

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 14 February 2012.

PRESENT

Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Executive Members:	Cllrs	Mrs C Hegley K C Matthews B J Spurr	Cllrs	R C Stay Mrs P E Turner MBE M A G Versallion
Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	Mrs A Barker A D Brown I Dalgarno	Cllrs	D J Hopkin B Wells R D Wenham
Apologies for Absence:	Cllrs	J G Jamieson A M Turner J N Young		
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	P N Aldis A R Bastable M C Blair D Bowater P A Duckett Dr R Egan C C Gomm Mrs S A Goodchild	Cllrs	D Jones D McVicar J Murray T Nicols B Saunders A Shadbolt N Warren
Officers in Attendance		Mr G Alderson Mr J Atkinson Mr R Carr Ms D Clarke Mr A Fleming Mrs E Grant Mrs S Hobbs Mrs J Ogley Mr C Warboys		Director of Sustainable Communities Head of Legal and Democratic Services Chief Executive Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation) Project Director Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services Committee Services Officer Director of Social Care, Health and Housing Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer

E/11/120 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/11/121 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

Councillor Dr Egan declared a personal interest in Agenda item 10 'Budget report for the Landlord Services Business Plan 2012/13 under the new Self Financing regime' as she was a tenant of Central Bedfordshire Council. She was present during the item.

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

None.

E/11/122 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources reminded Members to retain their Executive Agenda as they would be referred to at the Council meeting on 23 February 2012.

E/11/123 **Petitions**

No petitions were received.

E/11/124 **Public Participation**

The following statement was received in accordance with the Public Participation Scheme:

1. Mr D Dix

Mr Dix spoke on behalf of the Friends of Crescent Court to Agenda item 11 'Future of Crescent Court Sheltered Housing Scheme (Review of housing for older people in the south of Central Bedfordshire)'. Mr Dix contended that he had experienced difficulties dealing with the Council over this issue but explained that the Friends of Crescent Court were in support of the Residents Option and requested that the Executive agree to consider this option further.

2. Ms T McMahon

Ms McMahon spoke on behalf of Houghton Regis Leisure Centre Action Group to Agenda item 12 'Houghton Regis Leisure Centre – Tender for Leisure Management Contract from 1 April 2012'. Ms McMahon thanked the Council for listening to the community and trying to find an alternative solution to keep Houghton Regis Leisure Centre open.

E/11/125 **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 February 2012 to 31 January 2013 be noted.

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 to Council

- 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 to Council

- 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 to Council

- 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.***

E/11/129

Future of Crescent Court Sheltered Housing Scheme, Toddington

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that proposed further work on the feasibility of the development of a mixed tenure Extra Care Housing Scheme either on the site of the existing Crescent Court Sheltered Housing Scheme or on a new site in Toddington.

The Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing thanked Mr Dix for his comments on behalf of the Friends of Crescent Court. She thanked too the Independent Tenant Advisor and the tenants who had contributed to the discussions to date. The Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the item on 23 January where Members expressed their strong support for the development of an Extra Care Scheme in Toddington, with Crescent Court residents fully involved in the design of the Scheme.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to provide flexible, extra care accommodation in Toddington that contributed to meeting the growing demand for housing for older people.

RESOLVED

1. ***that the outcome of the consultation on the future options for Crescent Court Sheltered Housing Scheme and the comments and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted;***

2. that officers continue to explore the feasibility and viability of Option Three (development of an Extra Care Scheme on a site in Toddington) being progressed as a mixed tenure scheme through a Neighbourhood Plan for Toddington;
3. that officers explore the feasibility and viability of aligning Option Two (Development of an Extra Care Scheme on the existing site) and the Residents Option. The remit is the phased development of a mixed tenure Extra Care Scheme with provision for people with dementia whilst retaining the existing building. The existing flats would be refurbished over time as the opportunity arose;
4. that residents be invited to participate in the design aspect of any new development, in particular to avoid any new development being institutional in character;
5. to request officers to report back to the Executive by September 2012 with the results of the feasibility studies and a recommended way forward in relation to the development and the funding arrangements;
6. that work commencing at Crescent Court to address the health and safety issues and replace the heating system, be approved; and
7. that all existing Crescent Court residents be offered a tenancy in any new development for older people in Toddington.

