

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 27 March 2012.

PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)
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
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Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	Mrs A Barker A D Brown I Dalgarno D J Hopkin	Cllrs	A M Turner B Wells R D Wenham J N Young
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Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	P N Aldis A R Bastable D Bowater Mrs R J Drinkwater C C Gomm Mrs S A Goodchild Mrs D B Gurney	Cllrs	D Jones D McVicar J Murray B Saunders A Shadbolt N Warren P Williams
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Officers in Attendance	Mr J Atkinson	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
	Mr R Carr	Chief Executive
	Ms D Clarke	Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation)
	Mr A Fleming	Project Director - Business Services
	Mrs E Grant	Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services
	Mrs S Hobbs	Committee Services Officer
	Ms C Murphy	Principal Planning Officer
	Mrs J Ogley	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
	Mr R Parsons	Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning
	Mr T Saunders	Assistant Director, Planning

E/11/136 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/11/137 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

Councillor Mrs Goodchild declared a personal interest in Agenda item 23 'Quarter 3 Performance Report' with regard to performance indicator SCHH 3 as she was a carer. She was present during the item.

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

None.

Note:

The Chief Executive declared a personal interest in minute E/11/146 'Central Bedfordshire University Technical College – Premises Procurement' as he was a governor at Central Bedfordshire College. The Chief Executive was present during this item.

E/11/138 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman was pleased to announce that the Adult Social Care Team had won the "GO Best Customer Engagement Initiative of the Year Award" for the Extra Care Procurement Project.

He advised that the Old Warden Rural Exception Scheme opened on 23 March 2012; all the properties had been allocated.

The Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing advised that the Council had received a grant of £200,000 from the Homes and Communities Agency to bring empty homes back into use.

The Chairman advised Members that he would be taking Agenda item 10 'Alternative Future Provision of the Pupil Referral unit' before Agenda item 8 'Central Bedfordshire Council Library Service Strategy'.

E/11/139 **Petitions**

No petitions were received.

E/11/140 **Public Participation**

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

1. Mr Bishop

Mr Bishop spoke with regard to Agenda item 9 and 26 'New School Place Programme 2012/13 – 2016/17'. Mr Bishop requested that the Council give a firm undertaking that the provider for the new lower school for Sandhills Estate, Leighton Buzzard would not apply an admissions policy that discriminated against any child on the basis of their parents' religious affiliation.

The Executive Member for Children's Services responded.

E/11/141 **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

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

E/11/142 **Alternative Future Provision of the Pupil Referral Unit**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that summarised the work completed to date on the Pupil Referral Unit provision and identified proposals for alternative models of delivery from September 2013. The Upper Schools had been working as a consortium to propose a Free School Alternative Provision and a bid had been submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the second round of Free School bids.

In accordance with the provisions of the Council's Public Participation Procedure, the Chairman invited the member of the public who had registered to speak on this item to address the Executive:

- Mr Croft, Head Teacher of Redborne Upper School spoke as Chairman of the Upper School Head Group. He explained that he had attended meetings with the DfE and explained that 10 upper schools had signed up to this very exciting project, to run a Free School Alternative Provision. Mr Croft thanked the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services and the Head of Learning and Schools Support for their support in preparing the bid.

The Executive Member for Children's Services moved the revised recommendations as set out in the Chairman's Briefing Note.

Reason for decision: To secure appropriate delivery of provision for pupils who might otherwise be out of school.

RESOLVED

- 1. that a project to establish a free school Pupil Referral Unit be supported;**
- 2. to authorise the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services, to take any action necessary to support this project, including a commission for medical needs and any future commissions relating to this area of work; and**
- 3. that the arrangements for the maintenance of the existing Pupil Referral Unit be approved until alternative arrangements were made.**

E/11/143

Central Bedfordshire Council Library Service Strategy

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services on the Library Service Review outcomes, including the public consultation findings and presented the Library Service Strategy for endorsement. Members noted the Council's commitment to keep the libraries open whilst delivering over £555,000 of efficiency savings.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services confirmed that the opening hours of the libraries were being examined in consultation with local communities.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to effectively discharge its statutory duty to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" library service under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act and in doing so offer value for money, support the delivery of the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Council's ambitions for Central Bedfordshire.

RESOLVED

that the Library Service Strategy and library road maps be approved as the direction for the service for the next 15 years.

E/11/144

New School Places Programme 2012/13 - 2016/17

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that proposed a five year investment programme, subject to annual refresh, of new school places to fulfil the Council's statutory duty regarding sufficiency of school places and to implement the identified need in the previously published School Organisation Plan. Members noted the Council's role as commissioner of new school places and the options available to expand existing or establish new schools. The planning and provision of new school places was one of the key challenges for the Council in managing growth effectively and providing quality infrastructure for its new and existing communities. The Council would be working closely in partnership with schools.

The Executive Member for Children's Services moved the recommendations as set out in the Chairman's Briefing Note.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to implement the new school places programme.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the commencement of informal consultation and the publication of statutory notices for the proposals to expand Fairfield Park Lower and Shefford Lower School, as outlined in Appendix D to the report, and Greenleas Lower School as set out in the exempt Appendix E to the report be approved;**
- 2. that the Transforming Learning reviews for the Sandy and Biggleswade area and rural mid Bedfordshire area, planned to commence in April 2012 and April 2013 respectively, do not proceed and that places planning take place across the whole geographical area of Central Bedfordshire as required by the annual refresh of the School Organisation Plan; and**
- 3. that the new Education Vision at Appendix F to the report be approved.**

RECOMMENDED to Council

the rolling Capital Programme for New School Places as set out in the Executive report, noting the required amendments to the Council's approved Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2015/16.

E/11/145

The Future of Special Schooling in the South of Central Bedfordshire

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that set out the responses to the statutory notices to merge Hillcrest Community Special School and Glenwood Community Special School to create a single area special school for pupils with complex educational needs, Severe Learning Difficulties, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties and Moderate Learning Difficulties with additional needs ages 3-19.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to discharge its duty to secure special school provision in an efficient way and which meets the needs of children and young people with complex needs.

RESOLVED

that the implementation on the proposal to merge Glenwood and Hillcrest Schools be approved through the expansion of Glenwood School and the closure of Hillcrest School across the two existing sites.

E/11/146 **Central Bedfordshire University Technical College - Premises Procurement**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that proposed specific arrangements for the procurement of premises for the University Technical College (UTC) in existing Council-owned premises at Houghton Regis, in order that the UTC would be open for September 2012. Members welcomed the project as it would help to deliver improved technical skills within the community, thereby enabling more local residents to access jobs.

The Executive Member for Children's Services moved the recommendations as set out in the Chairman's Briefing Note.

Reason for decision: To enable this project to be included in the Capital Programme in order to commence the works.

RESOLVED

- 1. to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to enter into an Education Funding Agency Design-and-Build Contract and Development Agreement, as outlined in the report, and to comply with the implementation arrangements required by the Partnerships for Schools/the Education Funding Agency; and**
- 2. to delegate authority to the Project Director – Business Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources and Head of Legal Services, to authorise and approve the terms of all property-related legal documentation, including leases of the relevant land and buildings to the Central Bedfordshire University Technical College Trust.**

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the addition of the Central Bedfordshire University Technical College premises scheme within the Capital Programme be approved and the commencement of expenditure be authorised.

E/11/147 **Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that set out the All Age Skills Strategy. The Strategy set out three high level priorities around working together, development of the current and future workforce and raising individuals' aspirations and achievements. The priorities were underpinned by key actions for all skills partners. The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development thanked the Head of Community Regeneration and Adult Skills for their work on the Strategy.

In response to a request from the Chairman of Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Executive Member amended the recommendation as follows, which was duly seconded:-

“that the Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy be approved as an integrated part of the Council’s Economic Development Plan and that a progress report be submitted to a joint meeting of the Children’s Services and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees within one year.”

Reason for decision: To put in place a Central Bedfordshire wide All Age Skills Strategy that sets the strategic direction for the Council and its partners in addressing the skills needs of employers and individuals and aims to better align local provision to meet those needs in order to enhance Central Bedfordshire as a place to live and work.

RESOLVED

that the Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy be approved as an integrated part of the Council’s Economic Development Plan and that a progress report be submitted to a joint meeting of the Children’s Services and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees within one year.

E/11/148

Local Area Transport Plans and Scheme Prioritisation Framework

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that proposed the endorsement of the second round of Local Area Transport Plans (LATPs), together with the adoption of a scheme prioritisation framework through which to determine the transport funding priorities for the authority.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development moved an amendment to recommendation 1 as follows, which was duly seconded:-

“endorse the second round of Local Area Transport Plans for the areas of Ampthill and Flitwick, Marston Vale, Shefford, Silsoe and Shillington, Toddington, Health and Reach and Barton Le Clay be approved, subject to any necessary minor amendments being delegated to the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development.”

The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee had raised concerns over the issue of road safety which it had felt should be given more prominence. The Executive Member explained that there was a separate budget and scheme that dealt with road safety issues, but he would take this on board when considering future LATPs. All LATPs would be subject to an annual review, but Members were reminded that there had not been an increase in the funding available. The Executive Member agreed to provide a written response to the relevant Member in relation to the bid regarding sustainable transport and improving the access to the Kingsland Campus, Houghton Regis.

Reason for decision: To enable the delivery of the second year of Local Transport Plan funding through the implementation of the LATPs for Ampthill and Flitwick, Marston Vale, Shefford, Silsoe and Shillington, Toddington, Heath and Reach and Barton-le-Clay.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the second round of Local Area Transport Plans for the areas of Ampthill and Flitwick, Marston Vale, Shefford, Silsoe and Shillington, Toddington, Heath and Reach and Barton Le Clay be approved, subject to any necessary minor amendments being delegated to the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development; and**
- 2. that the Scheme Prioritisation Framework be endorsed as a tool for determining the content of the Local Area Transport Plan programmes.**

E/11/149

Leighton Buzzard Opportunity Sites Planning and Development Briefs

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development that set out the planning and development briefs for Bridge Meadow and land south of High Street in Leighton Buzzard. These Briefs would guide and attract the regeneration of the two sites and would enable the sites to provide a range of improved facilities for the town.

In response to a letter from a member of the public, the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development explained that many of the points in the letter related to the Core Strategy rather than the development briefs. He confirmed that the development briefs had been through a public consultation process and that it was acknowledged within the briefs that development on the Bridge Meadow site would take place in the medium to long term. It had been an aspiration in the town for improvements to health and education facilities and the briefs identified an appropriate site for both of these developments.

Reason for recommendation: To enable regeneration of these two sites to provide a range of improved facilities for current and future residents, businesses and visitors to Leighton Buzzard.

RESOLVED

that the planning and development briefs for Bridge Meadow and land south of High Street in Leighton Buzzard be approved as technical guidance for development management purposes.

E/11/150

Site Allocations Policy HA10 - Development Brief for land at Stanford Road, Shefford

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that set out the development brief for land at Stanford Road, Shefford. The Brief provided the background and policy context for the Stanford Road site and its allocation for residential development.

Members welcomed the development brief and agreed that the Council should encourage developers to produce development briefs to help inform subsequent planning applications and guide development.

Reason for decision: To meet the housing requirements for Central Bedfordshire (North) for the period up to 2026 as set out in the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (adopted 2009).

RESOLVED

that the development brief be approved as technical guidance for development management purposes.

E/11/151

Stotfold Heritage

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that provided background information relating to a proposal for the development of a steam heritage museum in Stotfold.

Reason for decision: To inform the Executive of a proposed development on Council land.

NOTED

- 1. that Councillor John Saunders had proposed the development of land owned by the Council for use as a steam heritage museum;**
- 2. that the proposal will require planning permission which will be determined on its merits by the Development Management Committee should an application be submitted; and**
- 3. that if planning permission is granted, a further report will be submitted to the Executive to consider whether and, if so, on what terms, the land would be made available for this use.**

Note: Councillors Spurr and Dalgarno withdrew from the meeting for this item.

E/11/152

Community Safety Partnership Priorities and the Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2012-2013

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services that set out the proposed Community Safety Partnership Plan (CSP). The Plan set out the expectations of the Central Bedfordshire CSP, what it would deliver over the next 12 months, the resources available, how performance would be measured and how the Council would communicate and consult with local people.

Reason for decision: Central Bedfordshire Council is a responsible authority of the Community Safety Partnership under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Act places a statutory duty on the local authority to work with other responsible authorities to develop and implement a strategy for reducing crime and disorder. The Strategy must cover a district, borough or unitary area.

RESOLVED

that the Strategic Assessment and the Community Safety Partnership priorities be approved.

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the adoption of the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2012-2013, as attached at Appendix A to the Executive report be approved.

E/11/153

Award of the Housing Responsive Repairs and Void Refurbishment Contracts 2012 -2019

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that proposed to award the Contract for Housing Responsive Repairs and Void Refurbishment Service 2012-2019. This Contract had been re-procured jointly with Aragon Housing Association and covered repairs and void works to Aragon's 6,500 properties and the Council's 5,200 properties.

Reason for decision: So that Housing Responsive Repairs and Void Refurbishment Service is maintained and delivered at the end of the existing contract.

RESOLVED

1. that the Contract for the Housing Responsive Repairs Service (Lot 5) be awarded to contractor C, as set out in the exempt Appendix to the report; and
2. that the Contract for the Housing Void Refurbishment Service (Lot 6) be awarded to contractor A, as set out in the exempt Appendix to the report.

E/11/154 **Medium Term Plan - Consultation Document**

The Executive considered a report from the Leader of the Council and the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that proposed an approach to sharing the emerging Medium Term Plan (MTP) for consultation with Overview and Scrutiny and partners prior to its adoption by Council on 21 June 2012. The MTP set out the Council's priorities reflecting residents' concerns and a delivery plan for the next four years.

The Leader of the Council moved the recommendations as set out in the Chairman's Briefing Note.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to carry out a consultation process of the Medium Term Plan.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the emerging priorities set out in the Medium Term Plan be shared for consultation with Overview and Scrutiny and key partners, primarily the Local Strategic Partnership and the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board; and**
- 2. that the timetable set out in the report for adopting the Medium Term Plan 2012-2016 as the basis of the Council's promises to its residents for the next 4 years be approved.**

E/11/155 **Revenue Budget - Quarter 3 Monitor**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the financial position for 2011/12 as at the end of December. The report provided detail on the spend to date against the profiled budgets and the forecast financial outturn.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning.

NOTED

that the Revenue Forecast position is an under spend of £0.051M (less than 0.03% of net budget).

E/11/156 **Capital Budget - Quarter 3 Monitor**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the capital financial position for 2011/12 as at the end of December. The report provided detail on the spend to date against the profiled budgets.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning.

NOTED

- 1. that the Capital gross spend of £42.8M is below the profile budget;**
- 2. that the forecast position as at the end of December is £0.8M below budget, analysed as £0.4M saving and £0.4M slippage; and**
- 3. the good progress on the delivery of schemes.**

E/11/157

Quarter 3 Performance Report

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the quarter 3 2011/12 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council's key performance indicator set.

In response to a query, the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing confirmed that there had been improvement in relation to the performance for self-directed support and reviews. Additional resources had been secured to assist with the annual reviews, which would also help to improve performance on these measures as well as the performance on carers' assessments.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources acknowledged that the indicator for processing time for Benefit claims had not changed, but it was anticipated that processing times would be brought in line with targets by the end of the financial year. The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources agreed to provide a written response to the relevant Member regarding accuracy of claims assessments.

Reason for decision: To ensure a rigorous approach to performance management across Central Bedfordshire Council.

RESOLVED

that the strong overall performance made against the set of indicators be noted and that officers further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators.

E/11/158

Accommodation for the Secondary Age Pupil Referral Unit

The Executive agreed that this item would be considered in public.

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that identified proposals for alternative models of delivery of the provision including a preferred location for a free school within the recently vacated Roecroft Lower School and the effect on capital receipts/Capital Programme of such proposals.

Reason for decision: To secure appropriate delivery of provision for pupils who might otherwise be out of school and to consider the associated financial implications.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the use of the vacant Roecroft Lower School as the preferred location and the consequential potential loss of up to £2,500,000 capital receipt, be approved; and**
- 2. to grant a lease to the proposed Free School, of the existing Pupil Referral Unit accommodation at Kingsland and of the former Roecroft site, on the terms of the Department for Education's model Academy lease, if the Free School application is successful.**

E/11/159 **Exclusions of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED

that in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

E/11/160 **Implementation of the School Organisation Plan: New School places programme 2011/12 - 2016/17**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that outlined the specific project within the New School Places Programme 2012/13 – 2016/17 in south Leighton Buzzard where local pressure of demographic growth required the Executive's approval to undertake informal and statutory consultation on a proposal to expand an existing school to provide additional places.

Reason for decision: To ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations to provide sufficient school places and also meets the legal requirements placed on the Council by the Education and inspections Act 2006 regarding proposals to expand maintained schools.

RESOLVED

that the commencement of informal consultation and the publication of statutory notices be approved for the proposal to expand Greenleas Lower School, Leighton Buzzard as set out in the exempt report.

E/11/161

Award of the Housing Responsive Repairs and Void Refurbishment Contract 2012 -2019

See minute E/11/153 for details.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.50 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated