from the Chamber owing to their membership of The Rookery South (Resource Recovery Facility) Committee, a Committee of the Executive.

The Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services confirmed that four contractors had been shortlisted and that a shortlist of two would be announced in February, with the contract being awarded in November 2012. It was anticipated that the facility would be in place by 2016.

(Councillors Hegley, Matthews and Stay rejoined the meeting).

4. Councillor Murray asked what the Council was doing or planning to do to support the Government's proposals against late night opening of pubs and bars and the scope for Councils to charge for policing.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services confirmed that the Council would follow the Government's direction.

5. Councillor Gurney asked when the funding for the bus shelter in Eyeworth would be available.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services undertook to provide a written answer.

6. Councillor D Jones asked for confirmation that the Council adhered to policies promoting sustainability in connection with renewable energy when determining applications at the Development Management Committee.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development explained that each application was determined on its merits.

7. Councillor Dr Egan asked what efforts were being made to keep the Houghton Regis Leisure Centre open and viable.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services explained the recent tendering process.

8. Councillor Murray asked about the Council's response to the outcome of consultation on the amalgamation of special schools in Dunstable and Houghton Regis and an issue before the Traffic Management Meeting scheduled for 25 January 2012.

The Executive Member for Children's Services confirmed that the Council took into account the outcome of public consultation.

9. Councillor Aldis asked how a 60% recycling rate would be achieved in the next few years considering that glass was not collected at the kerb side.

The Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services explained the plans for improving recycling still further.

- 10. Cllr Mrs Clark asked for a comment on the recent Key Stage 2 results for Central Bedfordshire Middle Schools.

The Executive Member for Children’s Services confirmed that recent results were not good enough for a small number of schools. Out of the 25 middle schools in Central Bedfordshire, one fifth were in need of improvement and arrangements were in place to provide assistance.

- 11. Cllr Aldis asked how and where the 400 staff from Technology House will be accommodated in the future.

The Leader of the Council commented that this programme was seeking to reduce costs whilst not affecting front line services, through the better utilization of office space.

C/11/76

Housing Strategy

The Council considered a report of the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development concerning the development of the proposed Housing Strategy for Central Bedfordshire.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development highlighted three minor changes to be made to the Housing Strategy as follows:-

- page 60 of the agenda – remove item 4
- page 64 of the agenda – add the words ‘private and’ before the word ‘council’ in the third bullet point under ‘Delivery and Outcomes for Strategic housing, planning, housing delivery and assets review’.
- page 47 of the agenda – in the last paragraph of the forward add the word ‘relatively’ before the word ‘new’ in the first sentence.

RESOLVED

that the Housing Strategy 2011/2012 – 2015/2016, which was attached at Appendix A to the report and amended as above, be adopted.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.35 p.m. and concluded at 9.20 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated

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COUNCIL MEETING – 23 FEBRUARY 2012

Recommendations to Council from the Executive meeting held on 14 February 2012

E/11/126 **Budget 2012/13 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2012 to 2016**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that proposed the Council's spending plans for the medium term and Council Tax rate for 2012-13, with indicative figures for future years. It was proposed that there would be no increase in Council Tax and a commitment to harmonise rates in the North and South of Central Bedfordshire over a two year period.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources moved the following amendment to recommendation (h), which was duly seconded:-

“note that certain efficiency proposals identified in Appendix I to the report be subject to formal consultation and Equality Impact Assessment and instructs the Corporate Management Team, *in consultation with the relevant Executive Members and the Chief Finance Officer as appropriate*, to propose alternative compensatory savings where it appears, following a review of the outcome of the consultation and Equality Impact Assessment, that any specific proposal cannot be delivered.”

Reason for decision: To recommend a balanced budget for 2012/13 and identify resource requirements for the Medium Term.

RECOMMENDED

- 1. that the response from the consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees as set out in paragraph 35 in the report and the response to consultation with the public and stakeholders as set out in Appendix A to the report be noted;**
- 2. that the Revenue Budget for 2012/13 and the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2012/13 to 2015/16 be approved;**
- 3. that the following adjustments to the draft Budget be noted:-**
 - additional pressures of £1.5 million in 2012-13;**
 - additional efficiencies of £0.77 million in 2012-13; and**
 - reduction in estimated 2012-13 inflation provision of £1 million;**
- 4. that the Council Tax Base as set out in Appendix G to the report be noted;**

5. ***that a Band D Council Tax be approved of:

£1,308.33 for residents in the North of Central Bedfordshire
£1,326.24 for residents in the South of Central Bedfordshire;***
6. ***that the fees and charges set out in Appendix J to the report be approved;***
7. ***that the budget is predicated on an assumption that non statutory Human Resources, payroll and bursary services to schools would generally cease from September 2012, with full costs recovery where schools have been unable to make alternative provision by that date;
and***
8. ***that certain efficiency proposals identified in Appendix I to the report be subject to formal consultation and Equality Impact Assessment and instructs the Corporate Management Team, in consultation with the relevant Executive Members and the Chief Finance Officer as appropriate, to propose alternative compensatory savings where it appears, following a review of the outcome of the consultation and Equality Impact Assessment, that any specific proposal cannot be delivered.***

E/11/127 Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2015/16

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that proposed the Capital Programme for 2012/13 to 2015/16. The proposals resulted in an increase in gross capital expenditure for 2012/13 of £53.019 million. This would be partially offset by an increase in external funding of £35.399 million and therefore resulted in an increase in net expenditure for 2012/13 of £17.620 million to be financed from Council funded resources such as borrowing.

In the context of the proposed investment in roads, the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services paid tribute to the gritting crews who had ensured that the main roads had remained open during the recent inclement weather.

Reason for decision: To recommend a sustainable and affordable Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2015/16.

RECOMMENDED

- 1. that the 2012/13 to 2015/16 Capital Programme as set out in Appendix B to the report be approved;***
- 2. that the additional SAP optimisation item cost of £1 million since the Programme was submitted to the Executive in December 2011 be approved; and***
- 3. that the 2012/13 to 2015/16 Capital Programme – Housing Revenue Account as set out in Appendix C to the report be approved.***

E/11/128 **Budget Report for the Landlord Services Business Plan 2012/13 Under the New Self Financing Regime**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources and Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that set out the Landlord Services Business Plan under the new Self Financing regime. The Council would have to borrow £165.7 million as a result of self financing, but would then benefit from the ability to invest in its housing stock, according to local needs and objectives. The 2012/13 budget proposed to increase tenants' rents by an average of 7.94%, in line with the Government's rent restructuring policy.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources moved the following amendment to recommendation (b), which was duly seconded:-

“that delegated authority be given to the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate resources in consultation with *the Chief Executive* and Chief Finance Officer to agree the final debt structure, in conjunction with the Council's Treasury Management advisers.”

In response to concerns regarding the proposed average rent increase of 7.94% for 2012/13 the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing explained that its impact would be closely monitored. The 30-year business plan had been drawn up taking account of the average rent increase being in line with the Government's policy on Rent Convergence.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning for the Housing Revenue Account under self-financing.

RECOMMENDED

1. ***that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) would borrow £165.7 million as a result of legislation to implement the self-financing regime;***
2. ***that delegated authority be given to the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources in consultation with the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer to agree the final debt structure, in conjunction with the Council's Treasury Management advisers;***
3. ***a reserve be initially earmarked for the re-provision and re-modelling of sheltered housing and for the development of the Asset Management Strategy, within the Landlord Service Business Plan model;***
4. ***that the Landlord Service Business Plan Summary at Appendix A to the report be approved. This includes the Landlord Service efficiency programme, being developed as part of the HRA Value for Money Strategy;***

5. *that the feedback that had arisen from tenant engagement as set out in paragraphs 39-41 in the report be noted; and*
6. *that in line with the Government's policy on Rent Convergence approve the average rent increase of 7.94% for 2012/13.*

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COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Recommendations to Council from General Purposes meeting held on 9 February 2012

GPC/11/38 Pay Policy Statement 2012/13

The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive People and Organisation which set out the proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2012/13. The meeting noted that the Localism Act 2011 required all local authorities to prepare, approve and publish a pay policy statement for the financial year 2012/13 and for each subsequent year. The meeting further noted that, under its current terms of reference, the General Purposes Committee would have approved the Policy and it would then have been adopted by Council. However, the Localism Act required that the Policy be approved by full Council. In addition, pay policy statements would need to be approved and adopted by full Council annually before 31 March, immediately prior to the financial year to which they applied.

Turning to the Policy itself Members were advised that the legislation extended the existing requirements under the Code of Transparency so that Chief Officer remuneration was now required to be published on council websites. The Committee was aware that Central Bedfordshire already complied with this requirement.

The Committee was also advised that the legislation had drawn on Hutton's Fair Pay Review in the Public Sector 2011 and introduced requirements to compare the policies on the remuneration of chief officers and other employees in the Authority and set out a policy on the lowest paid (excluding local authority schools to which the Act did not apply).

The Committee was assured that the draft Pay Policy Statement 2012/13 met the requirements of the Localism Act and that it referred to information relating to the Council's existing policies and terms and conditions.

NOTED

the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2012/13.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- 1 that the draft Pay Policy Statement 2012/13, as set out at Appendix A to these minutes, be approved and adopted;**
- 2 that, following approval and adoption, the Pay Policy Statement 2012/13 be published on the Council's website.**

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