E/11/130

Houghton Regis Leisure Centre - Tender for Leisure Management Contract from 1 April 2012

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services that sought the Executive's approval to award the contract for the operation and management of Houghton Regis Leisure Centre (HRLC) from 1 April 2012.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services thanked Ms McMahon for her comments on behalf of Houghton Regis Leisure Centre Action Group. He also thanked the Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services and the Head of Community Safety and Public Protection for their work.

The proposed recommendation to award a one year contract for the operation of the Leisure Centre was welcomed by Non-Executive Members and the Action Group, as this would allow for the Council to consider the Centre's future.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to appoint a contractor to operate and manage HRLC in 2012/13 whilst considering and determining the Council's longer term role in respect of the provision and operation of leisure facilities in Central Bedfordshire, as it develops its Leisure Strategy.

RESOLVED

that the contract to Contractor A be awarded, as set out in exempt Appendix A, to manage Houghton Regis Leisure Centre from 1 April 2012.*

*(Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

E/11/131

Site Allocations Policy HA4 - Development Brief for Land West of Abbey Lane, Ampthill

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning that sought approval of the development brief for land west of Abbey Lane, Ampthill as technical guidance for development management purposes.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development moved the following inclusion of paragraph 5.8 relating to superfast broadband within the Warren Farm Development Brief, which was duly seconded:-

“5.8 High Speed Broadband – To put in place the necessary on-site infrastructure to ensure future connectivity to superfast services.”

Reason for decision: To meet the housing requirements for Central Bedfordshire (North) for the period up to 2026 as set out within the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD.

RESOLVED

that the Development Brief be adopted as technical guidance for Development Management purposes subject to the inclusion of paragraph 5.8 relating to superfast broadband within the Warren Farm Development Brief as follows:-

“5.8 High Speed Broadband – To put in place the necessary on-site infrastructure to ensure future connectivity to superfast services.”

E/11/132

Central Bedfordshire Local Broadband Plan

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that sought approval of the Central Bedfordshire Local Broadband Plan. The Plan set out how the Council would support the roll out of superfast broadband in the area by 2015.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources moved the recommendation subject to the words “consider and” being removed from the first recommendation, which was duly seconded.

The Council would develop, with neighbouring local authorities, a Joint Broadband Plan and submit this to Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) during February 2012. Once BDUK had approved the Plan, further detailed work would begin on the procurement phase.

Reason for decision: To secure external resources and put in place the necessary infrastructure to support the delivery of superfast broadband to 90% of premises and support towards a minimum speed of 2 megabits per second for all in Central Bedfordshire.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Central Bedfordshire Local Broadband Plan be approved; and**
- 2. to delegate to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to approve a Joint Broadband Plan with Milton Keynes and Bedford Borough Council or any other partnership arrangements as necessary, for submission to Broadband Delivery UK for approval, subsequent procurement and to make minor consequential amendments to the Central Bedfordshire Local Broadband Plan.**

E/11/133

Corporate Asset Management Strategy

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that proposed the Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS) for Central Bedfordshire Council for the period 2012-2016, highlighting the Council's approach to the management of its assets.

The Executive Member for External Affairs moved the following amendment to recommendation 4, which was duly seconded:-

- “4. to delegate authority to the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, *in consultation with the Chief Executive*, agreement of the detailed work plan relating to the Strategy, following work to align the detailed operating model and restructure of the Assets Division to the Strategy.”**

Reason for decision: The CAMS sets out the key principles which would provide the platform for excellent asset portfolio management and development through the key workstreams comprising the activities in the Strategy.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Council's Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2012-16, set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;**

2. that regular progress reports on the Strategy be submitted as part of quarterly performance monitoring;
3. to receive an annual update and revision of the Strategy; and
4. to delegate authority to the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Chief Executive, agreement of the detailed work plan relating to the Strategy, following work to align the detailed operating model and restructure of the Assets Division to the Strategy.

E/11/134 **Houghton Regis Leisure Centre**

See minute E/11/130 for details.

E/11/135 **Draft Local Broadband Plan**

See minute E/11/132 for details.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.10 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated