

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



please ask for Sandra Hobbs
direct line 0300 300 5257
date 22 November 2012

NOTICE OF MEETING

EXECUTIVE

Date & Time

Tuesday, 4 December 2012 at 9.30 a.m.

Venue

Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the EXECUTIVE:

Cllrs	J Jamieson	– Chairman and Leader of the Council
	M Jones	– Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
	M Versallion	– Executive Member for Children's Services
	Mrs C Hegley	– Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing
	N Young	– Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development
	B Spurr	– Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services
	Mrs P Turner MBE	– Executive Member – Economic Partnerships
	R Stay	– Executive Member – External Affairs

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 apologies for absence.

2. **Minutes**

To approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 6 November 2012.

3. **Members' Interests**

To receive from members any declarations of interest.

4. **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any matters of communication from the Chairman.

5. **Petitions**

To consider petitions received in accordance with the Scheme of Public Participation set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

6. **Public Participation**

To respond to general questions and statements from members of the public in accordance with the Scheme of Public Participation set out in Appendix A of Part A4 of the Constitution.

7. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

To receive the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013. (To follow)

Decisions

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
8.	Local Broadband Plan - Procurement and Options for Intervention	17 - 30

To approve the process for awarding contract.

9.	Consultation on Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools	31 - 46	
	To approve the commencement of consultation on proposed Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in schools which, if adopted, will form the basis for the development of commissioning options for New School Places in Central Bedfordshire.		
10.	Future of the Adult Skills and Community Learning Service	47 - 80	
	This report summarises the outcomes from a review of the Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning Service and proposes that Executive endorse the move to a commissioning based model.		
11.	Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme	81 - 94	
	The report proposes that Executive approve a Private Sector Property Accreditation scheme for Central Bedfordshire. The scheme is intended to be a cost effective initiative aimed at improving the supply of good quality privately rented accommodation.		
12.	Site Allocations Policy MA2 - Masterplan for Land at Steppingley Road and Froghall Road, Flitwick	95 - 166	
	The report proposes that Executive adopt the Masterplan as technical guidance for Development Management purposes.		
13.	Dog Warden and Kennelling Service Contract	167 - 170	
	To seek approval to retender the Dog Warden and Kennelling Contract.		
<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 10px 40px;">Monitoring Matters</td> </tr> </table>			Monitoring Matters
Monitoring Matters			
14.	Quarter 2 Revenue Report 2012/13	171 - 194	
	The report provides information on the revenue position as at Quarter 2 2012/13 and the forecast outturn position for 2012/13.		
15.	Quarter 2 Capital Report 2012/13	195 - 204	
	The report provides information on the Capital position as at Quarter 2 2012/13 and the forecast outturn position for 2012/13.		

16. **Quarter 2 Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Report 2012/13** 205 - 218

The report provides information on the Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital position as at Quarter 2 2012/13 and the forecast outturn position for 2012/13.

17. **Quarter 2 Performance Report** 219 - 242

To consider quarter 2 performance report.

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 6 November 2012.

PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)
Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Executive Members:	Cllrs	Mrs C Hegley B J Spurr R C Stay	Cllrs	Mrs P E Turner MBE M A G Versallion J N Young
Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	A L Dodwell D J Hopkin A M Turner	Cllrs	B Wells R D Wenham
Apologies for Absence:	Cllrs	A D Brown Mrs S Clark		I Dalgarno
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	P N Aldis Mrs A Barker A R Bastable R D Berry M C Blair D Bowater Cllr Mrs G Clarke P A Duckett C C Gomm	Cllrs	Mrs S A Goodchild D J Lawrence D McVicar J Murray T Nicols B Saunders A Shadbolt I Shingler Miss A Sparrow
Officers in Attendance		Mr S Andrews Mr J Atkinson Mr R Carr Ms D Clarke Mr A Fleming Mr R Fox Mrs E Grant Mrs S Hobbs Mrs J Ogley Mr D Pywell Mr C Warboys		Strategic Planning and Housing Team Leader Head of Legal and Democratic Services Chief Executive Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation) Service Director - Business Services Head of Development Planning and Housing Strategy Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services Committee Services Officer Director of Social Care, Health and Housing Regeneration Lead Chief Finance Officer

E/12/60 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/12/61 **Members' Interests**

None were declared.

E/12/62 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman advised Members that Agenda item 15 'Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2014/15' would be taken after Agenda Item 12 'Determination of Admission Arrangements to Greenleas Lower School (Sandhills) for September 2013.

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Richard Wenham and officers on the Council's success in securing the Excellence in Digital Communications Award, sponsored by the multi national company, GovDelivery. The Award was in recognition of the Council's progress in developing electronic channels to both inform and engage with local residents and businesses.

The Chairman referred to the Prime Minister's recent visit to Central Bedfordshire to discuss the Council's joint working with local organisations to reduce crime.

E/12/63 **Petitions**

In accordance with the Scheme of Public Participation set out in Annex 2 of Part 4 of the Constitution, the Executive received the following petitions:-

1. Petition to Request Central Bedfordshire Council to Arrange for the Closure of the Urban Footway between St Neots Road and Bellan Way, Sandy

Councillor Aldis presented a paper petition on behalf of residents in Sandy, containing a total of 18 signatures urging the Council to close an urban footway between St Neots Road and Bellan Way, Sandy. Councillor Aldis explained that the footway was blighting residents lives due to anti-social behaviour. He also explained that the local Police were in support of the petition.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services thanked Councillor Aldis and explained that the Council had been in contact with local residents and the Police about the anti-social behaviour in the footway. Officers had investigated the ownership of the footway.

There appeared to be no record of any public rights or liability over the south-western half of the path the Council had no legal interest in the footpath and no power to close it. The owner of the property that abutted the south-western half of the path had been advised by the Council that if no record was found than he might be entitled to close the footway. However, in doing so he would have to ensure that it did not infringe any private rights of access or easement and it could cause precipitated complaints and possibly a claim under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for a public footpath to be recorded.

2. Petition to Request Central Bedfordshire Council to Pay Sufficient Compensation to the Shopkeepers in Dunstable who have Suffered due to the Road Works in Kingsway, Court Drive and Queensway

Mr Bloye presented a paper petition on behalf of the shopkeepers in Dunstable, containing a total of 24 signatures, requesting compensation for the shopkeepers whose trade and profit had been affected adversely by the road works in Dunstable.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development thanked Mr Bloye for presenting the petition. The Executive Member explained that a one way system had been introduced whilst road works were taking place to enable them to be completed faster, thereby causing less disruption. He also explained that Mr Selous MP, local councillors, officers and Amey had met with shopkeepers in the area to discuss measures to reduce the impact of the works. As a result, extra signage and publicity had been arranged. Also, a lay-by had been installed opposite Mr Bloye’s business replacing the double yellow lines that had been in place previously.

E/12/64

Public Participation

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

1. Mr M Stonnell

Mr Stonnell spoke to Agenda item 9 ‘Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire’. Mr Stonnell enquired about the funding of the proposed Luton North bypass and the sequencing of new housing and infrastructure. He also asked a question about the response to the consultation and the line of the Luton North bypass appearing to be passing through the urban extension rather than the outer edge creating noise for surrounding homes and problems associated with the separation of the proposed community.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development explained that the Luton North Consortium had agreed to fund the A6-M1 link road from Sundon Park Road to the A6. The road would be a wide single carriageway with the provision to upgrade it to a dual carriageway if further investment was received from the Highways Agency. It was anticipated that the first part of the development would be a rail freight interchange. The proposed recommended route for the bypass would be available in the near future.

E/12/65 **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 December 2012 to 30 November 2013 be noted.

E/12/66 **Capital Programme Review**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that outlined adjustments to the General Fund Capital Programme for 2012/13 onwards following the completion of a review. The revenue implications of the proposals resulting from the review, together with the proposed inclusion in the Programme of the Woodside Link and Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling project were outlined in the report. Proposals were made to progress the development of a Capital Programme for inclusion within the Medium Term Financial Plan 2013 – 2017.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources moved an additional recommendation, which was duly seconded:-

“note that the Council remains committed to regeneration of the Quadrant and will consider any investment proposal in that context.”

Reason for decision: To progress the development of a Capital Programme for the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan 2013 – 2017 and revise capital budgets for 2012/13.

RECOMMENDED to Council

- 1. that the changes to the Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2015/16, as outlined in the report at paragraphs 33 to 37, tables 3 and 4, be approved;***
- 2. to include in the Capital Programme a maximum of £35m to support the Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling (BeaR) Project from 2013/14 to 2015/16 as outlined in the exempt Appendix B to the report. It is anticipated this would be funded by Prudential Borrowing, with its associated revenue implications as set out in the report;***

3. ***that the estimated receipts for the periods 2016/17 and 2017/18, be earmarked to repay any Prudential Borrowing undertaken in respect of the BeaR project; and***
4. ***that the Woodside Link scheme be included in the Capital Programme from 2012/13 to 2017/18 with the consequential impact for Prudential Borrowing and associated revenue implications as set out in the report, whilst noting that officers continue working to confirm the extent of external contributions to the scheme.***

RESOLVED

1. **that the forecast for capital receipts at paragraphs 48 to 50 and table 7 in the report be noted;**
2. **that Officers prepare a full Capital Programme for the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan (2013-2017) as part of the budget setting process in February 2013; and**
3. **that the Council remains committed to regeneration of the Quadrant and will consider any investment proposal in that context.**

E/12/67

Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that presented the draft Pre-Submission version of the Development Strategy. The Development Strategy was an overarching planning policy document that set out the overall approach to new development in Central Bedfordshire for the period to 2031, including new homes, jobs and infrastructure and detailed policies to guide decisions on planning applications.

Members noted the comments from the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Nicols' comments and the response to these comments from the Executive Member.

The Executive Member moved revised recommendations, which was duly seconded:-

- “1. That the draft Pre-Submission Development Strategy, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved for the purposes of Publication and Submission to the Secretary of State.
2. To delegate authority to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development, to make any minor amendments to the Development Strategy, including any saved policies from the adopted North Core Strategy:
 - (i) prior to Publication;
 - (ii) after Publication but before Submission; and
 - (iii) during the Examination Process.”

The Executive Member responded to questions from Non-Executive and Executive Members about the M1-A6 link road, the density of the housing, the requirement for 30% of all qualifying sites to provide affordable housing and the need to provide appropriate accommodation for older people. A Task Force was currently compiling the Housing Strategy and once this document had been approved it would become a supplementary planning document.

Reason for decision: To enable progress on the draft Development Strategy prior to its formal submission to the Secretary of State in May 2013 and during the Examination period.

RECOMMENDED to Council

- 1. that the draft Pre-Submission Development Strategy, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved for the purposes of Publication and Submission to the Secretary of State; and**
- 2. to delegate authority to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development, to make any minor amendments to the Development Strategy, including any saved policies from the adopted North Core Strategy:**
 - (i) prior to Publication;**
 - (ii) after Publication but before Submission; and**
 - (iii) during the Examination Process.**

E/12/68

Commissioning for Outcomes : Development of a Framework Agreement for Domiciliary Care

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing about the retendering of the current domiciliary care block contracts and the proposed contractual arrangements to be adopted.

Members welcomed the proposed strategic approach to the future commissioning of domiciliary care services as this would provide access to the widest choice of service from high quality providers and support the shift to care based on more personal and flexible arrangements. In response to a question about customers using this service as way of receiving social interaction, the Executive Member acknowledged this concern which was not the purpose of the services provided and confirmed other approaches to tackling the issue of loneliness were being developed.

Reason for decision: A Framework Agreement would enable the Council to shape the domiciliary care market, and give value for money, by commissioning services from a number of high quality domiciliary care providers who were able to meet customer's personalised outcomes, whether customers were publicly or privately funded.

RESOLVED

that the establishment of a Framework Agreement to replace current block and spot contracting arrangements for domiciliary care providers be approved.

E/12/69

Commissioning for Outcomes: Approach to Standards and Quality of Dementia Care, Fee Levels for Care Homes, and Planned Withdrawal from Existing Block Contract Arrangements

The Executive received a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that presented an overview of the work planned to secure good quality care for some of the Council's most vulnerable residents. The report contained proposals which were designed to ensure that the social care market was able to meet current care needs and the demands of the future.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to deliver services to vulnerable and frail people that shifts the balance of care to more personal and flexible arrangements.

RESOLVED

1. **that the establishment of a dementia quality accreditation scheme from January 2013 be approved;**
2. **that the introduction of an incentive scheme for all dementia related residential care home payments from January 2013 be approved;**
3. **to authorise the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing to undertake a procurement exercise, in consultation with the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing, to establish a Framework Agreement for engaging with providers of care homes in the future;**
4. **that the establishment of a quality system for informing general residential and nursing care home fee levels from 2013/14 be approved;**
5. **that the proposals in respect of the Central Bedfordshire Council Procurement Procedure Rules as set out in exempt Appendix C to the report be approved;**
6. **that the proposed arrangements for the current contract as described in exempt Appendix C to the report be approved; and**
7. **that the granting of new leases as described in exempt Appendix C to the report be approved.**

E/12/70

Determination of admission arrangements to Greenleas Lower School (Sandhills) for September 2013

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that set out the proposed admissions 'over subscription' criteria for Greenleas Lower School (Sandhills), in the context of the previously approved statutory proposals to expand the school onto a second site.

Reason for decision: To determine the admission criteria for Greenleas Lower School (Sandhills), Leighton Buzzard.

RESOLVED

1. **that the procedures established by The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended by The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2009 be noted, which the bringing forward of the proposals outlined in the report has complied with;**
2. **that the statutory notice and the proposed admissions arrangements as set out in Appendix A to the report, issued on 11 June 2012 under Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 for Greenleas Lower School be noted; and**
3. **that the recommended admission criteria as set out in the report, for September 2013, be approved.**

E/12/71

Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2014/15

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that sought approval to commence consultation on Admission Arrangements for 2014/15, specifically the Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme and admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. Members noted the proposal to remove the catchment areas for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and to move to an open admissions policy.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services advised Members that the Council would only pay travel expenses to the nearest available school and therefore if Academies take children from other areas, the Academies should make this clear to the parents.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations to consult on admission arrangements.

RESOLVED

1. **that the situation regarding Greenleas School referred to in agenda item 12 be noted;**

2. that the commencement of consultation for Central Bedfordshire's co-ordinated admissions scheme as set out in the report be approved;
3. that the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the academic year 2014/15 be approved; and
4. that the commencement of the consultation for Central Bedfordshire's admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the academic year 2014/15 be approved.

E/12/72

Food Waste Disposal & Collection Contracts

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities that sought approval to retender the two contracts, the Food Waste Disposal Contract and the Food Waste Collection Contract, that were operating in the north of Central Bedfordshire.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the disposal and collection of food waste can continue in the interim period prior to the implementation of the Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling (BEaR) waste management solution and the subsequent procurement of contracts for the collection of all household waste.

RESOLVED

1. that the procurement of the following two waste management contracts be approved in accordance with the Council's Code of Procurement Governance:
 - (a) the disposal of Food Waste;
 - (b) the Collection of Food Waste; and
2. to delegate the award of the two contracts to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Executive Member of Sustainable Communities Services, subject to successful procurement processes.

E/12/73

Assets Disposals List

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that recommended that the properties set out in the exempt Appendix A be disposed of to achieve the best value for money and to realise capital receipts as soon as possible. The estimated value of the properties on the disposal list were based on the current economic climate.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources moved the following revised recommendations, which was duly seconded:-

- “1. that the disposal of the properties included in the Assets Disposal List, as shown in the exempt Appendix A to the report be approved, and the Service Director, Business Services, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, be authorised to approve the terms of disposal provided that the sale price does not fall below the estimated value of the property shown in Appendix A by more than £250,000 or 10% of the estimated value whichever amount is greater; and
2. that the transfer, subject to individual business cases, of suitable residential properties to the Housing Revenue Account.”

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources confirmed that relevant ward Members would be consulted before any decision was taken on any property.

Reason for decision: So that completion of the disposals could be effected sooner and more efficiently and to avoid having to come back to the Executive every time a sale was likely to exceed £500,000. This would also allow the early use of suitable residential property by the Housing Revenue, where appropriate.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the disposal of the properties included in the Assets Disposal List, as shown in the exempt Appendix A to the report be approved, and the Service Director, Business Services, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, be authorised to approve the terms of disposal provided that the sale price does not fall below the estimated value of the property shown in Appendix A by more than £250,000 or 10% of the estimated value whichever amount is greater; and**
- 2. that the transfer, subject to individual business cases, of suitable residential properties to the Housing Revenue Account.**

E/12/74

Exclusion 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/12/75 **Former Barton Training Centre (Orchard School), Higham Road, Barton-Le-Clay**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that sought consent to dispose of the former Barton Training Centre (Orchard School), Higham Road, Barton-Le-Clay. This property had previously been used by the former Bedfordshire County Council as a Training Centre, but leased to Orchard Independent School since November 2001.

Reason for decision: To dispose of a surplus property to enable the school to invest and expand.

RESOLVED

that the sale be approved of the unencumbered freehold of the property, at a sale price as set out in the report, to be received upon completion of the transfer documentation.

E/12/76 **Capital Programme Review**

See minute E/12/66 for details.

E/12/77 **Commissioning for Outcomes: Approach to Standards and Quality of Dementia Care, Fee Levels for Care Homes, and Planned Withdrawal from Existing Block Contract Arrangements**

See minute E/12/69 for details.

E/12/78 **Assets Disposals List**

See minute E/12/73 for details.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.30 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 4 December 2012
Subject: Local Broadband Plan – Procurement and Options for Intervention
Report of: Councillor Nigel Young, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development

Summary: The report proposes that the Executive approves the use of the Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) framework to select a broadband infrastructure provider to deliver against the goals of the Joint Local Broadband Plan and agrees that the primary assessment criterion for selecting a broadband provider is the maximisation of superfast (speeds of at least 24 megabits per second) and basic (speeds of at least 2 megabits per second) broadband coverage in Central Bedfordshire.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Liz Wade, Assistant Director, Economic Growth, Skills & Regeneration and James Cushing Economic Policy Manager
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The delivery of the Local Broadband Plan directly addresses the Council priority of Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport, in particular the targets to:

- Achieve 90% access to superfast broadband by 2015/16
- Achieve 100% access to at least 2MB broadband by 2015/16

Implementing the Broadband Plan will also contribute to a range of wider Council objectives including Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – particularly creating jobs and enabling businesses to grow providing, delivering great services and value for money, through supporting the accessing of services online and on demand.

Financial:

1. The Council has approved £1 million in the capital programme of match funding towards the delivery of superfast broadband. In addition to this we have secured £200,000 from Central Bedfordshire Together and have been allocated £620,000 of Central Government funding towards implementation of the Local Broadband Plan. It is expected that this total public sector funding (£1.82 million) will be at least matched by the private sector.
2. The Council is acting as lead accountable body for the wider Local Broadband Partnership (including Bedford and Milton Keynes Councils). As such the total value of public sector funding including Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) funds for the project is £5.24 Million. This figure would be expected to be matched by the private sector.
3. The Council's Constitution requires the Executive to approve expenditure over £500,000 before commencing any procurement.
4. Any costs for the potential contract manager would be met through reserves, though opportunities to capitalise this cost will be sought. The costs of any post would be met between the three partner authorities.

Legal:

5. The Council can undertake activities to promote or improve the economic well-being of its area under Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. There are no statutory requirements for the Council to undertake improved broadband works. The Council will be able to secure a private sector partner and undertake delivery activities utilising a national BDUK State Aid notification and a procurement framework which is compliant with European Union (EU) requirements. Council legal, financial and procurement rules will also be adhered to throughout delivery of the plan.
6. A binding collaboration agreement between the Council, Bedford Borough and Milton Keynes Councils has been developed to ensure that funding is directed according to each local authority's requirements and in line with BDUK contractual requirements, ensuring a proportionate bearing of risk.

Risk Management:

7. BDUK has indicated that they require partnerships of Local Authorities to be formed to secure their funding and maximise the likelihood of private sector engagement. There is a risk in partnership working in delivery, though the development of a binding collaboration agreement and the development of a Joint Broadband Programme Board mitigates against this risk.
8. There will be a number of procurement and state aid risks associated with the project. The use of the BDUK procurement and state aid frameworks and the use of specialist consultancy services will mitigate against these risks.

9. A significant risk to the project is the reliance on the private sector supplier to match any public funding. The risk is that the more complicated the scheme, the less likely the supplier will be willing to invest in it given the number of local authority projects in competition and the limited capacity of the suppliers to respond. This risk will be mitigated by seeking to minimise to the complexity of our project for example, by minimising local priorities and continuing to build strong relationships with both providers within the BDUK framework.
10. There will be a number of risks associated with delivering the plan, in terms of securing a private sector partner and delivery risks. These will be mitigated through the use of the BDUK frameworks and early market engagement and also putting in place dedicated project management resource and processes for delivery.
11. A project management process including a Risk log for the project has been put in place.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

12. Existing staffing resources are being utilised to manage the procurement phase of the project. There maybe a need for a dedicated contract manager following any award of contract.

Equalities/Human Rights:

13. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and to foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
14. In developing the Local Broadband Plan consideration of the need to improve access for all has been a core principle. Analysis of options for intervention, while meeting state aid guidelines, has mapped access to areas of deprivation and found very little correlations. Likewise through the deployment process the Council will work with suppliers to ensure that broadband services are available to the maximum number of people and that access is not discriminated against in anyway.

Public Health:

15. Not Applicable.

Community Safety:

16. Not Applicable.

Sustainability:

17. Delivery of the Local Broadband Plan will positively impact on a number of sustainability considerations, including reducing the need to travel (by increasing access to online services and opportunities for home working) and resulting emission reductions. Further to this, the provision of superfast broadband will also support the delivery of jobs growth aspirations for the area, by supporting growth in existing businesses productivity, ensuring the area remains attractive to new inward investment and supporting new business to start up, through taking advantage of new technologies and market opportunities.

Procurement:

18. It is proposed to utilise a national BDUK procurement framework (which has recently been completed through an Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) procurement process. BT and Fujitsu are the companies on the framework and a mini competition process will be used to call off one of these to deliver infrastructure locally.

Overview and Scrutiny:

19. This matter has not been considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **approve the procurement of a broadband infrastructure provider, utilising the BDUK procurement framework to meet the 90% superfast (speeds of at least 24 megabits per second) and basic (at least 2 megabits per second) coverage targets, such that the necessary broadband infrastructure is in place so that Central Bedfordshire remains a competitive and attractive location to current and new investors and residents;**
2. **approve the local priority within the procurement process, to maximise total coverage in Central Bedfordshire, subject to achieving a 90% business premises coverage and achieving a reasonable geographic spread, taking into account local demand, demonstrated through responses to the Broadband survey and response to consultation; and**
3. **to delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development, to select the contractor based on any priorities the Council sets and the successful completion of the BDUK procurement process and sign and vary the contract if additional resources are secured during the lifetime of the contract.**

<i>Reason for Recommendations:</i>	<i>To secure external resources and put in place the necessary infrastructure at the earliest opportunity 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 in line with the Joint Local Broadband Plan.</i>
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Executive Summary

20. Central Bedfordshire Council is the accountable body for a Joint Broadband Partnership (along with Milton Keynes and Bedford Borough Councils), whose aim is to deliver the approved Joint Local Broadband Plan vision of increasing access to superfast broadband services and ensuring access to basic services for all.
21. The partnership proposes to utilise a procurement framework developed by BDUK to select a private sector partner to invest in the area and delivery the necessary broadband infrastructure.
22. An executive delegation to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development, is sought to select the contractor and vary the contract if additional resources are secured during the lifetime of the contract.
23. The Council has a limited ability to set additional local priorities within the use of the BDUK framework. It is proposed to assess private sector bids against the criteria of maximising both superfast (speeds of at least 24 megabits per second) and basic (at least 2 megabits per second) broadband coverage across Central Bedfordshire (in terms of residential and business premises covered), achieving a 90% business premises coverage and achieving a reasonable geographic spread of coverage, taking into account local demand. Setting additional priorities over the maximisation of coverage, may increase the risk of not securing a private sector bidder and necessary investment.

Background Information

24. The rollout of superfast broadband is a priority in the Council's Medium Term Plan, such that the necessary infrastructure is in place, to ensure that the area remains competitive and attractive to current and new investors and residents. The Council's Local Broadband Plan) supports the rollout of superfast broadband across the Central Bedfordshire area in the period up to 2015.
25. The Local Broadband Plan has two key objectives:
 - that 90% of premises in our area are able to access superfast broadband speeds of at least 24 megabits per second (mgbps); and
 - that the remaining 10% in the more hard to reach areas are able to access a minimum 'universal' broadband service of at least 2 mgbps

The Joint Local Broadband Plan was endorsed by full Council at its meeting on 14 February 2012.

26. In line with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), the government agency for broadband delivery, the Council has formed a partnership with Milton Keynes Council and Bedford Borough Council to progress through a joint BDUK procurement process to select a private sector provider to install the necessary infrastructure. BDUK have approved a joint Broadband Plan (based on the CBC Local broadband Plan) for the partnership. This restates CBC's objectives, but also states that:
- 90% of Bedford premises will have access to superfast broadband by 2015; and
 - 95% of Milton Keynes premises will have access to superfast broadband by 2015 (due to a higher level of funding from Milton Keynes Council being available).
27. In line with the Joint Local Broadband Plan the Council is acting as the accountable body for the project. A Joint Broadband Programme Project Board has been established by the three authorities consisting of the responsible member for broadband (Cllr Richard Wenham), nominated officers and BDUK. The Board is responsible for the delivery of the Joint Local Broadband Plan in line with the necessary approvals process with the individual local authorities.

Current Picture and Proposed Levels of Intervention

28. As part of the Local Broadband Plan, a technical appraisal of the current and anticipated broadband coverage provided by the market by 2015 has been carried out. This shows that within Central Bedfordshire 46.9% of all residential and business premises currently or will have access to superfast broadband from multiple broadband suppliers such as BT and Virgin by 2015, with 26.9% of premises able to access superfast broadband services from only one provider, so will have no market choice. The remaining 26.2% (amounting to 29,259 premises) will not have any direct access to superfast broadband. These premises (categorised as white area premises) are the only locations where public resources can be invested, in order to comply with state aid guidelines.
29. Based on the level of public funding subsidy available and the most likely level of private sector investment the minimum intervention expected from delivery of the Local Broadband Plan has been set at 90% of all premises using a Fibre To The Cabinet technical solution. This will ensure at least 18,122 premises will receive access to superfast broadband as a direct result of this project.
30. In addition to the procurement process of the Local Broadband Plan, the Council has been working closely with existing broadband infrastructure providers to maximise their current rollout plans. Since February our close working with the private sector has encouraged them to accelerate their rollout plans. As such BT has already upgraded exchanges in Biggleswade, Leighton Buzzard, Sandy, Dunstable and Stotfold, and have recently announced the upgrade of the Woburn Sands, Whipsnade and Shefford exchanges. These recent announcements may have the impact of reducing the level of white area premises in the area.

31. Furthermore, the Council has included a policy in the draft Development Strategy to require all new developments over 25 premises to have superfast broadband infrastructure. This aims to minimise the creation of any new white areas in Central Bedfordshire. Likewise a demand stimulation plan is being developed. This aims to set increase awareness of the benefits of superfast broadband to maximise take up of services by both business and residents.

Procurement Process

32. The broadband partnership proposes to utilise the national BDUK procurement framework to select a private sector. BDUK have now completed a competitive tender process and BT and Fujitsu are the only providers on the framework. Under the framework the Councils will undertake a mini competition to select a private sector provider from the two providers, who do not have to bid to our tender. The process for this is highly prescriptive from BDUK, with a standard contract also developed by BDUK to ensure that state aid requirements are met, relating largely to technical standards, service performance and payment claw back aspects, to ensure that the providers are given no more than the minimum subsidy necessary. The Councils will have some ability to add in local priorities and requirements over and above the BDUK conditions.
33. The partnership has been allocated Slot 28 (of 31) to enter into the BDUK procurement process. This would mean starting procurement activities in April 2013, which would mean awarding the contract in August 2013, which may put at risk completion by 2015 in accordance with the Medium Term Plan. These slots are based on industry capacity to respond to tenders, but the previous Secretary of State recently stated a desire for all projects to be contracted by the summer of 2013, so timescales may change again. The original joint Local Broadband Plan set out a timeline for procurement such that procurement activity could begin in early 2013, with a view to award of contract in April. The current approach of the partnership is to continue to engage with BDUK to ensure that we are able to meet their check point requirements and be ready to procure at the earliest opportunity, currently estimated to be June 2013.
34. BDUK requires a lead authority in a partnership and has nominated Central Bedfordshire Council, due to it being the largest recipient of BDUK funding. As the nominated accountable body for the joint project, the Council is leading the partnership in developing an Invitation to tender under the BDUK framework. Consultants have been procured (with the costs split three ways between the LA partners) to support the development and meet BDUK approval processes. Likewise, a legally binding collaboration agreement between the authorities has been developed to ensure that the risk, costs and liabilities of the broadband project are equally shared. This must be signed and agreed by all authorities prior to any procurement activity. A key element of the collaboration agreement is that cross subsidy of activity between local areas within the partnership is not allowed and that local authority funding must be spent on activity within that authority.

35. BDUK are leading on developing a national state aid notification and developing a competency centre which would then be able to grant LA's approval to fund broadband investment under this national approval. BDUK has originally stated this would be in place by April 2012, however this has been delayed. Discussions between BDUK and the EU commission are ongoing and BDUK have stated that they are confident the state aid notification will be in place in November 2012.
36. It is recommended that the Council utilises the BDUK frameworks. Not using the BDUK procurement and state aid frameworks may result in the following risks/ costs:
1. Further delays in achieving BDUK funding approvals
 2. Possible loss of BDUK funding of £620,000
 3. State aid risks of non compliance
 4. Increased costs of undertaking OJEU and state aid notification processes
 5. Comparatively small size of contract may not secure private sector interest through OJEU
 6. Risk to the broadband partnership.

Prioritising Intervention

37. Under the BDUK framework various processes need to be undertaken to confirm areas eligible for intervention. Analysis to date is based on initial modelling and we are required to produce a final intervention area map- based on an Open Market review process, whereby telecommunications providers are formally contacted regarding their plans for the area. We will be able to invest anywhere in this final intervention area but initial modelling shows that approximately 90% coverage would be achievable under available funding. We will not know the exact areas to be covered until we receive a response from the private sector bidders through BDUK framework mini competition.
38. In line with the ability to add local priorities as additional selection criteria to the core BDUK framework for the two providers to bid against, a number of possible suggestions are considered below. These options would be additional to the minimum 90% target of all premises, which requires the full level of public intervention to achieve and may incur additional costs. Likewise, a known risk to the project is the finite capacity of BDUK framework suppliers to meet competing demands from local authority broadband projects. The risk is that increasing the complexity of projects through additional priorities may deter them from choosing to invest in the area. The suggested options are further detailed in Appendix A and include:
1. Maximising total coverage (No additional priorities)
 2. Maximising rollout to business premises
 3. Targeting large employment zones
 4. Maximising geographical spread
 5. Matching local demand
 6. Targeting areas of deprivation
 7. Adding other local requirements such as carrying out additional promotional activity.

39. Based on the options analysis set out in Annex A, it is recommended that the optimum local priority is the maximisation of total coverage, including achieving a 90% coverage rate of business premises and ensuring a reasonable spread of geographic coverage across Central Bedfordshire, taking into account local demand through responses to the Broadband survey and response to consultation. This is based on the supporting the maximum number of residents and businesses in Central Bedfordshire, fit with the Medium Term Plan priorities and balancing the risk of increased perceived complexity of the project and risk that the private sector may choose not to bid for and invest in the area. These priorities will be tested through the BDUK bidder engagement process, to ensure the optimum procurement outcome for Central Bedfordshire.
40. As part of the BDUK state aid process, the Council will also consult on its finalised intervention areas and any local priorities. BDUK requirements state that this must be open for one month and can only be done one month prior to the launch of any invitation to tender. This consultation process will be undertaken jointly by the partner authorities.

Conclusion and Next Steps

41. The Council are currently working with BDUK on early entry to the procurement process. We aim to issue a mini tender through the BDUK framework in April 2013 and hope to have a selected provider in place by June 2013. Every effort is being made to ensure that delivery of infrastructure can begin at the earliest opportunity and any opportunities to reduce the current timetable are being investigated, subject to the various approval processes of BDUK.
42. The current project plan highlights the key next steps in the project.

November	Completed BDUK initial approval process
December	Initial provider engagement (BT and Fujitsu)
	Undertake Open Market review
January	Undertake state aid public consultation and analyse responses to inform tender process
April	Issue Invitation to Tender
June	Finalise and award contract
	Begin roll out of contract

Appendices:

Appendix A – Options Analysis

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Joint Local Broadband Plan:

http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/Joint%20Local%20Broadband%20Plan%20Web%20Version_tcm6-34264.pdf#False

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Appendix A: Prioritisation Options

Option	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Maximising superfast and basic broadband coverage (No additional priorities)	The Council does not set any geographic or user priorities, but sets the priority for suppliers to provide the highest overall coverage of superfast and basic services i.e. levels higher than 90%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher levels of total coverage • BDUK and the private sector have indicated that they favour procurements that do not have additional local priorities. As such the project stands a higher chance of BDUK approval and is more likely to secure private sector investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less ability to target intervention meaning those areas that are hardest to achieve may not be supported. • Rollout may not match those areas that have been most active in demanding new superfast broadband services, so a possible reputational risk.
Maximising rollout to business premises	A target to ensure that at least 90% of all business premises are covered This would roughly equate to an additional 80 business premises supported Current analysis indicates that some 12% (500 premises) of business premises in Central Bedfordshire would not receive NGA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong fit with the Medium Term Plan priority of Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow • Supports the Councils jobs growth targets of 27,000 additional jobs by 2031. • Addresses Business Survey findings that 31% of businesses have their business performance restricted by broadband provision and speed • Likely to support a number of Small and Medium Enterprises to access superfast services and support business growth and resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting business premises is likely to be more costly and so reduce the ability to meet the 90% target. • The introduction of targets may reduce the ability of the plan to be approved by BDUK • The introduction of targets may increase the perceived complexity of the project and reduce the likelihood of the private sector bidding for the project and so securing necessary investment. • Likely to result in a lower total coverage and so potentially reduce the benefits of the project.

<p>Targeting large employment zones</p>	<p>Current analysis shows that parts of some major employment zones, including Cranfield, Woodside and Stratton Business Parks may not be covered. Therefore, this option seeks to ensure that the area's major business locations are covered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong fit with the Medium Term Plan priority of Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow • Supports the Councils jobs growth targets of 27,000 additional jobs by 2031. • Addresses the Business Survey findings that 31% of businesses have their business performance restricted by current broadband provision and speed and that a lack of broadband services is a barrier to future growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business parks/ large premises may already be served through alternative providers or individual lease lines from Virgin and BT. As such this may result in duplicated provision. • Targeting business premises is likely to be more costly and so reduce the ability to meet the 90% target, and so potentially reduce overall benefits of the project. • The introduction of targets may reduce the ability of the plan to be approved by BDUK • The introduction of targets may increase the perceived complexity of the project and reduce the likelihood of the private sector bidding for the project and so securing necessary investment.
<p>Maximising geographical spread</p>	<p>Seek to ensure a more even geographical split within Central Bedfordshire, this would be achieved through seeking suppliers to ensure that the maximum number of settlements were supported as opposed to premises.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that the benefits are most equally spread across Central Bedfordshire. • May support more rural areas of central Bedfordshire that maybe less likely to be covered under a market based rollout. • Minimises reputational risk of non delivery in any one area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to result in a lower total coverage due to higher cost areas being targeted, and so potentially reduce overall benefits of the project. • The introduction of targets may reduce the ability of the plan to be approved by BDUK • The introduction of targets may increase the perceived complexity of the project and reduce the likelihood of the private sector bidding for the project and so securing necessary investment.

Match local demand	Target investment to areas with the most demand for improved services, through utilising the findings of the demand survey the Council has been running.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Alignment with recorded interest, so maximising the likelihood of take up of services. This in turn may increase the attractiveness of the project to the private sector. • Minimises reputational risk of delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those areas that have recorded highest demand may not match those in most need of services. • Likely to result in a lower total rollout due to higher cost areas being targeted. and potential reduce benefits of the project • The introduction of targets may reduce the ability of the plan to be approved by BDUK • The introduction of targets may increase the perceived complexity of the project and reduce the likelihood of the private sector bidding for the project and so securing necessary investment.
Target areas of deprivation	Target areas of highest deprivation within Central Bedfordshire to support those communities in most need of support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets resources at those who are at the highest risk of deprivation and may benefit for support the most. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective targeting of resources due to the very low level of correlation of the number of white area premises compared to the level of deprivation of an area (measured using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation). • May not be eligible for public sector intervention due to state aid requirements.
Other requirements	Require other activities such as demand stimulation activities, including marketing campaigns, training programs and technology demonstration projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilises private sector resources to promote demand for broadband services which will help to increase take up and make areas more commercially attractive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional requirements will increase the cost and complexity of the project which may increase the risk of not securing a private sector provider. • Likely to result in a lower total coverage and so potentially reduce the benefits of the project

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Meeting: Executive

Date: 4 December 2012

Subject: Consultation on Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools

Report of: Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services

Summary: To approve the commencement of consultation on proposed Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in schools which, if adopted, will form the basis for the development of commissioning options for New School Places in Central Bedfordshire. If the consultation exercise is approved, the outcome will be reported to Executive on the 5 February 2013.

Advising Officer: Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Pete Dudley, Assistant Director for Learning, Commissioning and Partnerships

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Executive

Key Decision: Yes

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The report supports Central Bedfordshire's Medium Term Plan: Delivering your priorities – Our Plan for Central Bedfordshire 2012-2016 and the specific priority of Improved Educational Attainment.

Financial:

1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The annual review of the Council's New School Places Programme, reported to Executive in February of each year, outlines the financial implications of the next five years of the rolling programme and of specific options for commissioning new school places.

Legal:

2. The Council has statutory responsibilities in respect of education provision for Early Years, compulsory school age children, post 16 and for pupils who have special educational needs.

3. Section 6 of the 2006 Childcare Act gives local authorities a duty to secure the provision of early education and childcare to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare.
4. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on Councils to secure sufficient and suitable school places to provide for 5 – 16 year old statutory aged children in its area. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Councils a strategic role as commissioners, but not providers, of school places to promote parental choice, diversity, high standards, the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and fair access to educational opportunity.
5. The Education Act 2011 has created a presumption that all new schools will be academies or free schools.
6. Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Council acting as the Local Authority to provide full time education for pupils not in education by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise and which is appropriate to individual pupil needs. This duty is discharged through the Pupil Referral Unit and the Alternative Provision Free School.
7. The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 requires Local Authorities as strategic commissioners of 16-19 education and training to ensure suitable and sufficient opportunities are accessible to all young people of that age and those aged 19-24 who have a learning difficulty. This is further emphasised by the new duty on all young people to participate in education or training until their 18th birthday, from September 2015.
8. There is a range of legislation that establishes duties for the Council acting as the Local Authority in relation to provision for children and young people with special educational needs in schools, academies and pre school settings. The duties also include the requirement to ensure that children and young people with disabilities are not unfairly discriminated against.
9. In discharging each of its duties, the Council must comply with legislation, regulation and also have regard to statutory guidance. However, the commissioning of new provision also provides the Council acting as the Local Authority with options and flexibility to enable it to adopt local planning principles and ensure transparency in its role of strategic commissioner.

Risk Management:

10. The need to commission new provision through the Council's New School Places Programme implements the identified need in the previously published early years sufficiency assessment and in the school organisation plan and mitigates the risk on the Council of failing in its statutory duty to provide sufficient early years and school places. Key risks include:
 - Failure to discharge legal and statutory duties/guidance.
 - Failure to deliver the Council's strategic priorities.
 - Reputational risks associated with the non delivery of required school places.
 - Financial risks, including non realisation of anticipated Section 106 monies and anticipated levels of government grant.
 - Risks of equity and equality in terms of access to school places.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

11. Staff and Trades Unions are consultees on any proposals to expand schools or Academies, as part of the initial consultation and statutory process required by regulations.

Equalities/Human Rights:

12. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to foster good relations in respect of the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. All new schools will be reminded of their duties under the Equality Act 2010.
13. This statutory duty includes requirements to:
- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
 - Encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
14. The consultation and decision making process set out in regulation for proposals to expand Council maintained schools requires an evaluation on a project by project basis of any equalities and human rights issues that might arise. This applies not only where the Council is the decision maker for proposals, but where it is strategic commissioner of all new provision. The recommendations include an annual assessment of equalities impacts arising out of the application of these proposals.

Public Health:

15. Services around school and early years settings will be further developed as a result of the growing early years and school population.
16. The range of extended services that may be provided in schools includes:
- Parenting and family support officers.
 - Transition support for pupils, schools and families.
 - Combined clubs and after school activities.
 - Holiday activities.
 - Support for vulnerable pupils and families i.e. siblings group and young carers.

Community Safety:

17. Whilst schools have an important role in working alongside a range of other agencies to ensure safety in their local communities, the expansion of schools and the creation of new Academies does have the potential to increase community safety issues around the school locations. Inconsiderate parking, low level anti social behaviour, noise, litter etc.
18. These are issues that can, in some instances, have a significant impact on residents living in the school vicinity and place additional demand upon the services responsible for dealing with them. To meet its statutory duty in relation to crime and disorder, the Council will work with schools and the promoters of new Academies to ensure that community safety issues are considered and appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate any risks with regard to community safety issues in these areas.

Sustainability:

19. Whilst there may be additional costs in order to meet sustainability objectives for new build and/or expansion of existing schools, these will be contained within the costs identified in the Council's New School Places Programme. These measures will contribute to reduced running costs through better energy and resource efficiency, and therefore limit the Carbon Reduction Commitment burden on the Council and the school, alongside creating a better learning environment for the pupils.

Procurement:

20. Where capital projects for new school places are commissioned through new or existing Academies the Council will seek suitable safeguards and assurances, as outlined in this report, for project management and construction procurement, following the Council's finance and procurement rules.

Overview and Scrutiny:

21. If approved by the Executive, a report on the New School Places Refresh will be considered by Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny on 15 January 2013, with all responses to this consultation exercise and a comment from Scrutiny reported back to Executive on 5 February 2013.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **approve the commencement of consultation on proposed Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in schools which, if adopted, will form the basis for the development of commissioning options for New School Places in Central Bedfordshire; and**
2. **note that the proposals include an annual evaluation of the impact of the proposals by the Director of Children's Services/Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services along with an annual equalities assessment to provide an assurance that there are no unintended consequences of the application of the principles via scoring that would prejudice equality of access to a range of school places.**

Reason for Recommendations: *To enable the commencement of consultation.*

Executive Summary

22. The report sets out the legal framework and constraints that Local Authorities as Strategic Commissioners of New School Places must comply with. It also reflects the National policy context in place at the time of writing. It outlines nine key principles on which the Council is consulting which it considers are critical in considering school organisation proposals and in achieving the Council's Education Vision and key strategic priorities.
23. The report seeks the approval of the Council's Executive to consult on the range of local policy principles that will help to guide the development of commissioning options for new school places. The outcome of this consultation exercise will be reported to the Council's Executive on 5 February 2013 and if adopted, will be applied to all future commissions for new school places, each of which will be evaluated against grading criteria and be the subject of subsequent reports to Executive as and when decisions are required.

Introduction

24. As outlined in the report to the Council's Executive on 27 March 2012, the Council has approved a programme of capital investment in new school places to meet the challenges of demographic growth in Central Bedfordshire. In terms of new housing alone the area will see an estimated average of 2,100 new homes expected to be built each year for the next five years, contributing to the corresponding anticipated rise of approximately 6,000 additional pupils over that period.
25. The Council acting as the Local Authority must plan for and secure sufficient school places for their area in line with their duties under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996. New school places required as a result of demographic demand are commissioned by the Council acting as the Local Authority through investment and expansion of existing maintained schools and Academies or by the establishment of new provision.

26. In doing so the Council must have regard to statutory guidance for prescribed alterations to its mainstream schools and guidance on enlarging maintained schools, as it is the decision maker in these instances.
27. Proposals to enlarge or to alter in any way the capacity or organisational structure of an existing Academy must be supported by the Academy's board of trustees, its funding body the Education Funding Agency and the Department for Education. The Council is not the decision maker in proposals relating to Academies. Formal Department for Education (DfE) procedural guidance has not yet been published on implementing proposals of this nature.
28. In establishing a new school, the Council must have regard to DfE guidance and the presumption that it will be an Academy/Free School.
29. There are a range of other legal and investment constraints that the Council as commissioner of new places must work within when considering models for investment and potential changes to the organisation of school places. These include the protection against closure of designated rural schools, control over the transfer and disposal of school land and the inability of the Council acting as the Local Authority to introduce selection to Central Bedfordshire.
30. Although the Academies Act 2010 allows schools that already select all or some of their pupils on the basis of ability to continue to do so; it prevents any schools from adopting new selection by ability.
31. Maintained schools which already select some or all of their pupils by ability will be able to continue to do so when they become academies, but schools becoming academies cannot decide to become selective schools if they were not already selective as maintained schools.
32. Independent selective schools joining the academies sector are not able, by law, to continue to select by ability as academies.
33. The factors outlined above do not prevent a school from adopting new selection by aptitude. Any school with a relevant specialism can select 10% of its intake by aptitude in sport, modern foreign languages, visual arts or performing arts.

Local Policy Framework

34. In addition to the need to meet the demand for new education infrastructure, the Council also considers that the commissioning process should be used as a catalyst to raise educational standards and will therefore promote the expansion of popular and successful schools and Academies where possible. The establishment of new Academies will maximise opportunities for outstanding education promoters to establish new provision.
35. The principles support the Council's statutory obligations to promote parental choice, diversity, high standards, the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and fair access to educational opportunity and they are key to the achievement of the Council's renewed Education Vision for Central Bedfordshire, approved by the Council's Executive on 30 April 2012.

36. The Council may also increase places in areas where there is already good or outstanding provision through an existing school, whether that be Council maintained or an academy. In such circumstances, although the Council has always looked to expand provision which is in high quality schools, this is not a formally adopted policy and the need to build on the success of existing schools with high attainment is key to the proposals outlined in these proposals.
37. As the numbers of projected expansions peaks and the demand for new places is predicted to be at its height in the coming five years, the numbers of good and outstanding schools (71%) that are available to expand may be at plateau as a result of a challenging new Ofsted inspection framework. It is not possible to accurately predict but this may affect the outcomes of Ofsted inspections until schools respond to preparations for the new framework. To support this, briefing sessions have been arranged whereby schools can feedback to others their experiences of the new inspection regime. The plateau may last for 12 months or so after which the rate at which schools are deemed good or outstanding may start to increase again albeit slowly.
38. At the same time, the number of schools operating in formal collaborations is growing and is set to continue to grow as a result of national funding reforms and policy incentives. A consideration therefore arises as to whether the Council should adopt a policy of seeking to expand places in schools which themselves may not be good or outstanding but which are members of formal collaborative arrangements (such as trusts or federations) where outstanding provision exists, helping to revitalise the educational plans of existing schools and Academies that are already on the school improvement journey.
39. The number of issues to be taken into consideration by the Council in considering the location and nature of an expansion to a school (or trust) are increasing. This is partly because coalition government policy has placed schools, and particularly parents, in the forefront in determining the way their school develops. If there is sufficient parental demand then a school can seek leave from the Council (in the case of maintained schools) or from the Secretary of State (in the case of Academies) to consult on changing its designation or changing the age ranges it educates.
40. There is a growing knowledge base about the features of schools that are most closely associated with successful learning and achievement. These proposed policy principles are informed by the best and most current evidence available and also reflective of changes in local and national policy. There may also be unintended consequences of applying the principles and therefore it is recommended that there be an annual review of the impact of applying these principles which will be undertaken by the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services and reported to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Headteacher and Governor forums.
41. If agreed, this statement of policy principles will form the basis for the development of commissioning options to deliver new school places in Central Bedfordshire. It will be applied by officers to initial options appraisals which will be based on a scoring matrix and to the evaluation of the different models of education provision ie. expansion of any existing school or the setting up of a new school to meet the demographic and school improvement challenge.

42. Following scoring and evaluation, each resulting recommendation for significant new or expanded provision, as set out in the Council's New School Places Programme, will be the subject of a report to the Council's Executive accompanied with an evaluation of its alignment with these local principles.
43. The policy principles will provide clarity for schools and Academies on the strategic commissioning objectives of the Council and of the need for investment proposals to be assessed against the quality of the places being added to the system, based on the vision and educational plan of the proposer, be they an existing school, Academy or promotor of a new Academy or Free School.

Consultation

44. Consultation on the proposed policy principles will be undertaken with the support of the Executive Member for Childrens Services, with the following:

The Council's Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Church of England and Roman Catholic Dioceses
Headteachers and Partners Reference Group
All Headteachers
Chairs of Governing Bodies
The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
Neighbouring Councils
Website consultation with other stakeholders

45. The consultation will commence immediately following Executive approval and will conclude on 15 January 2013 following the meeting of the Council's Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The outcome of the consultation will be reported to the Council's Executive on 5 February 2013.
46. The following sections set out the proposed Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in schools in Central Bedfordshire.

Principle 1 - The need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel.

47. Section 76 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on local education authorities to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs of their area. Ensuring the sufficiency of provision local to the areas of demographic demand supports this duty by reducing the need for car journeys and also limits potential growth in the cost of providing school transport on distance criteria to qualifying pupils to meet the Council's statutory responsibilities.
48. Section 38 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 also places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion. Promoting local schools enables children living in the same local community to attend the same school fostering a coherent community identity and enabling community ownership to build around a range of extracurricular activities.

Principle 2 - The need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable

49. There are three sources of evidence that it is important to consider when determining the optimum size of a school. These relate to (i) international data of the effect of school size on pupil outcome measures, (ii) the minimum size needed to provide a rich curriculum offer and (iii) the effect of school size on leadership.
50. (i) The optimal school roll in terms of pupil outcomes is around 900 in a non deprived area. (This is based on all ages not only secondary or upper, but excludes Post 16 provision). This number can increase in areas of greater affluence and might drop to around 800 in areas of hardship and deprivation (in global terms). The proposals treat Post 16 education as an integral element of the main school roll.
51. (ii) In terms of supporting a broad curriculum offer, six forms of entry would be what most research and professional bodies consider to be the minimum year group size to support the kind of offer to meet the range of needs typical in a Central Bedfordshire context. It is acknowledged that research has taken place on provision that is historic and that there has been a considerable shift in the nature and offer of different types of schools in recent years.
52. (iii) The larger the school the more a governing body can pay a Headteacher according to scales that reflect pupils numbers . This may have an impact on the calibre of leader available to schools. The larger the school the more options an experienced leader has available in shaping an excellent school to meet the needs of students. Research shows that secondary schools tend to reach their peak performance when a headteacher has been leading the school for around 6 or 7 years and furthermore, a headteacher with experience of leading more than one school is generally held to be likely to be successful in a second or third school. Schools therefore need to be big enough to attract and retain experienced Headteachers for these periods if they are to be well placed to perform optimally.
53. Establishing or expanding schools of an appropriate size therefore is likely to contribute towards the likelihood of their success.
54. Comments on school size relate to single schools that occupy a single site. The minimum or maximum size of a school may be outside of the range of capacities implicit in these proposals if it is part of a non traditional governance and leadership structure as is the case in multi site schools, school trusts, federations, academy chains and multi academy trusts where a broad curricular offer, for example, may be achieved as a result of the collaborative arrangements.

Lower and Primary Schools

Minimum Size

55. Small rural schools have nationally shown themselves capable of delivering the National Curriculum and of providing a high standard of education. In determining a minimum school size, it is however not simply issues of quality that need to be considered but also but also organisational, social and community issues.

56. For example, where small numbers are nationally judged to operate against successful school management is where there are too few children to form at least one class for each key stage. Under present funding arrangements, this puts particular pressure on teachers and forthcoming changes to the local funding formula, as a result of national school funding reform, will increase the pressure to operate more efficiently. Therefore schools at or below the minimum size outlined below must consider options for federating, merging or joining an academy chain.
57. As a minimum, it is preferable that there should be one class for each of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, plus discrete part-time provision for children under five. In this way, there are no more than two year groups in each class. In total this equates to 2.5 classes. With a class size of 25-30 this means a minimum school size of 60-75 pupils for a Lower School.
58. For a Primary School also with years 5 and 6 in Key Stage 2 this equates to 3.5 classes. With a class size of 25-30 this means a minimum school size of 85 -105 pupils.
59. If three age groups need to be taught together school organisation becomes much more difficult, however there are some known mitigating factors. There are also organisational difficulties if the headteacher is the only full-time teacher. If the Headteacher is absent or leaves there may be no one left to manage where the other member of staff has no aspirations to lead or is not employed full-time.
60. Problems in delivering and monitoring standards in very small schools can occur. There may also be difficulties in recruiting enough able governors from such a small constituency of parents and supporters of the school. Finally, very small year groups may not provide sufficient peers of the same age for children to mix with although there may be some benefits of vertical grouping where younger children can learn from older peers.

Maximum Size

61. Ideally lower schools should have 2 forms of entry (i.e. two classes per year group), leading to a school size of 300. For Primary Schools this leads to a school size of 420. This gives headteachers a balance of some teaching, as well as time to manage and monitor, with the ability to employ appropriate non-teaching support in the school.
62. Above 3 forms of entry (450 pupils for lowers, 630 pupils for Primary Schools) it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain consistency, coherence and a 'whole school' ethos appropriate to pupils of this school age. The Council acting as the Local Authority consider it preferable to promote the expansion and creation of new lower/primary school provision at or above 3 forms of entry only in exceptional circumstances.
63. The larger the school, the more likely it is that the Headteacher and senior staff will spend most of their time managing resources rather than on education. If this time is spent on key issues known to promote school improvement in driving the ethos of the school towards raising attainment by a focus on pupil level data management, engagement with the teaching and learning process etc. their offer outside that of classroom input can accelerate school improvement and outcomes.

Middle Schools

Minimum Size

64. All middle schools are considered to need to have sufficient staff expertise to cover the curriculum and the teaching of basic skills at both Key Stages 2 and 3. The budget must also be sufficient to support the curriculum and an appropriate management structure.
65. It is proposed that as a minimum, a middle school should have 4 forms of entry (480 pupils in all) in order to deliver the National Curriculum. Below this figure the ability of a middle school to retain sufficient staff with the appropriate range of expertise comes under question.
66. 3 forms of entry (360 pupils) can be manageable in certain circumstances where there is an appropriate range of staff expertise, but below this number the costs of supporting even a minimum staff complement become disproportionate.

Maximum Size

67. Ideally middle schools should have 6 forms of entry (720 pupils). Beyond 7 forms of entry (840 pupils) it can be argued that the school becomes increasingly difficult to manage and to maintain an appropriate middle school ethos, and it may be more impersonal, particularly for the younger children.
68. Large middle schools face similar management challenges to any large school but community and parent views of the provision of a large middle school which pupils attend from age 9 are likely to be less positive than is the case for Upper schools where pupils start school at 13. Schools which were originally designed for a smaller number of pupils may lack specialist accommodation, both teaching and non-teaching, possess inadequate library facilities and study space, and may have social areas that are not capable of meeting staff or student needs and have congestion in corridors.

Upper and Secondary Schools

Minimum Size

69. For an upper or secondary school there need to be enough pupils in each year group to support the full range of the curriculum and generate a viable sixth form. Notwithstanding the potential for governance and leadership models outlined above, this suggests a proposed total minimum school size of around 900+ pupils for a single school. For schools engaged in collaborative and partnership arrangements this figure may be reduced to a minimum of 720 pupils where the schools in the federation or trust can demonstrate that a good, coherent educational offer is provided as a result of their sustainable collaborative arrangements. It should be noted that the Audit Commission takes the view that a sixth form of fewer than 160 students constitutes a small sixth form, with associated questions over viability.

Maximum Size

70. This is difficult to determine on curricular or organisational grounds. Larger schools have economies of scale which make for more flexible curricula and more specialist staffing but encounter organisational difficulties in accommodating large year groups.
71. In schools which were originally designed for a smaller number, there may also be a lack of specialist accommodation, both teaching and non-teaching, inadequate library and study space, social areas incapable of meeting staff and student needs and congestion in corridors.
72. A commonly held historical belief in historical principles nationally for education provision is that once numbers rise above 1500 including sixth form, the disadvantages of size may start to outweigh the benefits of economies of scale, however there are now known to be many larger schools nationally that provide a high quality of education and generally have the benefits of larger sixth forms and have overcome the potential disadvantages of large schools through internal organisation ie schools within schools and the house system. These schools, if successful have been invited to provide the cornerstone of some large Academy chains, particularly in the London area.

Principle 3 - The ability to support the expansion of local popular and successful schools or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools

73. The Council is unlikely to support the expansion of an existing school or Academy unless it is at least rated as good and preferably outstanding by Ofsted or is in a Trust or Multi Academy Trust that includes good and outstanding schools that have the capacity to support the expanded school in terms of standards and quality in order that it can become outstanding itself.
74. The Council is committed to ensure that every parent can choose an excellent school for their child and that new places should therefore be allocated where parents want them. The Council will therefore seek to support the expansion of oversubscribed schools and Academies.
75. In every case the Council will require a business case to be provided by the school or Academy that is subject to the expansion proposal to guarantee the quality of the places being added into the system, based on the school's vision and educational plan. In addition to its Ofsted rating, the business case will also require the school to outline its performance in terms of results and improvement over time in key stage assessments, in terms of value added and in comparison with other schools in similar circumstances. The business case will require the school to establish its improvement targets and will be judged by evaluation criteria.
76. Where the school or Academy that is subject to an expansion proposal is also intended to procure and deliver the capital project with the support of the Council, the business case will require assurances of the capability and capacity of the school to deliver the proposal to time and on budget, based on their expertise and experience.

77. Where new schools are to be established and proposals are received in response to the Council's invitation, an initial assessment will be undertaken of each proposal against the criteria set out above to ensure that proposers with track records in successful and popular provision are also promoted to the DfE. The proposers' abilities to prove value for money in delivering the new provision within the financial envelope available will also be assessed in these circumstances.

Principle 4 - The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities

78. The education 'offer' can be significantly enhanced from schools that collaborate effectively when compared with those that do not and the capacity for those schools to self improve and to recruit, train and develop their own staff and leaders are enhanced by well designed school to school support systems.
79. The Council has strongly supported such approaches including its joint work with the Central Bedfordshire Teaching School Partnership (CBTSP) designed to help both the Council and the CBTSP discharge their statutory duties in relation to school improvement and in relation to teacher education, qualification, induction and development and to leadership development and succession planning and also in relation to identification and transfer of successful practice. The growing success of this partnership is also evident in the successful joint bid for an alternative provision Free School aimed at eliminating permanent exclusions and increasing the pathways from education to employment.
80. The Council is developing a strategy of school community engagement in order to facilitate parental and school-led system development and as funding reforms are rolled out, so affecting the viability of some school budgets, this policy will continue in order to ensure small school settings serving rural communities can reconfigure the way they are run in order to continue to provide education close to home.

Principle 5 - The ambition to achieve a single phase of education 0 -19 and reduce school transfer points

81. There is evidence that learning can be lost at points of transfer between schools and also transition within schools from one phase or key stage to another. There are two ways in which this can be addressed.
82. The first is to design systems that limit the number of points at which a child transfers from one school to another. The second is to promote collaboration amongst schools through which a cohort of children will pass, on such issues as continuity of pedagogy, curriculum, expectations, progress, behaviour and ethos.
83. A federation or trust with close agreement between its constituent schools and with the knowledge of the community it serves could mitigate some of these effects. Reducing transfer and transition or the effects of transfer and transition is therefore suggested that this is a consideration that should be evaluated in the context of school place planning.

84. The Council will continue to develop integrated early years provision in a variety of settings, wrapping childcare around nursery education provision to ensure that all parents that require it have access to an extended and flexible early years offer so that they can access training or work.
85. Where new early years provision is needed as a result of demographic growth or changes in entitlement, and is forecast to be required in a similar timeframe and location as proposed new lower or primary places, the Council will seek to develop both new provisions on the school site and under its leadership.

Principle 6 - The need to support the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA)

86. Coalition Government policy is to ensure that all young people are in either education, training or work related education/training full time up to the age of 18 by September 2015. The Council will therefore need to consider the way in which proposals for new or expanded schools and Academies will support it in meeting this raised participation age and support educational establishments and employers in delivering this.
87. The Council will also support the maintenance of a diverse range of post-16 provision, enabling students to choose between remaining at upper school, transferring to an Further Education college or taking advantage of vocational routes of study. The Council will continue to support and strengthen the 14-19 strategic partnership subgroup of the Children's Trust so that it can work together to improve outcomes and it will support providers to access post 16 funding from the Education Funding Agency.

Principle 7 – To seek opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use

88. The Council will adopt a high standard of design and community engagement as part of its evaluation of the proposals for major new and expanding school provision in Central Bedfordshire. This will define the basis for calculation of planning obligations that will be required from housing developers where additional infrastructure is required.
89. The briefing of projects to expand existing provision will include an assessment of the suitability of the premises to ensure pre existing deficiencies in provision can be considered in order to provide premises that are fit for purpose for the increased capacity of the school.
90. The Council will support opportunities to pool funding from other sources in any planned expanded or new provision and it will seek guarantees for sustainable, enhanced community use of the school's facilities where capital investment is being committed.

Principle 8 – To promote the diversity of provision offered in Central Bedfordshire to increase opportunities for parental choice

91. Central Bedfordshire has a comprehensive system of education providing educational opportunities for all its pupils and the Council recognises, supports and encourages the need for a diverse range and ethos within the schools in the area to provide opportunities for parental choice.

92. The Central Bedfordshire geographical area comprises only co-educational schools and the majority of schools are based on a three tier system of education although schools are encouraged to consider alternative models of leadership, governance and school organisation to achieve the Council's overarching aim of raising standards.
93. The Council's aim is to create a more diverse school system offering excellence and choice, where each school has a strong ethos and sense of mission and may act as a centre of excellence in particular areas or offer specialist provision in order to meet the aspirations of parents, help raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps.
94. While a good supply of non denominational provision is essential, parents have a right to select a denominational education for their children if they wish. Within Central Bedfordshire, there are Church of England lower, middle and upper schools although Roman Catholic provision is only represented at lower and primary school. No other faiths are currently provided for in Central Bedfordshire.
95. Some faith based provision is below national rates of representation in some phases in Central Bedfordshire. Where there is a need for new school places and there is unmet parental demand for particular faith provision, the Council will consider supporting an increase in such provision where it will bring the area closer to national averages for each individual faith based provision and where other factors such as an evaluation against the potential of the school to raise education standards will not be compromised. As part of the annual appraisal of the impact of the principles there will be an equalities impact assessment to ensure that there are no unintended consequences of promoting faith based provision on those who have minority or no faiths on access to school places.
96. The Council will continue to support the establishment of Trusts, Federations and Multi Academy Trusts who share the ambition of the Council's Education Vision and its principles which are now seen in the context of the enhanced complexity created by increased numbers of academies, academy chain partners and school self-determination.
97. The Council will welcome the parent or other promoter of any free school in Central Bedfordshire and will consider the allocation of financial support where the proposal is approved by the DfE and it meets a demand identified as a result of demographic growth in the area.

Principle 9 – To support vulnerable learners and integrate appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within mainstream schools

98. The Council will continue to support close links between mainstream and special school sectors, building better partnerships and improving co-ordination of services. While most children with special educational needs attend their local mainstream schools we will continue to support the model of area special schools.
99. The Council will also continue to maintain and support specialist provisions in some lower, middle and upper schools for children who require a more specialist approach to meeting their special educational needs.

100. The Council will also support the establishment of alternative provision for pupils who are excluded or at risk of exclusion and for whom an alternative curriculum is more appropriate.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None

Meeting: Executive
Date: 4 December 2012
Subject: Future of the Adult Skills and Community Learning Service
Report of: Councillor Nigel Young, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development
Summary: This report summarises the outcomes from a review of the Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning Service and proposes that Executive endorse the move to a commissioning based model.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Kate McFarlane, Head of Community Regeneration and Adult Skills
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

1. The Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning (ASCL) service is a shared service with Bedford Borough and accordingly delivers against the priorities of each. The ASCL service supports the delivery of a number of Central Bedfordshire Council medium term plan priorities, most notably:
 - **Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow** – through the support of work clubs that help individuals prepare for, and find employment, and through the range of employment and skills related training programmes.
 - **Improved educational attainment** – through the Family Learning Programme adults are engaged in improving their own skills whilst enabling them to support their children’s learning.
 - **Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable** – through the delivery of learning programmes that support independent living, and improve health and wellbeing.

2. The ASCL Service is well placed to deliver the priorities contained within the Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy and the outcomes of the service wide review will ensure increased targeting of resources to support those adults with the lowest skills and those who are furthest from the labour market.

Financial:

3. In 2012/13 financial year the ASCL service is operating with a budget of circa £2.1M. The service is predominantly externally funded. Funding from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) is the main source, with a core grant of circa £1.7M. Other external contracts total circa £170k, student fee income £132k, with a contribution from Bedford Borough Council of £65k and Central Bedfordshire Council of £60k. The service is small compared with other Local Authority areas.
4. The funding from the SFA does not form part of the Council's Formula Grant settlement, it is awarded separately on an academic year basis. SFA grant funding can only be used in accordance with the Agency's Funding Rules. In summary, all funding is there to deliver accredited learning and associated support to adults aged 19 years and over, with the exception of the 16-18 year old apprenticeship funding that can only be used for learners aged 16 to 18 years undertaking an apprenticeship.
5. Future levels of SFA funding are not known, there are a number of Central Government Policy reviews underway which could have a significant impact on the level of grant in the future. Furthermore, the long term trend of student fee income is one where the amount is in decline due to a combination of factors including changes to benefit eligibility rules and what learners can be charged for.
6. In 2011/12 the Central Bedfordshire Council contribution to the ASCL service was £110k. In February 2012 the Council agreed to reduce its contribution to the service to nil by 2015/16. The reduction is to be tapered, over three years by £50k in 2012/13, a further £50k in 2013/14 and £10k in 2015/16.
7. In addition, in line with requirements being placed on all external funding streams Central Bedfordshire Council has announced its intention for the service to make a contribution to Central Bedfordshire Council overheads. Any overhead contributions must be within the levels specified by the external funding bodies. The SFA permissible levels are for no more than 10% of the external grant. This equates to a maximum of approx £170K per financial year, but could increase or decrease over time. Furthermore, we will actively consider all opportunities that the Council's Customer First Programme can bring to improve efficiencies in the ASCL service and enhance the customer experience.

Legal:

8. Under the current legislation, the Council has a 'power' to deliver adult learning provision rather than a specific 'duty' to do so. The Skills Funding Agency has the statutory responsibility for funding the delivery of adult learning provision, not the local authority.

9. The Local Government Act of 2000 endowed local authorities with responsibility for community leadership and for promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area.

Risk Management:

10. Proposed service re-modelling of this kind provides key risks to the Council. The risks outlined below will be mitigated through close management of the implementation of the new service model, including regular reporting to the already established ASCL review project board.
- (a) Reputation and customer satisfaction: Any changes to services if not communicated effectively to stakeholders and customers can result in a reduction in customer satisfaction, increase in complaints and loss of support for the service. This is particularly true of the withdrawal from informal learning, known as Learning for Leisure and Pleasure. The withdrawal of this provision will need to be planned carefully and where possible seeking alternative routes for these learning outcomes to be achieved.
 - (b) Non delivery of external funding: Change of this magnitude could disrupt the delivery of existing learning provision and therefore result in the Council not being able to draw down the full SFA grant allocation. During the transition phase additional monitoring of performance against contract will be undertaken.
 - (c) Delivery of poor quality learning: Loss of key staff during time of change could result in a drop in the quality of provision currently on offer. A move toward a new delivery model means there is less direct control of the quality of delivery, which if not managed appropriately could result in a reduction in the Ofsted grading when next inspected. Staff will be supported during this period in accordance with the Managing change Policy. Quality will be ensured through close monitoring of contracts and support and training for smaller providers.
 - (d) Shared Services: The move toward a new service model requires changes to the governance arrangements and the identification of service priorities, which requires agreement and co-operation with Bedford Borough Council. Discussions will be held to shape this new arrangement.
 - (e) Risk of doing nothing: as it stands, the service is not financially viable. In doing nothing the Council risks the potential of not being able to deliver the agreed efficiency savings. The Council would not only be delaying making difficult decisions but also missing the opportunity to take a more strategic position with this external funding stream, which through its relative flexibility can be used to contribute to a range of key Council agendas.
 - (f) Failure: a failure to create a sustainable ASCL service that meets the needs of communities will have implications for the Council in relation to delivering the medium term plan priorities and the opportunity to improve lives, particularly in the most deprived areas, will be lost.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

11. Implementing any changes to the ASCL service can be expected to have implications for staffing including the risk of redundancy. If the Council endorse the recommendations laid out here these implications will be significant. In such circumstances the Council is required to undertake consultation with our recognised Trade Unions and affected employees. This will be taken forward in accordance with Central Bedfordshire Council's Managing Change policy. We will seek to minimise the impact of redundancy and redeploy any staff who are at risk of redundancy into suitable alternative employment.
12. The ASCL service employs 37 FTE staff and is supported by just over 100 casual staff, which includes visiting lecturers and internal verifiers.

Equalities/Human Rights:

13. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and to foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
14. To inform the service review, focus groups were held with learners and non-learners and a series of in-depth qualitative telephone interviews were held with businesses that currently work with the ASCL service and businesses that do not work with the ASCL service. Interviews have also been held with key stakeholders with an interest in the delivery of adult learning.
15. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed that has taken into account the outputs from the resident focus groups, business feedback and stakeholder views along with analysis of service data, mosaic mapping of residents who use and do not use the ASCL services and the June 2011 Ofsted inspection report findings. In undertaking the ASCL Services Review the findings from the Local Economic Assessment equalities considerations and target groups have been considered.
16. The proposed strategic priorities will enable greater targeting of services to support the most vulnerable. However, it is recognised that changes to the curriculum offer, especially Learning for Leisure type activities could impact on a wider range of learners. The ASCL service will therefore work pro-actively with other providers and partners to explore opportunities for these programmes to be taken forward.

Public Health:

17. There is a strong relationship between skills and employment and health and wellbeing. Those who are more highly skilled are more likely to secure employment and to enjoy higher standards of living, contributing to better physical and mental health. Concurrently, poor health and disability can contribute to lower attainment and economic inactivity. Through supporting skills development and employability, the work of ASCL has a role to play in contributing to improved health and wellbeing.

18. Some of ASCL's current work has a direct focus on health and wellbeing, particularly learning aimed at older and more vulnerable individuals.

Community Safety:

19. Access to skills, training and employment are key factors in preventing offending behaviour and breaking historic patterns of offending for individuals and within families. The Council has a statutory duty to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.
20. ASCL play a direct and immediate role in supporting community safety through their work with the Bedfordshire Integrated Offender Management Programme, a multi-agency partnership that works with offenders to break the cycle of crime. A range of support and interventions are offered, including those around providing support and training to improve basic skills and life skills. ASCL have also supported the Bedfordshire Probation Service through providing skills for life assessments, teaching sessions and Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG) for offenders.

Sustainability:

21. Matching employment with the needs of our growing resident population will support the longer term sustainability of Central Bedfordshire. The refocusing of ASCL provision supports the delivery of the All Age Skills Strategy (adopted by the Council in March 2012), which itself is aligned to the Economic Development Plan which fits with the Council's Climate Change Strategy.

Procurement:

22. The move toward a commissioning based model will require support from the Council's procurement team that builds on the 2012-13 piloting of commissioned activity and operates in accordance with the Council's procurement framework.
23. Any engagement with partner organisations or external service providers will be formalised through an appropriate agreement (prepared in accordance with the procurement toolkit) which contains a statement of requirements (or specification), a set of contract terms and conditions, performance metrics and remuneration arrangements.

Overview and Scrutiny:

24. The move toward a commissioning based model directly links to the implementation of the All Age Skills Strategy priorities. The draft All Age Skills Strategy and role of the Local Authority in supporting its delivery was considered and endorsed at the 28 February 2012 Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee joined by the Members of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. endorse the strategic priorities identified for the Adult Skills and Community Learning Service outlined in section 31; and**
- 2. approve the recommendation to move toward a commissioning based model in the first instance whereby some or all of Adult Skills and Community Learning provision is sub-contracted.**

<i>Reason for Recommendations:</i>	<i>To provide a strategic direction for the Service which is focused on community and business learning needs in a financially sustainable way. Ensure the customer experience is enhanced, and the responsiveness, flexibility and quality of the service is maintained at a reduced cost, with increased financial viability.</i>
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Executive Summary

25. The Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning Service (ASCL) is a good performing shared service with Bedford Borough Council, hosted by Central Bedfordshire Council. The ASCL service has a budget of approx £2.1M, Ofsted grading of “Good” and has learner retention and achievement rates above 85%, consistently above national rates.
26. In February 2012 the Council agreed to seek full cost recovery of its costs from this externally funded service by 2015/16. This decision along with potential future changes to Skills Funding Agency Funding resulted in the need for a comprehensive service wide review to establish whether the Council wants to continue to offer the ASCL Service, and if so, how best to do this in a financially sustainable way.
27. The review recommends that the Council has a clear role to play in leading and delivering adult learning and that due to the small size continues as a shared service. Specifically, ASCL must focus on delivering the priorities that have emerged from the strategic needs assessment. In order to deliver these priorities, whilst delivering efficiencies, maintaining quality levels and ensuring the maximum levels of funding are targeted at delivering learning outcomes it is necessary to re-model how the service is delivered. The recommendation is to move toward a commissioning based model for delivery in the 2013-14 academic year.
28. Further delivery options could be considered in the medium term once the service is operating from a financially sustainable base.

Outcome of the Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning Service Review

29. A summary of the existing ASCL service can be found at Appendix A. The Service wide review conducted in 2012 concluded that:
- (a) ASCL involves relatively flexible external funding which can be used to deliver wider Council objectives. In the context of increasing economic austerity, and decreasing funding to support adult skills development it is wise for the Council to continue to access this funding but review the focus and extent to which its use is being maximised.
 - (b) Adult learning has been shown to have a positive impact on people's lives, through improving their confidence and skills, employability, family relationships, and health and wellbeing. For many individuals, engaging in learning particularly through ASCL can be the first step on a longer learning journey often resulting in employment. This was identified through engaging customers in focus groups used to inform the review.
 - (c) The service provides good quality teaching and learning as evidenced by the Ofsted inspection grade of "good" in June 2011 and has improving learner retention and achievement rates above 85%, which are consistently above regional and national rates.
 - (d) The service faces significant challenges around its size as it is relatively small. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to improve efficiencies as operating costs are higher than comparable services, 70% of provision is operating below capacity and course cancellation rates of around a third are high. Finally, courses which are classified as fully funded are, in most cases operating at a loss.
 - (e) Following an options appraisal the most appropriate option is to move toward a commissioning based model immediately and that this be in place for the beginning of the 2013-14 academic year. In the medium term the service should remain open to opportunities to work more closely with appropriate external partners through joint partnerships or other arrangements that improve the range and quality of adult learning opportunities whilst being delivered in the most efficient way. However, in order to be able to exploit potential future opportunities the ASCL service has to become leaner, more focused and efficient in the short term.
30. The review recommends that:
- (a) The ASCL service has a set of clear agreed priorities based on locally determined priorities, therefore enabling better targeting of available resources.
 - (b) The service should actively seek out external funding opportunities to increase funding to deliver the agreed priorities. This should include early conversations with the SFA to increase funding received to support apprenticeships.

- (c) The service needs to focus on significantly reducing management and administration costs. This can be achieved through a service wide re-structure to support the move to a commissioning based model in the short term. This should build on the experiences of the 2012/13 commissioning pilot.
- (d) In the medium term the service should remain open to opportunities to work more closely with appropriate external partners through joint partnerships or other arrangements that improve the range and quality of adult learning opportunities.

Future Priorities

31. Through the strategic needs analysis, the below emerging strategic priorities have been identified for the ASCL service for 2013/14. A copy of the strategic needs assessment can be found at Appendix B. The intention is to refresh the strategic needs assessment on an annual basis, this will include input from learners and businesses as well as survey and statistical data. The 2013/14 strategic priorities are:
- (a) To focus adult skills provision on those geographical areas with the highest levels of deprivation, tailoring delivery to meet the needs of individuals in those communities through bite size periods of learning, that build confidence and an appetite for further learning.
 - (b) All provision should focus on developing work skills with better support for learners to secure employment.
 - (c) Delivery of work clubs to support unemployed adults into work.
 - (d) Improve progression routes into next level training and into work.
 - (e) Further embed IAG into the curriculum offer.
 - (f) Provide particular support to those aged 19-24yrs and those over 50yrs to find work and progress in employment.
 - (g) Support workforce development through the provision of flexible, needs led provision that meets locally identified business needs.
 - (h) Recognise the impact that learning can have on social wellbeing and where appropriate use as a gateway to economic wellbeing.

Service Implications

32. Accepting this new direction does mean that the service cannot continue to deliver everything that it has delivered previously. This is particularly true of Learning for Leisure and Pleasure activities. Whilst these activities provide significant benefits to the individuals involved and local communities, the targeting of resources requires the service to reduce or eliminate what is currently delivered as Learning for Leisure and Pleasure. The withdrawal of this provision will need to be planned carefully in terms of mitigating risks to reputation and where possible seeking alternative routes for these learning outcomes to be achieved.

Conclusions

33. In order to ensure the continued delivery of a wide range of adult learning activities it is necessary to provide greater strategic focus for the ASCL service and from the 2013/14 academic year move to a commissioning based model.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning (ASCL) Service Needs Assessment, Executive Summary

Appendix B – Snapshot of the ASCL service

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

N/A

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Appendix A

DRAFT

**Bedfordshire Adult Skills and
Community Learning (ASCL)
Service**

Needs Assessment

14/11/12

Version 6

1. Background to the Needs Assessment

The Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning Service (ASCL) is contracted through the Skills Funding Agency to deliver Adult Learning across Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire. In the 2011/12 academic year 4,603 learners were engaged in 7,155 learning activities through the following funding streams:

- Adult Safeguarded learning which included personal and community development learning (PCDL), Family Language Literacy and Numeracy (FLLN) and Wider Family Learning (WFL)
- Employer Responsive
- Learner Responsive
- Formal First Steps
- Next Steps for Information Advice and Guidance

The ASCL service is expecting to receive funding from the above streams in 2012/13 totalling approximately £2.1M. It is also expected that a similar number of learners will be engaged. 53% of learners are from Central Bedfordshire, 35% from Bedford Borough and 12% from neighbouring authorities.

In addition to the above funding streams, ASCL delivers full cost recovery courses supporting Learning for Leisure and Pleasure.

The ASCL service is a shared service with Bedford Borough. Central Bedfordshire Council is the lead body and is leading a comprehensive review of the service. This review will set the strategic direction and priorities for the service and ensure the achievement of a financially sustainable model for the future.

This review is important and necessary for a number of reasons, primarily:

- ASCL involves relatively flexible funding which can be used responsively to help achieve wider Council objectives; in a context of increasing economic austerity, it is therefore wise for the Council to review the extent to which this opportunity is being maximised
- The Council has not, up till now, sought to influence the strategic direction of the ASCL Service, and has not set strategic priorities for the Service. The Service has therefore done its best to respond to as many adult learning needs as it could, which may have caused it to be spread too thinly
- External and internal financial factors place pressure on the Service's budget; it is unfortunately not financially viable beyond the current academic year, so there is a need for a review to establish whether the Council wants to continue to offer ASCL to Bedfordshire communities, and if so, how best to do this in a financially sustainable way

2. The Needs Assessment

The needs assessment seeks to provide the basis for the Council to set the strategic priorities for the Service, and also to derive detailed targets for the Service. There are always going to be a large number of competing demands for adult and community learning opportunities from amongst the diverse types of learners in the Bedfordshire community; these will include needs for learning amongst disadvantaged groups, employers, community groups, people who want learning for

leisure who can afford to pay towards their learning, people who need learning in order to increase their employability but who cannot afford to pay. In a context of a diminishing funding base, it is all the more important for the Council to take a long hard look at the range of priorities and to use this to set the strategy for the Service. In particular the needs assessment seeks to assist in the process of deciding where and how to target the subsidy of adult learning.

In order for this process to be as comprehensive and fair as possible, the needs assessment is based on several kinds of evidence about what the learning needs of Bedfordshire communities are. These include:

- Demographic information about the area: characteristics of different wards, balance of population by age, gender, employment status and other variables
- Information about employers and what they want from ASCL in order to get the right skills in the workforce
- Information from and about the third sector, because they are often very closely embedded in local communities and are an invaluable source of information about what learning is needed
- Feedback from learners and from potential learners
- Work which the Councils have already done to identify what the needs of the community are and how the Councils will respond. This includes Council strategies on skills, economic development, health, children, Central Bedfordshire Council's Medium Term Plan "Delivering your Priorities" and the wider range of Council strategies which seek to improve the wellbeing and prosperity of the population in Bedfordshire
- Account also has to be taken of what central Government priorities are and the likely impact of them on the ASCL service

Bringing this together forms the basis for setting the future direction of adult learning in Bedfordshire. Critically, the needs assessment aims to provide the basis for an ASCL Service Specification, by:

- Providing a community profile that is as current as possible, for targeting purposes
- Providing the basis of some analysis of the data in thematic and geographical contexts
- Using feedback from local stakeholders and learners to inform decision-making
- Providing the basis for setting of strategy and targets for the ASCL Service to best serve the learning needs of people in Bedfordshire

3. National Policy & Funding Priorities

National policy and funding triggers are currently complex and sometimes conflicting, so it is all the more important for the Council to have clarity about how these affect the context and funding for ASCL.

General policy directions affecting ASCL nationally are:

- Public service reforms:
promoting an ethos of public service
freeing professionals from top-down control and bureaucracy
giving **informed** choice to the user
encouraging competition between suppliers
payment by results wherever appropriate
publishing available information wherever possible
accountability to people, not to the government machine
- Big Society
Mobilising the enthusiasm of local volunteers
Local communities defining local needs
Community self-help
- Localism
Simplification, “cutting red tape”

This affects **ASCL providers** in a number of possible ways, all of which need to be thought about in the assessment:

- Adult Skills and Community Learning is primarily a policy responsibility of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), so the key focus is on how the FE sector/providers can contribute to the **growth agenda**
- Public funding for this work is administered by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), so the priority is on developing **economically useful skills**
- Strong emphasis on employability, on progression into mainstream skills programmes, on **upskilling the existing workforce**
- Growing emphasis on targeted work with the **unemployed (eg via “skills conditionality” – a DWP issue) and with disadvantaged groups (the “social mobility” agenda)**
- Increasing emphasis on need to respond to **employer demand**

BUT

- At the same time, adult learning contributes to personal and community well-being, enhances community cohesion, addresses local priorities, underpins or contributes to other public services (DCLG, DCMS, DoH interests)
- And parts of the provision have clear and in cases direct links to education concerns (DfE), eg via family learning, parenting, addressing the needs of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs)

In terms of specific **Government strategy for Further Education** (of which ASCL is part), the BIS FE Reform Plan “New Challenges, New Chances” (December 2011)

makes the following priorities quite clear:

- Learners at the heart of the system ('learner journey' is crucial)
- Better quality careers advice
- A progressive curriculum
- Ensuring the quality and relevance of vocational qualifications
- Strengthening the quality of teaching and learning
- Freeing up governors to lead
- Greater funding simplification and provider freedoms
- New efficiencies and shared investment, including FE Loans
- More transparency (informed choice) and accountability
- FE as a global brand/export product

In terms of what is happening to **funding for FE and for ASCL** in particular, the situation can be summarised as:

- 2012/13 is the second year of planned BIS budget reductions, with deeper cuts to come in 2013/14
- Next CSR now brought forward to Autumn 2013, and Treasury (since Spring 2012) requiring spending Departments to hold back 5% reserves
- The expectation is that things will get worse before they get better
- The policy of "shared responsibility" for paying for provision is already in place – as seen by changes in adult entitlement, planned introduction of FE Loans, etc
- Concern that some areas of public expenditure will be de-prioritised, and pressure on all aspects of public expenditure to demonstrate a return on investment

Specific trends for the **Adult Skills Budget** are:

- Growth in investment in Apprenticeships, especially 19-24 year-olds
- Top-slice to pilot "employer ownership", with SFA directly funding employers to make/secure required skills provision
- Loss of direct public subsidy for those aged 24 and over for Level 3+ programmes
- SFA "funding simplification" being modelled in advance of 2013/14 – in theory cost-neutral, but will impact differentially on providers depending on their mix and balance of provision

- Particular uncertainties over English and Maths (formerly “Skills for Life”) funding, and ESOL arrangements/eligibilities
- Transfer of Formal First Steps funding to a more closely-monitored, formula-funded regime
- Changes expected to adult learner support funds, and to additional learning support

Implications for **ASCL budgets and strategy**:

- £210m national “safeguarded” budget secure for 2012/13, but is considered very vulnerable to next round of CSR challenges by Treasury, and there is a possibility of future national redistribution
- Providers given freedom to vire sub-allocations between different strands of activity (PCDL, wider family learning, FLLN, NLDC), but required to sustain a broad and balanced offer and to maintain or increase learner volumes
- New policy direction:
to better target use of public funding, while maintaining a universal offer
to measure and report on the impact of adult learning
to give local accountability
to find innovative ways of funding provision
to create models of partnership working
- Community Learning Trust pilots in 2012/13; may be rolled out from August 2013, subject to evaluation
- Community Learning Innovation Fund
- Minister is known to be in favour of Community Learning Champions schemes

The new **Common Inspection Framework** is also contributing to the change and uncertainty for ASCL:

- Recent “ACL” inspection results set Grade 2 as sub-sectoral benchmark (but Grade 1 is very rare)
- While worsening college inspection grades are focusing all support on poor providers
- Shortage of the “sparkle factor” – no adult learning provider deemed to be outstanding in respect of teaching and learning
- Revised approach to inspection, and new Common Inspection Framework, from September 2012:
greater focus on teaching, learning and assessment
short-notice inspection (48 hours)
Grade 3 = “requires improvement”, more rapid re-inspection ... and more rigorous intervention for those that fail to improve
more attention to be paid to the learners’ end-to-end experience

- Adult learning providers still attracting notices to improve because of failure to meet minimum levels of performance
- OFSTED is as yet unclear about how to inspect new-style Community Learning

There are important issues for the **ASCL workforce** which again need to be brought to bear in Council strategy:

- Review of formal regulations requiring initial teacher training, annual registration with IfL, continuing professional development – BIS advised to de-regulate, puts a *new onus on individual providers to set and apply minimum professional standards*
- Future supply of teaching staff expected to be badly hit by changes in HE funding, and introduction of FE loans
- Concerns over lack of flexibility in the initial training that is offered (eg under-developed approach to recognition of prior learning)
- Some mis-match of staff skills with current/future curriculum priorities (eg enterprise education, work with adult unemployed)
- Changes in community learning may further emphasise skills gaps
- CPD not necessarily well managed, and is perceived to be overly focused on meeting organisational administrative needs
- Trend towards reducing reliance on permanent/factional staff ... with consequent negative impact on staff morale, and maybe on quality of provision
- Some evidence that workforce equality and diversity issues are receiving less priority than is expected under prevailing legislation
- Expanding “management span” in services where reviews have reduced senior staffing structures
- Lack of clarity in how to promote FE as a positive career option

All these imperatives mean at the very least that the Council needs to set a **development agenda for the Service** which includes:

- Comprehensive financial modelling to establish a standard baseline and methodology for costing and pricing of courses and classes
- Clarity about what the service is designed to do – set the vision, underpinned by a clear statement of values, and structure all future decisions around that. This is likely to require extensive needs assessment, local market analysis and consultation before it is agreed
- Secure (and where necessary develop) robust leadership, including a “service champion” to link with the local authority at the most senior levels, and to promote the service to external agencies

- Pay close attention to how future service outputs, outcomes and impacts will be monitored, and how key messages on service performance will be disseminated – to the accountable body, to funders, to stakeholders and to service users
- Develop a realistic assessment of forward income, including from new ventures (some of which may fail)
- Undertake a zero-based budgeting exercise, which includes a contingency fund and some "venture capital", and which allows for retention of generated surpluses
- At that stage, consider what business model(s) might be adopted to secure the level and nature of service required – including whether, how and with whom the service might partner to achieve its objectives
- Plan and implement a staffing structure to deliver this model

4. The Overall Central Bedfordshire demographics

Covering 716 square kilometres, Central Bedfordshire currently has a population of approximately 254,400. Between 2010 and 2021, the total population of Central Bedfordshire is set to increase by just over 14.5%. The biggest proportionate increase in population will be in the number of people aged 65 and over. This is expected to increase by 41.4% between 2010 and 2021.

The area is home to over 11,000 businesses and 134,300 economically active people. The majority of local businesses are small – 97.4% employ fewer than 50 people – and the area has high levels of self-employment, but the area does have some very large, successful employers such as Cranfield University, Amazon and Lockheed Martin.

According to the 2011 Census, females slightly outnumber males. Approximately a quarter of the population are under twenty years of age, and almost 16% are aged over 65. The highest numbers of individuals are within the 40-45 and 45-50 age ranges.

An estimated 13.3% of people in Central Bedfordshire were from ethnic minority communities in 2009. The largest of these groups are White Other (not British or Irish, 3.5%); Indian (1.9%); and Black African (1.3%). There is also some variation by age group: younger age groups have a higher proportion of people from ethnic minority groups, compared with the older age groups.

The pre-2009 wards with the highest proportions of people from BME groups were Parkside (7.3%), Tithe Farm (5.2%) and Cranfield (7.1%).

Central Bedfordshire is classified as predominantly rural. The two largest towns, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard, are located in the south of Central Bedfordshire, whilst a number of smaller towns including Biggleswade, Sandy and Flitwick, are to be found in the north.

Overall levels of deprivation within Central Bedfordshire are low. However, three lower super output areas (SOAs) are in the most deprived 10-20% in England and a further six are in the most deprived 20-30%. These areas are mainly within the south of Central Bedfordshire.

Levels of unemployment are below the national and regional averages. In October 2012, 2.4% of the resident population in Central Bedfordshire were claiming Job Seekers Allowance combined to 3% in the east and 3.8% in Great Britain. However, in some wards, the JSA claimant count is significantly higher (nearer 6% in parts of Houghton Regis and Dunstable).

Young people in Central Bedfordshire (aged 16-24) have also been affected in terms of increased unemployment. The figure now stands at 18.3%, which is below comparator areas and the national average of 21.3%.

The labour market in Central Bedfordshire is relatively strong compared to the national picture. Employment and economic activity rates have fallen since the 2008 recession and currently stand at 76.4% and 80.3% of the working age population respectively, but remain above comparator areas. At the same time, the percentage of people working part time has seen a notable increase, with the male rate having more than doubled to 10.3%.

Just over half of all Central Bedfordshire residents commute out of the area to work. Hertfordshire, Luton, London and Bedford are the most common destinations.

The top five industries of employment for people who work in Central Bedfordshire are education, retail, manufacturing, health, and public administration and defence.

At 59.4% in 2011, the percentage of students achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C including maths and English is slightly above the national average.

Individuals in Central Bedfordshire are more likely to have higher level qualifications.

Residents in Central Bedfordshire are generally in good health, with fewer people than nationally reporting long term illness and life expectancy longer than in England overall.

Central Bedfordshire has a number of strengths, particularly in relation to skills. These include the quality and range of skills providers; a labour force with diverse skills; a prevalence of higher level qualifications; and a history of partnership working. However, the area also faces a number of challenges, particularly around the varied nature of Central Bedfordshire as an area and the absence of an agreed sense of place or a focal town; the disparities in skills and deprivation that exist between areas; competition from other geographical areas; inconsistencies in achievement across schools; persistent skills gaps and limited workforce planning by some businesses.¹

The November 2011 Family Poverty Needs Assessment highlights that in 2009, 13.1% of children in Central Bedfordshire were living in poverty. Whilst all wards contain some children in poverty, there are particular parts of Central Bedfordshire where levels of poverty are significantly higher, namely:

- Houghton Regis 28.0%
- Northfields 25.2%
- Dunstable Downs 20.2%
- Sandy 18.6%
- Leighton Linlade Central 18.5%

¹ From Developing an All Age Skills Strategy: Consultation to support the development of an All Age Skills Strategy for Central Bedfordshire. A Report July 2011. Public Perspectives Ltd

5. The Overall Bedford Borough Demographics

Bedford Borough's population rose from 148,100 in 2001 to 160,800 in 2010, an increase of 8.6%. Growth was concentrated in older age groups, including a 26% rise in the number of people aged 80+. Younger age groups increased by much smaller amounts, with the 0-19 population rising by less than 4% since 2001.

Much of Bedford Borough is situated in one of the growth areas of the former Milton Keynes and South Midlands (MKSM) Strategy² and approximately 10,500 new homes are planned for 2010-2021. As a result, the Borough's population is expected to grow significantly to 173,000–178,500 by 2021, depending on the future level of net in-migration.

The number of older people is forecast to grow at a much higher rate than the total population between 2010 and 2021, with those aged 65+ and 80+ both rising by approximately 30%. This will represent a significant ageing of the Borough's population.

The number of births in Bedford Borough rose significantly in 2008-2010 compared to earlier years, with much of the increase attributable to mothers born outside the UK. If this trend continues it will result in an early rise in Early Years and younger school age populations.

There are major differences between the demographic profiles of the Borough's urban and rural areas. The population of Bedford and Kempston towns is much younger on average, with only 45% of the population aged 40+ compared to 55% in rural areas.

Bedford Borough has an ethnically diverse population. In 2001, 19.2% of the population was from minority ethnic groups (BME), compared to 13% nationally, and there has been a substantial increase since 2001 due to significant international in-migration. The BME population is largely concentrated in the urban area of Bedford and Kempston with particularly large BME communities in Queens Park (57.8% in 2001) and Cauldwell (43.6%) wards.

The Borough has received a large number of new migrants since 2001, particularly from the countries which joined the European Union in 2004 and 2007, including significant numbers from Poland and Lithuania.

Bedford Borough has a similar average life expectancy to England, both at birth and at age 65, but is slightly below regional averages. The most deprived areas of the Borough experience significantly lower life expectancy, with a difference of up to 9 years in life expectancy at birth between the most deprived and least deprived wards.

Though Bedford Borough is midway among local authorities on national Deprivation rankings, four areas³ in Bedford town (parts of Castle, Cauldwell and Harpur wards) are among the 10% most deprived areas in England, and a further 7 are among the 10-20% most deprived nationally.

² Though the Regional Spatial Strategy (the East of England Plan and the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub Regional Strategy) was revoked by Government in July 2010, the dwelling numbers planned for in the Council's Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan were based upon the RSS, and continue in effect.

³ Deprivation is measured using the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) geography. These average 1,500 residents and there are 102 LSOAs in Bedford Borough.

Income deprivation and Education, Skills and Training deprivation are particular concerns in Bedford Borough. Eight areas fall within the 10% most deprived on Income deprivation, and a further 8 within the 20% most deprived.

20% of children in the Borough are raised in income deprived households, rising to more than 50% in parts of Castle, Goldington and Kingsbrook wards.

Almost 16% of pensioners in the Borough are income deprived, with twice that level in Castle, Cauldwell, Harpur and Queens Park wards.

Rural areas are generally affluent, but there are pockets of deprivation such as the Shortstown area of Eastcotts ward. Two-thirds of rural residents live in areas which are among the 20% most deprived nationally in their access to essential services such as a GP, primary school, post office or supermarket.

Worklessness is an overall measure that combines people who are unemployed and seeking work with those who are economically inactive and not looking for a job, whether that is by choice (e.g. raising a family or in full-time education), or due to barriers to work or unwillingness to work. There is a strong relationship between an area's level of worklessness and deprivation.

Total worklessness in the Borough is estimated at 21,800 or more than 21% of the working age population. Of these 6,200 want a job and 15,600 do not.

Claimant Count unemployment, which measures Jobseeker's Allowance recipients, rose significantly in late 2008 and in 2009. It declined in 2010, but had risen to 4,314 or 4.1% of the working age (16-64) population in March 2012. This exceeds both the national (4.0%) and regional (3.3%) averages. Bedford and Kempston towns have a much higher rate (5.3%) than the rural area (2.1%).

11, people were claiming out of work benefits in May 2011. At 10.6% of the working age population this exceeds the regional average (9.4%) but is less than England (11.8%). In the most deprived parts of Bedford Town, out of work benefits claimants exceed 25% of the working age population.

Of particular concern is the estimated 10,000 people of working age who live in households in which no adult is in paid work. This is also estimated to affect 7,200 children living in workless households.

6. Feedback from Learners, Non Learners and Businesses

The below summarises the views of existing learners, businesses and potential learners. This information comes from:

1. Focus groups with existing ASCL learners and non ASCL users and telephone interviews with businesses in June 2012 as part of the ASCL service review
2. Focus groups with different groups in summer 2011 to inform the development of the Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy
3. 2012 Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Business Surveys

ASCL Focus Groups

The key findings from the focus groups in 2012 were that:

- There are low levels of awareness amongst non-learners and businesses about the ASCL service, although there is interest in the ASCL service which presents an opportunity
- Learners and businesses have high levels of satisfaction for the learning and support they receive and want to continue learning and working with the ASCL service
- Most learners and non-learners think that the ASCL service is mainly there for recreational/informal learning and they do not see it as a major provider of vocational learning and helping people in to work

The key issues arising from the above are that:

- There is scope to improve marketing and business development to residents and businesses
- Develop relationships with the Job Centre and local colleges to encourage signposting to the ASCL service
- Focus on developing a greater vocational offer and as part of this promote the qualifications that learners will achieve and how these will help them in the workplace
- Review arrangements for supporting learners in to employment or further learning at the end of their courses
- Review the administrative arrangements when learners first engage with the service and around enrolment
- Focus on developing and promoting local and community based learning
- Further price rises should be considered carefully and reflect the nature of the course and the situation of the learner

From a business perspective the key messages were that:

- Skills are important, but in the current economic climate it is not a major issue for most businesses
- There were limited examples of skills shortages or gaps
- Central Bedfordshire is considered a good place to access a skilled workforce and develop skills, although there is scope to raise awareness of some of the opportunities that are available
- There is evidence of commitment to workforce development and planning for the future
- There is a demand for coordinated engagement with businesses and businesses will only engage if they can clearly see a commercial benefit to their business

- The current economic climate makes it difficult to see the skills agenda as a priority, but there is an openness to participate in new opportunities if they are relevant to the business
- Businesses that support apprenticeships are very positive about the importance of apprenticeships, the potential to recruit more apprentices and the calibre of the apprentices they employ. For these businesses, apprenticeships are essential to the growth and success of the business
- Commercial property agents do not consider Central Bedfordshire to be an area which has a lack of skills and an area in which the skills agenda will be a barrier to attracting inward investment
- Recruitment agencies do not have problems filling vacancies in the current economic climate, although there are some skills shortages and some vacancies where getting the right person with the required job and work skills is a challenge

Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy

Through the development of the Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy a number of focus groups were held with people out of work, those aged 50yrs+, adults with low skills, parents, adults with learning disabilities, physically disabled adults and BME groups. The general skills issues emerging from these groups were that:

- The concept of skills development is understood and considered important
- Skills development is not always associated with receiving a qualification which poses a potential barrier to encouraging people to take up qualification based skills development
- There are aspirations but a lack of optimism that these aspirations can be met, with little experience of being rewarded for developing their skills
- There is awareness of skills development opportunities and experience of workplace development, but scope to improve the quality of provision
- There is a lack of core skills and job finding skills for some of those that are out of work, have low skills or are on low incomes
- There is some demand for practical and financial support to develop skills and progress in work
- There needs to be improved employment prospects at the end of skills development to make it worthwhile
- Some participants raised concerns about the effectiveness of Job Centre Plus
- Some older people felt they had skills which were not being utilised by their employers and felt their age was a barrier to career progression and investment in skills development
- For parents on low income, childcare responsibilities and benefit issues meant that the incentive to develop their skills and progress their careers was limited
- For people with learning disabilities, the support they received to develop their skills and find suitable employment was considered positive – but demand seemed to outstrip the available resources

2012 Central Bedfordshire Business Survey

The specific issues emerging through the 2012 Central Bedfordshire Business Survey were that:

- One in every six businesses reported hard to fill vacancies in the past 12 months, representing an increase on previous years, with larger businesses more likely to have hard to fill vacancies

- Sales and marketing occupations, followed by construction and building trades were the hardest to fill vacancies
- Lack of skills, qualifications, experience and attitude were the main reasons for hard to fill vacancies
- Almost one in five businesses expected to have hard to fill vacancies in the next 12 months, representing an increase on previous years, with larger businesses more likely to expect to have hard to fill vacancies
- Construction and building trades is the area where there are expected to be the hardest to fill vacancies
- Almost half of businesses reported finding it difficult to obtain key skills when recruiting new staff, representing an increase on previous years
- About a third of businesses reported skills gaps in their existing workforce, with larger businesses more likely to have skills gaps
- About half of businesses provided their staff with off the job or on the job training in the past 12 months, which represents an upward trend over time, with larger businesses more likely to provide training
- A lack of identified need was the main reason for not providing training
- About half of businesses either have an apprentice or would consider having an apprentice, which is an improvement on previous years, with larger businesses more likely to have or consider having an apprentice
- About four in every ten businesses either offer or would consider offering work experience placements, with larger businesses more likely to do so
- About a third of businesses have links with local schools, with larger businesses more likely to do so

2012 Bedford Borough Business Survey

The preliminary findings from the 2012 Bedford Business survey show that:

- The number of businesses reporting hard to fill vacancies has remained pretty constant (7% in 2012, compared to 6% in 2011). 9% of the businesses surveyed expected to have hard to fill vacancies in the coming twelve months.
- A third of businesses had funded or arranged off-the-job training or development for staff (33% in 2012, 30% in 2011)
- On-the-job, informal training and development stayed much the same as last year at 40% (42% in 2011).
- Some 30% of Bedford businesses reported skills gaps amongst their existing staff, up from 25% in 2011
- 25% of Bedford businesses considered they had skills for growth needs (26% in 2011).
- 5% of Bedford businesses had employees on the Government Apprenticeship Programme (same as 2011).
- 20% would consider taking on an apprentice compared with 22% in 2011
- 13% offered unpaid work experience (compared with 19% in 2011) and 26% would consider offering such (compared with 28% in 2011)

7. Other Providers operating in Central Bedfordshire

In 2009/10 approximately 215 providers delivered SFA funded programmes in Central Bedfordshire to learners aged 16+ years, which equates to over 20,600 enrolments.

There were just over 15 providers delivering with more than 100 enrolments in 09/10 this includes the larger FE Colleges such as Central Bedfordshire College, Barnfield College, North Herts College, Milton Keynes college and Cambridge Regional

College. But also a number of private training providers such as Bedford Training Group and CiTB construction skills.

8. Big Society and Community/ Civic Engagement

The Big Society remains a key part of Government social policy, and it is recognised by BIS that ASCL has an important role to play in this development.

The Council could consider ways in which this agenda could work together with other agendas to help promote the Big Society vision in ways appropriate for people and communities in Bedfordshire, whilst also helping the ASCL Service meet its targets.

Self-organised groups are an important component of the Big Society vision, and ASCL providers are ideally placed to support learners in developing skills to run their own groups. The Council could consider setting a strategic priority to develop the Big Society and Community Engagement aspects of the ASCL curriculum, including developing civic engagement through training volunteers, community allotment courses, community learning champions, self-organised group facilitator training, school governor training, community leadership etc.

9. Voluntary & Community Sector in Bedfordshire and engagement

In the 2011/12 academic year the ASCL service began commissioning activity across a number of Skills Funding Agency funding streams. This resulted in 34 voluntary and community sector organisations being involved in the delivery of adult learning worth £250,378. Some of the organisations the service are working with are Mind, Autism Bedfordshire, Bedfordshire FA, Voluntary Community Action, Evolve Your Future, Family Groups, YMCA.

For the 12/13 academic year the Council has increased the level of funding being commissioned or delivered through partners to £450,000. This has resulted in 21 voluntary and community sector organisations working with ASCL to deliver effective Adult Learning.

The ASCL service is committed to working with the voluntary and community sector as an effective way of engaging harder to reach learners in local community based settings.

According to VCA's March 2012 report "Social What? Defining and Mapping the Characteristics of Social Enterprise in Central Bedfordshire" there are around 3,000 records of voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations operating within all or part of Bedfordshire. 166 organisations were identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises and of these, 55 organisations identified at least one or more of the following support needs:

- 18 Business plan development (33%)
- 3 Company registrations (5%)
- 6 Constitutions and governing documents (11%)
- 9 Financial management (16%)
- 9 Full Cost Recovery (16%)
- 30 Marketing and promotion (55%)
- 25 Partnership/Collaborative working (45%)
- 9 Public sector contracting and procurement (16%)
- 14 Quality Assurances (25%)
- 4 Social enterprise activity and trading (7%)

At Central Bedfordshire Council there are a number of initiatives aimed at helping the voluntary and community sector.

CB2 - Central Bedfordshire Capacity Building Project

The aim of the 18 month project is to support organisations to be more entrepreneurial, enabling them to respond to changes in core funding and to capitalise on proposals set out in the Localism Bill and Open Public Service White Paper. In particular, the project aims to support organisations to be able to deliver public sector services effectively. It is essential that organisations are supported to be able to deliver the services required, in an effective way, and in accordance with local authority expectations.

Through the CB2 project, Social Enterprise East of England (SEEE) will work intensively with ten organisations, providing support from an accredited business advisor, Micro coaching from trained and experienced social entrepreneurs, host visits to learn from similar organisations and, where there is sufficient demand, workshops on particular subjects.

Support through the Business Investment & Marketing Team

The Business Investment and Marketing Team signpost social enterprises and potential social entrepreneurs to a range of generic business support, including Business TimeBank and the ESF Building Enterprising Communities project, as well as to organisations specific to social enterprise such as BedSEN. They also encourage networking amongst organisations that support enterprise through the Pathways to Enterprise group.

Support through the Service Modernisation Team

The Team are aiming to encourage the establishment of small local microenterprises that could potentially deliver social care and support services on behalf of the local authority through a number of events. The microenterprise event aimed to raise awareness of microenterprise and to signpost those who are interested to mainstream business support.

10. Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG) in ASCL

An integrated approach to the delivery of IAG is, we believe, at the heart of developing the ASCL service. The ASCL service is Matrix accredited. Whilst there has been a lot of good work to date in embedding IAG into our curriculum offer we recognise that there is more we can do and that this will take time.

11. Fees

One of the key challenges facing the ASCL service is the need to ensure that Government funding is focused on the most disadvantaged, while ensuring that the offer is a universal one. Maximising fee income for those who can afford to pay is seen as a way of better of members of society supporting or subsidising those least able to pay.

In 2012/13 all fees are being held at the 2011/12 rates. Following a review of fees it is clear that current fee levels are at the higher end when compared to neighbouring Local Authority provision and local providers. Customer focus groups undertaken in summer 12 have also indicated that they consider fees to be at the top end of scale.

National changes to benefit entitlement has already impacted on the number of learners being able to join courses for free or at reduced rate. For some customers it appears that course fees “have gone up”.

For the ASCL service income from fees has reduced over the last three years.

12. Key emerging themes for Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough

Through the work on the strategic influences on ASCL both nationally and locally and through customer, resident and business feedback a number of emerging themes can be identified. These are summarised below:

- **The importance of skills to the most deprived areas, with improving skills levels and getting people into work being the key drivers for regenerating these communities**

As highlighted in Central Bedfordshire's Local Economic Assessment, Family Poverty Needs Assessment and the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis, parts of Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Leighton Buzzard, Sandy and Flitwick, are ranked within the 10% most deprived lower super output areas nationally in relation to education, skills and training. In these same areas, unemployment tends to be higher, child poverty more prevalent and health problems more pronounced.

Similarly, the Bedford Borough Economic Development Plan identifies hotspot areas of unemployment, deprivation and inequality. Parts of the Castle, Cauldwell and Harpur wards are amongst the 10% most deprived super output areas in England. A further seven super output areas are amongst the most 10-20% deprived nationally.

Addressing education, skills and training in these areas could have a significant impact on individuals, in terms of improving their chances of securing new or better employment which in turn influences their standard of living. By concentrating efforts on individuals in a particular geographical area, the overall impact on the area and its regeneration could be substantial.

- **Provision should focus upon the development of skills for employment, with clarity for learners on how provision links to employment opportunities**

A common theme within the Central Bedfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's Medium Term Plan is around maximising employment opportunities and ensuring individuals have the skills required to secure employment. This is further reflected in Central Bedfordshire's Economic Development Plan and All Age Skills Strategy, both of which emphasise the importance of local training provision that meets the skills needs of employers.

The importance of skills and employment are also highlighted in Bedford Borough's Sustainable Community Plan under the Thriving theme and in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Similarly, both the 2012 Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Business Surveys highlighted increasing numbers of businesses with hard to fill vacancies, skills shortages and skills gaps. This suggests a real need to work with individuals to ensure they have the skills required by employers.

The focus groups facilitated by Public Perspectives highlighted that both learners and non-learners are unclear how the provision offered by ASCL relates to employment opportunities, or how it can enhance their chances of securing employment. As such, consideration should be given to how to improve this awareness, both amongst those who may be looking to undertake training to improve their employment prospects and

amongst current learners with respect to progression (see further bullet points below):

'You need to get something out of the course . . . it has to be recognised by employers . . . for me it's got to help you get a job . . . from this it isn't clear whether that's the case . . . I feel like they don't market themselves as well as they should . . . they should be stressing how their courses have helped people to get a job . . . how many qualifications they've achieved.' Non-learner, Group 3 (Male, 35-54, White British)

With a focus upon learning for employment, it would be pertinent to embed employability skills within every course. This includes formal first steps to learning. Additionally, most of the learners who participated in the focus groups were keen to receive additional support to help them find employment:

'Ultimately surely this is what it's all about [to get you in to employment], brushing up on your skills and having a qualification is only half the battle.' Learner, Group 2 (Male, White British, Skills for Life learner)

Similarly, the focus groups held as part of the development of the Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy identified a similar attitude, with the learning needed to be seen as relevant to, and leading to, employment opportunities:

'I'm not against going back to college or getting a qualification . . . but there's got to be a benefit for me doing it . . . I'm not going to do it just for fun or because my employers says I should . . .' Female, Low skilled group

- **improvements need to be made to progression routes, including progression to other training, learning and employment**

One of ASCL's strengths, highlighted in the 2011 Ofsted report, is their ability to engage with a range of communities, including those in areas of disadvantage. The importance of this first engagement in learning should not be underestimated, but consideration needs to be given to how learners are supported on to the next stage of the journey, be it onto the next level of ASCL provision, or training offered by a college or other provider.

The Versa Review of the service highlighted that 83% of ASCL's delivery is focused on provision up to level 1. Moving learners on to level 2 and beyond should be a priority, particularly with a focus on skills for employment, as employers are increasingly seeking higher level skills, and given the relationship between skills levels, employment opportunities and poverty.

None of the learners who participated in the focus groups could provide examples of ASCL providing them with support to go on to further learning:

'I think they should do more marketing to current learners . . . I've never received information when I enrol about other courses and I've never received a call to see how things have gone and if I'd like to go on other courses . . . I think that's a shame . . . they have all our details . . . they should take advantage of that.' Learner, Group 1 (Male, Non-White British)

The importance of progression routes is further recognised in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills "New Challenges, New Chances: Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan". This is based around a number of core elements, of

which, a 'ladder of opportunity' from community learning and basic skills, to apprenticeships and further vocational education, is one.

- **Effective Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) is crucial and more should be provided as an integral part of all provision**

Linked to both of the above points is the importance of information, advice and guidance. IAG could support awareness of progression pathways and other training and support opportunities.

87% of learners who took part in the focus groups said that on enrolment they received appropriate information, advice and guidance on the learning opportunities available. Such IAG should be provided at the end of and at suitable points during, the course. Similarly, the focus groups identified concerns over the careers advice that was provided, with few individuals accessing this and those that did, considering this to be ineffective.

The consultation undertaken as part of the development of Central Bedfordshire Council's All Age Skills Strategy further emphasised the importance of IAG to ensure learners are aware of the skills and learning opportunities available and the employment pathways available.

- **The focus on particular age groups should be enhanced, specifically those aged 19-24 and those over 50+yrs**

One of the priorities identified in the Central Bedfordshire Economic Development Plan is around addressing youth unemployment. Similarly, the Local Economic Assessment has highlighted youth unemployment, given its high level compared to historic rates. In Bedford Borough, 18-24 year olds have also been identified as a priority group in relation to unemployment.

Research has also shown that those over 50 are more likely to experience long term unemployment.

As such, an argument can be made to target some provision at these particular age groups.

- **The training needs of businesses need to be recognised, addressed and tailored**

The importance of creating employment opportunities and maintaining an employment rate higher than the national average, are emphasised in Central Bedfordshire Council's Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's Medium Term Plan. It is acknowledged, particularly in the former document, that supporting businesses to train their workforce has a role to play. Similarly, the second priority in the Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy is about developing the current and future workforce. The importance of supporting businesses and developing a "quality and competitive workforce" are further included within the priorities of Bedford Borough's Economic Development Plan.

The in-depth interviews with businesses carried out by Public Perspectives showed that businesses who have used ASCL have been extremely impressed by their services:

'I would recommend them because I think they're spot on in what they do . . . I'm happy with them and so is the company . . . we are not interested in working with other providers because I have not seen anything better than what we already have.' Business working with the ASCL service

There is however, a lack of awareness of the service amongst businesses, and this is something that needs to be addressed if ASCL wish to increase the range and number of businesses they are involved with:

'I wasn't aware of them at all and I certainly didn't know they did this sort of thing . . .' Business not working with the ASCL service

- **Recognise the impact that learning can have on social wellbeing and where appropriate use as a gateway to economic wellbeing**

Health and wellbeing and independent living are recognised in their own strategies as well as being recurrent themes in strategies such as the Sustainable Community Strategies for both Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire Council's Medium Term Plan and Bedford Borough's Corporate Plan.

The focus groups further emphasised the social benefits that arise from participation in learning:

'The course has been excellent for me . . . it's the socialising and sharing things with people that have similar interests . . . My family lives 200 miles away from me . . . taking part in these classes has almost created another family for me.' Learner, Group 1 (Female, White British)

'I can't tell you how important it is for us . . . it gets you out of the house, gives you a sense of satisfaction and the socialising is important.' Learner, Group 1 (Female, White British)

In some circumstances, engaging with learners through more social activities may encourage an appetite for learning, which where appropriate, could be channelled towards learning for employment and economic reasons. Again, clear progression pathways, IAG and support with progressing into further learning or employment would be important.

Support for community learning is outlined in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills "New Challenges, New Chances: Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan". The Plan outlines a number of objectives relating to community learning, including increased confidence; improved/maintained health and/or social well-being and cites one of the purposes of funding this to be to "maximise the impact of community learning on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities".

13. Looking to the future

The below are the draft service priorities for the 13/14 academic year:

- To focus adult skills provision on those geographical areas with the highest levels of deprivation, tailoring delivery to meet the needs of individuals in

those communities through bite size periods of learning, that build confidence and an appetite for further learning

- All provision should focus on developing work skills with better support for learners to secure employment
- Delivery of work clubs to support unemployed adults into work
- Improve progression routes into next level training and into work
- Further embed Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) into the curriculum offer
- Provide particular support to those aged 19-24yrs and those over 50+yrs to find work and progress in employment
- Support workforce development through provision of flexible, needs led provision that meets locally identified business needs
- Recognise the impact that learning can have on social wellbeing and where appropriate use as a gateway to economic wellbeing

There are implications here for the provision of Learning for Leisure and Pleasure type activities. Any new strategy would need to involve careful transition planning with other local partners if the Council were to reduce its curriculum offer in this area.

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Appendix B

Snapshot of the Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning Service today

1 The ASCL service currently directly delivers or commissions a broad range of learning opportunities. 83% of delivery is up to Level 1, which is lower level skills (GCSEs in comparison are level 2 qualifications). The types of activities delivered include:

- **Family learning:** to enable parents to improve literacy & numeracy skills and achieve qualifications by building confidence, communication and employability skills and accessing provision of information, advice and guidance.
- **Support Into Work:** through Work Clubs across Leighton Buzzard, Houghton Regis, Dunstable and Biggleswade to support individuals at risk of redundancy. Specifically includes working closely with Housing Association tenants to tackle unemployment and offer employment information, advice and guidance.
- **Working with employers:** to improve literacy and numeracy levels within the workforce through to leadership and management training and promoting and supporting apprenticeships. Working with employers such as RAF Henlow, 3M, DHL and local schools
- **Careers advice:** to adults in areas such as returning to work, career changes and dealing with redundancy.
- **Working with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged:** through health and well being activities for older people, including delivery in day care centres, hostels and care homes. Working with the probation service to support learning in Bedford prison and activities to engage those with no skills or low skills and support them to gain confidence, qualifications and progression on to further learning or employment. Supporting learning through organisations such as MIND, Autism Beds and Sight Concern. Working with learners who through personal circumstances have the hardest and longest journeys to get back into work or those who have difficulty or disability enabling them to gain independent living skills
- **Learning for Leisure and Pleasure:** full cost recovery courses in a range of subjects from languages to floristry that promote health, well being, relaxation and learning for fun.

2. In the 2011/12 the service engaged with 4,603 learners in 7,155 learning activities through delivery in over 145 venues. 53% of learners are located across Central Bedfordshire, 35% in Bedford Borough and 12% from neighbouring authorities. The learner profile is fairly evenly distributed across wards throughout both Local Authority areas, although there is as would be expected higher levels in more urban areas. 71.88% of learners are female and 28.12% male, this is comparable to the gender split in other ASCL services. 35% of learners are aged 55+ years. The level of engagement of Black and Minority Ethnic learners is around 11% in Central Bedfordshire and 19.2% in Bedford Borough.
3. Throughout 2012/13 the ASCL service has undertaken a commissioning pilot which has seen £350,000 of activity being delivered by a broad range of local providers including voluntary and community sector organisations and private training providers. This has been used as a pilot to test out the approach, the market and establish a unit cost range for delivering provision.

Meeting: Executive
Date: 4 December 2012
Subject: Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme
Report of: Councillor Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing

Summary: The report proposes that Executive approve a Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme for Central Bedfordshire. The Scheme is intended to be a cost effective initiative aimed at improving the supply of good quality privately rented accommodation.

Advising Officer: Julie Ogle, Director of Social Care Health and Housing
Contact Officer: Nick Costin, Head of Service
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The proposals support the following Council priorities:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.
- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
- Value for money – freezing council tax.

Financial:

1. The Property Accreditation Scheme is to be administered within existing resources. The Housing Service currently provides housing standards advice to landlords. The accreditation scheme will require a different approach to existing service provision, rather than provision of a new service.
2. Improving the quality of rented accommodation in partnership with landlords is more cost effective in comparison to enforcement led approaches.

Legal:

3. The scheme will help ensure that more rented accommodation meets the legal requirements of the Housing Act 2004. The Council has legal responsibilities where high risk hazards are found in rented accommodation. A property accreditation scheme can help the Council meet those responsibilities through partnership and prevention, rather than enforcement.

Risk Management:

4. Reputational Risk:
There could be a reputational risk if properties are not of good quality with satisfactory management arrangements.

Financial Risks:

There could be a financial risk if costs are not contained within existing budgets.

Legal Risks:

Failure to comply with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 and the Localism Act, including failure to discharge legal responsibilities where high risk hazards are found in rented accommodation.

The identified risks will be managed within the implementation of the scheme.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

5. Not applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

6. The aim of the scheme is to improve quality of accommodation for private tenants and will not result in a disproportionately negative impact on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, women or men. The scheme should help provide more good quality accommodation as an option to vulnerable families potentially facing homelessness.
7. Public Authorities must ensure that decisions are made in a way which minimises unfairness, and without a disproportionately negative effect on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, women and men. An equality impact assessment has been completed. The assessment indicated no adverse effects on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, women or men.

Public Health:

8. The code of standards for properties accredited under the scheme should ensure that those properties have sufficient heating and insulation standards that prevent the incidence of cold related ill health.

Community Safety:

9. The Council has a statutory duty to do all that it reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder in its area. Community safety has a number of work areas where the availability of accommodation at a minimum standard is key to rehabilitating offenders e.g. Integrated Offender Management, or enabling victims that may need to relocate e.g. victims of domestic abuse. As such the Private Sector Property Accommodation Scheme supports the Council in its statutory duty.

Sustainability:

10. The Code of Standards applicable to the scheme will include requirements around the energy performance of the property to help prevent fuel poverty and high risk Excess Cold hazards. The scheme should encourage the ongoing maintenance of properties required to prevent more serious deterioration.

Procurement:

11. Not applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny:

12. This matter has been considered by Overview and Scrutiny on 23 January 2012. Members requested a number of alterations to the scheme and code of standards. These recommendations were incorporated into the draft scheme prior to consultation with landlords and letting agents.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **approve the Central Bedfordshire Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme.**

<i>Reason for Recommendation:</i>	<i>So that the Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme can be promoted and implemented to private landlords and lettings agents with properties in Central Bedfordshire.</i>
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Executive Summary

13. The private rented sector has a higher proportion of poorer quality properties but could provide a more significant role in the future if the Council decides to discharge homelessness duty to this sector. A property accreditation scheme could help improve quality of private rented accommodation through a partnership approach with private landlords.
14. The main aim of the scheme is to provide an incentive to landlords to raise the standard of their properties to higher than minimum requirements. The scheme provides recognition for accredited properties and provides greater re-assurance for tenants and prospective tenants.

15. The scheme was subject to comprehensive consultation with landlords and letting agents. The scheme has also been subject to an equalities impact assessment and has been benchmarked with schemes provided by other local authorities.
16. The Council will always need to provide a statutory enforcement role where required, however, improving the quality of rented accommodation in partnership with landlords is more cost effective in comparison to enforcement led approaches.

Background

17. The private rented sector has a higher proportion of poorer quality properties, evidenced through national stock condition surveys. However, the private rented sector could provide a more significant role in the future if the Council decides to discharge homeless duty to this sector. A property accreditation scheme could help improve quality of private rented accommodation.
18. The Audit Commission inspection of strategic housing services in 2010 recognised that property accreditation was only applicable to Let's Rent. The resulting Improvement Plan included a commitment to develop an accreditation scheme beyond Let's Rent.
19. Following presentation to Overview and Scrutiny in January 2012, the Scheme was subject to comprehensive consultation with landlords and letting agents. The Scheme has also been subject to an equalities impact assessment and has regard to a benchmarking survey of schemes provided by other local authorities.

Consultation Outcomes

20. 12 of 15 CIPFA family local authorities have implemented property or landlord accreditation schemes and many other local authorities operate such schemes. The schemes include a variety of conditions and incentives, which have helped form proposals for a Central Bedfordshire scheme.
21. 80% of all schemes offer accreditation free of charge. In addition, consultation indicated that 73% of respondents would not be prepared to pay for accreditation. It is proposed that Central Bedfordshire Council offer accreditation free of charge as the scheme helps provide a cost effective approach to improving the quality of private rented accommodation.
22. There was a "lukewarm" response to the question of the need for an accreditation scheme. However, 33% agreed that there was a need and all were landlords. No letting agents or property managers agreed that there was a need. However, the Scheme will be targeted at private landlords so this response should not prevent the Scheme being implemented. Appendix A provides a summary of consultation responses.

23. The consultation indicated that some landlords and letting agents had not fully understood the intentions of the scheme. Consequently, it is important to ensure clear communication and promotion of the scheme, and to encourage landlords to obtain accreditation for their properties. A communications plan has been developed with Corporate Communications team.

Scheme Proposals

24. The aim of the Scheme and benefits for the Council, landlords and tenants are included within the Property Accreditation Scheme Overview document (Appendix B). This provides the Scheme intentions but has to be read together with the Code of Standards (background paper), which sets out the standards required for accredited properties. The Scheme will focus on improving quality of accommodation above minimum standards.
25. Consultation, including feedback from Members, has influenced both documents. In particular, Members required the provision of carbon monoxide detectors in accredited properties, and required a re-inspection process that would help ensure that accredited properties do not deteriorate to unacceptable standards.
26. To ensure that properties meet quality standards, the intention is to accredit the property rather than the landlord, even though tenancy management is one aspect within the Code of Standards.
27. It is proposed that accreditation is provided at no cost to landlords as an incentive to apply for accreditation. The Scheme is a more effective use of resources as costs of improving quality of accommodation in partnership with landlords are lower than costs of enforcing standards. This approach also builds better relationships with landlords.
28. To reduce costs it is proposed that after initial property inspection, accredited properties are re-inspected annually on a sample basis. All properties will be inspected at least once every 3 years to ensure that quality is maintained.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Summary of consultation responses and comments

Appendix B – Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme Overview Document

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Report 23 January 2012
Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme

Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme Code of Standards

http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/12%2006%2029%20CBC%20Property%20Accreditation%20Scheme%20Code%20of%20Standards%20V10_tcm6-6688.pdf#False

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Appendix A – Summary of consultation responses and comments

Respondents to consultation suggested that the most popular benefits would be Landlords' Information pack, listing accredited properties on the Council's website and special rates for insurance cover. However, there was interest in all benefits to some degree.

Respondents were asked to provide any specific comments or concerns. Some are outlined below.

- a) Some responders felt that a scheme was not needed on the basis that it would provide additional regulation on landlords/agents. This is not the intention and the Council will have to ensure that the scheme and its benefits are communicated well.
- b) Some responders suggested that the scheme will not include and consequently not address poor quality, sub standard accommodation. However, the additional benefits of the scheme are intended to encourage improved quality where a landlord would not have previously considered it. A Property Accreditation Scheme, Loan Assistance for improvements, Advisory Service, and the use of Council enforcement powers (where appropriate) provide a suite of tools for dealing with the full spectrum of rented properties ranging from good quality housing to properties in the very poor condition.
- c) Some responders stated that they would not find a scheme cost effective. However, these comments are made on the assumption that the Council will charge a fee for accreditation. This is not proposed.
- d) There was a suggestion that accredited properties could be managed by the Council as part of a Social Lettings agency approach. Whilst the Council does not currently operate a Social Lettings Agency, acceptance into the Property Accreditation Scheme could lead to a property entering the Let's Rent Scheme by virtue of meeting the required property standards.
- e) Some responders stated a preference for Landlords' Accreditation, where the landlord is accredited for all properties managed. However, it is proposed that the Council needs to ensure the quality of each property accredited and to avoid the problems previously experienced with "self-certification". Consequently, it is proposed that the Council continues to provide the scheme as Property Accreditation.
- f) Members of Overview and Scrutiny had concerns relating to plans to re-inspect 10% of accredited properties on an annual basis. It was felt that this could lead to some properties not being re-inspected for a considerable period of time. Consequently, an undertaking was made to ensure that all properties would be re-inspected at least once every three years.
- g) Members required that all accredited properties should be required to fit devices for the detection of carbon monoxide gas.
- h) Members observed that feedback from the initial Landlords' Forum had highlighted that landlords wanted to work closer with the Council.

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Central Bedfordshire Property Accreditation Scheme

Overview (Draft)

A large decorative graphic consisting of two overlapping, rounded rectangular shapes. The top shape is a light green color with a fine grid pattern, and the bottom shape is a solid, medium green color. The shapes are positioned such that they overlap, with the solid green shape appearing in front of the grid-patterned one.

Central Bedfordshire Property Accreditation Scheme - Overview

Introduction

This scheme has been formulated by Central Bedfordshire Council following consultation with landlords, lettings agents and Members of the Council in 2012. The Council is committed to improving the quality of accommodation in the private rented sector and will work with private landlords and lettings agents to achieve this. This Property Accreditation scheme provides recognition for good quality rented accommodation and provides incentives for property owners to meet accreditation standards. The scheme is based upon one developed in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire following guidelines set out by the Accreditation Network – UK. It is aligned with the Housing Health and Safety Rating Standards contained within the Housing Act 2004, Government guidance, and the Decent Homes standards.

Aim of Scheme

The aim of this scheme is to

- Enable good quality homes for private sector tenants by working with landlords to ensure reasonable standards of accommodation and management are maintained.

This supports Central Bedfordshire Council's priority of;

- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable

Scheme Objectives

The objectives of this Scheme are:-

1. To raise standards in privately rented accommodation.
2. To raise tenant and landlord awareness about the standards required in privately rented accommodation.
3. To enable tenants to gain access to good quality accommodation.
4. To provide guidance for accreditation officers, landlords and tenants

What can the scheme offer landlords and lettings agents?

The Council recognises that there must be a range of benefits for property owners that will encourage applications to accredit rented properties. The following incentives are offered to owners of accredited properties. Landlords do not have to make use of the incentives.

1. Accredited Property Certificate for display within the property (with additional copies for landlords to provide prospective tenants). The certificate will have clear Central Bedfordshire Council branding.
2. A landlord's information pack containing helpful information about the Council and other agencies who might provide advice and assistance.
3. Fast track entry to the Council's Lets Rent scheme.
4. Special rates on malicious damage insurance cover.
5. Listing of accredited property on the Council's website and accompanying landlord's contact details.
6. Access to wider range of Home Improvement Loan Assistance packages including the standard version for improving properties beyond the basic legal minimum standard as well as an enhanced version to help non-complying properties reach the required standard. The enhanced version would require the landlord to agree to provide nomination rights (normally through the Lets Rent scheme). *This is subject to availability of Council funding at any particular time further details will be provided through a Home Improvement Assistance factsheet.*

The Council also aims to develop further benefits for owners of accredited properties. These could include provision of a Contractors' list, and provision of useful training/awareness courses.

How does a landlord enquire or apply for property accreditation?

A standard procedure will be followed for all enquires for Property Accreditation to ensure consistency but at any time the landlord can contact the Council to discuss any particular issues. Contact details are provided below. The standard procedure is as follows:

- An application pack will be sent to all landlords who request one.
- The Council will consider all applications from the private landlords with properties in Central Bedfordshire, who are interested in joining the Property Accreditation Scheme.
- The required standards are laid down in the Code of Standards which may be updated from time to time. The code of standards will be provided to the landlord.
- Upon the return of the forms to the Council, the application will be considered along with all the relevant documentation.
- All applicants will be treated with fairness, courtesy and openness.
- Accreditation will require an initial property inspection and thereafter a proportion of properties will be inspected each year so that all properties are inspected at least once every 3 years. All inspections will be by prior arrangement.
- Upon compliance with all the requirements of the code of standards (verified by the property inspection), a Certificate of Accreditation will be issued to the landlord for the property concerned.
- A list of all accredited properties will be published on the Council's website.
- If, during a random inspection the property is found to no longer comply with the code of standards, the certificate will become invalid and the property removed from the scheme.
- Should any tenant complaints be received concerning the accommodation or management standards, the Council will carry out a full investigation and action may be taken against the landlord, including removal from the Property Accreditation Scheme. However, the investigation will include consultation with the landlord concerning the issues reported to the Council.
- Should a landlord disagree with a decision by the local authority, they may appeal to the Appeals Panel.
- The Appeals Panel will be made up of three local authority representatives and three independent representatives.

A Fair and Transparent Procedure

- Members of the scheme will be provided with advice and information on a regular basis and on request.
- The landlords will be regularly consulted through the accreditation scheme regarding future private rented sector housing initiatives.

Contact us...

The scheme will be administered by the Council's Private Sector Housing Service. To contact us...

by telephone: 0300 300 8302

by email: customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or
psh@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

on the web: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

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

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 4 December 2012
Subject: Site Allocations Policy MA2 – Masterplan for Land at Steppingley Road and Froghall Road, Flitwick
Report of: Councillor Nigel Young, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development
Summary: The report proposes that Executive adopt the Masterplan as technical guidance for Development Management purposes.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Connie Frost-Bryant, Senior Planning Officer, Local Planning and Housing Team
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Flitwick
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The masterplan will support the CBC priority of:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.

Financial:

1. The creation of the Masterplan does not represent a financial burden on the Council. The costs for creating the Masterplan have been borne in their entirety by the site promoters. Furthermore, a Planning Performance Agreement (a collaborative project management tool) has been entered into which secured funding for the administration and supervision of the Masterplan and subsequent determination of future outline planning applications.

Legal:

2. The adoption of the Masterplan will provide technical guidance for Development Management purposes and in particular it will be a material planning consideration in the assessment and determination of planning applications made in respect of the Site.

Risk Management:

3. Policy MA2 of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) makes clear the requirement for the production of a Masterplan for the site. An adopted Masterplan will give more certainty to the development management process.
4. Risks, such as failure to deliver the Council's priorities, reputational risks, failure to discharge statutory responsibilities, failure of partnership working, and environmental and financial risks could also be incurred. The masterplan serves to minimise these risks by setting an agreed framework for development in advance of the planning applications and then onwards through to implementation.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

5. Not Applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

6. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and to foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
7. The Site Allocations DPD Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) highlighted the need for:
 - The delivery of housing and employment in towns and villages throughout the north of Central Bedfordshire.
 - The selection of housing sites on the basis that that future residents live in locations close to services and public transport routes.
 - Provision of land for community facilities.
 - New employment units allocated close to centres of population in order to increase job opportunities locally and help to address unemployment and out-commuting.
8. The DPD EIA concluded that the emphasis placed on ensuring that developments are allocated within sustainable locations and ensuring that residents are able to access employment opportunities, facilities and services to meet their everyday needs should help to ensure a positive impact for all sections of the community.
9. Section 35 of the report highlights the key objectives of the Masterplan, many of which will address key equality issues.

Public Health:

10. The new development has the potential to improve the health and wellbeing of those living within Flitwick and surrounding areas as the new cycling and pedestrian routes that are proposed will allow people to use sustainable modes of transport. The level of public open space that is to be provided on the site which is in excess of the requirements, will also contribute to health and wellbeing.

Community Safety:

11. Key objectives within the Masterplan have the potential to impact on community safety e.g. housing, employment, connectivity, public open space and play areas. The Council will need to ensure that it carefully considers those implications and complies with its statutory duties under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act to do all that it reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder in its area; and to ensure that all plans fulfil the criteria set down for community safety within the adopted Central Bedfordshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

Sustainability:

12. Within the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD for Central Bedfordshire (North), Flitwick has been identified as a major service centre capable of accommodating additional housing and employment provision. The proposed development would contribute toward the vitality and viability of local facilities thereby reducing the need to travel. The Site Allocations DPD has also been the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Procurement:

13. Not Applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny:

14. In response to the report to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 18 October 2012, Members discussed the following issues in detail:-

- (a) **Whether young people had been consulted on the type of equipment to be provided in the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and the extent to which young people had commented as part of the consultation.**

In response it was confirmed that Flitwick Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council's Leisure Services Team, had been consulted for their views on the type of equipment to be provided in the MUGA and that further discussions would be undertaken during the planning application stage. It was however acknowledged that as is usual, there had been limited responses from young people during the public consultation although opportunities had been made available. To remedy this, the developer has committed to undertaking some consultation with the local Youth Parliament. It is hoped that a meeting can be convened in advance of the Executive and that the results of such a meeting may be reported verbally if required.

- (b) **The percentage of homes that would be affordable in the development.**
The Council confirmed that in the first instance it would seek to deliver 35% of homes as affordable in accordance with the policies set out in paragraph 35(b) of this report.
- (c) **Concerns that there had been little attempt made to show how the concerns and responses received through the consultation had been taken into account.**
Whilst Members did not feel a recommendation was necessary it was requested that in the future more detailed responses be provided detailing how consultation responses had been taken into consideration and any action that was intended to be taken. In direct response to this concern, an additional column has been added to the consultation responses summary table in the Statement of Community Involvement (Appendix D).
- (d) **The proposed height of properties in the development.**
The masterplan has been formulated on the basis that most dwellings would be no higher than two and a half storeys (with living space extended into the roof); unless there was a specific design based rationale for a taller building, for example as a gateway feature.
- (e) **The importance of ensuring effective connectivity and usage of shared space.**
The masterplan indicates a main spine road which then filters down to smaller shared space roads and lanes to allow direct access to all properties. This hierarchy of streets will ensure good movement through the site whilst capturing the positive safety and visual benefits that shared space principles offer to all road users.
- (f) **The importance of pathways being designed so as to minimise community safety concerns.**
The masterplan ensures that all footpaths in the development are designed so that houses front on to them, thus providing good natural surveillance.
- (g) **The effective use of noise contours to minimise disruption to residents living adjacent to the railway.**
The masterplan makes no provision for residential development beyond the noise contour closest to the railway line (see plan at Appendix B) as in this zone no soundproofing mitigation measures could be effective in reducing noise levels to those acceptable for residential development. The masterplan instead makes provision for the employment element of the scheme to be located in this area.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. adopt the masterplan as technical guidance for Development Management purposes.**

<i>Reason for Recommendation:</i>	<i>To meet the housing requirements for Central Bedfordshire (North) for the period up to 2026 as set out within the adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD.</i>
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Executive Summary

15. The Executive is asked to adopt the masterplan as technical guidance for Development Management purposes. The comments from Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are set out in paragraph 14.

Purpose of the Masterplan

16. The production of a masterplan was a requirement of Policy MA2 of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2011). The Masterplan provides the background and policy context for the site and its allocation. It sets out the aims for the development to deliver and identifies the constraints and opportunities which the subsequent outline planning application must address.
17. It is a high level document, whose purpose is to set out general principles; the more concentrated and detailed work will be a matter to be addressed at the planning application stages of the process.
18. Once adopted, the Masterplan will then support the submission of an Outline Planning Application and assist Development Management in determining that application.

Background

19. The Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan (2005) identified the Valley Farm site on Steppingley Road as safeguarded or “white land” to be excluded from the Green Belt.
20. In November 2009, the Council adopted the Core Strategy and Development Management DPD following an Examination in Public in June/July of the same year. The Core Strategy required the delivery of at least 17,950 new homes between 2001 and 2026 with 5,000 new homes required in addition to those already committed (such as those allocated in the Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan 2005).
21. Of these 5,000, the Core Strategy stated that 500-700 should be provided in Flitwick (Policy CS5) with the Safeguarded Land identified as being brought forward to accommodate these new homes. The Plan also noted that these should be brought forward early in the plan period which ran up to 2026, as new housing would support the town centre redevelopment and also benefitted from its location close to the mainline railway station.

22. In April 2011, the Council formally adopted the Site Allocations DPD (for the former Mid Bedfordshire Area) following an examination in October 2010. Policy MA2 of the Central Bedfordshire Site Allocations DPD (April 2011) allocates Land at Steppingley Road and Froghall Road, Flitwick (also known as Valley Farm) for the development of a minimum of 450 dwellings and at least 1.1 hectare of B1 and B2 employment land.
23. It is now considered after completing a detailed design based appraisal of the site that it is only capable of delivering up to 400 homes. The reduction in housing numbers is deemed necessary in order to deliver a mix of family sized accommodation at a lower density than the standard 35 dwellings per hectare density that has previously been adopted to estimate site capacities. This approach has been welcomed at the various consultation events that are outlined in paragraphs 26 to 34 below.
24. Clearly a slightly lesser number of houses will be delivered on this particular site; but through the production of the housing trajectory, the overall picture in terms of housing delivery is monitored and reviewed on an annual basis, thus providing the opportunity for any shortfall in the five year supply to be addressed. However, this usually balances out, as some developments deliver in excess of their target figure and others come forward slightly earlier than was originally phased. In any event, any identified shortfall in the overall totals for the plan period up to 2031 can be met by the developments that are being put forward through the emerging Development Strategy.
25. A Planning Performance Agreement has been entered into between Central Bedfordshire Council and the site promoters, Old Road Securities Plc. The Agreement identifies a shared vision and sets out key milestones and timescales for the delivery of a planning decision. Whilst it offers certainty in terms of project management, it does not offer any guarantee that planning permission will be granted.

Consultation

26. Various stakeholder meetings have been convened to inform the preparation of the Masterplan.
27. A presentation meeting was held for local ward Members, Flitwick Town Council and Council officers in December 2011 with the purpose of initiating the development of the masterplan and informing those involved of the opportunities and constraints that the site presented. These are further outlined in paragraphs 36 and 37 below.

28. Using the comments and feedback gained from this session a second whole day seminar involving stakeholders was held in February 2012. This also included a presentation but used a focus group format on specific topic based areas to explore the issues in further detail. The groups were well attended and involved members and officers of the Council. The topics comprised of the following themes:
- Urban Design/ Masterplanning
 - Open Space and Green Infrastructure
 - Transport & Connectivity
 - Employment
29. A dedicated website was launched in advance of the public consultation (www.valleyfarmflitwick.co.uk); with the purpose of providing general information, plans and also a platform for the subsequent public consultation and exhibition material.
30. Formal public consultation commenced on 7 September 2012 and ran for a period of four weeks until 6 October 2012.
31. As part of this, a two day public exhibition was held during the afternoon and evening of Friday 7 September and during the day on Saturday 8 September to inform local residents and the wider public about the proposals and allow them to comment on the masterplan. The timing of the exhibition outside working hours was designed to give everyone who was interested in the proposals the best opportunity of attending the exhibition.
32. The exhibition was also attended by those tenants whose properties adjoin the site, ward members, town councillors and the Chair of the adjoining parish council, Steppingley Parish Council.
33. Following this, a static unmanned exhibition together with comments forms was maintained for the first fortnight of the consultation period at the Rufus Centre in Flitwick and then from 24 September onwards at the public library in the centre of the town. This gave the exhibition material increased coverage in the town and ensured that paper copies were viewable at all times during the consultation period.
34. The consultation and publicity of the masterplan proposals was carried out in compliance with the Central Bedfordshire Draft Statement of Community Involvement (June 2012).

The Masterplan

35. As a high level visual and spatial plan which sets out general principles, the Masterplan (Appendix A) is succinct in its nature and is comprised of three themed plans showing movement; landscape, open space and play areas; and built form and character. The masterplan seeks to achieve the following key objectives:

- (a) **Housing:** - A target of up to 400 new dwellings to be delivered across the site. As discussed in paragraph 23, this is a lower figure than that which was stipulated in Policy MA2 of the Site Allocations Plan, but reflects the current approach of ensuring that reasonably sized family accommodation, and adequate car parking and landscaping can be delivered on new housing sites. This will include the provision of a range of housing types and sizes, including those to support an ageing population based on an assessment of the need in this area in accordance with Policy DM10 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD and Policies 30 and 34 of the emerging Development Strategy. Densities will vary across the site to allow the creation of different character areas in order to give the development a sense of place.
- (b) **Affordable Housing:-** In accordance with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD and Policy 32 of the emerging Development Strategy, the objective is to deliver 35% of the total number of houses as affordable. A mix of tenures will be required which could include social rent, affordable rent, and intermediate tenures having regard to housing needs and best available evidence.
- (c) **Employment –** The site is allocated for 1.1ha of B1 (offices and light industry), B2 (general industry) or bulky goods retail. In accordance with Policy 7 (Employment Sites and Uses) of the emerging Development Strategy, and in order to ensure that the site delivers new jobs; some flexibility will be afforded to non-B employment-generating uses, which could include C2 (residential institutions) or D1 (non-residential institutions).
- (d) **Planning Obligations:** - The site promoters are to enter into a planning obligation in order to make contributions towards necessary facilities and services in accordance with Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD. This will include the provision of additional school places as required. These contributions will be provided through entering into a S106 Agreement with the Council in accordance with the Planning Obligations SPD or any future Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule. As well as new school places, the planning obligation will, where appropriate, also include contributions towards sustainable transport measures, healthcare, sport and recreation facilities, local community facilities and any other requirements as agreed by the Council. Draft Heads of Terms are to be agreed and submitted with the Outline Planning Application.

- (e) **Connectivity across the site:** - The scheme allows for convenient movement for residents, while ensuring through the use of surfacing, road layout and low speed limits that routes through the site will not be used as a 'rat-run'. A central spine road will allow a bus to travel through the site to connect the new housing with the town centre. The minor streets and lanes which flow off this will where appropriate be shared surfaces to make for an attractive, legible and safe development for all. The existing public footpath linking Windmill Road to Froghall Road will be retained and enhanced to create an attractive green corridor and the opportunity to link to the pedestrian network either in the direction of Flitwick town centre to the south or Ampthill to the north.
- (f) **A Safe Route to Redborne Upper School** – The masterplan shows the creation of a pedestrian footpath along the boundary of the site which fronts Froghall Road. This picks up the proposed footpath network throughout the site and links with the existing public footpath route. It then continues underneath the railway bridge onwards towards the school in Ampthill. The need to create a footpath of a safe width under the bridge has meant that a one way shuttle system controlled by traffic lights must be employed for vehicular access. The speed limit on Froghall Road would also be lowered from 60mph to 30mph for the safety of cyclists and pedestrians and to reflect the new residential character of this area. This solution will be further tested through the Transport Assessment which must be submitted alongside the outline planning application. Further detail about the design of this route can be found in the plan at Appendix C.
- (g) **Integration with the existing neighbourhood:** - The site is not adjacent to other residential development other than the three cottages that front the site, but instead adjoins the community uses of the Rufus Centre and Flitwick Leisure Centre. The successful integration of new housing with the existing community, both physically and socially will be aided by this accessibility to key services and also by the pedestrian links that are outlined in point (e) above.

- (h) **Public open space and play areas** – A total of 3.16ha of open space will be delivered across the site. This provision slightly exceeds the level required by the Council’s adopted standards. Two new children’s play areas will also be created and will help to address the existing deficiency in play space to the north of the town. Currently there is no provision within 15 minutes walk of an area stretching from Beaumont Road to The Paddocks in the north of Flitwick. This is plotted spatially on plans titled ‘Children’s Play Provision’ on p13-14 in Appendix B. One of the play areas will be a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) which caters older children and includes at least eight pieces of play equipment. The other will be a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) which is suitable for children aged from 3-8 years and includes at least five types of equipment. The masterplan also shows a Multi Use Games area on the site which accommodates a range of team sports activities. It has been agreed that this will now be delivered off-site on the adjacent Flitwick Leisure Centre land to increase accessibility and usage. The Section 106 Legal Agreement will make provision for a commuted sum to be paid by the developer to deliver this facility. The terms of the agreement will also ensure that the money will be ring fenced for this use whether the plans to relocate the existing leisure centre come to fruition or not.
- (i) **Drainage** - The developer will be required to deliver a comprehensive and appropriate Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) scheme for the site that complies with best management practice for SuDS in order to limit surface water run-off. A surface water attenuation area and pond will be delivered on the eastern corner of the site as part of this wider drainage management strategy.

36. The technical work (Appendix B) which informed the creation of the Masterplan identifies the constraints which any future planning application will have to consider. These consist of:

- Existing landscape and aboricultural features.
- The railway line and resulting noise contours.
- Water mains and easements.
- Electricity cables.
- Surface water and drainage.
- Highway capacity issues.

37. The draft Masterplan itself (Appendix A) also identifies the opportunities which any future planning application will have to consider. These consist of:
- New homes for Flitwick.
 - Well-designed homes and spaces.
 - Informal green space.
 - Two new children's' play areas and a Multi-Use Games Area on the adjacent Leisure Centre site.
 - Reduced vehicle speeds and safe access along Froghall Road.
 - Better environment and connections for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - New commercial units/ other employment generating uses.
 - A new bus route.
 - Improved access to the countryside.
 - Improvements to existing drainage.

Analyses from the Consultation Exercise

38. The summary of results of the public consultation exercise can be found at Appendix D within the Statement of Community Involvement.
39. In brief, over 100 visitors attended the exhibitions and 32 responses were submitted either at the exhibition on the feedback forms provided, or by letter or e-mail in the weeks that followed. A number of copies of a response on behalf of the residents group Flitwick at the Crossroads (FATCRAG) were received. This raised concerns in relation to the provision of community infrastructure and increased traffic; and sought additional detail on matters like house types which would not be included within a Masterplan. A letter was also received from Nadine Dorries MP noting the exhibition and her intention to view the exhibition boards during the consultation period.
40. The high level of attendance and interaction by those who attended the exhibition showed that there is a good level of interest in the scheme proposals and the Masterplan.
41. Despite this overall interest, the consultation on the Masterplan itself received very little direct feedback with the overwhelming majority of comments being about the principle of development, or what residents would like to see included within the application or addressed by the S106 legal agreement. This again suggests that the content of the Masterplan itself is not contentious.

42. In addition, 5 out of the 32 respondents gave positive feedback, and a further 2 gave neutral responses to the masterplan proposals. This lack of contention, may in part be due to the fact that principle of development in this location is well established in the town, as the site has been promoted as an area for the expansion of Flitwick for the last two decades.
43. The majority of comments received, related to concerns about suitable infrastructure provision particularly in relation to local schools and doctors surgeries; and increased traffic congestion around the site caused by additional vehicles and the proposed shuttle arrangement under the Froghall Road railway bridge.
44. While these comments are valuable, they are not pertinent to informing the Masterplan given its purpose as a high level document which identifies key principles for development. The first set of concerns will be addressed by the S106 legal agreement which will ensure that suitable infrastructure is provided through planning contributions and the latter by the Transport Assessment which must be submitted alongside the Outline planning application.
45. Other comments related to parking provision, surface water drainage and build standards. Parking will be provided in accordance with the current parking standards for Central Bedfordshire, drainage will be addressed by a comprehensive SuDS scheme as discussed in section 35 (i) and build standards will be determined by the current Building Regulations in conjunction with the relevant Development Plan policies.

Proposed Changes

46. The first change made to the Masterplan (Appendix A) as the result of consultation was to remove the Multi Use Games area from the plan following a consultation response as detailed in section 35 (h). It is proposed that this facility is now delivered on the adjacent Flitwick Leisure Centre land by payment of a commuted sum. Furthermore this approach has the full support of Flitwick Town Council.
47. The second change relates to a consultation response submitted by residents of the adjacent farm properties for additional hedge planting. This is referenced in the Statement of Community Involvement (Appendix D) in the summary of consultation responses (Appendix 8), at response number 16. The masterplan now makes provision for the insertion of a replacement low level hedge from the public footpath to the north east corner of the site parallel to Froghall Road. The hedge will have root ball protection so as not to damage the water main and drainage infrastructure and will also be relatively low due to safety audit observations (maximum 900mm- 1200 mm). The function of the hedge is to soften the visual impact of the development by providing a green transition from the site to the road, and open countryside beyond. It will also serve to increase safety, as it will separate users of the path from the road traffic, whilst still enabling good surveillance of pedestrians using the path.

Conclusions

48. Whilst the level of direct feedback on the Masterplan was relatively low, it is testimony to the endeavours of the stakeholder working groups who have listened to and reflected local opinion in the emerging document. Great consideration has been afforded to the feedback from consultation at all stages in informing and creating the masterplan so it is therefore concluded that as a technical document, the Masterplan is fit for development management purposes and should be adopted as such by this Committee.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Masterplan

Appendix B – Background Technical Data

Appendix C – Froghall Road Plan

Appendix D – Statement of Community Involvement

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Landscape, Open Space & Play Areas

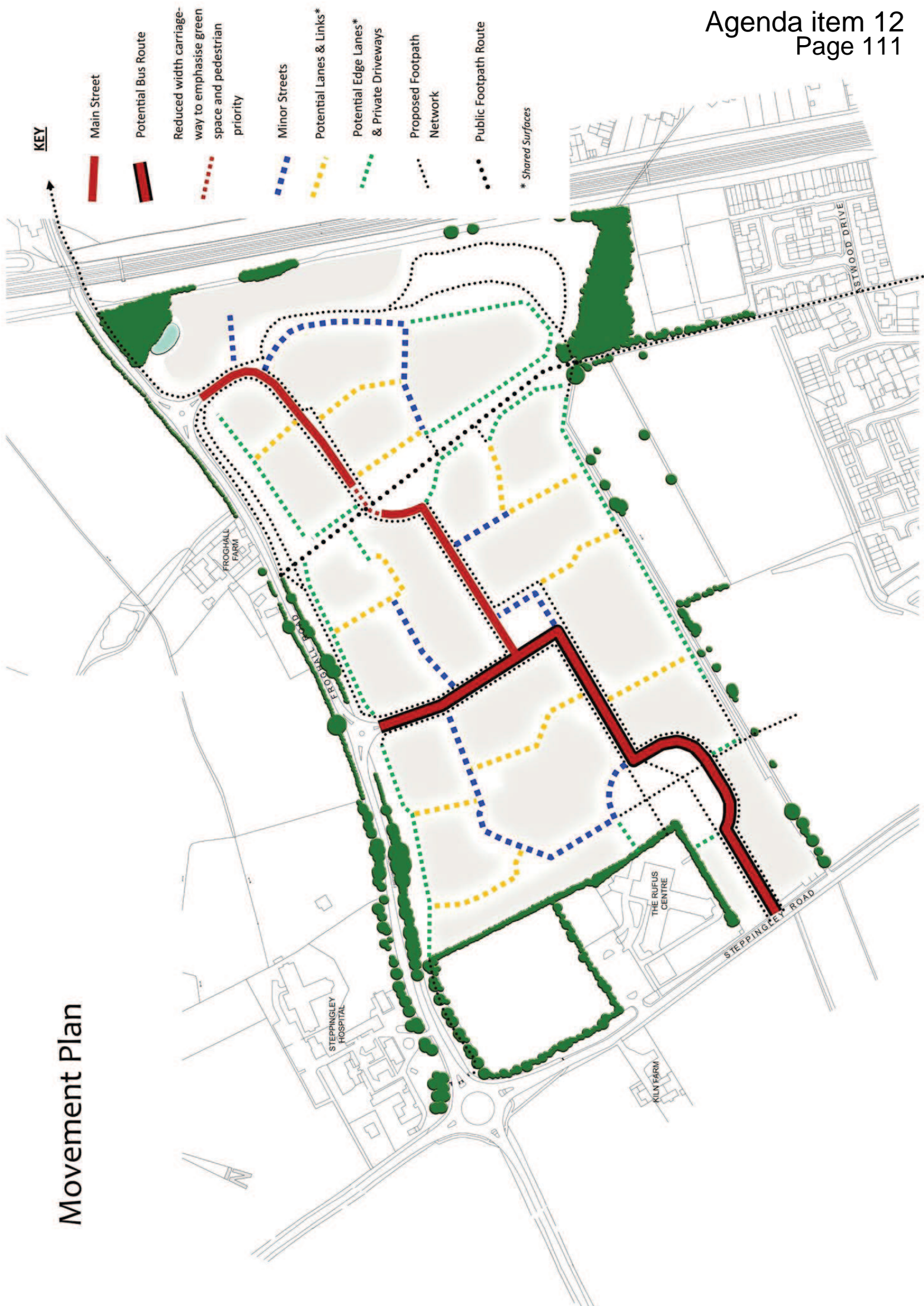
KEY

- Children's Equipped Play Space:
- N = NEAP + Super LAP
- L = LEAP + Super LAP
- LAP = up to 6 years
- LEAP = 4 to 8 years
- NEAP = older children
- Existing Trees & Hedges
- Existing Pond
- Proposed Trees
- Open Space
- Surface Water Attenuation Area
- Proposed Footpath Network
- Public Footpath Route
- Proposed new Hedgerow (1.2m High)



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Movement Plan



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Built Form & Character

KEY







1. Land Budget

-  Residential gross developable (approx. 11.25ha)
-  Commercial (1.1ha)
-  Open Space (3.16ha)

2. Character Areas

-  Boulevards & Open Spaces
-  Streets & Links
-  Froghall Road Frontage
-  Edges
-  Commercial

3. Features

-  Gateway
-  Dual Frontage building form/corner features
-  Focal Buildings
-  Formal Squares and opportunities for 2.5 storey elements
-  Existing Cottages to be retained
-  'Farmyard' Courtyards (single storey)



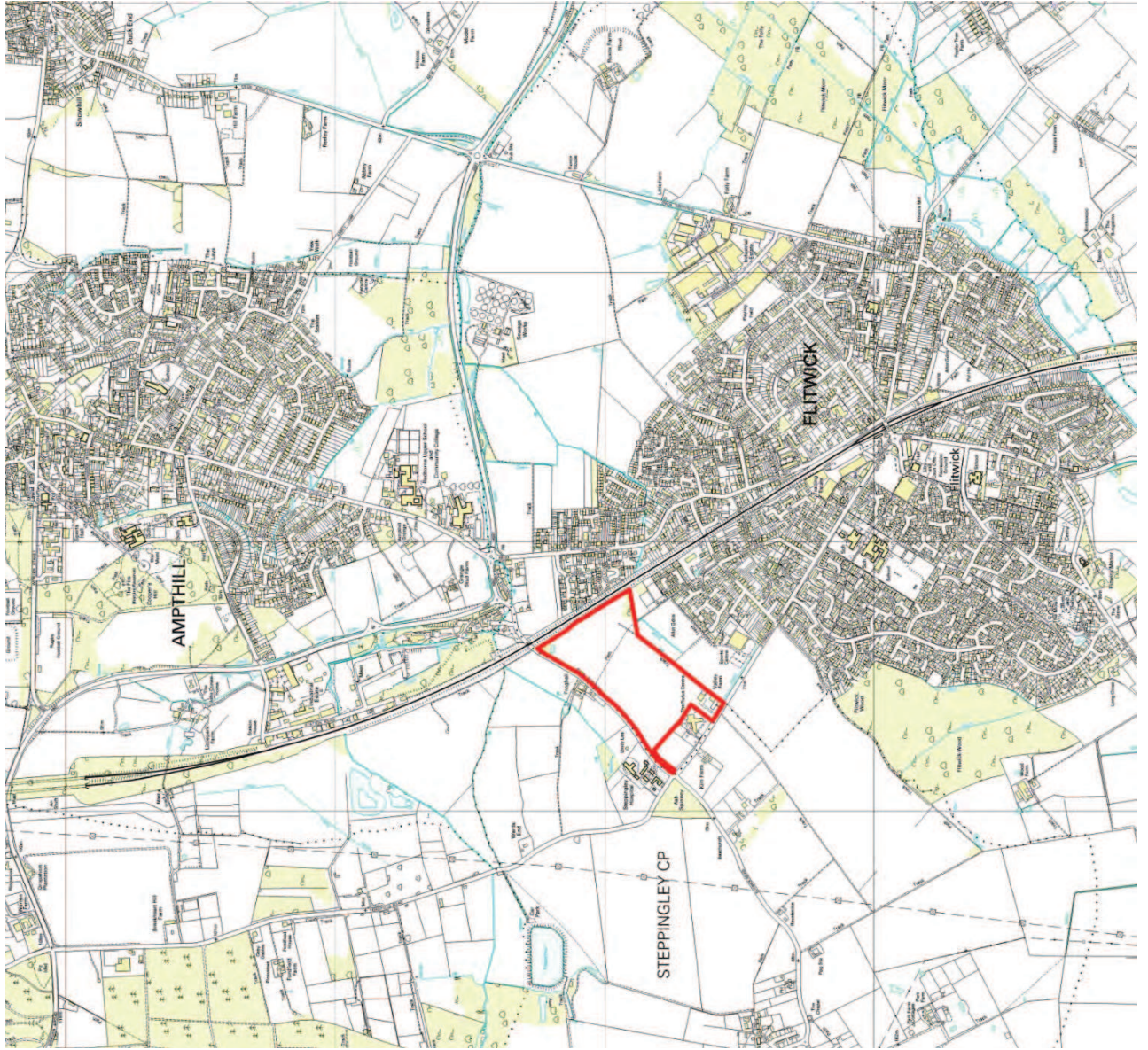
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Appendix B - technical data



















Land at Valley Farm,
Steppingley Road/
Froghall Road, Flitwick

Location Plan

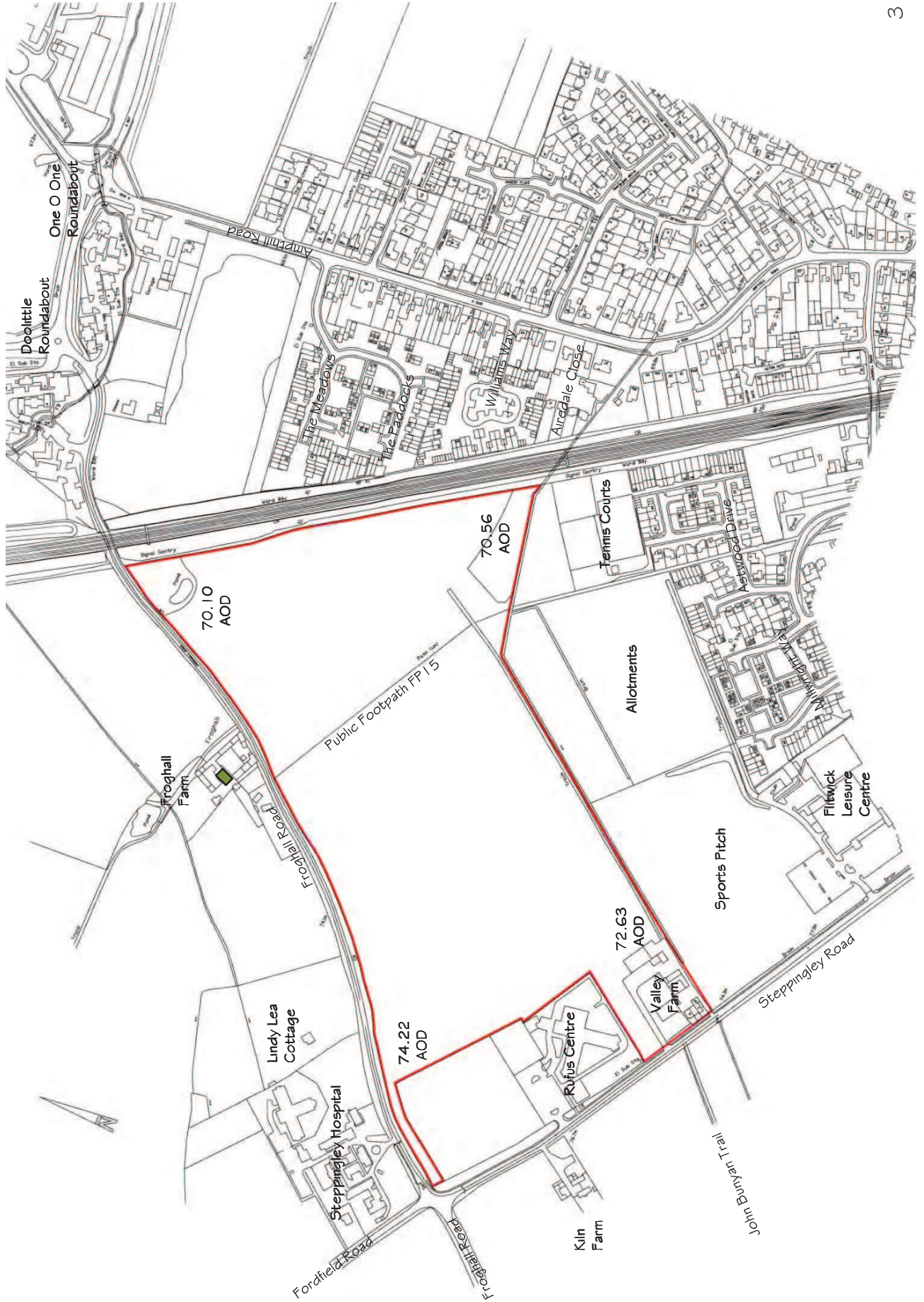




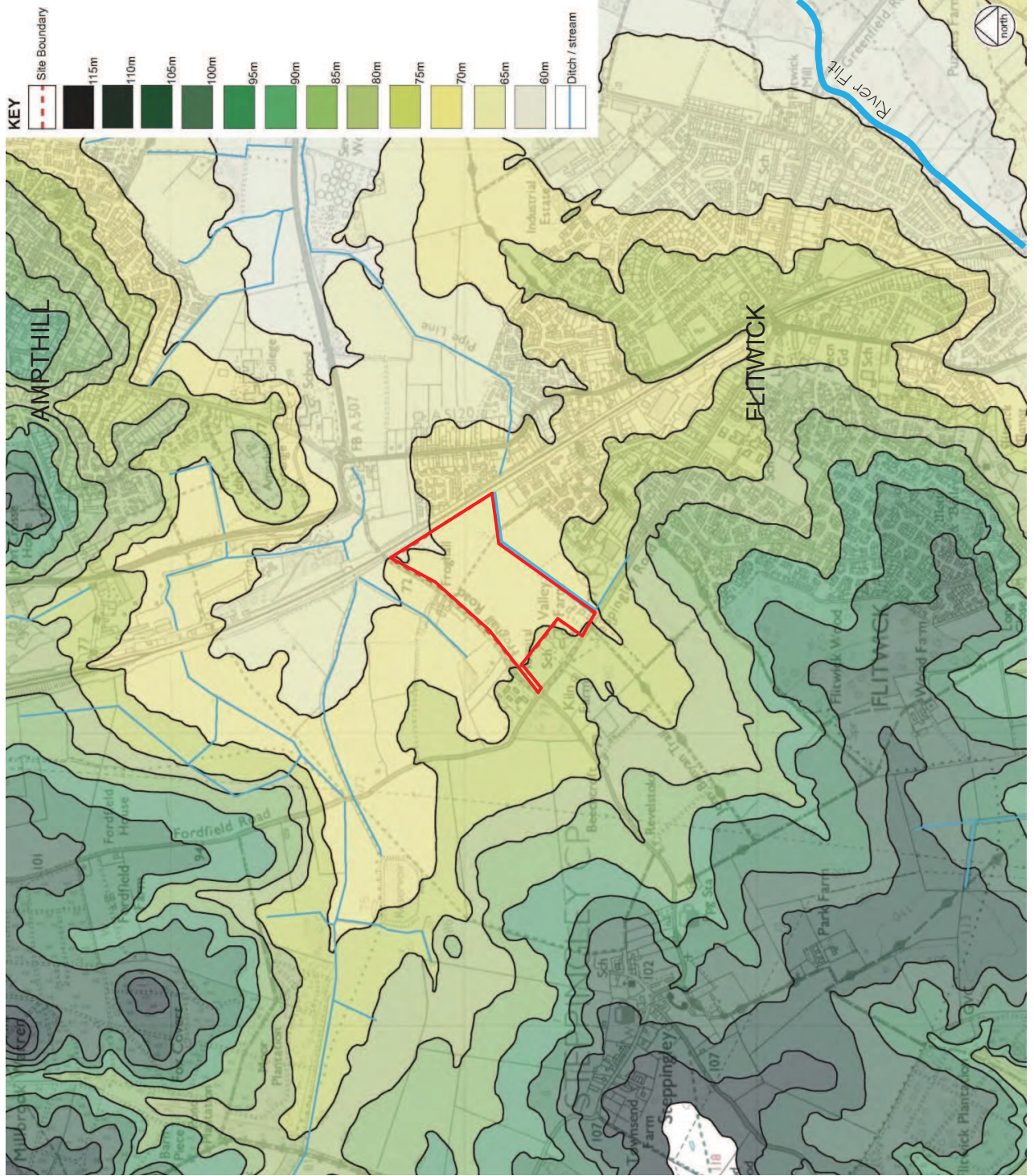
Policy Context

CS3/DM17		Open Space, Sports and Recreation (PPG17 Study) Style may vary - area, line or point depending on type. Refer to study for clarification of individual sites.
CS12/DM7		Town Centre
CS13		Floodplain (Floodplain on Side A&B is solid blue) Floodplain maps 2006 as published by the Environment Agency. Probability of Flooding 0.1 - 1.0%. www.environment-agency.gov.uk
CS15/DM13		Conservation Area
CS15/DM15		Historic Parks and Gardens Source: English Heritage. www.english-heritage.org.uk
CS18/DM15		CWS/LNR Source: LNR - Natural England. www.naturengland.org.uk CHS - Biodiversity and Recording Monitoring Centre
CS18/DM15		SSSI/NNR Source: Natural England. www.naturengland.org.uk
CS18		Local Geological Sites (Previously RIGS Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites) Source: Biodiversity and Recording Monitoring Centre
DM4		Settlement Envelope
DM5a		Important Open Space
E1		Key Employment Site
EA		Employment Allocation
HA		Housing Allocation
MA		Mixed Use Allocation
RA		Recreational Allocation
TC2		Town Centre - Flitwick

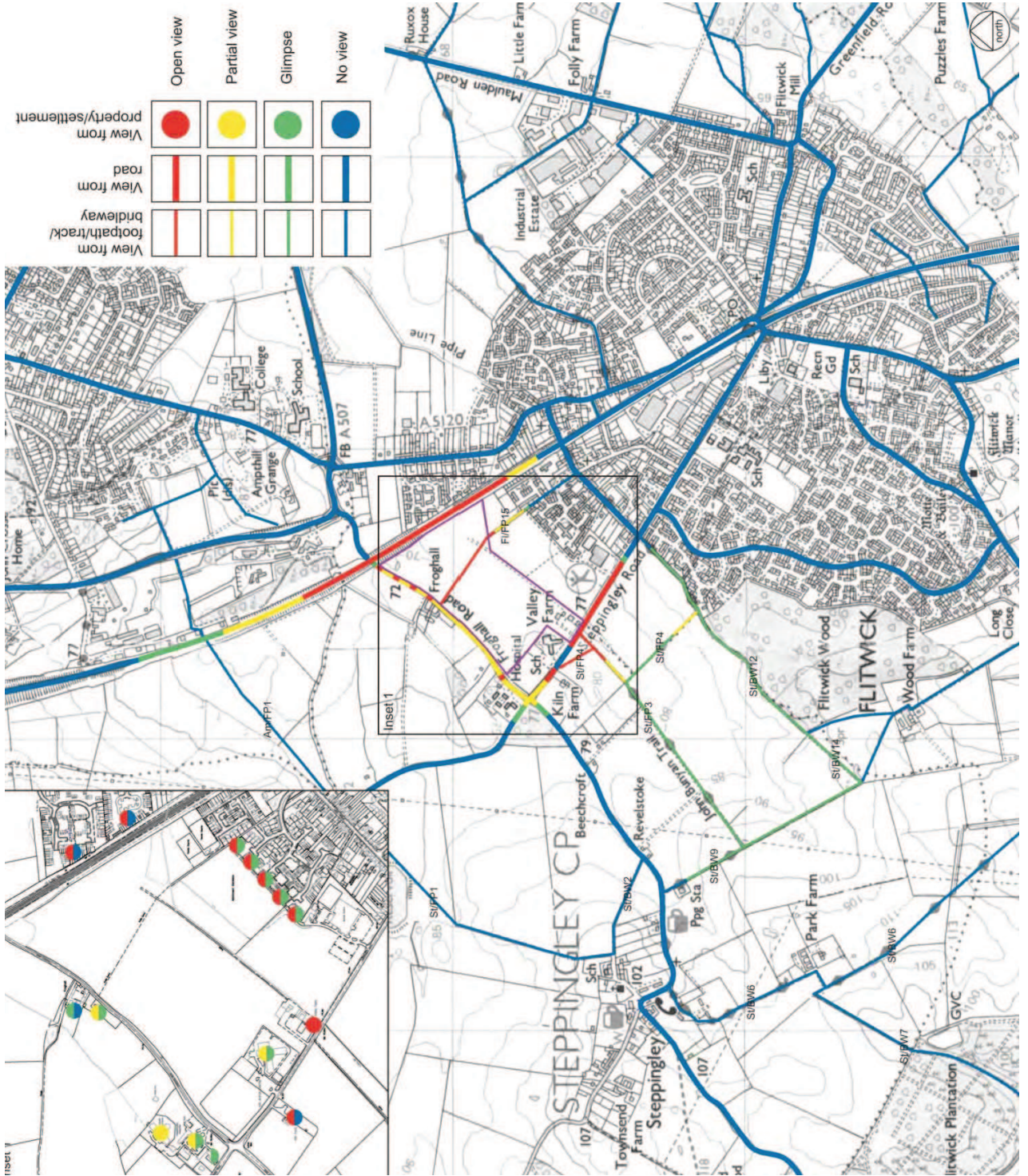
Location Plan



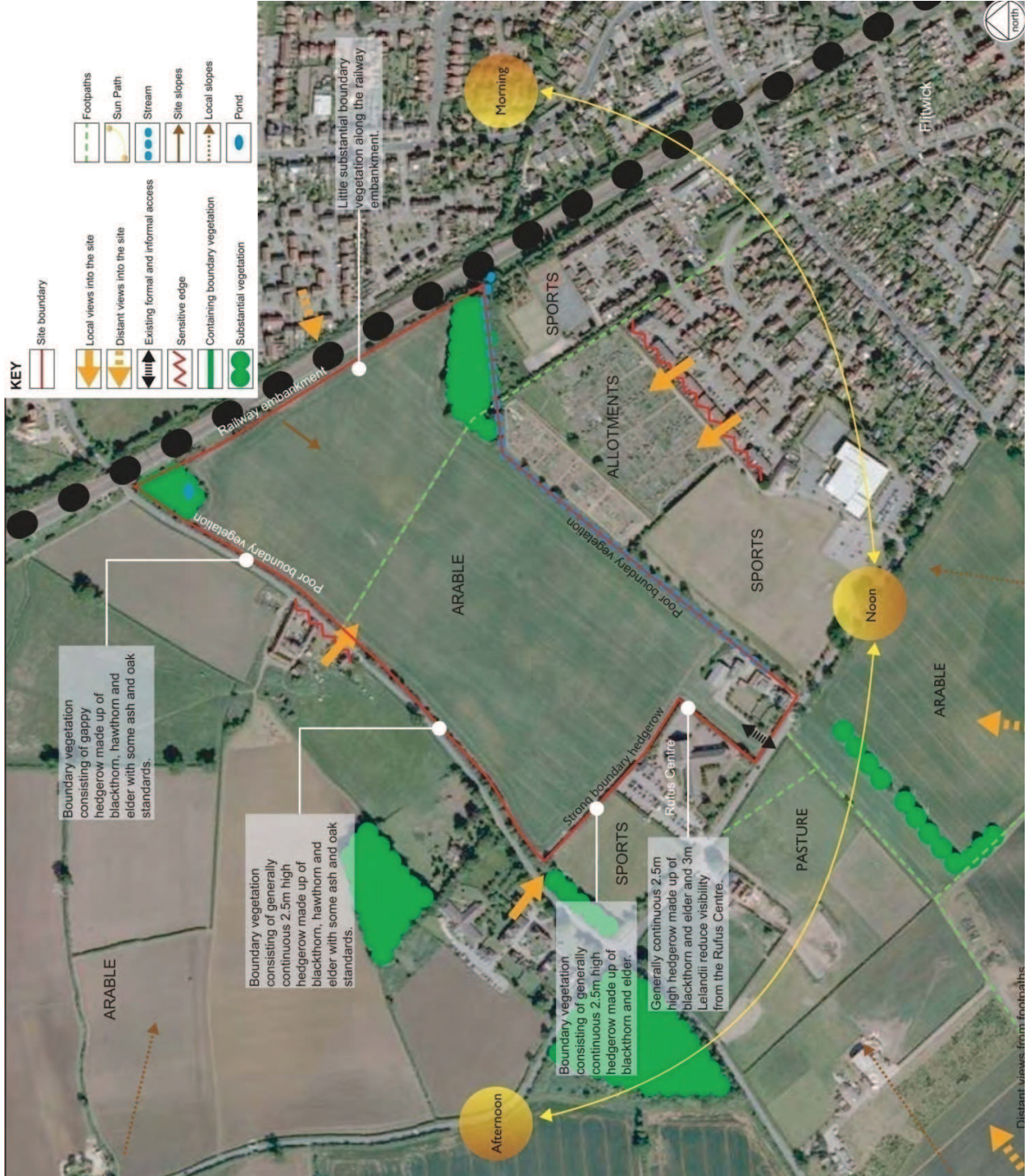
Topography



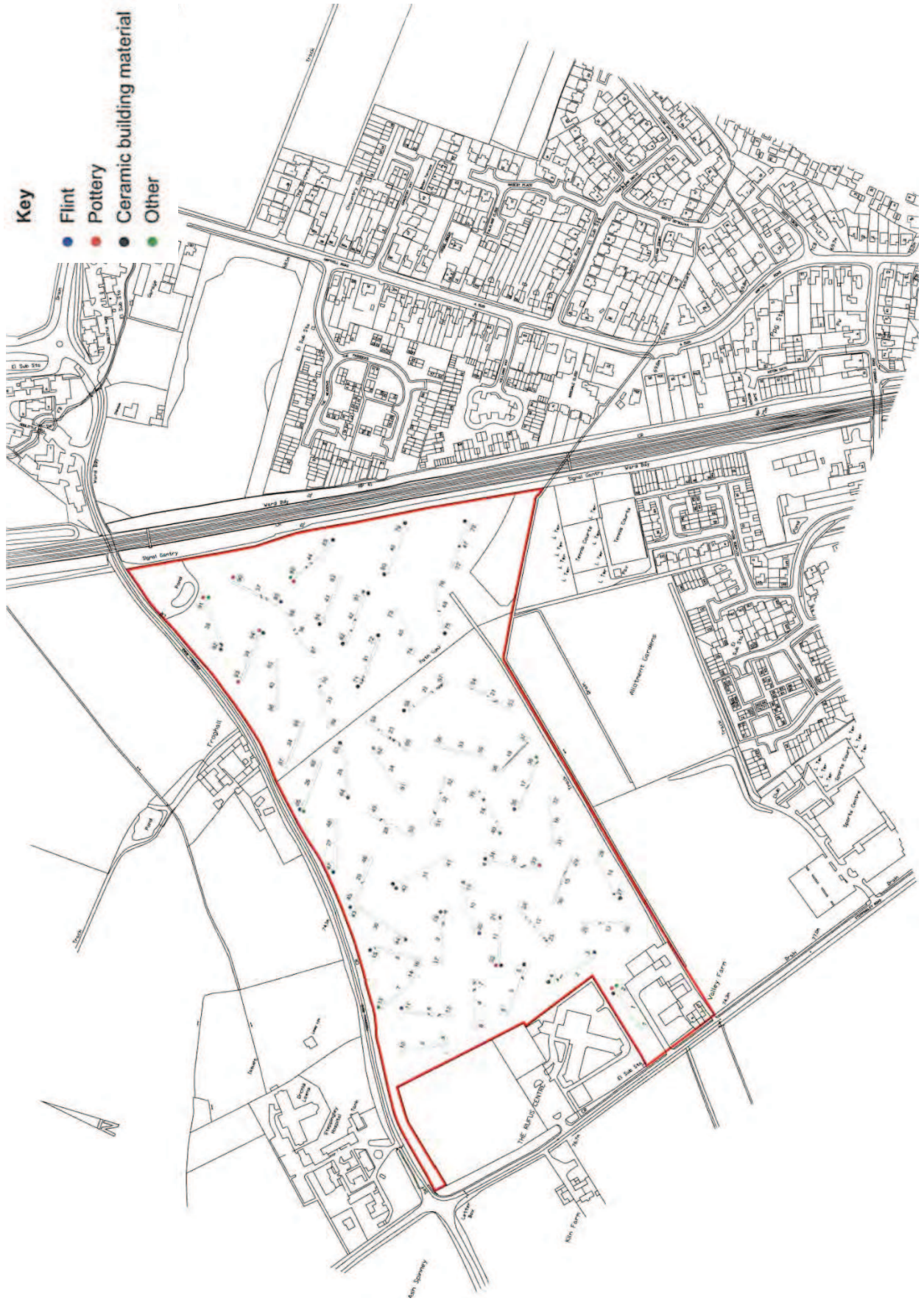
Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment I
Existing Visibility



Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment 2 Analysis

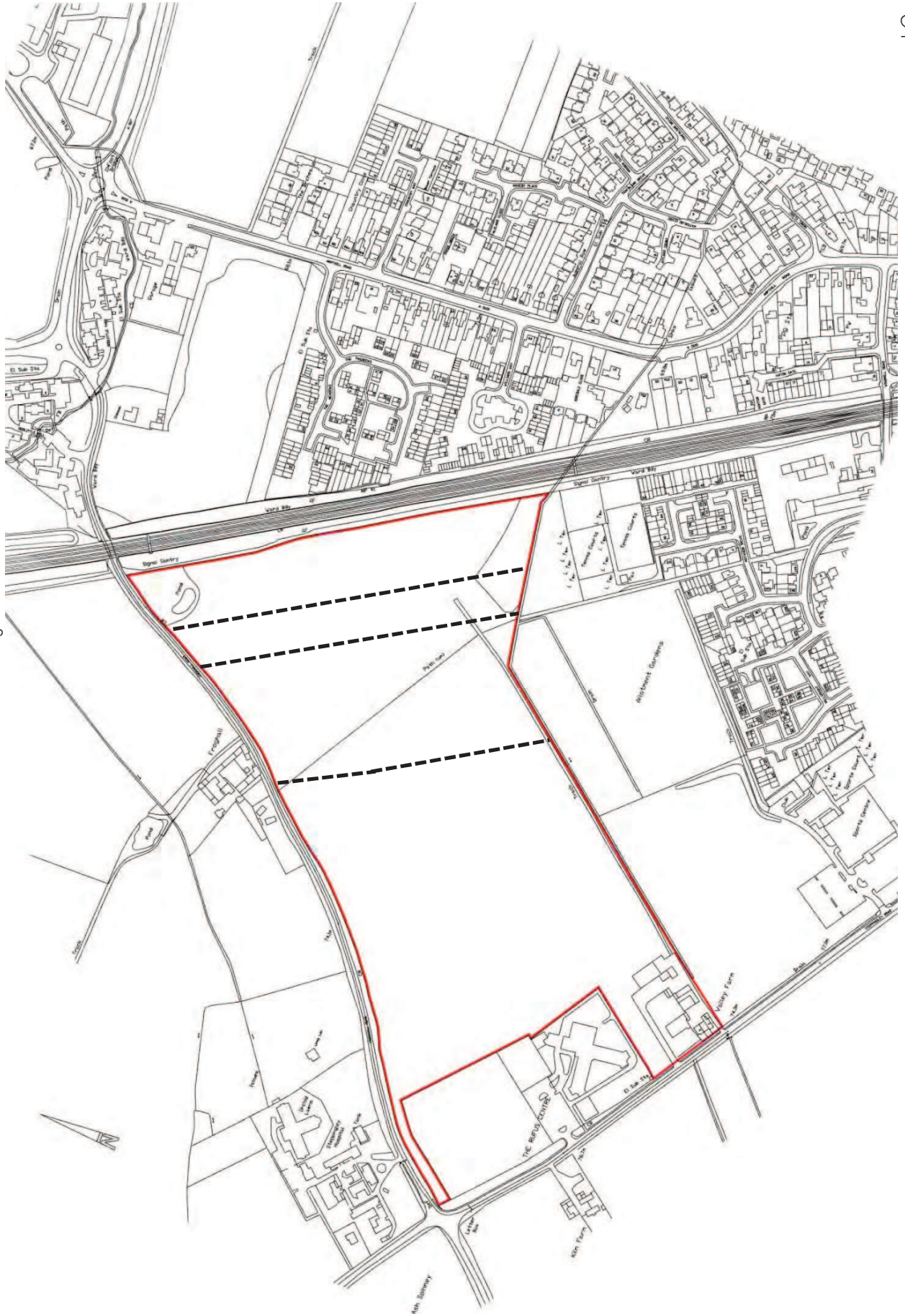


Archaeological



Noise Contours

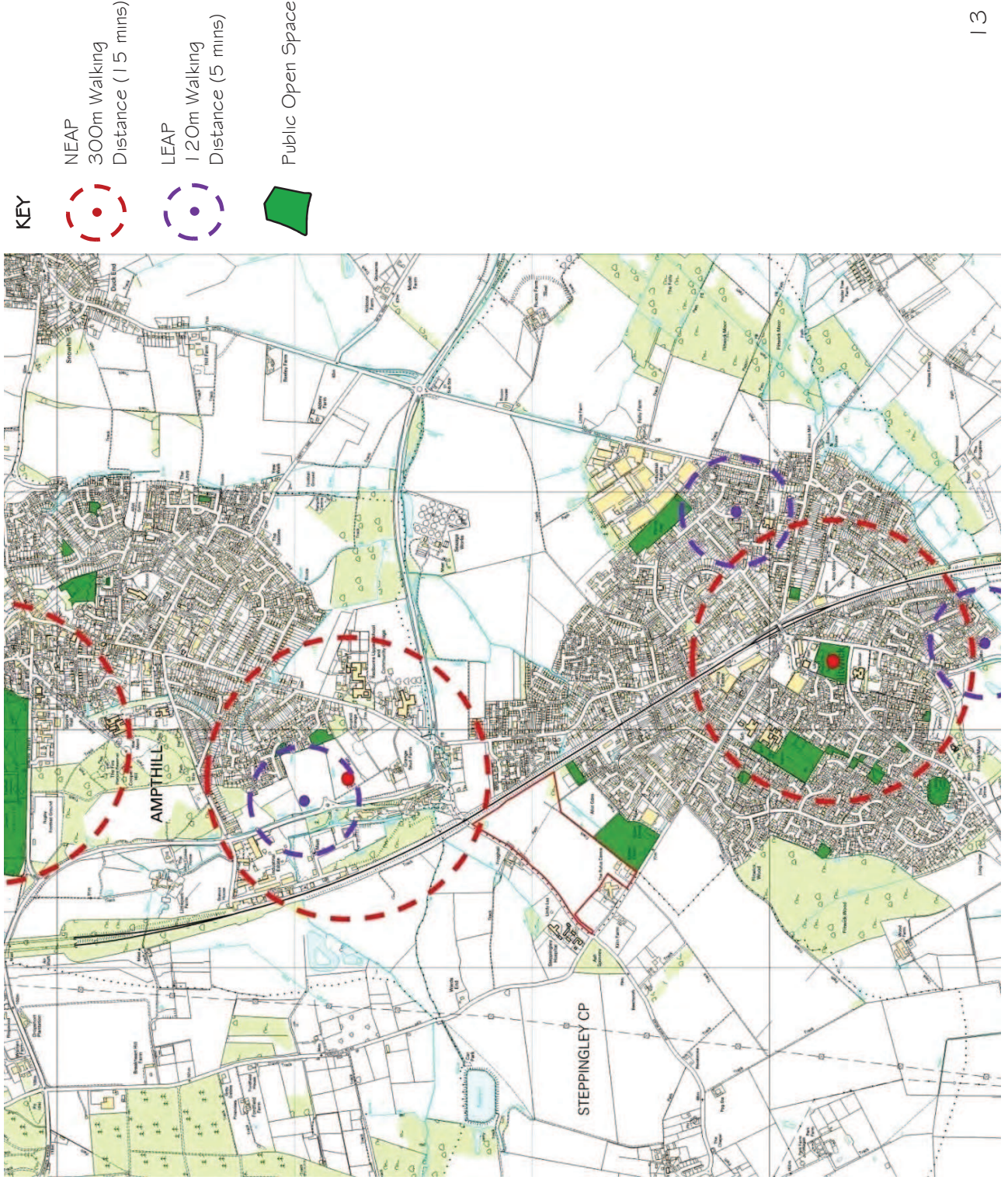
Baseline Field Evaluation – Night time La max Contours



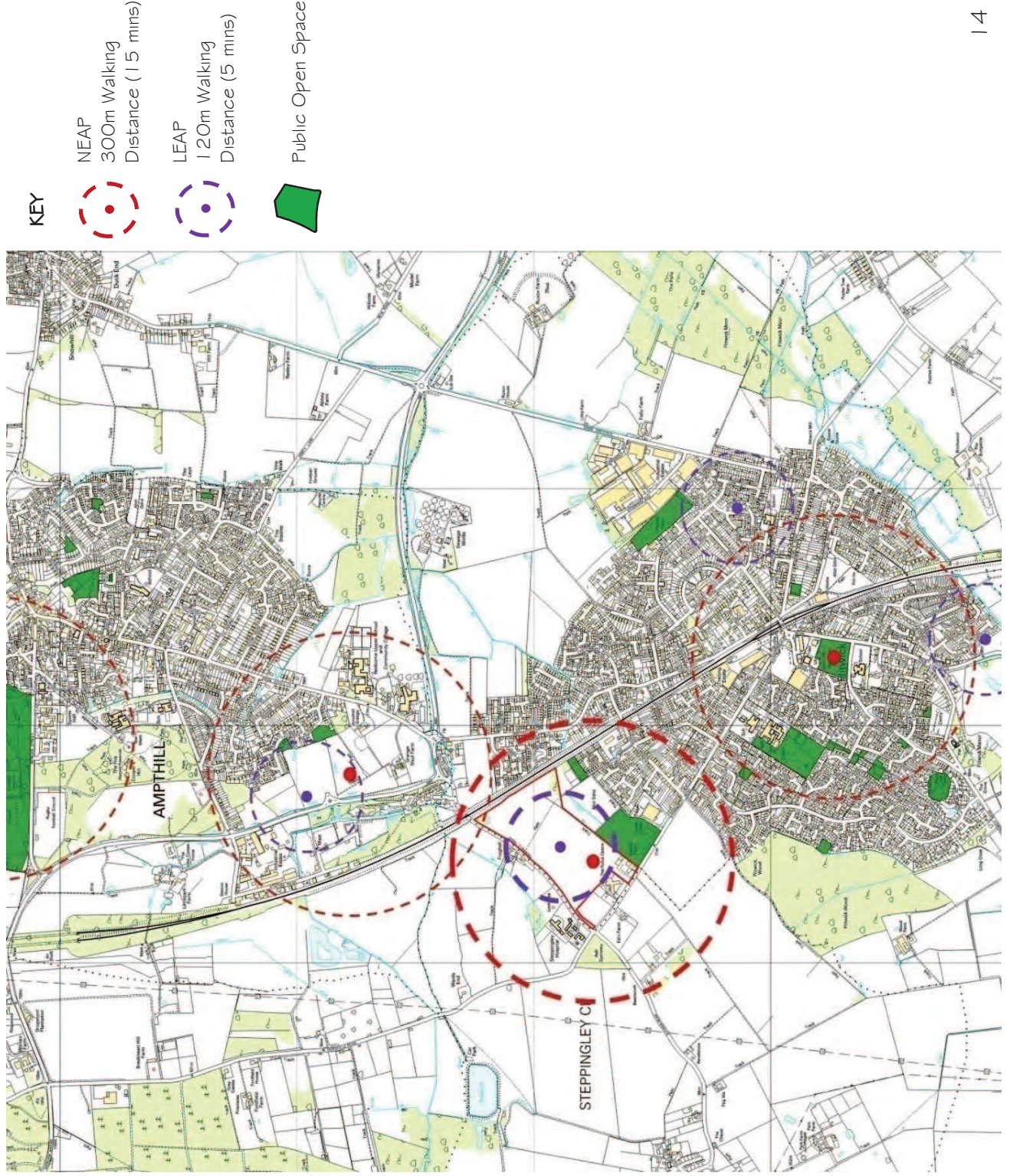
Land Use Principles



Children's Play Provision I – Wider Locality



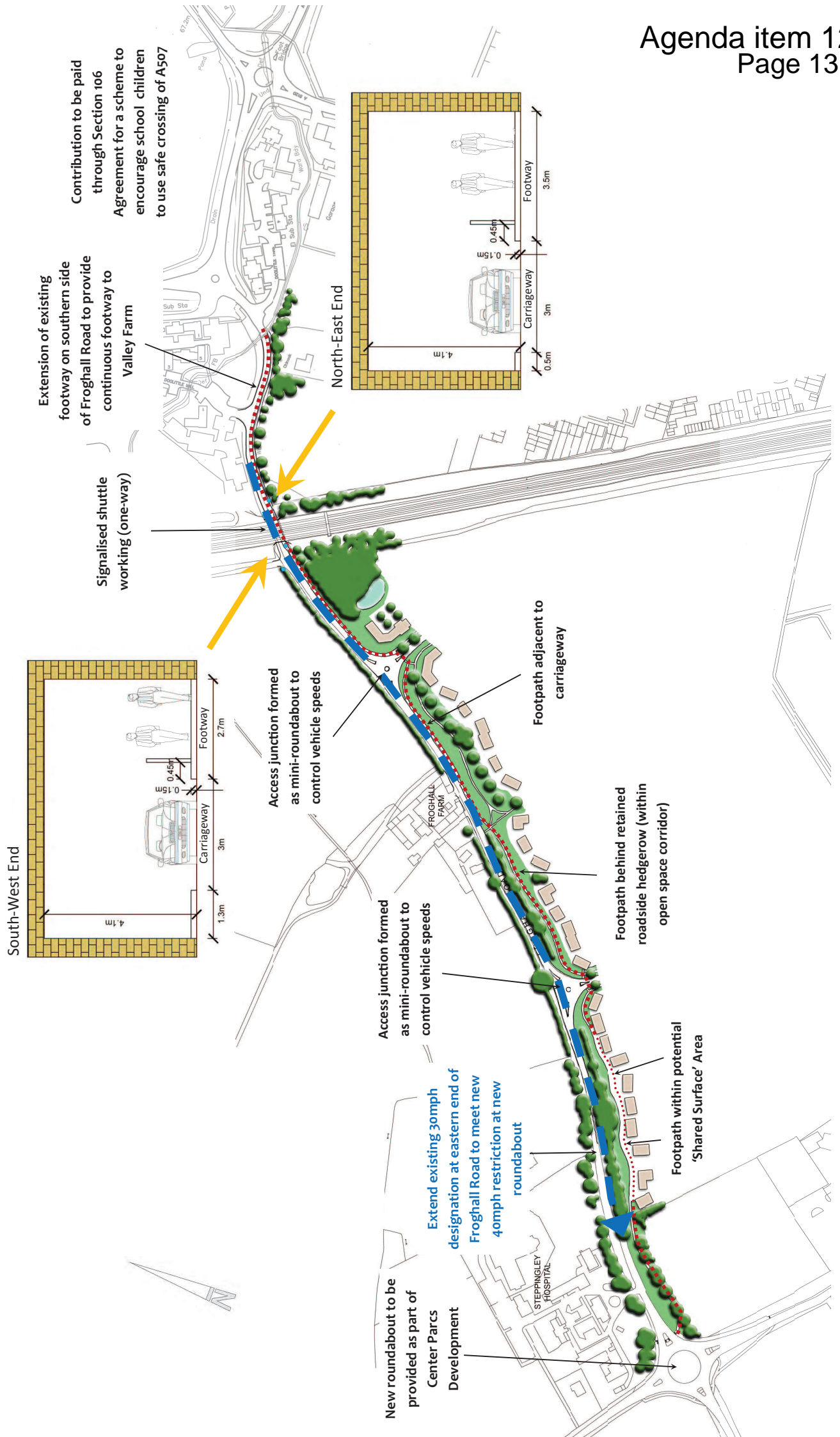
Children's Play Provision 2 – Site Provision



Access & Connectivity



Froghall Road Frontage



Contribution to be paid through Section 106 Agreement for a scheme to encourage school children to use safe crossing of A507

Extension of existing footway on southern side of Froghall Road to provide continuous footway to Valley Farm

Signalised shuttle working (one-way)

Access junction formed as mini-roundabout to control vehicle speeds

Access junction formed as mini-roundabout to control vehicle speeds

Extend existing 30mph designation at eastern end of Froghall Road to meet new 40mph restriction at new roundabout

New roundabout to be provided as part of Center Parcs Development

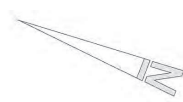
Footpath adjacent to carriageway

Footpath behind retained roadside hedgerow (within open space corridor)

Footpath within potential 'Shared Surface' Area

South-West End

North-East End



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TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**TO ACCOMPANY A MASTER
PLAN CONSULTATION EVENT FOR: -**

**A MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT
INCLUDING RESIDENTIAL, EMPLOYMENT
AND OPEN SPACE**

AT: -

**VALLEY FARM
OFF STEPPINGLEY ROAD/FROGHALL ROAD
FLITWICK, BEDFORDSHIRE**

ON BEHALF OF: -

ORS PLC

NOVEMBER 2012

REF: PF/5534

1.0 INTRODUCTION –

Appendix D: Draft Statement of Community Involvement

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (“SCI”) has been prepared to accompany Policy MA2 - Land at Steppingley Road and Froghall Road, Flitwick (Valley Farm) Masterplan consultations for: -

“A mixed use development comprising residential development with associated employment provision and open space at Valley Farm Flitwick”.

- 1.2 The SCI describes the process by which efforts have been made to engage with the local community in Flitwick, and the surrounding areas, to establish views on the emerging master plan, which will inform the future proposals for the development of the site. This SCI also details the discussions that have taken place with the local community and summarises the outcomes. The report describes the method used to publicise a public exhibition; the information provided to the public at the exhibition; the method used to gather feedback on the proposal, and a summary of the responses received during and following the exhibition event.
- 1.3 The intention of the public engagement process is to provide local residents and other interested stakeholders with an early opportunity to view the emerging master plan and to make any comments on the content of the proposals.

2.0 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 2.1 A public exhibition was held at The Rufus Centre, Flitwick on Friday 7th September and Saturday 8th September 2012, between the hours of 14:00 and 20.00 on the Friday 10:00 and 14:00 on the Saturday.
- 2.2 In addition, the exhibition material was left maintained as an unmanned exhibition in the Rufus Centre between 8th September – 23rd September. It was then relocated to Flitwick Library (a town centre location) for a further two weeks between 24th September – 6th October.
- 2.3 The exhibition was advertised locally and a Public Notice was placed in the Mid Beds & Times Citizen on the 30th August 2012 prior to the event (see **APPENDIX 1**). A press release article was also issued to Mid Beds & Times Citizen about the exhibition details (**APPENDIX 2**).
- 2.4 Letters were also sent to other relevant parties including all District Councillors, Ward Councillors, Flitwick Town Councillors (57 in total) and Nadine Dorries MP the local Member of Parliament for Flitwick (**APPENDIX 3**).
- 2.5 Public Notices were also placed on notice boards in the following key locations identified in consultation with officers at Central Bedfordshire

Council namely; The Rufus Centre, Flitwick Library, Flitwick Railway Station, and the town centre Tesco supermarket (**APPENDIX 4**).

2.6 The event intended to stimulate discussion with the local community in relation to the emerging master plan. The event comprised a series of exhibition boards that displayed the application site and the emerging master plan with explanatory text. A copy of the exhibition material, which comprised nine A1 boards, is appended as (**APPENDIX 5**).

2.7 Below is a photo of the of the nine exhibition boards as they were set up at the Rufus Centre manned consultation event:



(The exhibition material from the Rufus Centre public consultation event 7th & 8th Sept 2012).

2.8 The first unmanned exhibition was set up in the reception area at the Rufus Centre as shown below:



2.9 A four page booklet summarising the proposed master plan was provided for attendees to take away with them and a copy of this document is included as **(APPENDIX 6)**.

2.10 The exhibition was attended by the following representatives: -

- Kate Sylvester-Kilroy – (Planning Director) Old Road Securities
- Gary Surkitt – Woods Hardwick (Architects/master planner)
- Peter Frampton – Framptons (Planning Consultant)
- Peter Bateman – Framptons (Planning Consultant)
- Paget Fulcher – URS Ltd (Highways Consultant)

2.11 In addition to the master plan project team, the event was also manned by a number of representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council over the 2 day exhibition. These included:

- Connie Frost-Bryant – Senior Planning Officer
- Ben King - Senior Strategic Transport Planner
- Carry Murphy – Principal Planning officer
- Tim Cakebread – Planning Officer
- Stuart Robinson – Planning Officer

Website and email

2.12 The Valley Farm emerging master plan was accessible to all interested parties by a dedicated website. The website can be viewed by following the below link:

<http://www.valleyfarmflitwick.co.uk>

2.13 The website advertised the scheme, enabled those using it to view the emerging master plans, outlined key historical and forthcoming events in the evolution of the scheme and provided contact details for both the project team and Local Planning Authority. The website provided the opportunity for interested parties to e-mail comments, questions or observation relating to the scheme to one of two e-mail addresses:

enquiries@framptons-planning.com

comments@valleyfarmflitwick.co.uk

- 2.14 A printing error was noticed on the summary sheets which were produced for the manned public exhibition events. However, this mistake (which was the insertion of a hyphen in the web address) was noticed and corrected by hand on all sheets prior to any summary sheets being taken away by attendees of the exhibition. Revised summary sheets with the correct web address were provided for the unmanned exhibitions.

Other consultation events

- 2.15 The exhibition events took place following a series of stakeholder working groups. These are briefly summarised below:
- 2.16 West Place Making Committee 25th July 2012, Rufus Centre, Flitwick. This meeting was held following extensive interim meetings with Planning Officers to inform representatives of the major interest groups of the progressive design proposals for the Valley Farm development site, including a presentation of suggested design solutions and a question and answer session.

- 2.17 Leisure Services/Open Spaces Meeting 5th March 2012, Rufus Centre, Flitwick. As a consequence of the Focus Group workshop, further discussions were held specifically concerning open space and play area provision.
- 2.18 Focus Groups Workshop 6th February 2012, Rufus Centre, Flitwick. Following presentation of the initial scheme proposals at the Stakeholder meeting, a day of targeted series of discussions relating to specific ‘topic’ areas was held relating to the site.
- 2.19 Stakeholder Meeting 11th November 2011, Rufus Centre, Flitwick. This meeting was held with a purpose to provide a forum where Planning Officers, representatives of the Town Council and other technical professionals and other stakeholders discussed preliminary issues relating to the development proposals for the site.

3.0 ATTENDANCE AND FEEDBACK

3.1 The public exhibition was well attended, attracting a constant flow of members of the public totalling 110 (73 on Friday 7th September and 37 on Saturday 8th September)

Photos of the exhibition in action are below:



The exhibition in the Rufus Centre 7th & 8th September 2012

3.2 Comment forms were provided during the public exhibition to enable residents to reflect on the emerging master plan proposals and submit reasoned comments. An example of the comment form is provided as **APPENDIX 7**. It was decided to leave a blank space for respondents to provide their comments rather than list any pre-conceived questions or statements. This was because the project team did not want to be seen to ask any leading questions or restrict the scope of comment. It was intended that respondents would be able to comment on any aspect of the proposals.

3.3 At the time of writing this SCI (6th November 2012) a total of 30 written representations have been received following the consultation event. A couple may be duplicates, but because they were received on different dates and from different e-mail addresses they have been included twice. A full breakdown of the written representations received is provided in **APPENDIX 8**. (Copies of the original comments are available upon request). This list has been expanded since the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to include a summary of what action the project team has taken in response to the submitted comments.

3.4 Those attending the manned exhibition were met at the entrance and a summary of where they lived was taken in the form of collating postcodes. The vast majority of those attending were from the MK45 post code. The

breakdown of those attending the exhibition is included in **APPENDIX 9** of the statement.

3.5 Positive comments received made reference to:

- providing housing (particularly affordable and family accommodation);
- the benefit of bringing jobs to the area through employment provision and location of the employment provision next to railway;
- Provision of additional open green space and children's play facilities;
- improving linkages through to the town and Ampthill, particularly parallel to Froghall Road
- The quality of the presentation material and detail which explained the process well

3.6 The negative comments made reference to:

- the traffic congestion in the town;
- concern over the traffic solution for the bridge on Froghall Road;
- the feeling that this site in addition to Centre Parcs would exacerbate existing traffic problems;
- Large increase in population will place pressure on infrastructure such as schools, doctors, burial space and town centre parking especially at the station

- 3.7 Two particular responses from the exhibition have resulted in changes to the master plan. These followed consultation responses which presented logical alterations which would enhance the master plan and were considered to be acceptable and added value in planning terms. The two main changes were firstly the removal of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) from the site to the Leisure Centre and secondly the insertion of a hedge to the frontage with Froghall Road.
- 3.8 The MUGA was removed following a request from the Council representative responsible for Leisure Projects from within the site to nearby land associated with the existing town Leisure Centre. The second change was the insertion of a low level (maximum 900 mm to 1200 mm) hedge (with root ball protection so as not to damage drainage infrastructure) parallel to Froghall Road. The function of the hedge is to soften the visual impact of the development, provide a green transition from the site to road and open countryside beyond, separate users of the path from the road traffic but still enable surveillance for safety and act as a replacement for the existing hedge.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 It is considered that the processes to engage the community concerning this proposal have met best practice guidelines by offering the opportunity for local engagement, and that feedback provided will contribute to the master planning process. A number of events and methods of seeking clarification as well as opportunities to offer comment were provided.
- 4.2 In terms of specific outcomes the main concern from residents living adjacent to the site is the issue of traffic generation and congestion. General concern focused on the adequacy of social infrastructure such as schools and doctors which are perceived to be at capacity.
- 4.3 The positive comments received made reference to the provision of housing, affordable housing and employment land all of which are needed. In terms of the master plan design the majority of comments were positive. Key issues that appear to have been progressed well included the linkages, the emphasis on family housing, the proposed density variations and amount of open space.
- 4.4 The two changes proposed to the master plan (the removal of the MUGA and the introduction of a low level hedge to Froghall Road) are clear evidence of the consultation exercise adding value to the proposal at the appropriate stage in the evolution of the master plan.

APPENDIX 8

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION COMMENTS

<i>Comment ID</i>	<i>Main Comments</i>	<i>Response to comments and action taken if applicable.</i>
1.	Letter from Nadine Dorries MP apologising for not being able to attend the exhibition, but stating she will visit the unmanned exhibition in due course.	None
2	The presentation was very informative which has certainly helped with my understanding of the proposals.	Noted
3.	Concern expressed about increased traffic, Flitwick is already congested at peak times, school places, concerned about surgery facilities.	Highways concerns will be considered by a TA. Infrastructure will be addressed by S106
4.	Concern expressed about a safe crossing to Flitwick hospital. Needs to be able to accommodate invalid buggies. An Aldi or Lidl would be nice instead of commercial	Highways concerns will be considered by TA. Infrastructure will be addressed by S106 Retail noted
5.	As a tenant of one of the cottages on Steppingley Road I have concern about access and impact on the garden areas of the cottages.	Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.
6.	Concern about the loss of another green space in Flitwick/Amphill. Appreciates the need for affordable housing but queries whether any will be delivered. Likes the idea of a footpath along Froghall Road, but concern about the lights on the bridge which will cause a bottleneck. Supports bus route principle.	Site is already identified by MA2. Affordable housing will be addressed by a a specific report at the time of submission.

		Traffic management measures along Froghall Road will be addressed by the TA.
7.	Concern that proposals will increase traffic flows in the town. Froghall Lane and the roundabout will be bottlenecks. Concern about impact of Centre Parcs as well. Sees no justification for the loss of green space. Will increase pressure on services and facilities.	Traffic management measures along Froghall Road will be addressed by the TA. TA will consider the cumulative impact of other developments in the locality including Centre Parcs. S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.
8.	No problems provided Doctors, Hospitals and schools etc are considered.	S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.
9.	Opposes the whole development. It will put more pressure on inadequate infrastructure especially roads and schools. It is crucial there are no through roads in the estate. There is a reasonable effort to make use of existing vegetation and add to it. It will lessen the gap between Flitwick and Ampthill. Put the houses somewhere else. Where was the consultation when the initial decision to build on the site was made?	S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure. Roads within the estate will be addressed by a TA. Site was allocated by policy MA2 following consultation in April 2011.
10.	Concept looks well thought out. Flitwick TC should ensure that the Rufus Centre is properly integrated with the whole scheme. The commercial element is pointless. It will not be taken up. Make it landscaping instead. Froghall Lane needs work to make it safe for School Children to use.	Rufus centre is remaining and will be integrated with the proposals at the detailed design stage. The commercial element is an integral part of the proposal being set at 1.1 ha by policy

		MA2. Connections along Froghall Road will be considered by TA and S106.
11.	Interesting proposals look forward to seeing the detail as plans develop.	Noted
12.	Concern regarding school places and road infrastructure. Also health may not have capacity for 400 houses.	S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.
13.	<p>Having attended the exhibition at the Rufus Centre and being a long standing resident of Flitwick, I would like to provide the following feedback for your consideration :-</p> <p>Traffic / Congestion: You may be aware of a longstanding focus group in Flitwick called FATCRAG (Flitwick at the Crossroads Action Group) which was formed originally off the back of wider Town Centre development plans – principally what is widely referred to as the Tesco development. A fundamental finding of this action group was the traffic implications of any widescale development and absence of infrastructure to support additional traffic. Whilst the Tesco development is currently on the back burner it could be resurrected at any point in time. We also have the well-publicised Centre Parcs development and there is scepticism that Motorway signage will help avoid increased traffic through the Town Centre. Added to this is the Valley Farm project. Of particular interest is the proposed access road along Steppingley Road (which does not include a roundabout). If the Tesco Development has not been inconclusive in</p>	<p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p> <p>TA will consider the cumulative impact of other developments in the locality including Centre Parcs.</p>

	<p>terms of traffic implications and absence of infrastructure to support additional development, then I am not sure how you are going to go about overcoming this issue.</p> <p>- Infrastructure :- Continuation of the above point but more specifically, there is only one way into and out of Flitwick i.e. Steppingley Road and there is only so much that this road can take without causing congestion problems. The other key roads such as Flitwick Road and Froghall Road are only what can best be described as country lanes, yet these are going to be expected to support a significant increase in traffic. The current proposals to have an entry and exit point to the development on Steppingley Road (which does not include a roundabout) exacerbates this problem massively. No exit onto Steppingley Road would greatly assist and ‘force’ people down to the ‘One o One’ roundabout thereby sharing the ‘burden’ of the various pressure points.</p> <p>- Wider Town Centre developments – It is widely publicised that Flitwick is the poor relation of the region suffering from an absence of funding / redevelopment of virtually any sorts. You only have to look at the High Street (the other side of the railway line) and absence of any progress / resolution of new leisure centre for confirmation. Adding another 40 houses and additional pressure to existing provisions will only make the matter worse. What proposals are there to tangibly give back / invest in Flitwick as a legacy?</p> <p>- Land – Out of interest who owns / owned the development land ? If this is / was Council owned then this tells me that they are more interested in profits then investment and opens up the question as to why this site was not put forward</p>	
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	<p>as a potential site for the Sports Centre ?</p> <p>Whilst I am not against development per say, I do not believe that your proposals address any of the existing traffic, congestion and infrastructure concerns and without any investment / progress then your development will only add to these problems.</p>	
14.	<p>Schools – Money provision will not give new school build. It will probably jut change from 3 to 2 tiers that nobody wants.</p> <p>Doctors – at capacity. No mention of burial ground or leisure centre</p> <p>Why was no consideration given to building new house/village on Centre Parcs site. Plans for moving Tesco – revamp of town centre – better facilities. Football centre of excellence. Train station parking/town centre parking.</p>	<p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p> <p>Site was allocated by policy MA2 following consultation in April 2011.</p>
15.	<p>Please to see new roundabout at Steppingley Hospital. Hopes the development will include small properties (1 and 2 bed) with private outside spaces as well as larger properties (or flats with no private outside space). It makes sense to have the industrial element next to the railway.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The master plan shows an indicative mix of dwellings. The precise mix will be subject to negotiations with CBC at the detailed design stage.</p>
16.	<p>No justification for the loss of the Froghall Lane hedge and establishment of two parallel paths. This would remove screening and reduce privacy for occupiers of the farm. Encouraging walkers immediately alongside the road would not be appropriate.</p>	<p>Hedge introduced to assist screening and separation from road. Height will be limited to 900cm to 1200cm and special root planting will be necessary to ensure no conflict with underground</p>

		water pipes.
17.	Concern about school places and proximity to schools. Increased traffic on Steppingley Road will result in a constant flow of traffic when added to Centre Parcs traffic. Lack of town centre infrastructure to support an influx of people.	S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.
18.	<p>Further to the public exhibition and website information, my comments are as follows :</p> <p>Why is the proposed housing development not 3-4 storey town houses (similar to <i>The Wixams</i>, which helps density-wise, but also for car parking provision at ground level)?;</p> <p>Sufficient off-road car parking (assuming ratio of at least 2 cars per household);</p> <p>Properties to be built to latest eco/sustainability standards;</p> <p>Clarity over proposed bus route – where from & to (given narrow low-height Froghall Road railway bridge & the current use on route 42 of double-deck vehicles by both Stagecoach & Grant Palmer);</p> <p>Safe walking/cycling route through the Valley Farm development – and including satisfactory links under Froghall Road bridge to Doo Little & Redborne Upper School, including a crossing (pelican/signalised) over the A507 bypass to the Ampthill “side of the road”; satisfactory route also from Valley Farm to Flitwick railway station & town centre;</p>	<p>Housing types will be agreed at reserved matters/detailed design stage and may include elements of town housing. However due to this being an edge of settlement site the maximum height will be 2.5 stories as this is considered to form an appropriate transition to the open countryside.</p> <p>The buildings will be built to whatever the relevant standards of building regulations are.</p> <p>Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.</p> <p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p> <p>The consultation was intended to consult on the design parameters for a master plan to shape the upcoming planning</p>

	<p>How will road traffic be regulated through the proposed <i>contra-flow</i> Froghall Road railway bridge – signalisation/lights?;</p> <p>Footpath/cycleway adjacent to bypass to Amphill Heights/Greensand Woods developments, plus Warren Farm and Centre Parcs;</p> <p>Consistency in road speed limits – should be 20 mph in “Home Zone”/residential area of Valley Farm development and 30 mph elsewhere (including at the proposed Steppingley Hospital croosroads roundabout where the 30 mph restriction currently comes off just past the Rufus Centre);</p> <p>Less (noise) sensitive retailing development [Aldi or Lidl?] next to railway embankment on east side of the Valley Farm development;</p> <p>Overall the development is bland, lacking in vision and detail. It does not do justice to the concept of a ‘<i>Masterplan</i>’ especially given that if constructed it will increase Flitwick’s population significantly. More detailed information is required, including likely Section 106 <i>development gain conditions</i> &/or a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payment.</p> <p>More specifically of particular concern, is :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · No immediate infrastructure such as shops, a school or a surgery/health centre within the Valley farm development – so that residents will by implication have to travel into town for basic amenities, putting additional pressure on already inadequate facilities. Schoolchildren in particular will have a very difficult journey; <i>Safe Routes</i> to all schools? · The prospect of traffic gridlock along Froghall 	<p>application. It therefore has to demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating the quantum of development in a well-planned manner. It lacks detail compared to a full application as many of the matters are reserved for later consideration.</p>
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	<p>Road, not least because it is narrow and is to be controlled <i>one-way</i> under the railway bridge – backing up both ways to the proposed Steppingley Hospital crossroads roundabout to the west and the junction with the A507 bypass to the east, being a distinct possibility given likely traffic flows. Where is the traffic modelling for the proposed contra-flow?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Although a potential bus route is identified , it would be helpful to know if appropriate discussions have been undertaken with service providers (Stagecoach, Grant Palmer, Flittabus & Centre Parcs) and whether their reaction is positive in principle – a plus point would be the possibility of being able to access both the Valley Farm site – and the Rufus and Leisure Centres by public transport. · Little if any information has been provided on the types and density of housing proposed, and also the type of commercial/mixed-use uses envisaged. The latter looks perilously close to the railway embankment and it is to be hoped that Network Rail have been consulted for a full safety assessment to be made. This safety assessment to include the Froghall Road railway bridge which is <i>sub-standard</i> – low-height, limited-headroom and approached by blind-bends on either side. The bridge could easily be subject to “bridge strikes” putting the railway (Midland Main Line) out of action. Is the road to be straightened as well as the introduction of signalised “contra-flow” control? In addition to Network Rail, have CBC (Highways) & their contractors Amey been consulted? <p>It is hoped that these comments will be fully taken into account both by Old Road Securities PLC, Framptons, their respective consultants</p>	
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	(URS, etc.) and Central Beds. Council (CBC). Finally are ORS going to adopt the “Code for Sustainable Homes” for the proposed new houses to be built at Valley Farm?	
19.	400 houses means 800 more cars on the road and 100 people (approx..) Can infrastructure cope with this? Low voltage may be an issue as Flitwick already has low voltage. Proposals will cause traffic jams. Will commercial vehicles fit under the bridge? Number of access points questioned as it may be too permeable to plan out crime. A preference for brownfield development over agricultural land is expressed.	Highways concerns will be considered by a TA. Site was allocated by policy MA2 following consultation in April 2011.
20.	Members of FATCRAG have visited the exhibition relating to the proposed Valley Farm Development in Flitwick and would make the following consensual comments: Overall we find the development pedestrian and lacking vision and detail. It does not do justice to the concept of a ‘Masterplan’ especially given that if constructed it will increase Flitwick’s population significantly. We need far more information. More specifically, there are aspects of particular concern, namely, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No immediate infrastructure such as shops, a school or a surgery so that residents will have to travel into town for basic amenities putting additional pressure on already inadequate facilities. Schoolchildren in particular will have a difficult journey. • The prospect of traffic gridlock along Froghall Road not least because it is narrow and is to be controlled one-way 	The consultation was intended to consult on the design parameters for a master plan to shape the upcoming planning application. It therefore has to demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating the quantum of development in a well-planned manner. It lacks detail compared to a full application as many of the matters are reserved for later consideration. S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure. Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.

	<p>under the railway bridge – backing up both ways to the Steppingley Road roundabout to the west and the junction with the A507 to the east is a distinct possibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although a potential bus route is identified , it would be helpful to know if appropriate discussions have been undertaken with providers and whether their reaction is positive in principle – a plus point would be the possibility of being able to access both the site and the Rufus and Leisure Centres by public transport. • Little information provided on the types and density of housing proposed, and also the type of commercial uses envisaged. The latter looks perilously close to the railway embankment and we would wish to be assured that a full safety assessment has been made. 	
<p>21.</p>	<p>Houses have to be built somewhere and the Valley Farm site is as good as any. It was difficult to judge the effect that this development will have without a plan showing in detail where the houses will be sited.</p> <p>More houses will have an impact on schools and the local doctors surgery. This is a matter for the Central Beds Council if they allow this development to go ahead. The main problem is that the doctors surgery appears to be working at full capacity, as are the local infants schools.</p> <p>My only objection to this development is the need to restrict traffic to one way working controlled by traffic lights at the railway bridge in Fordfield Road. This is a busy little road used by</p>	<p>The consultation was intended to consult on the design parameters for a master plan to shape the upcoming planning application. It therefore has to demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating the quantum of development in a well-planned manner. It lacks detail compared to a full application as many of the matters are reserved for later consideration.</p> <p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed</p>

	<p>locals to avoid the centre of Flitwick and to avoid using Windmill Road.</p> <p>Some years ago a housing development was allowed off Windmill Road, and the footpath by the road at the railway bridge was widened. To allow this to happen, the road was narrowed to a single carriageway with priority given to traffic travelling West.</p> <p>A consequence of the Valley farm development is to do the same to the railway bridge on Fordfield Road, but with traffic lights. The need for residents to drive from one side of the railway to the other is self-evident and the Fordfield Road bridge needs to be two way.</p> <p>A new pedestrian tunnel under the railway track is required connecting the Valley Farm estate with The Meadows, a cul-de-sac on the other side of the railway.</p>	<p>development on local infrastructure.</p> <p>Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.</p>
<p>22.</p>	<p>Consultation response from Lisa White (which included a quotation in relation to the Multi-Use Games Area) the Projects Officer in Leisure Services (CBC).</p> <p>With regard to the above development and the provision of a MUGA. Leisure Services' view is that on-site provision of a MUGA would not be appropriate due to the isolated location of its identified location and the potential for noise nuisance and mis-use. On-site provision, even in an alternate location would not be appropriate due to the proximity to residential units, the noise levels emanating from such a facility, and the high likelihood of nuisance to residents.</p> <p>It is our view that a better location for the MUGA would be within the Flitwick Leisure Centre site.</p>	<p>The MUGA has been removed from the proposals and will be recited at the Leisure Centre. ORS are willing to make the stated contribution of £50,000 towards delivering this developer contribution.</p>

	<p>The MUGA's casual sporting use would be a logical fit with the centre's activities, would not create a noise nuisance for any residents, and would allow informal surveillance and security to be provided by the centre management.</p> <p>As indicated by the recent quotation provided to Jennie, a reasonable construction cost for a MUGA would be £50k, and this amount is sought to fund the construction of the MUGA on the leisure centre site as a commuted sum.</p>	
23.	<p>Will result in a large increase in population. Local Infrastructure will struggle to cope with it. Problems are anticipated on Froghall Road during the rush hours. Development could become a rat-run with people seeking to avoid the new roundabout on Steppingley Road. Concern expressed about the local Doctor's Surgery and schools which are perceived to be at capacity.</p>	<p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p>
24.	<p>I have a couple of comments further to the recent exhibitions in Flitwick about the proposed development:</p> <p>Utilities- we sometimes have power cuts in Flitwick, as I result, I am guessing, of the constant addition of housing in the area without a sufficient upgrade of power supplies. Can you give assurances that the power infrastructure will be upgraded to mitigate the increased risk of power outages?</p> <p>Roadworks. Roads seem to be closed and temporary traffic lights used at the drop of a hat in Flitwick. Please ensure that your development does not result in <u>any</u> inconvenience for motorists.</p>	<p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p> <p>Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.</p>

<p>25.</p>	<p>I have areas of concern on the details in the proposal details shown in the exhibition.</p> <p>In Froghall Road the changes shown for the railway bridge are in my opinion totally inadequate for the present level of traffic movements, the development will without doubt generate considerably higher traffic density especially at rush hour.</p> <p>Recent changes increasing the footway width to the bridge in Windmill Road, resulting in a single carriageway with priority from one direction, has had a significant effect on traffic flow. Froghall Road almost certainly already carries a higher volume of traffic and so the situation will become progressively worse.</p> <p>Back in the 1860s when the railway was built Froghall was a rural road with little or no pedestrian use; hence the bridge was quite adequate for purpose.</p> <p>I maintain this is no longer the case and therefore to support and enable the proposed development and anticipated pedestrian aspect a more realistic solution is needed. Such a solution may be a pedestrian tunnel adjacent to the south side, which surely would cheaper and more practical than a total rebuild of the bridge.</p> <p>Moving round to the Steppingley Road access next to the existing Valley Farm dwellings, surely the reason for access roundabouts in Froghall Road and 40 mph speed limit, must also be applied especially as this is mentioned as a potential bus route.</p> <p>I am also concerned about car parking as little detail is proposed. Having seen the shambles of inadequate planning on the last major development in Flitwick between Steppingley</p>	<p>Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.</p> <p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p>
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	<p>Road and Church Road along Manor Way, attention needs to be paid to the provision of off road parking which is a major issue and safety concern, especially now that many dwellings are 3 and even 4 car families.</p> <p>I am also concerned about school provision which whilst not directly part of the development ought not to be overlooked.</p> <p>The nearest lower school Templefield is I understand already at max capacity, whilst Woodland middle school has only been relieved by Alameda in Ampthill taking Flitwick pupils. Needless to say increased pressure will be put on Redborne the only upper school.</p>	
26.	<p>My concerns on the proposed development at Valley Farm Flitwick are as follows:</p> <p>Road safety: There is an entrance to the development on Steppingley Road between the entrances to the Rufus Centre and the Leisure Centre with no roundabout although this is a proposed bus route and a road which will be increasingly busy with the Centre Parcs traffic. There are two entrances on Froghall Road which do have roundabouts - but why is it necessary to have two?</p> <p>Infrastructure: Do the existing schools for Flitwick have enough capacity for the potential number of children from this number of houses - especially Woodland and Redborne</p>	<p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p> <p>Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.</p>
27.	<p>My views on the Valley Farm, Flitwick development are as follows:</p> <p>Signalised shuttle one way route under the bridge will cause tail backs onto the A507. This is a very busy through route. Also the road under</p>	<p>Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.</p> <p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local</p>

	<p>the bridge floods in heavy rain.</p> <p>Cycle and footpath along Froghall Road is a good idea</p> <p>Need a mini roundabout on Manor Way/Steppingley Road junction to control vehicle speeds and aid the flow of traffic due to increased usage from the development and Center Parcs.</p> <p>Can the local services cope ie, doctors/dentists/schools/leisure centre with increase in population?</p> <p>How much S106 money will go towards allowing local services to expand?</p>	<p>infrastructure.</p>
<p>28.</p>	<p>I attended the exhibition at the Rufus Centre, Flitwick on Friday 7 September.</p> <p>Houses have to be built somewhere and the Valley Farm site is as good as any. It was difficult to judge the effect that this development will have without a plan showing in detail where the houses will be sited.</p> <p>More houses will have an impact on schools and the local doctor's surgery. This is a matter for the Central Beds Council if they allow this development to go ahead. The main problem is that the doctors surgery appears to be working at full capacity, as are the local infant's schools.</p> <p>My only objection to this development is the need to restrict traffic to one way working controlled by traffic lights at the railway bridge in Fordfield Road. This is a busy little road used by locals to avoid the centre of Flitwick and to avoid using Windmill Road.</p> <p>Some years ago a housing development was allowed off Windmill Road, and the footpath by</p>	<p>The consultation was intended to consult on the design parameters for a master plan to shape the upcoming planning application. It therefore has to demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating the quantum of development in a well-planned manner. It lacks detail compared to a full application as many of the matters are reserved for later consideration.</p> <p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p> <p>Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.</p> <p>A new tunnel is not</p>

	<p>the road at the railway bridge was widened. To allow this to happen, the road was narrowed to a single carriageway with priority given to traffic travelling West.</p> <p>A consequence of the Valley farm development is to do the same to the railway bridge on Fordfield Road, but with traffic lights. The need for residents to drive from one side of the railway to the other is self-evident and the Fordfield Road bridge needs to be two way.</p> <p>A new pedestrian tunnel under the railway track is required connecting the Valley Farm estate with The Meadows, a cul-de-sac on the other side of the railway.</p>	<p>considered proportionate to offset the needs of the development and would make the scheme unviable. In addition it requires the involvement of a third part and is not therefore deliverable.</p>
29.	<p>Further to the public exhibition and website information, my comments are as follows :</p> <p>Why is the proposed housing development not 3-4 storey town houses (similar to <i>The Wixams</i>, which helps density-wise, but also for car parking provision at ground level)?;</p> <p>Sufficient off-road car parking (assuming ratio of at least 2 cars per household);</p> <p>Properties to be built to latest eco/sustainability standards;</p> <p>Clarity over proposed bus route - where from & to (given narrow low-height Froghall Road railway bridge & the current use on route 42 of double-deck vehicles by both Stagecoach & Grant Palmer);</p> <p>Safe walking/cycling route through the Valley Farm development - and including satisfactory links under Froghall Road bridge to Doo Little & Redborne Upper School, including a crossing (pelican/signalised) over the A507 bypass to the</p>	<p>Housing types will be agreed at reserved matters/detailed design stage and may include elements of town housing. However due to this being an edge of settlement site the maximum height will be 2.5 stories as this is considered to form an appropriate transition to the open countryside.</p> <p>The buildings will be built to whatever the relevant standards of building regulations are.</p> <p>Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.</p> <p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p>

	<p>Amphill "side of the road"; satisfactory route also from Valley Farm to Flitwick railway station & town centre;</p> <p>How will road traffic be regulated through the proposed <i>contra-flow</i> Froghall Road railway bridge - signalisation/lights?;</p> <p>Footpath/cycleway adjacent to bypass to Amphill Heights/Greensand Woods developments, plus Warren Farm and Centre Parcs;</p> <p>Consistency in road speed limits - should be 20 mph in "Home Zone"/residential area of Valley Farm development and 30 mph elsewhere (including at the proposed Steppingley Hospital croosroads roundabout where the 30 mph restriction currently comes off just past the Rufus Centre);</p> <p>Less (noise) sensitive retailing development [Aldi or Lidl?] next to railway embankment on east side of the Valley Farm development;</p> <p>Overall the development is bland, lacking in vision and detail. It does not do justice to the concept of a '<i>Masterplan</i>' especially given that if constructed it will increase Flitwick's population significantly. More detailed information is required, including likely Section 106 <i>development gain conditions</i> &/or a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payment.</p> <p>More specifically of particular concern, is :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · No immediate infrastructure such as shops, a school or a surgery/health centre within the Valley farm development - so that residents will by implication have to travel into town for basic amenities, putting additional pressure on already inadequate facilities. Schoolchildren in particular 	<p>The consultation was intended to consult on the design parameters for a master plan to shape the upcoming planning application. It therefore has to demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating the quantum of development in a well-planned manner. It lacks detail compared to a full application as many of the matters are reserved for later consideration.</p>
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	<p>will have a very difficult journey; <i>Safe Routes</i> to all schools?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The prospect of traffic gridlock along Froghall Road, not least because it is narrow and is to be controlled <i>one-way</i> under the railway bridge – backing up both ways to the proposed Steppingley Hospital crossroads roundabout to the west and the junction with the A507 bypass to the east, being a distinct possibility given likely traffic flows. Where is the traffic modelling for the proposed contra-flow? · Although a potential bus route is identified, it would be helpful to know if appropriate discussions have been undertaken with service providers (Stagecoach, Grant Palmer, Flittabus & Centre Parcs) and whether their reaction is positive in principle – a plus point would be the possibility of being able to access both the Valley Farm site - and the Rufus and Leisure Centres by public transport. · Little if any information has been provided on the types and density of housing proposed, and also the type of commercial/mixed-use uses envisaged. The latter looks perilously close to the railway embankment and it is to be hoped that Network Rail have been consulted for a full safety assessment to be made. This safety assessment to include the Froghall Road railway bridge which is <i>sub-standard</i> - low-height, limited-headroom and approached by blind-bends on either side. The bridge could easily be subject to "bridge strikes" putting the railway (Midland Main Line) out of action. Is the road to be straightened as well as the introduction of signalised "contra-flow" control? In addition to Network Rail, have CBC (Highways) & their contractors Amey been consulted? 	
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	<p>It is hoped that these comments will be fully taken into account both by Old Road Securities PLC, Framptons, their respective consultants (URS, etc.) and Central Beds. Council (CBC).</p> <p>Finally are ORS going to adopt the "Code for Sustainable Homes" for the proposed new houses to be built at Valley Farm?</p>	
30.	<p>We attended the Exhibition at The Rufus Centre and are writing to register our comments, suggestions and objections. We have absolutely no confidence that any of these will be taken into account as, from our conversations at the Exhibition, this development is clearly a done deal. The planners have made their plans so local Council Tax Payers will no doubt be ignored. Indeed, we raised many of these objections at the last "Which Other Bits Of Flitwick Can We Build On" Exhibition at The Rufus Centre a few years ago. This is clearly just a tick box exercise in public consultation.</p> <p>The Exhibition contained absolutely no details of the impact of this major development on Flitwick by way of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * schools: Lower Schools are already full to bursting. * doctors: the car park is already inadequate. * parking in Flitwick. * traffic: adding this development to existing traffic volumes + the additional traffic from the new housing estates in Ampthill and the Center Parcs development will not exactly enhance our quality of life. * shops – no doubt an inevitable consequence of the extra housing will be the expansion of Tesco. 	<p>The consultation was intended to consult on the design parameters for a master plan to shape the upcoming planning application. It therefore has to demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating the quantum of development in a well-planned manner. It lacks detail compared to a full application as many of the matters are reserved for later consideration.</p> <p>Highways concerns will be considered by a TA.</p> <p>S106 agreement will offset the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure.</p>

	<p>The Exhibition provided no details whatsoever of the type of housing to be built on the site. To say that it will include green spaces is just totally laughable: the whole area is currently one big green space!</p> <p>As regards the planned road layout:</p> <p>* to show the new Steppingley Road roundabout as part of the new estate is grossly misleading as this is being funded by Center Parcs as a condition of their development.</p> <p>* siting two mini roundabouts (one of which is far too close to the proposed railway bridge one way system) on the already narrow Froghall Road is crazy. Mini roundabouts just do not work; you only need to look at the tyre marks over every single one – people just drive over them. If the estate has to have an exit on Froghall Road, reduce it to one exit and make it a T Junction like the one proposed on Steppingley Road.</p> <p>* reducing the railway bridge to one way traffic is guaranteed to add to traffic chaos. Froghall Road is currently the only viable through route from West to East. The fact that you have to put a footpath under the bridge is precisely why you should not build on this site!</p> <p>* whenever it rains, Froghall Road floods on the Ampthill side of the railway bridge. Adding extra run off from the new estate will only compound this problem.</p> <p>* the traffic projections mentioned to us were grossly optimistic and did not appear to take into account the Ampthill/Center Parcs developments. You only need to look at the queues during the current roadworks along</p>	
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	<p>Fordfield Road & Steppingley Road to understand the potential impact of increased traffic volumes.</p> <p>Whilst it is clearly too late to stop the estate being built, I do hope you will think again about the road layout and do something to improve services for existing residents – and the newcomers; after all, the houses will not sell if education, youth and medical facilities are inadequate.</p>	
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Meeting: Executive

Date: 4 December 2012

Subject: Dog Warden and Kennelling Service Contract

Report of: Councillor Brian Spurr, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services

Summary: This report seeks approval to retender the Dog Warden and Kennelling Service Contract for Central Bedfordshire.

The retendering of this contract will enable the continuation of this essential service from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017 with a one year extension.

The estimated total contract value for the contract is £100k per annum based on current contract costs.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities

Contact Officer: Jane Moakes, Assistant Director, Community Safety, Public Protection, Waste & Leisure

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All wards

Function of: Executive

Key Decision No

Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The action supports the Council priorities of providing:

- Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries

By providing appropriate dog warden and kennelling services to ensure stray dogs are collected and appropriately managed to meet the Council's statutory duty.

Financial:

1. As an ongoing statutory service, finance is provided in base budgets for 2012/13 and within budgets in the Medium Term Financial Plan. It is anticipated that this procurement will result in some savings against current spend. Currently this contract is a sub contract of the pest control and dog warden contract and carries sub contract contractual costs. It is proposed to procure this contract separately to the pest control contract which should result in cost savings.

Legal:

2. The Council has a statutory duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 S.149 in respect of seizure of stray dogs. The dog warden and kennelling service enables the council to meet this statutory duty.
3. The current contract term is 4 years ending on 30 September 2013 (start date 1 October 2009). The EU procurement process applies to the contract due to its value and an Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) notice will need to be placed in February 2013.

Risk Management:

4. The risks associated with the retendering of the current contract include:
 - Failure to discharge statutory duty
 - Failure to follow EU and CBC Procurement rules
 - Failure to retender on a timely basis, which may result in failure to deliver value for money
 - Failure to provide continuity of service delivery

The retendering process will address and mitigate these risks.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

5. Not applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

6. Not applicable, any issues arising from non provision of the service would impact on all residents in the area.

Public Health:

7. The health and wellbeing of residents would be negatively impacted if a dog warden and kennelling service was not provided. There is the potential for stray dogs to cause physical harm to people and the environment and the spread of disease.

Community Safety:

8. No Community Safety implications.

Sustainability:

9. The procurement process will adhere to the Council's procurement policies which take into account the environmental performance of potential contracts as part of the assessment process.

Procurement:

10. The Council's Code of Procurement Governance provides that the Executive must approve expenditure before commencing any procurement over £500k. The costs over the life of this contract potentially reaches this threshold. The procurement team will actively support the tender process and the Council's Procurement Procedures will be followed.

Overview and Scrutiny:

11. The matter has not been considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **approve the procurement of the Dog Warden and Kennelling contract in accordance with the Council's Code of Procurement Governance; and**
2. **delegate the award of the contract to the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services subject to successful procurement processes.**

Reason for Recommendations: To ensure that a dog warden and kennelling service is provided to meet the Council's statutory duty to deal with stray dogs; to provide a warden service to regularly monitor the area for stray dogs and provide information and support to dog owners with regard to their responsibilities.

Executive Summary

12. The report seeks approval for retendering of the dog warden and kennelling contract to continue the service.
13. The estimated total contract value is £100k per annum, however it is anticipated that this procurement will make savings; therefore, the total financial commitment could be lower than current costs.

Dog Warden and Kennelling Service

14. The dog warden service is currently provided under contract and is combined with the pest control contract. It operates across the whole of the area and was procured in October 2009. The dog warden service activities involve collection of stray dogs, addressing complaints about dog fouling, (including issuing of fixed penalty notices), responding to dog barking complaints and educational activities on responsible dog ownership.
15. The kennelling service is provided through a separate agreement with a local boarding kennel that receives stray dogs, provides a boarding facility for up to eight days and re-homes. It is proposed that we combine these services into one contract as the functions are closely related.
16. The current dog warden contract ends 30 September 2013 and arrangements need to be in place to continue this service from 1 October 2013. It is proposed that the contract term for the combined is from 1 October 2013 to the end of September 2017 with a one year extension, as this should achieve better rates. The procurement process milestones are set out below:

Complete contract documentation	15/01/13
OJEU notice and open tender issue	01/02/13
End of evaluation and intention to award	31/03/13
Formal award and mobilisation period	01/05/13
New contract start date	01/10/13

17. In reviewing the service requirements and the current market, consideration was given to combining the dog warden, kennelling and pest control service under one contract. However, the nature of the services are quite different, dog warden and kennelling services being more specialist with comparatively fewer potential bidders than pest control, where the market is well developed and competitive. Running separate procurement processes for each contract will enable bidders to focus on their core business and should result in costs savings. The pest control contract will be subject to a procurement process, and will be tendered to the same contract period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017 (four years with one year extension). Due to its value it does not require Executive approval.

Conclusions and Next Steps

18. Executive is asked to approve the retendering of the dog warden and kennelling contract.
19. It is proposed that following the procurement process, the award of the contract is delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers: (open to public inspection) - None

Meeting: Executive
Date: 04 December 2012
Subject: Q2 Revenue Report 2012/13
Report of: Councillor Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report provides information on the revenue position as at Quarter 2 2012/13 and the forecast outturn position for 2012/13.

Advising Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer
Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** Not applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Sound financial management contributes to the Council's Value for Money and enables the Council to successfully deliver its priorities. The recommendations will contribute indirectly to all 5 Council priorities.

Financial:

1. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Legal:

2. None.

Risk Management:

3. None.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. Any staffing reductions will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Managing Change Policy and in consultation with the Trades Unions.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken prior to the allocation of the 2012/13 budgets and each Directorate was advised of significant equality implications relating to their budget proposals.

Public Health:

6. None.

Community Safety:

7. None.

Sustainability:

8. None.

Procurement:

9. None.

Overview and Scrutiny:

10. The 2012/13 Quarter 2 revenue report will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 December 2012.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **note that the Revenue forecast position is projected to overspend budget by £1.4m; and**
2. **request officers to continue with their efforts to achieve a minimum balanced outturn or an under spend.**

Reason for Recommendations: Note the financial position of the Council and that efforts continue to achieve a balanced budget outturn for 2012.

Executive Summary

11. The report sets out the financial position for 2012/13 as at the end of September. It sets out spend to date against the profiled budget and the forecast financial outturn. Explanations for the variances are set out below in section 3. This report enables the Executive to consider the overall financial position of the Council and agree any further actions to deliver as a minimum a balanced financial year end.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS (Appendices A1, A2, A3, A4)

12. In Summary

- The 2012/13 forecast outturn is to overspend by £1.4m (£0.94m in June). This is an increase of £0.3m on August forecast and is driven by increased costs in Children's Services and Adult Social Care.
- The budget includes £2.1m of contingency costs which are also currently included in the forecast so no variance impact (actual = budget). Whilst it is assumed in the forecast that this will be spent, this is subject to review as there are no current calls on this contingency.
- If the contingency is not required the forecast outturn spend position will reduce accordingly.
- The current forecast position includes the planned use of, and proposed transfers to, reserves, of which the most significant is the creation of a £0.9m earmarked reserve in Adult Social Care, Health and Housing for residential futures. Sustainable Communities have also created an earmarked reserve for integrated consumer protection costs of £0.14m.
- The Year to Date (YTD) spend is £4.5m below budget (£2.8m in June). Rest of year spend to outturn on forecast requires an overspend of £5.9m. Executive Members should ensure that officers rigorously test the rest of year spend plans in order to reduce spend and in order to achieve a balanced budget.
- Risks and opportunities indicate a further potential risk of £0.63m.
- September non current debt (i.e. debt that is more than 14 days from date of invoice) is £8.3m, which is £3.7m lower higher than last month (due to payment of £3.2m of NHS debt in early September).

13. Directorate forecast outturn variances

The full year forecast as at September for Directorates after proposed use of reserves is a £1.4m overspend. The following are the key areas:

- i) Social Care Health and Housing £0.1m above budget.
- ii) Children's Services £1.6m above budget.
- iii) Sustainable Communities £0.1m below budget.
- iv) Corporate Services £0.5m above budget.
- v) Corporate Costs and Contingency £0.7m below budget.

14. Directorate Year to Date (YTD) variances

YTD spend for 6 months to end of September (exc. Schools and HRA) at £80.1m after proposed use of reserves is below budget by £4.5m. The following are the key areas:

- i) Social Care Health and Housing £2.5m below budget.
- ii) Children's Services £0.4m above budget.
- iii) Sustainable Communities £0.5m below budget.
- iv) Corporate Services £1.0m below budget.
- v) Corporate Costs and Contingency £0.8m below budget.

DIRECTORATE COMMENTARY

Social Care, Health and Housing

15. The General Fund outturn for the directorate is a projected over spend of £0.056m or 0.1%.
16. Adult Social Care is projecting an under spend of £0.05m (under spend of £1.23m at Quarter One). Within this service area is Older People package costs which are currently showing an over spend of £0.21m. People are living longer and the costs of dementia are on the increase. The budget setting process included an increase due to demography of 5%, equivalent to £1.8m. This also has to cover the cost of former self funders requiring local authority support.
- The year-to-date position on Adult Social care is an under spend of £2.7m which indicates a much higher forecast under spend for the full year. Whilst some budgets have been profiled, including Transitions, there are some areas of activity where the pattern of spend will increase later in the year due to phased recruitment and new projects.
17. Within Physical Disabilities, the overall position on care packages is an under spend of £0.52m (under spend of £0.64m at Quarter One). This largely reflects reductions in nursing placement/diversion of funding to health. Additional budget was provided for Transitions from Children's Services and ten new cases are being reviewed currently.
18. Within the Older People client service group, the impact of former self funders continues to be tracked. Thirteen service users in this category have required council support during the first half year at an estimated full year cost of £0.21m. This is in line with the equivalent period in 2011/12 but, given the current financial climate, this trend is unlikely to diminish and will continue to put pressure on the Council's budget.

19. Challenging efficiency targets were set against the Older People service area and these are mainly on track. The Reablement service continues to achieve reductions in care with 1,125 hours in the first half year, which is equivalent to a saving of £0.16m with a projected full year saving of £0.21m. It is evident that whilst this activity is reducing costs to the Council it is not able to completely mitigate the costs of the demographic increases.
20. The Learning Disabilities service area is projecting an under spend of £0.01m after reserves. A reserve of £0.57m is held to meet the expected impact of two major de-registering providers but this process has been delayed and the reserve is expected to cover all current year costs.
21. The Commissioning service is projecting an over spend of £0.07m. This is a combination of an over spend on contracts of £0.20m offset by a projected under spend of £0.25m on residential fee uplifts due to deferred implementation. Customer income is projected to under achieve by £0.14m against budget within the Business & Performance service area.
22. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is subject to a separate report on this agenda.

Children's Services

23. The full year projected outturn position for 2012/13 is £1.60m overspend (£0.82m overspend quarter 1). This assumes full spend against allocated grants.
24. The budget to date is £13.35m compared to actual spend to date of £13.70m, over budget by £0.35m. The main spend to date variances relate to Children with Disabilities £0.23m, School Support £0.35m and Transport £0.79m. This is a contribution of periodic spend and the trend of spend associated with Education budgets.
25. The two areas contributing to the current forecast overspend are Child Protection and Children in Care £1.25m (£0.45m quarter one), and the Fostering and Adoption Service £0.59m (£0.38m quarter one). This pressure is due to additional expensive specialist children placements, increases in Looked After Children and the cost of agency workers covering qualified posts. The development and recruitment of qualified social workers to fill vacancies is an ongoing activity.
26. Between April 2011 and March 2012, the number of Looked After Children increased by 32 to 208. The number of children currently in care, at 227, is below that of statistical neighbours, where the average is approximately 255 children.

The number of children with a child protection plan (CPP) is now 250. Central Bedfordshire is now above the national figure and statistical neighbours for this category.

Work to determine whether thresholds for child protection plans are sound, and whether the plans formulated properly address concerns for children, continues to be undertaken through auditing.

Sustainable Communities

27. Sustainable Communities annual expenditure budget is £47.7m. Profiled spend to date is £22.23m which is £0.52m below budget taking into account use of earmarked reserves (June £0.15m).
28. The forecast spend to the year end is £47.58m an underspend of £0.13m (£0.01m over in June). An improvement of £0.06m vs. last month.
29. Economic Growth Skills and Regeneration has forecast an overspend of £0.02m which is an improvement of £0.05m from quarter one. Extra grant funding of £0.02m has been secured to support the delivery of the regeneration projects.
30. Highways and Transport has forecast an over spend of £0.15m which is an increase of £0.12m from quarter one.

The unforeseen prolonged wet weather caused additional damage to the roads by accelerating the rate at which pot holes form. There has also been an increase in the number of call outs to deal with flooding incidents. This has resulted in an increased spend of £0.15m.

A previous reported overspend of £0.03m on land fill tax is being absorbed by the service.

The previous reported under achievement of car park income of £0.04m due to issues when the service was first transferred is being offset by reduced expenditure in parking and traffic management.

31. Planning has forecast an underspend of £0.07m which is an improvement on quarter one.

Costs incurred by Albion have increased and in an increasingly competitive market they are less able to realise a surplus on each project. This has reduced the contribution to central overheads by £0.02m.

The professional services budget within Development Planning is forecast to underspend by £0.10m. This reflects the prudent procurement of specialist work and legal advice to support Development Strategy and other Local Plan documents.

32. Community Safety Public Protection Waste and Leisure has forecast an under spend of £0.27m which is an improvement of £0.06m to quarter one.

There is additional £0.04m income within public protection. The money related to a prosecution has been forecast and it is proposed to transfer this to a reserve at the end of the year.

To enable the reconfiguration of the North waste collection fleet to fit in with BEaR project solution the purchase of new residual vehicles has been delayed incurring additional maintenance costs of £0.05m.

Additional savings have been generated from the renegotiation of the Household Waste Recycling Centre contract and lower green waste contract costs have contributed to an underspend.

There has been increased advisor costs of £0.03m for the BEaR project due to the consultancy work on funding options and investigation works at the Thorn Turn site.

Leisure Service have forecast an underspend of £0.130m due to salaries and related spend, renegotiation of the leisure contract for the south area and additional income from the physical activity programme.

Corporate Services & Corporate Costs

33. The full year budget for the directorate of £42.54m is made up of:

Corporate Services £28.4m

Corporate Costs £13.80m

Contingency & Reserves £0.34m

34. The Directorate is currently forecasting an outturn underspend of £0.13m after use of earmarked reserves (£0.36m over in June). The key forecast variances identified are:

35. £0.17m net pressure within People & Organisation, Legal Services, the main items being £0.19m pressure as a result of increased Children's cases workload and a £0.12m saving in Members' Costs resulting from a new Executive structure and lower superannuation costs than budgeted.

36. £0.08m net pressure within People & Organisation, People, due to additional Health and Safety staffing needed (£0.040m pressure) and unachievable income target within HR Traded Services (£0.15m pressure). This has been mitigated in part by other overall reductions in salary costs and vacancy savings (£0.10m saving).

37. £0.45m net pressure within Resources, Finance, made up from the following variances: £0.24m pressure in Revenue and Benefits, mainly due to Department for Work and Pensions now recouping £0.30m more Housing Benefit subsidy for 2009/10 year, £0.13m due to the bursary service ceasing, reflecting an unachievable income target; £0.25m insurance income shortfall largely as a result of fewer schools buying the insurance package and £0.12m underspend in Audit following a reduction in audit fees and salary savings following staff secondments.

There are savings in debt management costs of £0.40m, managed within the Finance team, the benefits of which are recorded in Corporate Costs.

38. Under spend of £0.10m within Resources, ICT representing savings against superannuation costs.

39. Within Corporate Costs, the impact of non achievable budget efficiencies from prior years has been offset by lower than budgeted interest payable (£0.40m).
40. Under spend of £0.25m in Contingency & Reserves following a higher than budgeted New Homes Bonus award.

RESERVES POSITION

Earmarked Reserves

41. The opening balance of Earmarked Reserves is £18.5m (Excluding HRA and Schools). The current reported position proposes the planned use of £4.55m Earmarked reserves and proposed transfer to reserves of £1.1m. This would result in a forecast closing position of £15.0m earmarked reserves at year end.

General Reserves

42. 2011/12 outturn enabled us to make additional contributions to the General Fund reserve. 2012/13 budget is to make further contributions of £1.4m.

RISKS AND UPSIDES (Appendix C)

43. Risks and issues indicate a net risk of £0.63m.

DEBTORS (Appendix D)

44. General Central Bedfordshire Council sales debtors (excluding house sales and grants) for September amounted to £7.9m. Of this £2.4m was over 60 days; all of which is actively being managed.

£1.6m is actively being chased; £0.3m identified as disputed and work to resolve is underway. £0.2m has instalment agreements in place and £0.2m is being dealt with through legal channels. A further £1.3m is in respect of charges against houses which will be repaid once the houses are sold.

45. The largest items of note within the total debt are:
 - i) Adult Social Care general fund debt at the end of Quarter 2 2012/13 stood at £5.96m (£8.4m for Quarter 1) of which £2.1m was house sales debt, £2.2m Health Service debt and £0.2m other Local Authorities. Of the remaining £1.5m general debt, £1.0m (68%) is more than 60 days old. This includes legacy debt of £0.33m as well as Central Bedfordshire debt.
 - ii) Of the Adult Social Care debt aged more than 60 days, 19% is under query and 4% flagged for write-off. Excluding Health Service and house sales debt, there are 30 debtors whose outstanding balance is greater than £0.01m – these are all under active management.
 - iii) Total debt for Children's Services is £0.39m (£1.43m quarter 1), £0.17m is debt over 61 days. The debt over £0.01m totals £0.26m (£0.89m June), £0.17m of which relates to Bedford Borough.

- iv) The total debt for Sustainable Communities at the end of September was £2.46m, a decrease of £0.47m over June's figures. Invoices relating to developers legal contributions to deliver planning requirements associated with new developments account for £1.71m or 69% of debt. About 70% of debt is less than three months old. All debt recovery is in accordance with Council policy.
- v) Overall Corporate Resources debt has decreased by £0.28m in the month. There is currently £0.35m that is over 90 days old; this represents 24% of the current total debt. Finance has circulated to relevant Budget Managers details of customers who had debt of over £0.01m which was more than 60 days overdue. Budget Managers are working to resolve recovery of these debts and progress is being followed up at monthly budget meetings.

Treasury Management (Appendix E)

- 46. The authority received its benchmarking results for quarter 1 ending 30 June 2012 which compared the authority's treasury Management activities against 38 other local authorities.

The key bench marked information has been attached as Appendix E - Section A.

Borrowing

- 47. The authority has repaid £5m in maturing debt in the first half of the year and continues to internally borrow for new capital projects.

The total borrowing of the authority as at 30 September 2012 was £315.5m (nominal), of this amount, £302m was with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and £13.5m was Market Debt. This is split between the General fund and HRA.

	PWLB Fixed £m	PWLB Variable £m	Market (LOBO) £m	Total £m
General Fund	101.4	35.6	13.5	153.5
HRA	120.0	45.0	0.0	165.0
TOTAL	221.4	80.6	13.5	315.5

The profile of debt is split so that overall the authority has 71% Fixed PWLB debt, 25%, Variable PWLB debt and 4% Fixed Market debt, as shown in Section A on the Treasury Management Performance Dashboard (Appendix E).

Investments & Deposits

- 48. In accordance with Public Sector best practice the Council's main priorities remain security and liquidity, before yield.

In the current climate the Council continues to keep its investment highly liquid so that it has the option to withdraw funds quickly at the first signs of stress.

It is also diversifying its portfolio; deposits and investments are made in a range of accounts such as call accounts, fixed deposits, money market funds, all in line with the Council's approved policy for selecting suitable counterparties.

B1 of the treasury dashboard shows the breakdown of investment by institutions as at 30 September 2012. B3 of the dashboard shows the maturity portfolio of the Council's investments with just under £27m of its investments, which equates to 36.35%, being held in call accounts and money market funds and the remainder of short term investments on deposit maturing within 3 months. This has resulted in new deposits being placed at interest rates of between 0.4% to 1.4% in the first half of the year.

49. In the first quarter the Council average rate of return on investments was 1.55% (includes long term investment in the Lime Fund) compared to the benchmark authorities' average of 1.23%. B2 of the dashboard shows how the authority favourably compares to other benchmarked authorities.

Cash Management

50. Daily cash movements in the first half of 2012/13 have ranged between net payments of £11.2m and net income of £12.8m. Graph C1 on the dashboard demonstrates the volatility of the cash movement.

51. C2 on the dashboard sets out the range of cash outflows and inflows. In the first half of 2012/13 the monthly gross cash movement of the Council, both inflows and outflows, has varied between £50m and £70m.

C3 of the dashboard shows the level of deposits and investments held by the Council. This shows an upward trend of cash holdings within the Council which is typical for all councils as large cash receipts are collected earlier in the year and related expenditure follows in later months / years (e.g. monies from the PCT comes in mid June which is spent over the year, and receipts for some grants / S106 monies may take several years to spend).

The Council's actual average cash holding in 2012/13 was £71.3m (previous year £71m) which is considerably lower than the benchmarked average of £120.2m. C4 of the dashboard illustrates how the Council compares to other benchmarked authorities.

Outlook

52. The UK Bank Base Rate is not expected to rise until perhaps 2015/2016 implying that the short-term rate of return on investments and deposits will remain at very low levels.

Therefore, the Council plans to continue to use cashflow balances in lieu of borrowing to fund capital expenditure and where possible to pay off maturing debt. In the current climate the Council is also keeping new investments fairly liquid overall although this will have an adverse impact on investment income.

Currently it is expected that there will be a shortfall in investment income in 2012/13 by approximately £0.05m. However on the upside it is expected that the cost of borrowing to be below budget by up to £0.65m. Naturally the outturn will become clearer later on in the year. There are a number of variables which are outside the Council's control which will have a impact on treasury activity, such as the base rate, the economic climate, confidence in the government (both in the UK and outside), and the credit ratings, share prices and confidence in the counterparties on the Council's lending list. Other factors will be the timings of capital receipts and grants and the progress of the capital programme.

Appendices:

Appendix A1 – Council Revenue Summary

Appendix A2 – Directorate Summary

Appendix A3 – Monthly forecast variance

Appendix A4 – Subjective Analysis

Appendix C – Risks and Upsides

Appendix D – Debt

Appendix E – Treasury Management Performance Dashboard

Background Papers:

None.

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Appendices

Appendix A1 – Council Revenue Summary

Month: September 2012	Year to date				Full Year					
	Director	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves.
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Social Care Health and Housing	27,864	25,619	-220	-2,465	55,586	56,349	764	-708	56	
Children's Services	14,951	15,550	-246	352	32,561	35,712	3,151	-1,549	1,602	
Sustainable Communities	22,750	22,287	-61	-523	47,712	48,008	296	-430	-134	
Corporate Services	13,767	12,887	-114	-995	28,396	29,378	983	-452	531	
Contingency and Reserves	-1,971	-2,224	0	-254	344	91	-253	0	-253	
Corporate Costs	7,242	6,666	0	-577	13,801	13,397	-404	0	-404	
Total (Excl Schools &HRA)	84,603	80,785	-641	-4,462	178,399	182,935	4,537	-3,139	1,397	
Schools	-1,587	-1,604	0	-17	550	859	309	-309	0	
HRA	0	-109	0	-109	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	83,016	79,072	-641	-4,588	178,949	183,794	4,846	-3,448	1,397	

Appendix A2 – Directorate Summary

Month: September 2012	Year to date				Year				
Director	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves.
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Social Care Health and Housing									
Director of Social Care, Health, Housing	20	101	0	81	39	57	17	0	17
Housing Management (GF)	1,962	1,911	0	-51	3,925	3,923	-1	0	-1
Adult Social Care	27,795	25,160	-71	-2,706	55,500	55,461	-39	-39	-78
Commissioning	2,321	2,612	-107	185	4,641	4,783	142	-112	30
Business and Performance	-4,234	-4,165	-42	27	-8,520	-7,874	645	-557	88
Sub Total Social Care and Health	27,864	25,619	-220	-2,465	55,586	56,349	764	-708	56
Children's Services									
Director of Children's Services	150	131	0	-19	300	300	0	0	0
Children's Services Operations	9,995	11,739	-59	1,684	20,725	23,831	3,106	-1,268	1,838
Learning, Commissioning & Partnerships	2,220	1,707	-132	-644	5,311	5,300	-11	-226	-237
Joint School Commissioning Service (Transport)	3,211	2,425	0	-786	7,437	7,438	1	0	1
Partnerships	284	456	-55	117	606	661	55	-55	0
Sub Total Children's Services (excluding Schools)	15,860	16,459	-246	352	34,379	37,529	3,151	-1,549	1,602
DSG Contribution to Central Support	-909	-909	0	0	-1,817	-1,817	0	0	0
Sub Total Children's Services (excluding Schools)	14,951	15,550	-246	352	32,561	35,712	3,151	-1,549	1,602
Sustainable Communities									
Director of Sustainable Communities	384	334	0	-50	768	773	4	0	4
Economic Growth, Skills & Regeneration	2,660	2,667	-59	-52	5,389	5,810	422	-396	26
Highways Transportation	5,333	5,204	0	-128	11,538	11,734	196	-50	146
Planning	3,147	2,849		-298	6,823	6,789	-34	-30	-64
Comm Safety Public Protec Waste Leisure	11,226	11,233	-2	5	23,195	22,902	-292	46	-246
Sub Total Sustainable Communities	22,750	22,287	-61	-523	47,712	48,008	296	-430	-134
People & Organisation									
People and Organisation Leadership	82	92	-6	4	190	248	58	-58	0
Communications	362	311	0	-51	724	726	3	0	3
Customer Services	944	946	0	2	1,888	1,888	0	0	0
Policy & strategy	166	140	0	-26	333	314	-19	0	-19
Customer & Community Insight	46	56	0	10	91	110	18	0	18
People	1,210	1,158	0	-52	2,420	2,508	88	-6	82
Legal & Democratic Services	1,771	1,572	-25	-225	3,828	3,934	106	-25	81
Sub Total People & Organisation	4,581	4,274	-31	-338	9,474	9,728	255	-89	166
Resources									
Programme & Performance	496	273	-9	-232	991	1,265	274	-289	-15
E Procurement & Payments	161	185	0	25	322	352	30	0	30
Finance	1,966	2,086	-35	85	4,481	4,962	481	-35	446
Category Review	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ICT	3,375	2,924	0	-450	6,749	6,652	-98	0	-98
Assets	3,012	2,997	-39	-53	6,023	6,065	41	-39	2
Sub Total Resources	9,009	8,466	-83	-626	18,567	19,295	728	-363	365
Chief Executive	177	146	0	-31	355	355	0	0	0
Sub Total Corporate Services	13,767	12,887	-114	-995	28,396	29,378	983	-452	531
Contingency and Reserves*	-1,971	-2,224	0	-254	344	91	-253	0	-253
Corporate Costs									
Debt Management	5,850	5,207	0	-643	11,700	11,015	-685	0	-685
Audit Fees	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Insurance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Premature Retirement Costs	1,477	1,555	0	78	2,954	2,896	-58	0	-58
Corporate HRA Recharges	-45	-45	0	0	-90	-90	0	0	0
Efficiencies	-39	-50	0	-11	-763	-424	339	0	339
Sub Total Corporate Costs	7,242	6,666		-577	13,801	13,397	-404	0	-404
TOTAL Excluding Schools	84,604	80,785	-641	-4,461	178,399	182,935	4,536	-3,139	1,397

Appendix A3 – Monthly forecast variance

Director	August Variance	September Variance	Difference	COMMENTARY
	£000	£000	£000	
Social Care Health and Housing				
Director of Social Care, Health, Housing	17	17	-	
Housing Management (GF)	(1)	(1)	-	
Adult Social Care	(367)	(78)	289	Additional package costs in 65+ services - 25 new customers less 10 deaths/discharges , additional OT agency costs (clearance of the waiting list)
Commissioning	296	30	(266)	Fee increase for dementia beds in res/nursing homes to take effect for part year only
Business and Performance	(188)	88	276	Base budget shortfall no longer met from reserve
Sub Total Social Care and Health	(243)	56	299	
Housing Services (HRA)	-	-	-	
Sub Total Social Care Health and Housing	(243)	56	299	
Children's Services				
Director of Children's Services	-	-	-	
Children's Services Operations	1,474	1,838	365	
Learning, Commissioning & Partnerships	(109)	(237)	(129)	
Joint School Commissioning Service (Transport)	-	1	1	
Partnerships	(0)	0	0	
Sub Total Children's Services (excluding Schools)	1,365	1,602	237	
Sustainable Communities				
Director of Sustainable Communities	(11)	4	15	
Economic Growth, Skills & Regeneration	64	26	(39)	additional income
Highways Transportation	123	146	23	
Planning	(31)	(64)	(32)	change in forecasting
Comm Safety Public Protect Waste Leisure	(217)	(246)	(29)	delay in recruitment to vacant post / reduction in legal costs
Sub Total Sustainable Communities	(72)	(134)	(62)	
ACE People & Organisation				
ACE People	0	0	-	
Communications	3	3	0	
Customer Services	-	-	-	
Policy & strategy	0	(19)	(19)	
Customer & Community Insight	-	18	18	
People	72	82	10	
Legal & Democratic Services	182	81	(101)	£35k additional income and £71k reduction in staffing cost forecast
Sub Total ACE People & Organisation	258	166	(92)	
ACE Resources				
Programme & Performance	(4)	(15)	(12)	
E Procurement & Payments	38	30	(8)	
Finance	467	446	(21)	Laregely staffing cost forecast adjustments
Category Review	-	-	-	
ICT	(97)	(98)	(1)	
Assets	12	2	(10)	
Sub Total ACE Resources	416	365	(51)	
Chief Executive	-	-	-	
TOTAL Corporate Services	674	531	(143)	
Contingency and Reserves	(253)	(253)	-	
Corporate Costs	(361)	(404)	(43)	Revision to pension cost liability
TOTAL Excluding Schools	1,109	1,397	288	

Appendix A4 – Subjective Analysis

Revenue Subjective analysis September 2012 - Forecast Outturn										
Expenditure Type	Staffing costs	Premises and Transport	Supplies and Services	Third Party Payments	Other	Gross Costs	Income	Grants	Total Income	Net Costs
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Director										
Social Care Health and Housing	17,036	914	3,281	55,645	11,441	88,316	-14,860	-17,107	-31,967	56,349
Children's Services	22,251	8,971	25,351	8,766	2,156	67,494	-7,312	-24,470	-31,782	35,712
Sustainable Communities	20,185	2,827	7,716	29,650	126	60,504	-7,766	-4,729	-12,496	48,008
Corporate Services	23,216	4,115	14,918	544	78,733	121,526	-88,020	-4,127	-92,148	29,378
ACE People	9,811	427	1,920	285	2	12,445	-2,629	-87	-2,716	9,728
ACE Resources	13,061	3,685	12,990	259	78,731	108,726	-85,392	-4,040	-89,431	19,295
Chief Executive	344	3	8	0	0	355	0	0	0	355
Contingency and Reserves	0	0	1,251	0	3,034	4,285	0	-4,194	-4,194	91
Corporate Costs	2,817	0	-345	0	11,950	14,422	-940	-85	-1,025	13,397
Total Excluding Schools	51,362	16,826	52,172	94,605	107,439	356,547	-118,899	-54,713	-173,611	182,935

Appendix C – Risks and Upsides

Budget 2012/13 - Potential Risks and Opportunities

Appendix C

Likely
Possible
3rd party dependent

Risks (over £50k)						Sep 12	Aug-12
Directorate/AD	Description	Directorate	Ownership (Director, EIG, Finance, Corporate Measure etc)	Risk (certain, likely, possible, 3rd Party dependent etc.)	Estimated Value £000s	Estimated Value £000s	
People & Org					-	-	
Resources					-	-	
Children's Services							
Child Protection	Increased referral numbers expected due to the level of Child Protection Plans	Children's Services	Yolanda Corden	Likely	500	500	
TOTAL service risks quantified to date						500	500
Corporate Costs							
Corporate Costs	Teachers' Pension contributions omissions (historic)	Res		Possible	460	460	
TOTAL corporate risks quantified to date						460	460
TOTAL risks quantified to date						960	960

Budget 2012/13 - Potential Risks and Upsides

Opportunities (over £50k)						Sep 12	Aug 12
Directorate/AD	Description	Directorate	Ownership (Director, EIG, Finance, Corporate Measure etc)	Risk (certain, likely, possible, 3rd Party dependent etc.)	Estimated Value £000s	Estimated Value £000s	
TOTAL service upsides quantified to date						-	-
Corporate Costs							
Interest Payable	Due a reduction in the level of borrowing requirement resulting from slippage in the Capital Programme	Res	Charles Warboys	Likely	100	100	
MRP	Due a reduction in capital spend against budget in 2011/12	Res	Charles Warboys	Likely	226	300	
TOTAL corporate upsides quantified to date						326	400
TOTAL upsides quantified to date						326	400

Budget 2012/13 - Potential Risks and Opportunities

Summary Position

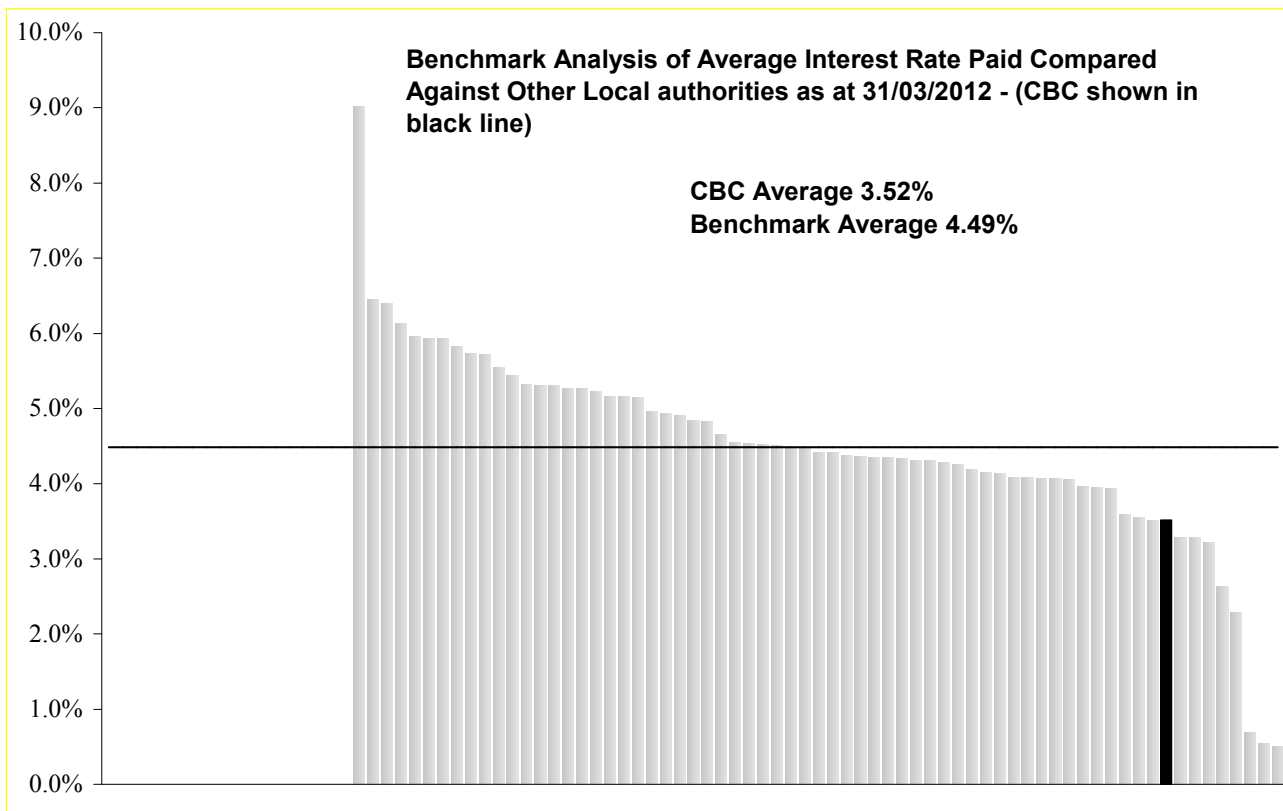
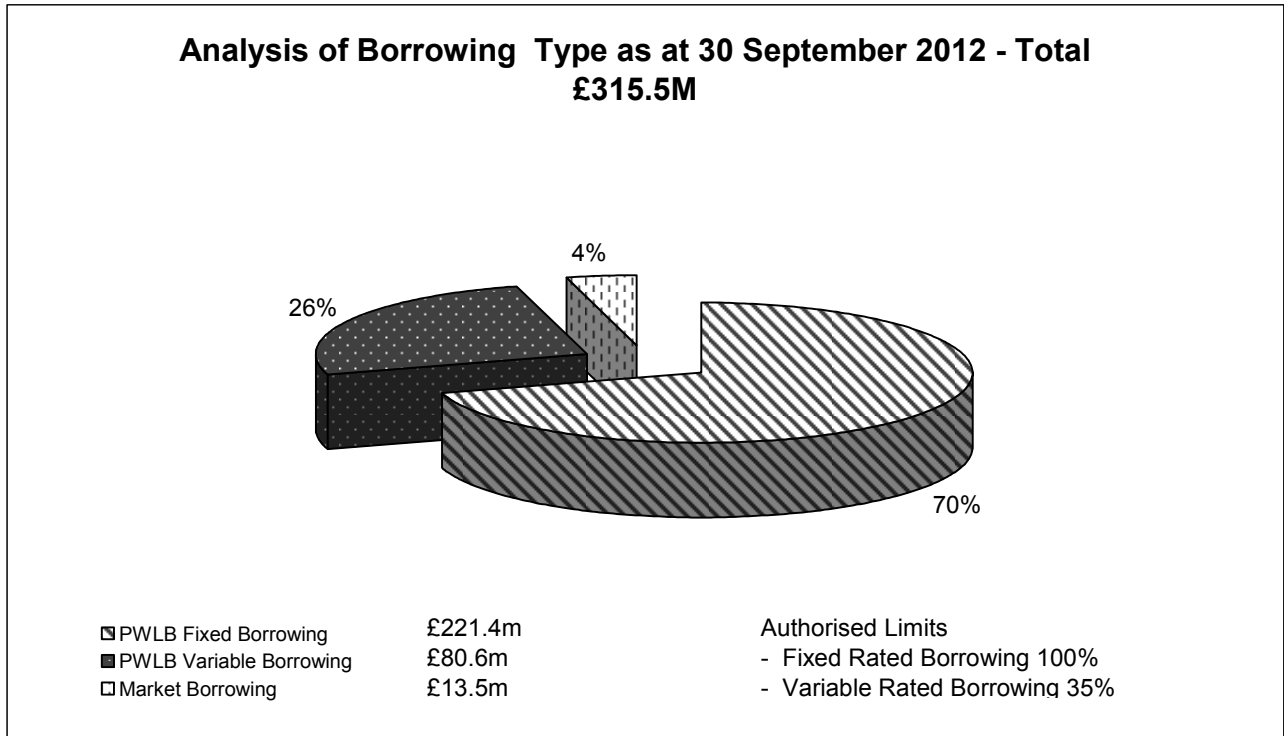
NET service quantified effect - upside / (downside)					(500)	(500)
NET corporate quantified effect - upside / (downside)					(134)	(60)
NET quantified effect - upside / (downside)					(634)	(560)

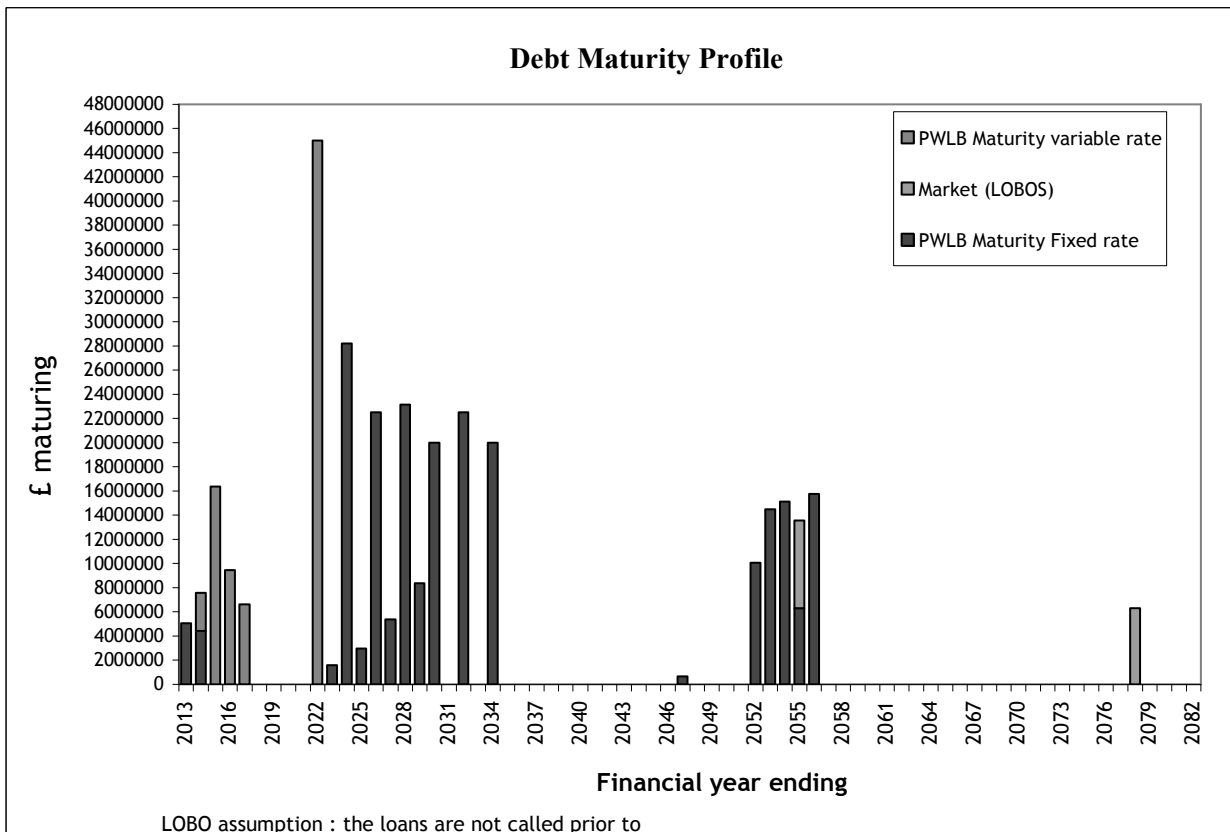
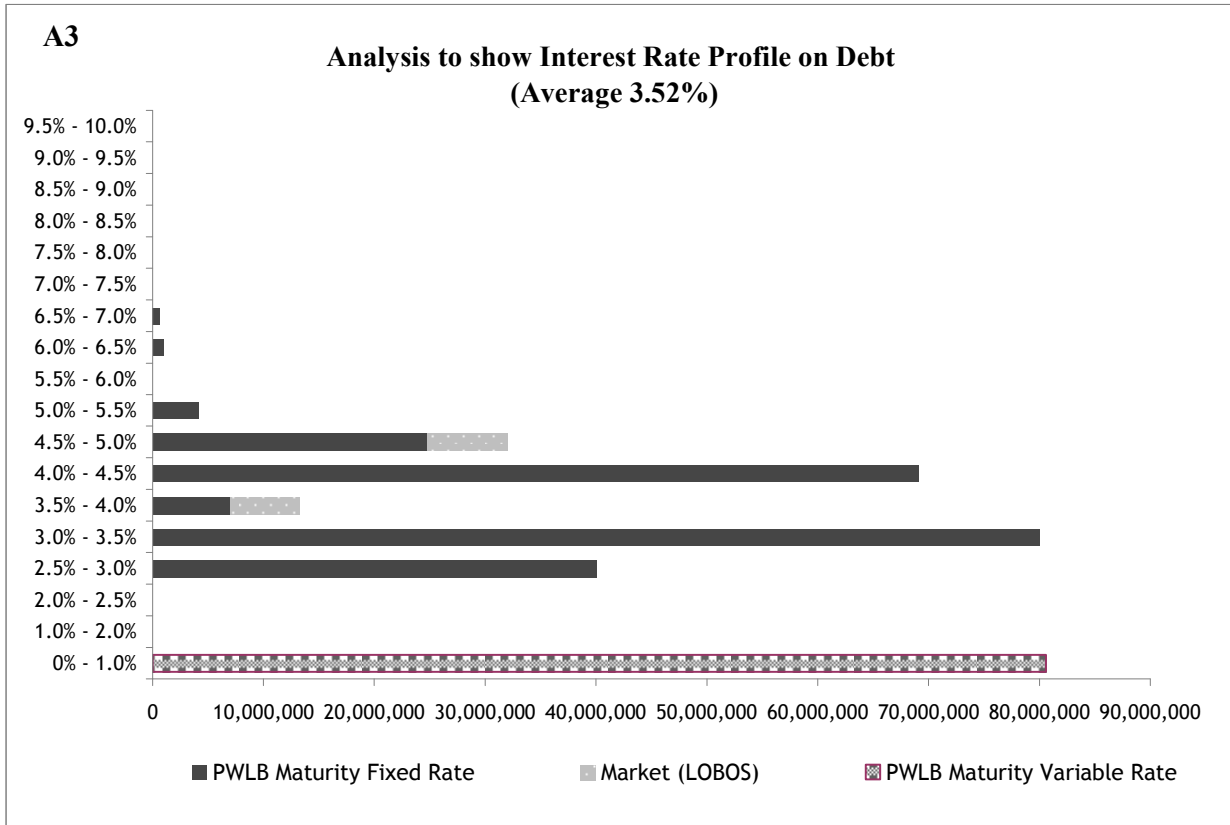
Appendix D – Debt

Debtors September 2012														
DIRECTORATE	1 to 14 Days		15 to 30 Days		31 to 60 Days		61 to 90 Days		91 to 365 days		1 year and over		Total Debt	
	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%
Social Care Health & Housing	344	23%	289	20%	51	3%	60	4%	314	21%	407	28%	1,465	100%
Children's Services	80	17%	118	25%	106	22%	3	1%	58	12%	110	23%	475	100%
Sustainable Communities	384	17%	530	23%	379	16%	-34	-1%	750	32%	308	13%	2,317	100%
ACE People	9	5%	36	21%	79	46%	0	0%	41	24%	7	4%	172	100%
ACE Resources	645	52%	246	20%	45	4%	19	2%	159	13%	137	11%	1,251	100%
NHS Bedfordshire	438	20%	850	38%	831	37%	4	0%	106	5%	10	0%	2,239	100%
Unallocated & Non Directorate	0	0%	-5	24%	-1	5%	-4	19%	-8	38%	-3	14%	-21	100%
House Sales	30	2%	36	2%	87	6%	65	4%	597	41%	645	44%	1,460	100%
Grants	3,298	79%	-525	-13%	1,315	32%	0	0%	72	2%	1	0%	4,161	100%
GRAND TOTAL	5,228	39%	1,575	12%	2,892	21%	113	1%	2,089	15%	1,622	12%	13,519	100%
PREVIOUS MONTH	2,254	16%	4,232	30%	373	3%	3,436	24%	2,470	17%	1,478	10%	14,243	100%

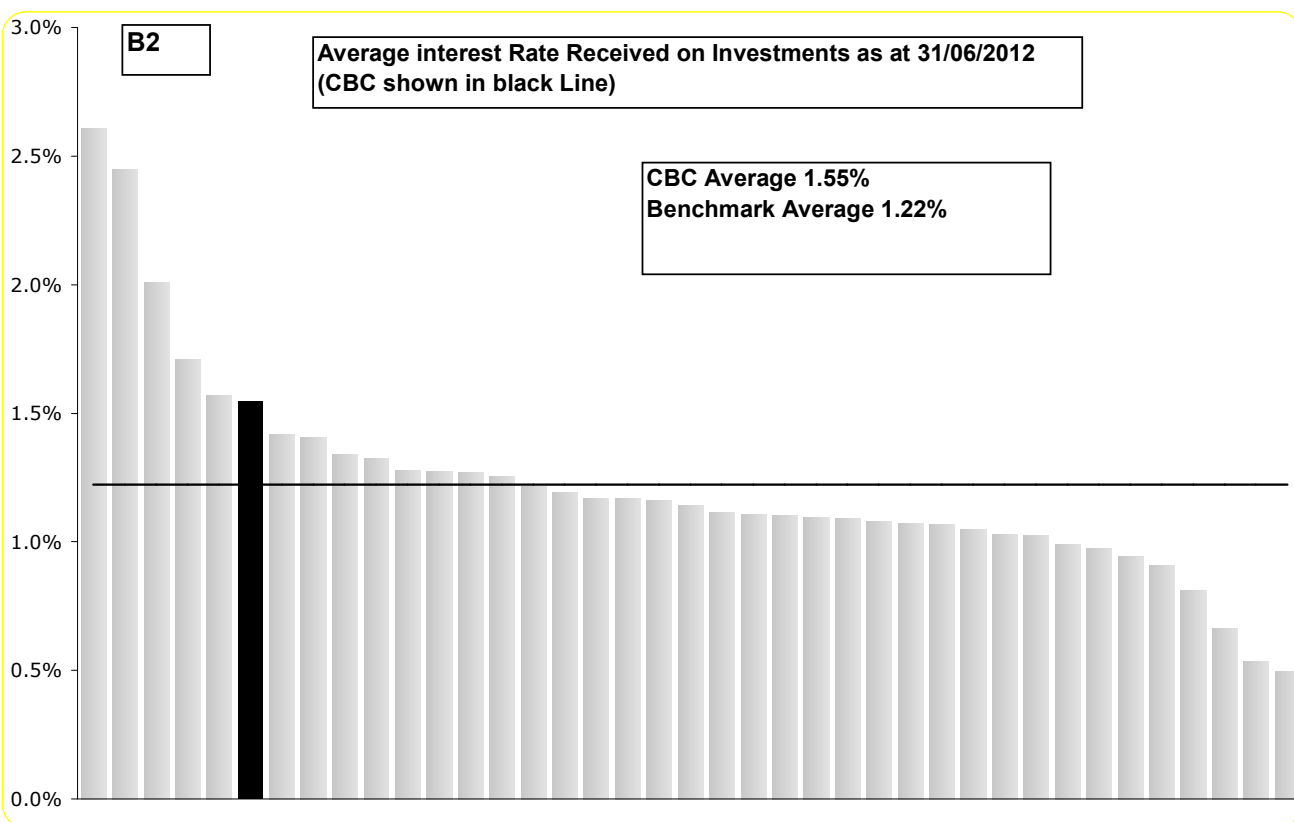
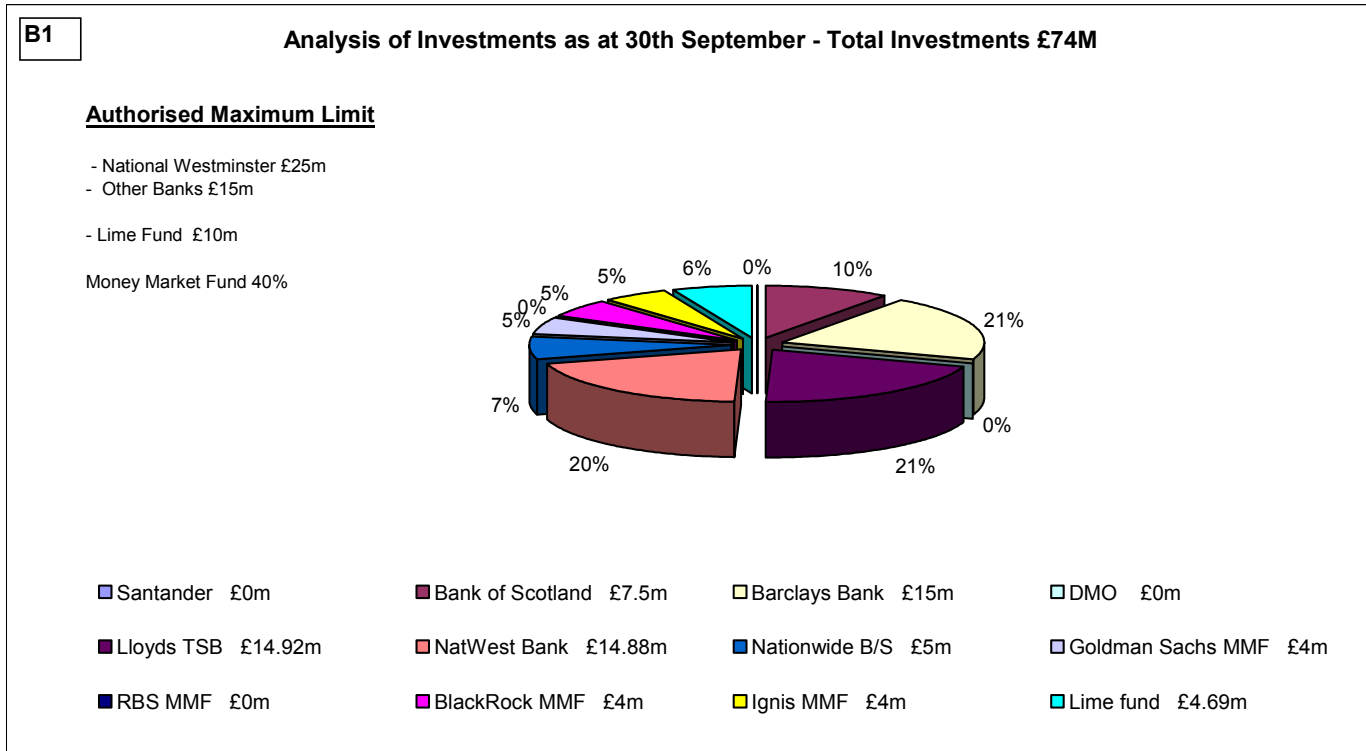
Appendix E – Treasury Management Performance Dashboard

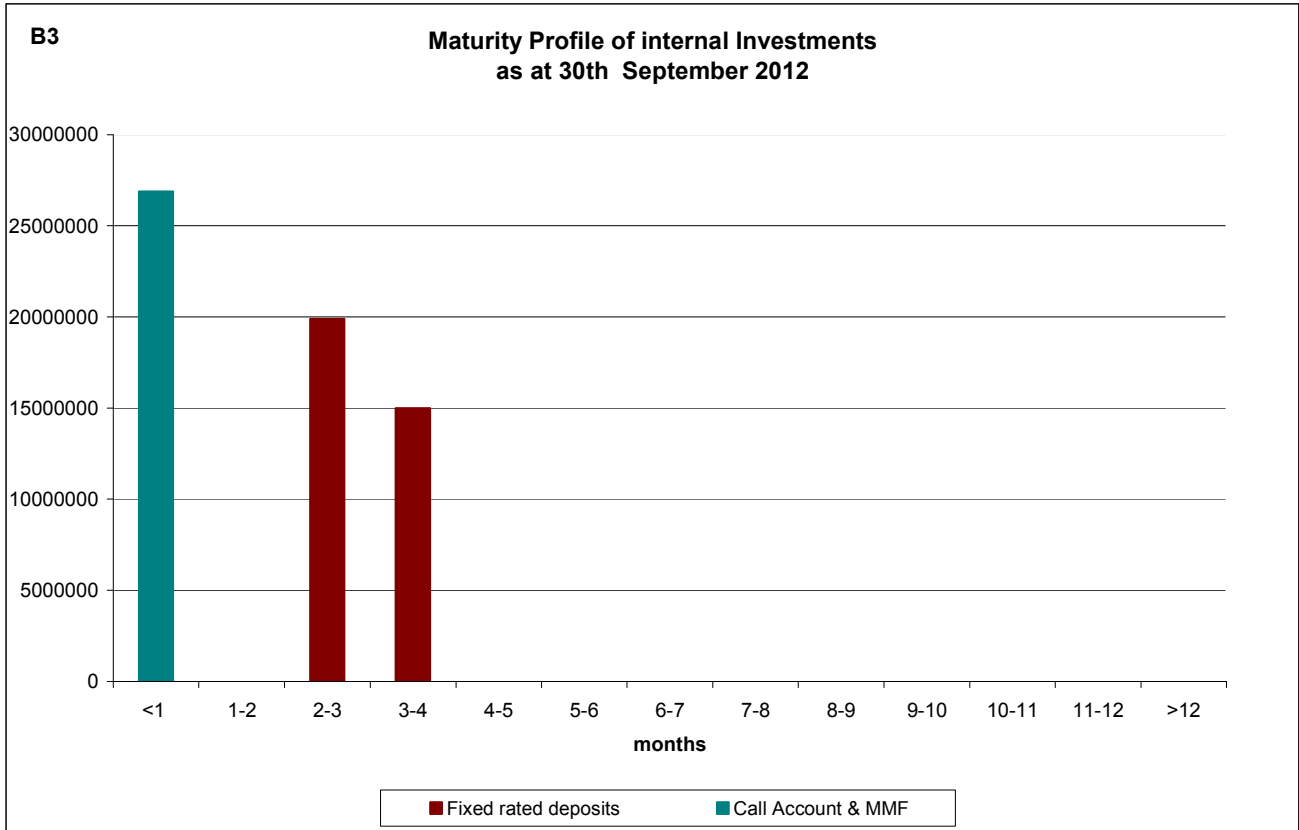
SECTION A: DEBT INFORMATION



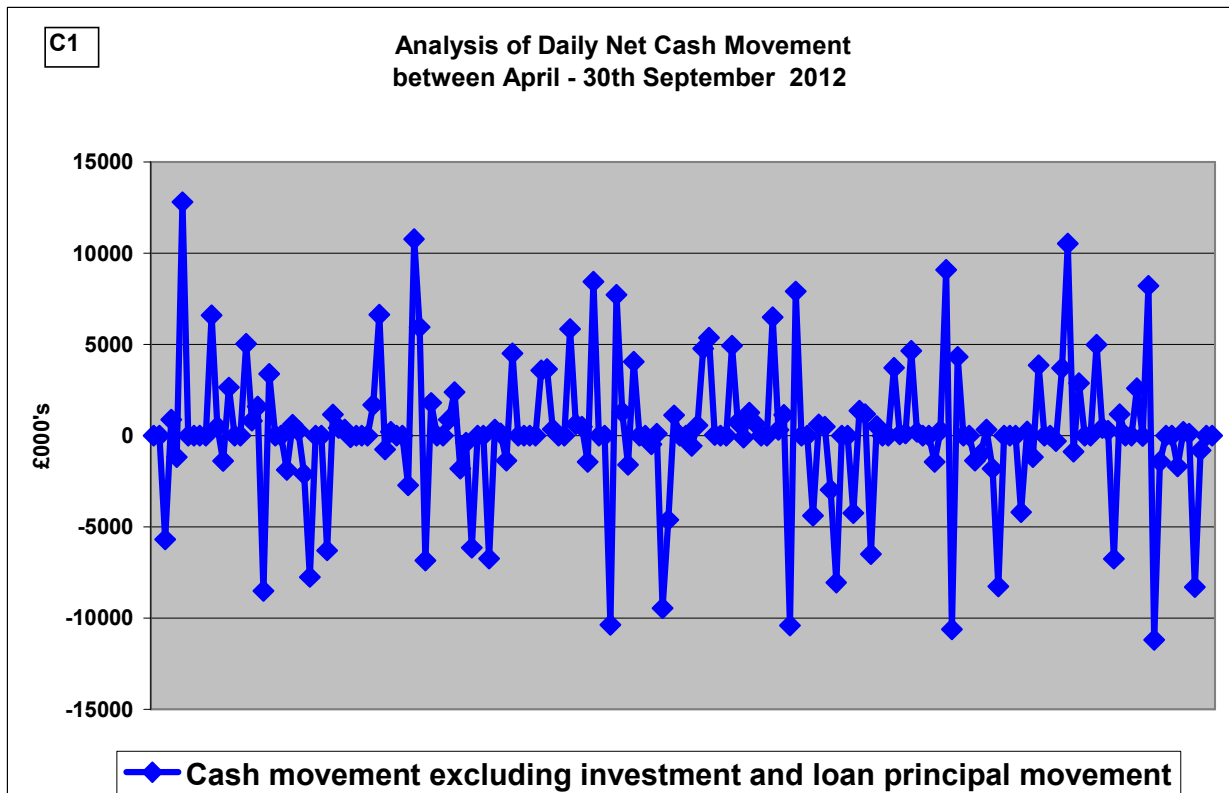


SECTION B: INVESTMENT INFORMATION



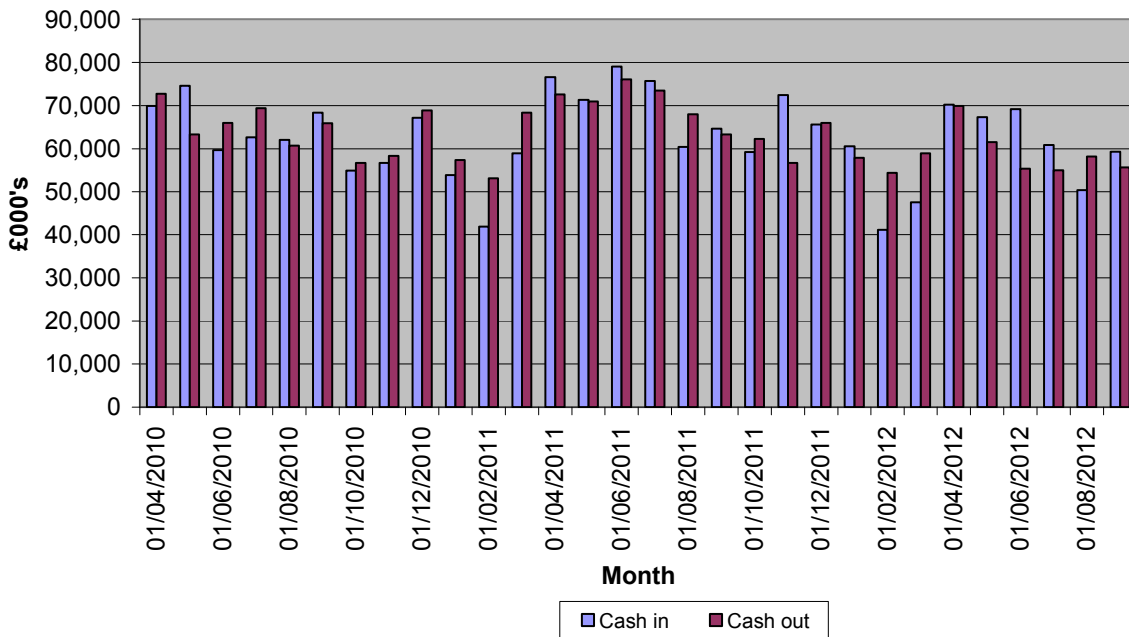


SECTION C: CASH MANAGEMENT



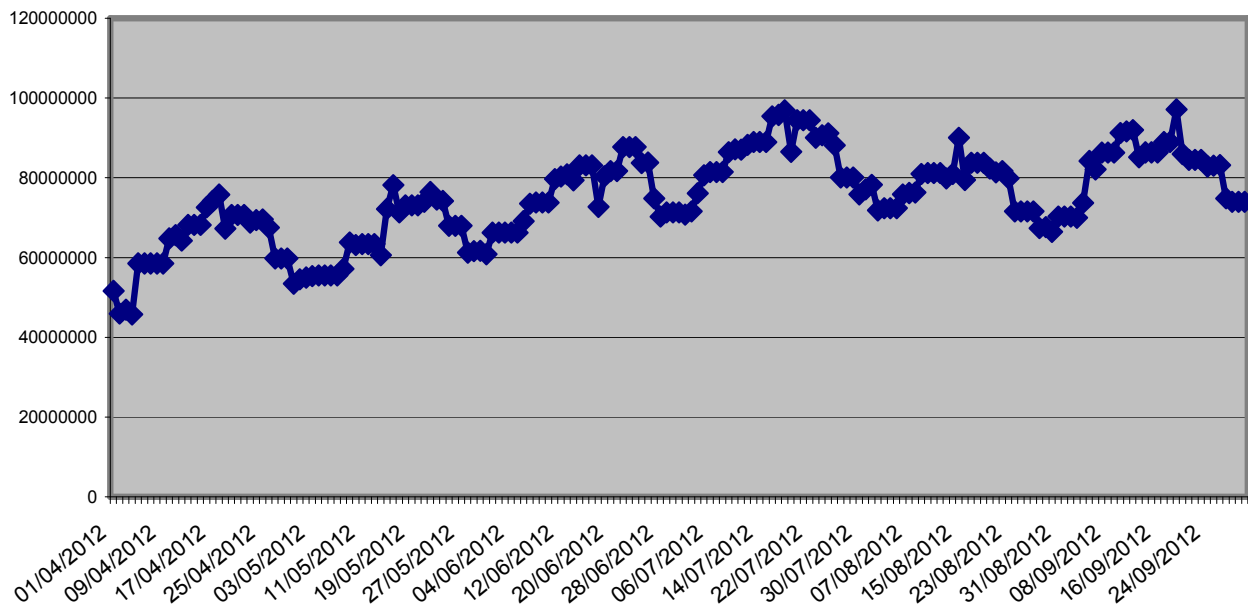
C2

Monthly Cashflow Analysis (Excluding Investment & Loan Principal Movements) to 30th September 2012



C3

Analysis of investments held by Council including externally managed funds between 1st April 2012 to 30th September 2012



Meeting: Executive
Date: 4 December 2012
Subject: Quarter 2 Capital Report 2012/13
Report of: Councillor Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report provides information on the Capital position as at Quarter 2 2012/13 and the forecast outturn position for 2012/13.

Advising Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer
Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) Not applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Sound financial management contributes to the Council's Value for Money and enables the Council to successfully deliver its priorities. The recommendations will contribute indirectly to all 5 Council priorities.

Financial:

1. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Legal:

2. None.

Risk Management:

3. None.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. Any staffing reductions will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Managing Change Policy and in consultation with the Trades Unions.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken prior to the allocation of the 2011/12 budgets and each Directorate was advised of significant equality implications relating to their budget proposals.

Public Health

6. None.

Community Safety:

7. None.

Sustainability:

8. None.

Procurement:

9. None.

Overview and Scrutiny:

10. The 2012/13 Quarter 2 Capital report will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 December 2012.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **note the overall forecast is to spend £79.7m (proposed deferral of £31.9m into 2013/14 and £2.6m overspend).**

Reason for Recommendations: To understand progress to date and the projected year end outturn position.

Executive Summary

11. The report sets out the capital financial position for 2012/13 as at the end of September.

INTRODUCTION

12. The report sets out the capital financial position for 2012/13 as at the end of September.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS (Appendices A1, A2,A3)

13. The gross programme excluding Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is £102.8m (£44.2m net). Gross budget including HRA is £109.0m.

The main issues to note are:

- i) Gross forecast is to spend £79.7m (£81.2m June), with proposed deferral of £31.9m into 2013/14.
- ii) Gross spend to date is £29m (£10.4m June) which is 36% of the full year forecast. Variance to budget is an underspend of £4.2m.
- iii) The average monthly gross run rate for the past six months is £4.8m. This spend rate would amount to c£58m continued for the remainder of the year, (73% of the full year forecast). However, this doesn't take account of seasonal spend and one offs.
- iv) £75.0m of the gross budget relates to 20 of the top value schemes. £14.7m (51%) of the gross spend to date relates to these schemes.

DIRECTORATE COMMENTARY

Social Care, Health and Housing

14. Full year gross budget is £11.1m. The forecast is £6.30m a projected under spend of £4.81m gross, £0.99m net (£2.09m gross, £0.22m net in June) of which £0.23m is slippage into 2013/14.
15. The year-to-date position is an under spend of £0.49m gross, £0.37m net (over spend of £0.12m gross, £0.05m net in June).
16. As part of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme to the end of September 175 grants have been completed, and the number of major adaptations completed is 244 (93 grants and 134 adaptations to June).

The grants provided to residents through the DFG programme assist some of the poorer and most vulnerable members of the community. Without these grants in many cases the properties involved would be unsuitable for the needs of the occupiers who may then be unable to remain in their own homes. This also reduces pressure on health service resources and residential care, as without these improvements more residents would require emergency or longer term care solutions.

17. The revised DFG forecast of £3.0m (gross) is predicted due to a lower than expected rate of referrals in the last 2 months (August and September), a higher than expected number of Council tenant adaptation cases (which are funded from HRA, not General Fund DFG programme), and some delays caused by contractors not being able to respond quickly to increased workload.

Whilst referrals are expected to increase in October and later months, this is a demand led budget and there may not be the time to complete all new and existing referrals before the year end.

18. A review has commenced to evaluate the DFG programme. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that those requiring such works are treated equitably and that the process provides Value for Money for the Council, tenants and council tax payers.

19. The NHS Campus Closure programme has six remaining projects – three for Central Bedfordshire, two for Bedford Borough and one Luton Borough Council. The Central Bedfordshire scheme in Silsoe started on site in July 2012 and is due to complete in February 2013. The second scheme, based in Dunstable, is the refurbishment of a local authority property, and is currently awaiting planning permission and, subject to this, is due to complete in September 2013. The third scheme is the refurbishment of an existing site in Dunstable and is due to start and complete in 2013/14.

Budget is £4.84m (all externally funded) and the forecast spend this year is £2.22m.

Children's Services

20. Children's Services revised annual capital expenditure budget is currently £33.77m, this includes £7.1m of slippage from 2011/12. The income budget is £32.73m which leaves a net expenditure capital budget of £1.04m.
21. The full year reported outturn position for 2012/13 is below budget by £5.73m gross, £0.25m net (below £0.40m gross and net in June). This is due to significant proposed slippage with New School places works continuing into 2013/14.
- YTD is in line with gross budget and over by £0.07m net (over £0.19m gross, £3.31m net in June).
22. All but two projects (Schools Access and Temporary Accommodation) are funded wholly by grant receipts. The net Council contribution for Children Services £1.0m. There is no expenditure deadline to the spending of the grant receipts.

Sustainable Communities

23. Sustainable Communities capital programme in 2012/13 is made up of 60 schemes which include projects that are the result of developer funds to deliver planning requirements, including highways schemes, associated with new developments.
24. The directorate gross budget is £43.75m and forecast outturn spend is £27.33m (£32.66m June). The forecast underspend of £16.41m includes proposed deferred spend of £12.4m into 2013/14 due to factors beyond the control of the Council.
- The single largest variance relates to S278 schemes. Section 278 schemes relate to works to the Highway, made necessary by housing or employment development. The cost of the works are met entirely by the developer so the net cost to the Council is £nil. Due to the general economic climate and normal fluctuations as to when these works are required, the year end forecast is £4m gross lower than initially forecast, net £nil cost to the Council. The gross forecast for 2013/14 will be reduced.

25. Expenditure to date is £9.75m against a profiled budget of £13.43m, an underspend of £3.68m gross, £4.39m net (under £3.12m gross, £6.89m net in June) mainly due to a lag in spend on highways schemes including S278 schemes where delivery is dependant on developers.

External funding of £6.40m was received compared to a budget of £5.69m, a difference of £0.71m and includes S278 schemes.

Corporate Services

26. The approved capital programme for Resources is £10.78m; this includes £3.93m of slippage from 2011/2012.

Following a detailed review of Capital schemes carried out in July and August there has been £2.0m of the schemes' budget that is now expected to occur in 2013/14. The proposed slippage to future years is £1.62m in Assets and £0.39m in ICT.

The full year forecast is an underspend of £2.39m gross, £2.26m net (on budget in June).

The year to date is an overspend against budget of £0.18m gross, £0.26m net (over £0.05m gross, £0.13m net in June) due mainly to the actual spend on Assets schemes being higher than the profiled YTD Budget.

27. The approved gross capital programme for People and Organisation is £3.41m; this includes £0.36m of slippage from 2011/12. The main schemes in People and Organisation are SAP Optimisation (£1.28m) and Customer First (£1.80m).

The forecast underspend of £0.32m gross and net (on budget in June) is due to £0.15m budget being slipped into this year from 2011/2012 for the Customer Relationship Management scheme (CRM). The other £0.17m forecast underspend is due to slippage on the SAP Optimisation project.

Year to Date is an underspend against budget of £0.74m gross and net (under £0.12m gross and net in June). This is due to the YTD spend on the two major schemes being lower than the profiled budgets (SAP Optimisation -£0.29m and Customer First -£0.45m).

CONCLUSION

28. The level of spend to date is below the run rate required to achieve the Council's full year forecast. The forecast to spend £79.7m, though £6.4m lower than August forecast outturn, still appears to be ambitious. To achieve forecast will require a rest of year monthly run rate of £8.4m compared to £4.8m in the first six months.

Appendices:

Appendix A1 Council Capital Summary

Appendix A2 Top 20 Schemes

Appendix A3 Movement in Net Variance

Background Papers: None

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Appendix A1 – Council Capital Summary

Title and Description of the Scheme	Sep-12						2012/13 Capital Programme Budget				Full Year Forecast				Full Year Variance							
	PROFILED BUDGET TO DATE			ACTUAL TO DATE			VARIANCE TO DATE				Gross Expenditure		External Funding		Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure		External Funding		Net Expenditure	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Social Care, Health and Housing	1,887	-821	1,066	1,396	-705	692	-491	116	-374	11,112	-7,427	3,685	6,300	-3,606	2,694	-4,812	3,821	-991				
Children's Services	13,704	-13,788	-84	13,695	-13,704	-9	-9	84	75	33,770	-32,726	1,044	26,038	-27,244	794	-5,732	5,482	-250				
Sustainable Communities																						
Community Safety & Public Protection Infrastructure	0	0	0	13	0	13	13	0	13	103	0	103	0	0	0	-103	0	0	-103			
Leisure & Culture Infrastructure	586	-44	542	575	-115	460	-11	-70	3,693	4,637	-944	3,693	2,049	-645	1,404	-2,598	299	-2,289				
Regeneration & Affordable Housing	38	-18	20	2,773	-76	2,695	2,736	-60	2,676	12,494	-5,262	7,232	4,285	-206	4,079	-3,209	5,086	-3,153				
Section 106 Schemes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Transport Infrastructure	12,589	-5,601	6,988	6,230	-6,205	25	-6,369	-603	-6,973	25,373	-11,463	13,910	20,630	-8,355	12,275	-4,743	3,108	-1,635				
Waste Infrastructure	211	-29	182	181	-2	159	-50	27	-23	1,144	-707	437	380	-155	225	-764	552	-212				
Total Sustainable Communities	13,434	-5,692	7,742	9,762	-6,399	3,353	-3,682	-706	-4,388	43,761	-18,376	25,375	27,344	-9,361	17,983	-16,407	9,015	-7,392				
Resources	1,197	-60	1,137	1,375	23	1,397	178	83	260	10,782	-132	10,650	8,387	0	8,387	-2,395	132	-2,263				
People & Organisation	1,163	0	1,163	424	0	424	-738	0	-738	3,405	0	3,405	3,083	0	3,083	-322	0	-322				
Partnerships	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Total excluding HRA	31,385	-20,362	11,023	26,643	-20,785	5,858	-4,742	-423	-5,166	102,820	-58,661	44,159	73,152	-40,211	32,941	-29,668	18,450	-11,218				
Housing Revenue Account	1,843	0	1,843	2,378	0	2,378	535	0	535	6,142	0	6,142	6,552	0	6,552	410	0	410				
Total Capital Programme	33,228	-20,362	12,866	29,021	-20,785	8,236	-4,207	-423	-4,630	108,962	-58,661	50,301	79,704	-40,211	39,493	-29,256	18,450	-10,808				

Central Bedfordshire Capital Programme
2012-13

As at Month 6		Annual Budget Monitoring										Monthly Budget Monitoring															
Directorate	Sub-Type	Scheme Title	Revised 2012/13 Capital Budget					Full Year Forecast as at Month 6					Proposed Deferral to 2013/14					Sep-12									
			Gross Expenditure £'000	External Funding £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	External Funding £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	External Funding £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	External Funding £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	External Funding £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	External Funding £'000	Net Expenditure £'000							
CS		New School Places	£12,218	£12,218	£0	£5,004	£5,004	£0	£7,214	£7,214	£0	£12,859	£12,859	£0	£200	£200	£0	£135	£135	£0	£65	£65	£0	£65	£65	£0	
CS		Schools Capital Maintenance (Formerly New Deal for Schools Modernisation)	£9,251	£9,251	£0	£6,551	£6,551	£0	£2,700	£2,700	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,500	£1,500	£0	£1,486	£1,486	£0	£198	£198	£0	£198	£198	£0	
CS		All Saints Academy	£7,284	£7,284	£0	£7,284	£7,284	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£6,000	£6,000	£0	£5,967	£5,967	£0	£33	£33	£0	£33	£33	£0	
CS		LPSA & LIA Grant payout	£1,261	£1,261	£0	£285	£285	£0	£976	£976	£0	£986	£986	£0	£0	£0	£0	£42	£42	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
People & Organisation		Customer First (previously Channel Shift)	£1,543	£1,543	£0	£1,543	£1,543	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£570	£570	£0	£154	£154	£0	£154	£154	£0	£154	£154	£0	
Resources		CS Corporate Property Rolling Programme (R)	£3,669	£3,669	£0	£2,441	£2,441	£0	£1,228	£1,228	£0	£1,088	£1,088	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
SCH & H		NHS Campus Closure	£4,837	£4,837	£0	£2,221	£2,221	£0	£2,616	£2,616	£0	£2,000	£2,000	£0	£3,225	£3,225	£0	£74	£74	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
SCH & H		Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme	£3,304	£3,304	£0	£3,000	£3,000	£0	£304	£304	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,361	£1,361	£0	£1,188	£1,188	£0	£571	£571	£0	£571	£571	£0	
SCH & H		Timberlands and Chiltern View Gypsy and Traveller Sites	£1,832	£1,378	£454	£20	£15	£5	£1,812	£1,363	£449	£911	£684	£227	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Section 278 Schemes	£4,500	£4,500	£0	£500	£500	£0	£4,000	£4,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,250	£2,250	£0	£198	£198	£0	£198	£198	£0	£198	£198	£0	
Sus Comm		Infrastructure Regeneration & Affordable Housing	£4,333	£4,000	£333	£0	£0	£4,333	£4,000	£333	£0	£4,333	£4,000	£333	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Local Flood Defence Funding (DEFRA)	£4,323	£0	£4,323	£3,389	£3,389	£0	£934	£934	£0	£934	£0	£934	£3,793	£0	£3,793	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Highways Structural Maintenance Additional Expenditure	£3,920	£3,920	£0	£3,920	£3,920	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,781	£0	£2,781	£0	£2,221	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Highways Structural Maintenance Block (R) Exm	£3,095	£0	£3,095	£2,011	£2,011	£0	£1,084	£1,084	£0	£1,084	£0	£1,084	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Dunstable Town Centre Regeneration Phase 2	£2,000	£0	£2,000	£500	£500	£0	£1,500	£1,500	£0	£1,500	£0	£1,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Leisure Strategy Implementation Invest to Save Project	£1,850	£0	£1,850	£1,678	£1,678	£0	£172	£172	£0	£172	£0	£172	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Regeneration & Affordable Housing	£1,547	£1,547	£0	£1,817	£1,817	£0	£270	£270	£0	£270	£0	£270	£0	£264	£0	£411	£411	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Highways Integrated Schemes (R)	£1,534	£0	£1,534	£200	£200	£0	£1,334	£1,334	£200	£1,534	£0	£1,534	£460	£0	£460	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Dunstable AS/MI Link Road Strategic Infrastructure	£1,500	£0	£1,500	£0	£0	£0	£1,500	£1,500	£0	£1,500	£0	£1,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Regeneration & Affordable Housing	£1,200	£0	£1,200	£300	£300	£0	£900	£900	£300	£1,200	£300	£900	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Sus Comm		Local Broadband Infrastructure	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Corporate Costs			£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
CS		CS	£30,014	£30,014	£0	£19,124	£19,124	£0	£10,890	£10,890	£0	£13,757	£13,757	£0	£7,750	£8,250	£500	£7,630	£8,167	£537	£120	£120	£0	£83	£37	£0	
HRA		HRA	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Resources		Resources	£3,669	£3,669	£0	£2,441	£2,441	£0	£1,228	£1,228	£0	£1,088	£1,088	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
People & Organisation		People & Organisation	£1,543	£1,543	£0	£1,543	£1,543	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£570	£0	£570	£154	£154	£0	£154	£154	£0	£154	£154	£0	
SCH & H		SCH & H	£9,973	£6,687	£3,286	£5,241	£2,886	£2,355	£4,732	£3,801	£931	£2,911	£2,684	£227	£1,686	£797	£889	£1,263	£691	£573	£423	£106	£318	£18	£0		
Sus Comm		Sus Comm Total	£29,802	£14,867	£14,935	£14,015	£6,437	£7,578	£15,787	£8,430	£7,357	£11,787	£4,430	£7,357	£9,548	£5,295	£4,254	£5,623	£5,984	£3,925	£360	£3,925	£689	£4,614	£0		
Total Top 20			£75,001	£51,568	£23,433	£42,364	£28,447	£13,917	£32,637	£23,121	£9,516	£29,543	£20,871	£8,872	£19,554	£14,342	£5,212	£14,671	£14,841	£171	£4,884	£489	£383	£0	£0		

Appendix
A2 – Top 20
Schemes

Appendix A3 – Movement in Net Variance

Title and Description of the Scheme	September Variance (Full Year Forecast Compared with Budget)	August Variance (Full Year Forecast Compared with Budget)	Change in Variance
	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Social Care, Health and Housing	(991)	(489)	(502)
Children's Services	(250)	0	(250)
Sustainable Communities			
Community Safety & Public Protection Infrastructure	(103)	(103)	0
Leisure & Culture Infrastructure	(2,289)	(1,046)	(1,243)
Regeneration & Affordable Housing	(3,153)	(3,227)	74
Section 106 Schemes	0	0	0
Transport Infrastructure	(1,635)	(2,839)	1,204
Waste Infrastructure	(212)	0	(212)
Total Sustainable Communities	(7,392)	(7,215)	(177)
Resources	(2,263)	(1,827)	(436)
			0
People & Organisation	(322)	(322)	0
Corporate Costs	0	0	0
Total excluding HRA	(11,218)	(9,853)	(1,365)
Housing Revenue Account	410	410	0
Total Capital Programme	(10,808)	(9,443)	(1,365)

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 4 December 2012
Subject: Quarter 2 Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Report 2012/13
Report of: Councillor Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing and Councillor Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report provides information on the 2012/13 Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital position as at Quarter 2 and the forecast outturn position.

Advising Officer: Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
Contact Officer: Nick Murley, Assistant Director Business & Performance
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) Not applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Sound financial management contributes to the Council's Value for Money and enables the Council to successfully deliver its priorities. The recommendations will contribute indirectly to all 5 Council priorities.

Financial:

1. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Legal:

2. None.

Risk Management:

3. None.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. Any staffing reductions will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Managing Change Policy and in consultation with the Trades Unions.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken prior to the allocation of the 2012/13 budgets and each Directorate was advised of significant equality implications relating to their budget proposals.

Public Health:

6. None.

Community Safety:

7. None.

Sustainability:

8. None.

Procurement:

9. None.

Overview and Scrutiny:

10. The 2012/13 Quarter 2 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue and capital report will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 December 2012.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to note the Housing Revenue Account financial position as at the end of September 2012.

Introduction

11. The report sets out the financial position to the end of September 2012.

Executive Summary

12. On 1 April 2012 the financing arrangements for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) underwent radical reform. The Council is no longer required to make an annual contribution to a national scheme of redistribution (the Housing Subsidy scheme). This has been replaced by a system of Self-Financing, which has entailed the Council undertaking on debt of £165m.
13. The debt structure chosen has given the Council the flexibility to balance asset management and regeneration priorities against the need to make debt repayments.

14. The change from subsidy to self-financing has released approximately £4m per year, which has initially been allocated to the earmarked reserve for Sheltered Housing Re-provision (SHR) and development of the Asset Management Strategy (£2.8m), and the existing capital programme (£1.2m).
15. The two key variances for the HRA as at the end of quarter two are due to a higher amount of income from rents (£0.800m) and lower interest costs from the self financing debt (£0.762m).
16. Under the rent restructuring guidelines the Council sets the rent levels based on the government determination in November, however in the past the rate of this increase has been reduced by government as late as March preceding the new financial year. In view of this the Council took a prudent view of the level of rental income when setting the 2012/13 budget. As the proposed increase was fully implemented an additional £0.800m of income is predicted in this financial year.
17. A further saving of £0.762m has been achieved due to lower than budgeted interest costs. The average interest rate actually achieved on the Council's self-financing debt for 2012/13 is 2.41%, as opposed to 3.00% in the budget build. The lower average rate is the result of the Council's decision to take approximately a quarter of the self-financing debt on a variable rate basis, at an average interest rate of only 0.58%.
18. It is proposed to use part of the above surplus budget to finance increased Capital programme costs (£0.410m) with the remainder to be used to offset minor operational budget variations (£0.049m), increase the amount set aside for debt repayment (£0.303m) and increase the contributions to reserves (£0.800m).
19. The 2012/13 budget for the HRA anticipates a contribution to the Sheltered Housing Re-Provision reserve of £2.750m. The analysis above shows that a contribution to reserves of £3.550m will be possible.
20. Although this is a favourable position it is still necessary to undertake an assessment of the likely impact of small scale regeneration schemes and the challenging investment requirements of existing stock against the need to repay debt. Until this has been undertaken a final use for this additional revenue is still to be determined.
21. The year end forecast outturn position is £0.410m higher than budget for the HRA Capital Programme (£0.410m in August). This is due to increased demand for disabled adaptations to Council properties.
22. The Council has adopted a Treasury Management strategy that can be adapted to suit the needs of the Landlord Services Business Plan, so that debt repayment can be delayed to enable greater investment in the Capital programme to take place in the short to medium term.

23. The interest rate for the HRA's variable rate debt is fixed on a six monthly basis, with the most recent change occurring at the end of September. This rate dropped from 0.62% to 0.54% and will not change again until the end of March 2013.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS (Appendix A)

24. Forecast outturn variances

- It is projected that there will be a positive variance of £0.800m (£0.800m in August).
- This is due to enhanced rental income following more detailed work around the assumptions made in the budget build as against actual rental increases
- The overall impact of this will mean that the HRA is forecast to contribute £3.550m to reserves (£3.550m in August), as opposed to £2.750m anticipated in the original budget.
- A further saving of £0.762m will result from lower than anticipated interest costs on self-financing debt. Possible uses of this sum are outlined in the Revenue Commentary below.
- The Capital programme is forecast to outturn at £0.410m above the budget (£0.410m in August), due to demand for disabled adaptations.

25. Year to Date (YTD) variances

- There is a year to date positive variance in the HRA of £0.109m (£0.206m adverse variance in August). This variance comprises increased rental income (£0.376m), offset by the profile of payments for the stock condition survey (which was completed in the first quarter of the year but budgeted on an even profile over the whole year).
- There is a year to date adverse variance of £0.535m (£0.773m in August) in the capital programme. This is partially due to the profile of works varying from the budget profile (£0.392m), for example a greater amount of wooden fascia boards being replaced with plastic boards during the summer months. In addition demand for disabled adaptations at Council properties has exceeded the budget profile by £0.143m.

BACKGROUND

26. In considering its Treasury Management Strategy in relation to self financing, the Council sought the greatest possible flexibility in terms of repaying the debt of £165m.
27. This has been achieved by taking the full portfolio of loans on a maturity (interest only) basis, with approximately a quarter of the loans (£44.995m) at a variable rate of interest.

28. The interest rate charged by PWLB on the HRA's variable rate debts is fixed on a 6 monthly basis. This rate dropped from 0.62% (March) to 0.54% (September), delivering a saving of £0.018m in interest costs.
29. As the variable rate has been fixed for the remainder of the financial year it is now possible to calculate the interest costs that will be payable for the whole financial year. The average rate of interest on HRA debt for 2012/13 will be 2.41% at a cost of £3.977m
30. The variable proportion of the debt can be repaid at any time without penalty, allowing the Council the flexibility to repay debt when it chooses.
31. This strategy has been designed to support the HRA Business Plan, which is used to forecast income, revenue and capital expenditure, debt related costs and reserves over a 30 year period.
32. Due to the unique nature of the HRA under self-financing, where rental income is the predominant source of financing, all expenditures have to be paid either from rental income streams or existing reserves.
33. Released from the constraints of the former subsidy system, the Council has an opportunity to develop a new strategic approach for the HRA which will involve investment both in new build and redevelopment.
34. It is likely that a great proportion of this investment will be targeted at the needs of an ageing population, and appraisal work is currently underway to evaluate potential Extra Care schemes.
35. At the same time a new Asset Management Strategy is being developed so that the Council can assess the needs of its existing stock, which includes challenging investment requirements and Sheltered Housing schemes that are in need of improvement.
36. The results of the independent Stock Condition Survey have been received and validated, giving the Council assurance that the amounts set aside in the Business Plan are sufficient to maintain the stock in its current condition.
37. It is proposed that as part of its new strategy the Council will retain its commitment to maintaining the Decent Homes standard for its stock of Council houses, with funding provided in the HRA's Capital programme.

REVENUE COMMENTARY

38. The HRA annual expenditure budget is £22.670m and income budget is £25.420m, which allows a contribution of £2.750m to the Sheltered Housing Re-Provision Reserve (SHR) to present a net budget of zero. A subjective breakdown of budget, year to date position and forecast outturn is shown below.

	2012/13 Budget	Budget YTD	Actual YTD	Variance YTD	Full Year Forecast	Variance Full Year Forecast to Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total Income	(25.420)	(12.710)	(12.813)	(0.103)	(26.256)	(0.836)
Housing Management	4.255	2.128	2.149	0.021	4.301	0.046
Asset Management	0.864	0.432	0.476	0.044	0.918	0.054
Corporate Resources	1.272	0.635	0.659	0.024	1.298	0.026
Maintenance	4.681	2.341	2.465	0.124	4.690	0.009
Debt related costs	0.169	0.085	0	(0.085)	0.119	(0.050)
RCCO*	5.942	2.971	2.971	0	6.352	0.410
Efficiency Programme	(0.400)	(0.200)	(0.200)	0	(0.400)	0
Interest repayment	4.739	2.369	2.065	(0.304)	3.977	(0.762)
Principal repayment / Set aside	1.148	0.574	0.744	0.170	1.451	0.303
TOTAL Expenditure	22.670	11.335	11.329	(0.006)	22.706	0.036
Contribution to / (from) reserve (actioned at year end)	(2.750)	(1.375) [^]	(1.484) [^]	(0.109) [^]	(3.550)	(0.800)
Net Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0

* Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay ^ Included for balancing and illustrative purposes only

39. The Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) shown above represents the funding of the HRA's Capital programme from Revenue. Further detail on funding of the Capital programme is shown in section 7.

40. Debt related costs are comprised of interest costs (£4.739m in the budget) and an amount set aside, either for debt repayment, reserves or investment purposes (£1.148m in the budget). At the time of the budget a prudent view was taken on the average interest rate that would be payable during 2012/13, assuming a rate of 3.00%. The average interest rate actually achieved on the Council's self-financing debt for 2012/13 is 2.41%. This has resulted in a reduction in interest payments due from £4.739m to £3.977m.
41. This has released an additional £0.762m into the HRA. At the current time it is proposed that £0.410m will be used to increase RCCO with a further £0.303m added to funds being set aside, to make a total of £1.451m. The additional £0.049m is earmarked to offside other minor variances.
42. Proposals to confirm the use of the funds set aside will be formulated once the Asset Management Strategy is completed and approved.

EFFICIENCIES

43. As part of the 2012/13 budget build the HRA revenue budget was reduced by £0.400m as part of the Council's efficiency programme.
44. Since 2010 the Council has been using Housemark to provide a benchmarking service.
45. The analysis provided by Housemark has assisted the Council in identifying the areas where HRA budgets are higher relative to other stock retained authorities. This has enabled efficiencies in staffing, reduced void periods, increased rental income and reduced repairs costs to be identified.
46. The HRA efficiency programme is on target to be fully achieved in 2012/13.

DEBTORS (Appendix B)

47. Total current and former tenant arrears were £0.992m at the end of September (£1.060m August). Current arrears are £0.579m or 2.12% of the annual rent debit of £27.280m (£0.652m or 2.39% August). The figure of 2.12% is a 0.07% adverse variance against a target of 2.05%.
48. Performance on former tenant arrears is 1.52% against a target of 1.00%, leaving a balance of £0.413m (1.50% with a balance of £0.408m August).
49. In addition to tenant arrears clients are invoiced for rents at a small stock of shops owned by the HRA, leaseholders who purchased flats via the Right to Buy scheme are invoiced for service charges and ground rent, and tenants/former tenants are invoiced for damages they are responsible for. There are currently £0.147m of arrears (£0.137m August).
50. In the first half of the year £0.038m of tenant arrears were written off as bad debts.

CAPITAL COMMENTARY (Appendix C)

51. As a result of the change from the Subsidy system to Self-Financing an additional £1.2m was allocated to the 2012/13 HRA Capital Programme.
52. This additional budget is partially earmarked to replace wooden fascia boards with plastic boards (Plasticisation), which will create savings within the external decorations budget. The other element is earmarked for stock remodelling projects, which range from replacing flat roofing to solid wall insulation.
53. An over spend of £0.085m is predicted on the roof replacement budget, as the roofs identified for replacement in this year's programme involve a higher than average replacement cost.
54. This is offset by savings in the Drainage and Water Supply programme, partially due to changes in legislation regarding responsibility for waste drains.
55. Demand for disabled adaptations for Council tenants has exceeded the profiled budget. In the first half of the year 58 DFGs have been completed. It is now anticipated that the outturn will be £0.870m (£0.870m in August) against a budget of £0.450m.
56. It is proposed to finance this spend from funding that has been set aside in the business plan for debt repayment. As mentioned above this is subject to approval.
57. A review has been scoped to evaluate the DFG programme. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that those requiring such works are treated equitably and that the process provides Value for Money for the Council, tenants and council tax payers.
58. The budgeted HRA capital programme is financed predominantly from revenue contributions (£5.942m), with a small proportion funded by capital receipts from Right to Buy sales (anticipated to be a contribution of £0.200m).

RESERVES POSITION (Appendix D)

59. The total reserves available as at April 2012 were £4.105m and the current forecast indicates that an additional £3.550m (£3.550m in August) will be transferred to HRA reserves at the year end.

RISKS AND UPSIDES

60. There are no risks or upsides to report.

CONCLUSIONS

61. Work is concluding on the Asset Management Strategy that will crystallise the longer term aspirations of the HRA under Self-Financing.
62. A number of development opportunities are currently being considered, with an aspiration to provide Extra Care facilities whilst improving and developing existing assets.
63. In the meantime there is an increasing focus on Value For Money, incorporating efficiency savings and revenue optimisation.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Net Revenue Position Full Analysis

Appendix B – Debtors

Appendix C – Capital programme

Appendix D – Reserves

Background Papers:

None

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Appendices

Appendix A – Net Revenue Position Full Analysis

Month: September 2012	Year to date				Full Year					
HRA	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves.	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Assistant Director Housing Service	-3,750	-3,899	0	-149	-7,500	-7,371	129	0	129	
Housing Management (HRA)	765	750	0	-15	1,531	1,580	50	0	50	
Asset Management (HRA)	2,783	2,825	0	42	5,565	5,386	-179	0	-179	
Prevention, Options & Inclusion	202	215	0	12	404	404	0	0	0	
Total	0	-110	0	-110	0	0	0	0	0	

Appendix B – HRA Debtors

Debt Analysis - Tenant Arrears						
Description of debt	0-4 weeks	4-8 weeks	8-13 weeks	13-52 weeks	Over 1 yr	TOTAL
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
Current Tenant	0.163	0.150	0.112	0.154	0	0.579
Former Tenant						0.413
						0.992

Debt Analysis - Other Arrears							
Description of debt	From 15 to 30 days	From 31 to 60 days	From 61 to 90 days	From 91 to 365 days	Over 1 yr but not over 2 yrs	Over 2 yrs	TOTAL
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
Shops	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.006	0.018	0.032
Leaseholders	0.000	0.003	0.004	0.026	0.009	0.010	0.052
Void recoveries	0.028	0.000	0.000	0.016	0.017	0.000	0.061
Misc recoveries	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.002
	0.032	0.003	0.004	0.048	0.032	0.028	0.147

Appendix C – HRA Capital Programme

Scheme Title	Revised 2012/13 Capital Budget	Full Year Forecast as at Month 6	Variance	Slippage to 2013/14	Monthly Budget Monitoring September 2012		
					Profilled Budget YTD	Actual YTD	Variance
					Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
					£'000	£'000	£'000
Garage Refurbishment	50	50	0	0	15	44	29
Asbestos management	58	128	70	0	17	62	45
Paths & Fences siteworks	60	60	0	0	18	12	-6
Structural repairs	150	150	0	0	45	46	1
Drainage & Water Supply	175	10	-165	0	53	0	-53
Central Heating communal	176	176	0	0	53	11	-42
Roof Replacement	240	325	85	0	72	167	95
General Enhancements (formerly Minor Works)	250	250	0	0	75	244	169
Estate Improvements	250	250	0	0	75	59	-16
Energy Conservation	250	250	0	0	75	33	-42
Rewiring	340	340	0	0	102	132	30
Capitalised Salaries	343	343	0	0	103	171	68
Secure door entry	350	350	0	0	105	137	32
Plasticisation	400	400	0	0	120	307	187
Aids and adaptations	450	870	420	0	135	278	143
Stock Remodelling	450	450	0	0	135	0	-135
Central Heating Installation	1,050	1,050	0	0	315	376	61
Kitchens and Bathrooms	1,100	1,100	0	0	330	299	-31
TOTAL	6,142	6,552	410	0	1,843	2,378	535

Appendix D – Reserves

Description	Opening Balance 2012/13	Spend against reserves	Release of reserves	Proposed transfer to Reserves	Proposed Closing Balance 2012/13
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
General Reserve	3,905	-			3,905
Business Process Re-engineering	-				-
Sheltered Housing Reprovision	-			3,550	3,550
Major Repairs (HRA)	200				200
TOTAL	4,105	-	-	3,550	7,655

Quarter 2 2012/13 Performance Report

Meeting: Executive
Date: 4 December 2012
Subject: Quarter 2 Performance Report
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: To report on Quarter 2 2012/13 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council's Medium Term Plan indicator set.

Advising Officer: Richard Carr, Chief Executive
Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programme & Performance Management
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision No
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The quarterly Medium Term Plan performance report underpins the delivery of all Council priorities.

Financial:

1. The indicator set monitors a wide range of indicators, which help to provide an understanding of the Council's effective use of resources.

Legal:

2. None.

Risk Management:

3. Any areas of ongoing underperformance would be a risk to both service delivery and the reputation of the Council.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. None

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. The report highlights performance against a range of indicators which support the monitoring of how the Council is delivering against its Medium Term Plan priorities. It identifies specific areas of underperformance which can be highlighted for further analysis. Whilst many of the indicators deal with information important in assessing equality, it is reported at the headline level in this report.

6. To meet the Council's stated intention of tackling inequalities and delivering services so that people whose circumstances make them vulnerable are not disadvantaged, performance data for indicators in this set is supported where appropriate by more detailed performance data analysis at the service level and this is used to support the completion of equality impact assessments. These impact assessments provide information on the underlying patterns and trends for different sections of the community and identify areas where further action is required to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups.

Public Health

7. The indicator set includes an indicator monitoring the percentage of 40 to 74 year olds offered a health check.

Community Safety:

8. The levels of Serious Acquisitive Crime and anti-social behaviour are included in the indicator set.

Sustainability:

9. Included in the indicator set are a broad range of indicators relating to sustainability including those covering employment, access to broadband, library usage, active recreation and waste.

Procurement:

10. Not applicable

Overview and Scrutiny:

11. This report will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committees during their December 2012 cycle of meetings.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **Acknowledge the overall strong performance in Quarter 2 for the indicators being used to help support monitoring of progress against the Medium Term Plan priorities and to request officers to further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators as appropriate.**

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

Executive Summary

12. This report marks a change from previous corporate performance reports, as it now focuses on a set of indicators that support the monitoring of progress against the priorities in the Medium Term Plan. The Overview section of this report provides an update on performance for the indicators in this new set. It is followed by directorate specific updates on the progress that is being made. This is supported by further information on the indicators being reported this quarter in Appendix A.

Introduction

13. This quarter sees the introduction of the Medium Term Plan (MTP) indicators which have been put in place to support the Council monitor progress against its priorities. In previous reports performance indicators have been grouped by directorate; however the introduction of the MTP marks a change with indicators now being group against priorities. To help explain how each directorate links to these indicators, a table is provided above each directorate summary detailing the relevant indicators, broken down by MTP priority.

Overview

14. The Medium Term Plan indicator set comprises of twenty eight indicators. These indicators are grouped in Appendix A into the priorities that they monitor. As some directorates support more than one priority and priorities are shared across directorates, the directorate commentary section of this report details which indicators align to each directorate.
15. Page 2 of Appendix A provides an overview of performance for each of the indicators in the new indicator set. Due to some indicators only being reported annually, and others for which there is data lag, the overview sheet now indicates which of the indicators are being reported this quarter and the time period that is being reported. Of those indicators being reported this quarter it has been possible to RAG score 18. (Appendix A).

Rag Status	Quarter 2	18 indicators are RAG scored
Green	Fourteen (78%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 with improved performance. ○ 7 showing no change / new indicator ○ 2 with declining performance.
Amber	Two (14.8%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 showing no change. ○ 1 with declining performance.
Red	Two (14.8%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 with improved performance. ○ 1 showing no change.

16. Looking at the high proportion of indicators scored as Green in Quarter 2, this evidences that the Council continues to perform well across a wide range of services and Medium Term Plan priorities. These indicators include:
- 1) Central Bedfordshire’s Employment rate (A2 MTP)
 - 2) % of residential development applications of 10 or more units with CABE excellent design status (A3 MTP)
 - 3) Number of Serious Acquisitive Crimes (A4 MTP)
 - 4) Number of recorded anti-social behaviour incidents (A5 MTP)
 - 5) Published Ofsted school and college classifications (B4 MTP)
 - 6) Protecting Vulnerable Adults (C1 MTP)
 - 7) Number of additional ‘Extra Care’ flats provided (C2 MTP)
 - 8) Percentage of decent homes (Council stock) (C3 MTP)
 - 9) Number of Village Care schemes in operation (C4 MTP)
 - 10) Percentage of council commissioned dementia care classed as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ (C5 MTP)
 - 11) Percentage of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments (C8 MTP)
 - 12) Percentage of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year that were reviewed (C10 MTP)
 - 13) Average time in days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted. (C11 MTP)

- 14) Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (E1 MTP)
17. Within these Green indicators it is worth pointing out the following:
18. Good progress continues to be made in tackling serious acquisitive crime. The rate of 2.0 crimes per 1,000 population recorded in Quarter 1 2012/13 was maintained in Quarter 2. In comparison the rates in Quarter 1 and 2 of 2011/12 were 2.8 and 2.6 respectively. As a result there were 155 fewer victims of serious acquisitive crime in Quarter 2 compared to the same quarter last year. This performance is better than other parts of Bedfordshire and is better than the national trend, and is supported by the Integrated Offender Management scheme. (A4 MTP)
19. The percentage Council housing stock meeting the Decent Homes Standard, at 99.6% at the close of Quarter 2, continues to exceed target. (C3 MTP)
20. The percentage of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments increased again this quarter to 82.9% confirming that assessments are focussing correctly on the right children who need our services. (C8 MTP)
21. The new indicator introduced by the DfE monitoring the average time in days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family for children who have been adopted, is showing performance that is not only achieving target but is also improving. This demonstrates that children are being placed in their permanent home without undue delay which is particularly important in enabling very young children to form positive emotional attachments. (C11 MTP)
22. Of the two indicators which are Amber, one is showing no change and the other is declining:
- The one showing no change is the percentage resident satisfaction with road and pavement repairs. Here the latest telephone tracker survey undertaken in September 2012 shows a one percent fall, down from 32% in April 2012 to 31% in September 2012. The size of the change is not statistically significant so in performance terms it has been recorded as no change however this latest result does validate the previous telephone tracker result. These telephone tracker results are designed to provide a direction of travel in between the main postal surveys, the next of which will be in the autumn of 2014. The Council is reviewing key areas of service delivery and ensuring that residents can be fully informed and engaged with this service. (D1 MTP)
 - The one showing declining performance is the percentage of Children's Social Care initial assessments within ten working days of referral. However this relates to a dip in performance this quarter down to 78.1%. However the causes of this reduction in performance have been identified and addressed so it is anticipated that performance will improve and meet the end of year target of 85%. (C9 MTP)

23. Of the two indicators scored as Red, one is showing improving performance, and the other no change:
- The indicator showing improved performance is the percentage of clients who are receiving self directed support. Here the percentage of clients has continued to increase up from 54.7% last quarter to 66.2% at the close of Quarter 2 and whilst this falls short of the demanding national target set for this indicator of 100% by the close of the year, it is significant improvement. Self directed support is being offered to all new customers and through the review process to existing customers. (C6 MTP)
 - The Red indicator showing no change is the percentage of 40 to 74 year olds offered a health check. Here the number of people offered a health check in Quarter 1 at 5,057 fell short of the target of 5,828. However the target for this year is a demanding one as it is 12% higher than last year's outturn and is 30% higher than last year's target. In recognition that repeating the message with individuals increases uptake, action is being taken to raise awareness of the availability and importance of health checks, including articles in CBC publications and the use of bill board posters in prominent sites. To support this with alternative ways to access health checks, Public Health has commissioned Horizon Health Choices to deliver additional health checks from the Active Transport Hub in Dunstable in collaboration with the Council's Active Transport Team, starting in November 2012. (C 7 MTP)

DIRECTORATE SUMMARIES


24. Social Care, Health & Housing

Ref	Indicator	Performance will be reported:	Performance information being reported this quarter		
			Time period		Performance
Promote health and wellbeing and protect the vulnerable					
C 1 MTP	Protecting Vulnerable Adults	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13		G
C 2 MTP	Number of additional 'Extra Care' flats provided	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13		G
C 3 MTP	Percentage of decent homes (Council stock)	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G
C 4 MTP	Number of Village Care schemes in operation	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13		G
C 5 MTP	Percentage of council commissioned dementia care classed as 'good' or 'excellent'.	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13		G
C 6 MTP	Clients receiving self directed support	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	R

25. The Directorate's performance for the Medium Term Plan priority of "Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable" is strong, with only one target not currently on track.

26. The performance on the target of the offer of personal budgets for adult social care support is currently Red. The number of customers receiving self-directed support has continued to increase, with 3,001 customers now receiving support of which 1,296 are in receipt of direct payments. The year to date figure is currently 74.8%, a significant improvement since March 2012 and whilst it has been recognised that the target is unlikely to be achieved, efforts are being made to get as close to the target as possible. Over the next few months, consideration will be given on how to capture and report on the reasons customers refuse self-directed support, to enable the likely outturn to be predicted.
27. Progress in the other targets includes the continuing use of file audits for safeguarding cases demonstrating improvement to case recording, discussions continue of an identified site for an extra-care scheme and a report is to be presented to Executive on the strategic approach to raising standards and quality of dementia care.
28. Work continues on ensuring that all council-owned housing meets the decent homes standard.

29. **Public Health**

Ref	Indicator	Performance will be reported:	Performance information being reported this quarter		
			Time period	Performance	
Promote health and wellbeing and protect the vulnerable					
C 7 MTP	Percentage of 40 to 74 year olds offered a health check	Quarterly	Quarter 1 2012/13		R

30. The number of people offered a health check in Quarter 1 at 5,057 was below the target of 5,828. This is also reflected in the reduced number of checks delivered at 1,992 against a target of 2,914. This performance needs to be set in the context of the changes that have been made to the target for this year. The 2012/13 target for the number of people offered a health check is a 12% increase over the 2011/12 outturn and is a 30% increase on the 2011/12 target. In 2011/12 less than half of Primary Care Trusts achieved their targets (Central Bedfordshire was one of the ones that did), which gives an indication of the additional challenge resulting from a 12% increase this year. To increase the take up of health checks action is being taken to further raise awareness of their availability and importance including articles in CBC publications and the use of bill board posters in prominent sites. It is recognised that repeated awareness raising with individuals is needed to increase up take. To support this Public Health has commissioned Horizon Health Choices to deliver additional health checks from the Active Transport Hub in Dunstable in collaboration with Central Bedfordshire Council's Active Transport Team, starting in November 2012. (C 7 MTP).

31. **Children's Services**

Ref	Indicator	Performance will be reported:	Performance information being reported this quarter		
			Time period	Performance	
Improved educational attainment					
B 1 MTP	Achievement of 5 or more A* - C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths	Annually in Quarter 3			
B 2 MTP	Percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training. (NEET)	Annually in Quarter 4			
B 3 MTP	Number of education and training opportunities for young people made available in the Autumn.	Annually in Quarter 4			
B 4 MTP	Published Ofsted school and college classifications	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↔	G
Promote health and wellbeing and protect the vulnerable					
C 8 MTP	The percentage of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G
C 9 MTP	Percentage of initial assessments within ten working days of referral	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↓	A
C10 MTP	Percentage of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year that were reviewed.	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↔	G
C11 MTP	Average time in days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted.	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G

32. The new Information System (Frameworki) for monitoring the council's performance in relation to protecting vulnerable children and young people was installed at the end of the 2011/12 financial year. Work is continuing to establish this system to fully support operational services and it will be February 2013 before all management performance reports can be accessed. However, it is now possible to report all measures in this set.
33. Performance in relation to three of the four safeguarding indicators has been good in Quarter 2, each remaining on target at quarter end.
34. Although the percentage of initial assessments completed in 10 days is showing a dip in performance this quarter it is anticipated that performance will level out and that the end of year target of 85% will be achieved. This dip in performance is partly as a result of difficulties in completion due to the holiday period, both in terms of leave and availability of colleagues in other agencies. Frameworki will allow greater clarity on recording the date of a contact which progresses to an Initial Assessment.
35. Overall the proportion of schools being classified as good or outstanding has remained stable over the last three years. In quarter two published inspection outcomes show that 76% of schools and colleges are either good or outstanding.

36. **Sustainable Communities**

Ref	Indicator	Performance will be reported:	Performance information being reported this quarter		
			Time period	Performance	
Enhance your local community					
A 2 MTP	Central Bedfordshire's Employment rate.	Quarterly	February 2012	↓	G
A 3 MTP	% of approved residential development applications of 10 or more units having CABE excellent design status	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↔	G
A 4 MTP	Number of Serious Acquisitive Crimes. (Covers SC1)	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G
A 6 MTP	Number of recorded Anti-social Behaviour incidents.	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G
Better infrastructure					
D 1 MTP	Percentage resident satisfaction with road and pavement repairs	Quarter 1 & Quarter 2	Survey Sept 2012	↑	A
D 2 MTP	Percentage of Central Bedfordshire with access to superfast broadband	Annually in Quarter 4			
D 3 MTP	Percentage of Central Bedfordshire with access to at least 2Mb broadband	Annually in Quarter 4			
Great universal services					
E 1 MTP	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	Quarterly	Quarter 4 2011/12	↑	G
E 2 MTP	Percentage of adults in Central Bedfordshire taking part in sport or active recreation. (APS)	Quarter 1 & Quarter 3	April 2012	↑	Not scored
E 3 MTP	Satisfaction of adults with library services	Annually in Quarter 1			
E 4 MTP	Number of visits to libraries	Annually in Quarter 4			

37. The Quarterly Economic Monitoring Report shows that Central Bedfordshire continues to perform above regional and national averages for economic growth, although this is against a backdrop of real world economic challenges that are affecting the whole country. For example, the number of people in employment (aged 16 to 64) is currently 6.4% above national average and so exceeds the MTP target of 5% above national average.

38. The service continues to perform well in its response to these challenges and is responding in a number of ways. For example, it is delivering a programme of visits to at least 30 of the top 100 key businesses, with Member support, to identify how the Council can assist their growth. The Skills Summit was held on 8 October with key business and educational organisations to engage with partners in the delivery of the All Age Skills Strategy objectives. A video and others materials have been produced promoting Dunstable and Houghton Regis. A programme for other areas is also being developed.


39. The percentage of approved applications for residential developments of ten or units having CABE excellent design status continues at 100%. Through partnership working, the Council has ensured that all the affordable houses have been built to a high quality design standard, so that they are great places to live where a strong community spirit will be felt. An additional 57 units were delivered in Quarter 2.
40. The allocating of new housing, infrastructure, employment growth and protecting the countryside and the environment will be set out in CBC's first Development Strategy. Public consultation on the draft Development Strategy has now been completed with over 3,000 comments received. It has been considered by OSC in October before the pre-submission Development Strategy is agreed by Executive on 6 November 2012 and Full Council on 29 November 2012.
41. To help ensure the Council meets its target of achieving above average satisfaction with road and pavement repairs by 2016, the Council is reviewing key areas of service delivery to meet resident's expectations. These include new approaches to maintenance and improved communication with residents.
42. The latest results of the Sport England Active People Survey were published on 22 June 2012 with a result for Central Bedfordshire of 25.3%. This represents a 3.3% increase which Sport England calculates as a significant change in the number of adults participating in sport and active recreation in Central Bedfordshire.
43. To support this target in the MTP, the Council is developing CBC's first Leisure Strategy. The Executive will be considering Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy in January. This will be followed by Chapters on Recreation and Open Space; Playing Pitches and Physical Activity. The overarching Leisure Strategy will go to Executive for approval in July 2013. The Leisure Strategy and associated chapters will then be agreed as Supplementary Planning Documents
44. Houghton Regis Library has become the first of our libraries to benefit from an £805k investment in library services by the Council. Self service technology, improvements to buildings and layouts, development of family read and relax areas and installation of refreshment facilities have all been put in place and are a result of extensive consultation with residents. Our aim is to build on the continuing increase in visitor numbers to our libraries with a target of a 20% increase in visitors by 2016.

45. **Corporate Services – Resources**

Ref	Indicator	Performance will be reported:	Performance information being reported this quarter		
			Time period	Performance	
Value for money					
F 1 MTP	Percentage increase in Council Tax	Annually in Quarter 4			

46. Performance for indicator F1 MTP The percentage increase in Council Tax will be reported in Quarter 4

47. **Corporate Services - People and Organisation**

Ref	Indicator	Performance will be reported:	Performance information being reported this quarter		
			Time period	Performance	
Enhance your local community					
A 1 MTP	Percentage of Central Bedfordshire residents satisfied with the local area as a place to live.	Quarter 1 & Quarter 2	Quarter 2 2012/13		Not scored

48. In September 2012 the six monthly telephone tracker update of the Resident's Survey was undertaken. This showed a one percent increase to 91% in the proportion of Central Bedfordshire residents who are satisfied with the local area as a place to live. The size of the change is not statistically significant so in performance terms it has been recorded as no change however the similarity between the latest result and that out the one carried out in April 2012 provides validation of the new results following a move from postal to telephone methodology. These telephone tracker surveys are designed to provide an indication of direction of travel in between the main postal surveys. The next resident's postal survey will be carried out in autumn 2014. (A 1 MTP).

Appendices: Appendix A (Exec) – High level summary table of the Quarter 2 Performance Indicators and supporting performance information.

Background Papers: (None)

Location of papers:

Appendix A (Executive Report) - Quarterly Performance Report

Medium Term Plan Indicators

Quarter 2 2012/13

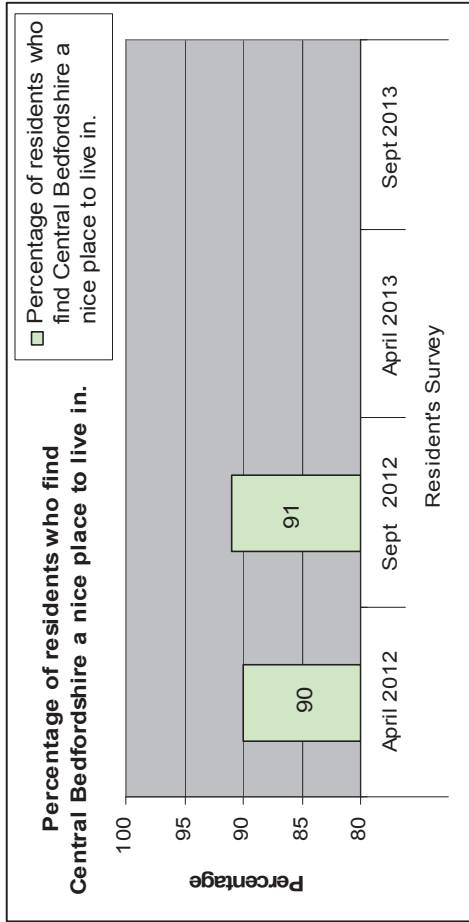
Report comparison - Depends on the nature of the indicator		Performance Judgement		
		Direction of travel (DoT)	RAG score (Standard scoring rules unless the indicator specifies alternative scoring arrangements)	
Seasonal	Compared to the same time period in the previous year	↓	RED - target missed / off target - Performance at least 10% below the required level of improvement	
Quarter on quarter	Compared to the previous quarter	↔	AMBER - target missed / off target - Performance less than 10% below the required level of improvement	
Annual	Compared to one fixed point in the previous year	↑	GREEN - Target achieved or performance on track to achieve target	

Overview of performance

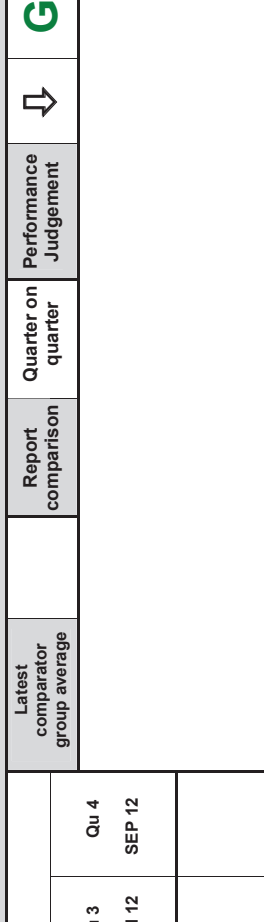
Ref	Indicator	Performance will be reported:	Performance information being reported this quarter		
			Time period	Performance	
Enhance your local community					
A 1 MTP	Percentage of Central Bedfordshire residents satisfied with the local area as a place to live.	Quarter 1 & Quarter 2	Survey Sept 2012	↔	Not scored
A 2 MTP	The number of people in employment (Aged 16 to 64)	Quarterly	February 2012	↓	G
A 3 MTP	% of approved residential development applications of 10 or more units having CABE excellent design status	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↔	G
A 4 MTP	Number of Serious Acquisitive Crimes.	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G
A 5 MTP	Number of recorded Anti-social Behaviour incidents.	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G
Improved educational attainment					
B 1 MTP	Achievement of 5 or more A* - C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths	Annually in Quarter 3			
B 2 MTP	Percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training. (NEET)	Annually in Quarter 4			
B 3 MTP	Number of education and training opportunities for young people made available in the Autumn.	Annually in Quarter 4			
B 4 MTP	Published Ofsted school and college classifications	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↔	G
Promote health and wellbeing and protect the vulnerable					
C 1 MTP	Protecting Vulnerable Adults	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13		G
C 2 MTP	Number of additional 'Extra Care' flats provided	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13		G
C 3 MTP	Percentage of decent homes (Council stock)	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G
C 4 MTP	Number of Village Care schemes in operation	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13		G
C 5 MTP	Percentage of council commissioned dementia care classed as 'good' or 'excellent'.	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13		G
C 6 MTP	Clients receiving self directed support	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	R
C 7 MTP	Percentage of 40 to 74 year olds offered a health check	Quarterly	Quarter 1 2012/13	↔	R
C 8 MTP	The percentage of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G
C 9 MTP	Percentage of children's social care initial assessments within ten working days of referral	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↓	A
C10 MTP	Percentage of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year that were reviewed	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↔	G
C11 MTP	Average time in days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted.	Quarterly	Quarter 2 2012/13	↑	G
Better infrastructure					
D 1 MTP	Percentage resident satisfaction with road and pavement repairs	Quarter 1 & Quarter 2	Survey Sept 2012	↔	A
D 2 MTP	Percentage of Central Bedfordshire with access to superfast broadband	Annually in Quarter 4			
D 3 MTP	Percentage of Central Bedfordshire with access to at least 2Mb broadband	Annually in Quarter 4			
Great universal services					
E 1 MTP	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	Quarterly	Quarter 4 2011/12	↓	G
E 2 MTP	Percentage of adults in Central Bedfordshire taking part in sport or active recreation (Active People Survey)	Quarter 1 & Quarter 3	June 2012	↑	Not scored
E 3 MTP	Satisfaction of adults with library services	Annually Quarter1			
E 4 MTP	Number of visits to libraries	Annually in Quarter 4			
Value for money					
F 1 MTP	Percentage increase in Council Tax	Annually in Quarter 4			

Enhance your local community

A1 MTP Percentage of Central Bedfordshire residents satisfied with the local area as a place to live. (Data taken from Resident's Survey undertaken twice a year in April and September)																
Unit	Good is	Resident's Survey				Targets				Latest comparator group average	N/A	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	Not scored	
		Baseline	Sept 2012 Reported in the Qu2 2012/13 Performance Report	April 2013 Reported in the Qu1 2013/14 Performance Report	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016							
%	High	April 2012	90%	91%	No target set	No target set	No target set	No target set	No target set	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016		
Percentage of residents satisfied with the local area as a place to live			90%	91%	No target set	No target set	No target set	No target set	No target set							
<p>Comment: Quarter 2 update: The latest Resident's Survey data shows a one percent increase in the proportion of Central Bedfordshire residents satisfied with their local area as a place to live. The size of the change is not statistically significant so in performance terms it has been recorded as no change however the similarity between the latest result and that of the one carried out in April 2012 provides validation of the new results following a move from postal to telephone methodology.</p> <p>These telephone tracker surveys are designed to provide an indication of direction of travel in between the main postal surveys. The next resident's postal survey will be undertaken in autumn 2014.</p> <p>The Resident's Surveys in April and September 2012 were undertaken using telephone interviews with 500 residents.</p>																



A2 MTP The number of people in employment (Aged 16 to 64)																		
Unit	Good is	2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	Report comparison	Quarter on quarter	Performance Judgement					
		Target (Outturn)	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1	Qu 2					Qu 3	Qu 4			
Number	High	No target set	126,300 (6.6% above)	125,000 (5.7% above)	125,100 (5.9% above)	126,700 (7.2% above)	128,000 (7.1% above)	126,400 (6.4% above)	126,400 (6.4% above)	5% above National Average	Target (Outturn)	DEC 11	MAR 12	JUN 12	SEP 12			
		125,000 (5.7% above)	126,300 (6.6% above)	125,000 (5.7% above)	125,100 (5.9% above)	126,700 (7.2% above)	128,000 (7.1% above)	126,400 (6.4% above)	126,400 (6.4% above)									
<p>Comment: This indicator is part of the official labour market statistics provided by the Office of National Statistics and is the most reliable data available. However, this indicator uses an average for the year to the close of the quarter and the data is only available at least six months in arrears. This indicator is used by the Environment and Economy Thematic Partnership and will only be delivered through joint working between the partners. Additionally, the Medium Term Plan highlights the target for Central Bedfordshire to maintain an employment rate 5% points above the national (England) level.</p> <p>The number of people in employment has fallen by 1,600 people in Quarter 2. This equates to an employment rate of 76.7% which while a decrease from the previous quarter (77.3%) is still above national, regional and SEMLEP levels. The fall between quarters is due to continuing economic uncertainties and within Central Bedfordshire there has been an increase of those who are economically inactive and do not want a job. However, the year on year performance has improved from 2010/11 (where the rate was 76.1%) and the difference between Central Bedfordshire and the English average was 5.7%.</p> <p>The Council is working hard to ensure that the number of people in employment remains 5% above the national average. This is being achieved through engaging with existing employers, attracting new businesses and investors into the area to increase local job opportunities and implementing the All Age Skills Strategy.</p>																		



Percentage of approved applications for residential developments of ten or more units having CABE excellent design status																			
A3 MTP	Unit		All data is cumulative for the financial year to the close of the quarter				Baseline 2011/12			Actual 2012/13			Latest comparator group average	N/A	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	↔	G
	Good is	High	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4 / Outturn	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4 / Outturn	Qu 1	Qu 2							
	Number of approved residential developments of ten or more units		1	5	1	1 / Outturn 8	6	4			6	4			This indicator assesses residential developments of ten units or more against the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), Building for Life Design Quality Criteria. It covers the functionality, design and sustainability of buildings. It uses twenty questions to evaluate the quality of new housing developments, with planning proposals assessed against the following headings: Environment and Community; character; streets, parking and pedestrianisation and design and construction. Each planning application which falls within the criteria is assessed as part of the determination process.				
	Number of approved residential developments of ten or more units having CABE excellent design status		1	5	1	1 / Outturn 8	6	4			6	4			CABE in partnership with Home Builders Federation and Design for Homes have launched an updated version of Building for Life, called Building for Life 12. This reflects our vision of what new housing developments should be: attractive, functional and sustainable places. It is based on the new National Planning Policy Framework and the Government's commitment to build more homes, better homes and involve local communities in planning.				
	Percentage of approved applications with CABE excellent design status		Target				100	100			100	100			During the next Quarter Development Management will be assessing the new scheme. It is anticipated that a new measure of excellence will be agreed and training for planning officers will be undertaken to enable the scheme to be adopted by CBC.				
			Comment: Performance remains at 100 percent in Quarter 2 of 2012/13.																

Number of serious acquisitive crimes																				
A 4 MTP	Good is		2010/11				2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	↑	G
	Number	Low	Outturn	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4	Outturn	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4	Outturn						
			13.1	2.8	2.6	2.9	2.3	10.6		13.3	2.0	2.0			Serious acquisitive crime (SAC) includes domestic burglary, robbery, theft of motor vehicle and theft from motor vehicle. Reducing SAC remains as a priority for Bedfordshire Police and longer term reduction plans are being developed with Community Safety Partnership (CSP) partners and town councils to make further progress. There were 155 fewer victims of SAC based crime in Quarter 2 compared to the same period last year. SAC Crime continues to fall at a higher level than elsewhere in Bedfordshire and at a rate exceeding the national trend. Along with the CSP, the Council's Community Safety and Housing teams are working hard on the Integrated Offender Management programme. This aims to stop the most prolific offenders reoffending by offering them help and support. If this help is not accepted then they are targeted through proactive policing. This "Offender targeting" approach is where subjects on bail for SAC based crime are personally visited to ensure they are complying with their bail conditions. Proactive operations targeting the "enabler's" of crime are also being run by the Police. Handlers of stolen property are being targeted and a number of people have been arrested after warrants were executed. This led to the recovery of property including phones, laptops and other electronic equipment. The MTP target is to reduce serious acquisitive crime by 10% by 2016. Against the backdrop of the current economic climate and falling policing resources, it will be very difficult to maintain the current level of reduction. The 2012/13 target has therefore been set to incrementally reach the main 2016 target.					

Promote health and wellbeing and protect the vulnerable

C 1 MTP Protecting Vulnerable Adults					
Milestones:	Latest comparator group average	Report comparison	Performance Judgement	G	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent audits of safeguarding case files - Annual 2. Annual Safeguarding Report - Annual 3. Develop & implement Safeguarding Case Support Tool – March 2013 4. Continue to develop and implement the 6 work stream within the safeguarding improvement register – March 2013 	-	-			
<p>Comment: An internal audit of 17 cases was conducted in during July and August, in which one cases was rated as excellent and two cases were rated as poor. Action has been taken to address the issues identified in the poor cases. Another internal case file audit will take place in Quarter 3; with the next independent audit will take place in early 2013. The Annual Safeguarding Board report was presented to Executive in October 2012. The use of the Safeguarding Case Support Tool has continued to improve and a review has taken place, which has identified a number of refinements that will be delivered over the next few months. Progress continues to be made in the workstreams of the safeguarding improvement register and the overall status being Green. Awareness training activity continues and the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) Coordinator started in post at the end of September.</p>					

C 2 MTP Number of additional 'Extra Care' flats provided					
Milestones:	Latest comparator group average	Report comparison	Performance Judgement	G	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify site, approve decision to invest – November 2012 2. Produce design and acquire site - tbc 3. Secure Planning Permission; agree s106 - tbc 4. Procure contractor - tbc 5. Commence Construction - tbc 6. Open New Provision – by December 2014 					
<p>Comment: The Site Specific Business Case is contingent on the S.106 implications (Dunstable). The government statement on affordable housing as a S106 contribution is a risk to the commercial negotiations and the business case, which can be tested during October.</p>					

C 3 MTP Percentage of decent homes (Council stock)																
Unit	Good is	2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	99.1% HouseMark 2010/11	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	G	
		Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4 / Outturn	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4 / Outturn							
%	Low															
Target					100											
Actual		99.3	99.4	99.4	100	98.20	98.40	99.00	99.6							

Comment: As previously reported the stock condition survey conducted at the beginning of the year, identified few decent homes than expected; 52 properties were identified as not meeting the Decent Homes standard. As at the end of September, 21 properties still do not meet the standard and the required works have been scheduled to ensure that all properties are brought up to standard by March 2013. Of the 31 properties, 14 have had the necessary works completed to meet the standard and 17 households have refused to have the works carried out and therefore are exempt from the standard.

C 4 MTP Number of Village Care schemes in operation								
Milestone:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish 'core offer' for the village care scheme - September 2012 2. Audit the current village care schemes - March 2013 3. Establish Baseline - March 2013 4. Draw up action plans and address the gaps - March 2014 				Latest comparator group average	Report comparison	Performance Judgement	G
Comment:	<p>Work continues through the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) to establish new schemes. New schemes have been in Biggleswade and Dunstable, consultation is taking place in Shefford, to gauge level and types of needs and the availability of volunteers. BRCC are also working with a charitable group in Eaton Bray.</p>							

C 5 MTP Percentage of Council commissioned dementia care classed as 'good' or 'excellent'								
Milestones:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dementia Quality Accreditation Scheme approved - January 2013 2. Incentive scheme for all dementia related residential care home payments introduced – January 2013 3. 60% of all dementia care classed as 'good' or 'excellent' – March 2014 				Latest comparator group average	Report comparison	Performance Judgement	G
Comment:	<p>A report is to be presented to Executive in November 2012, setting out the strategic approach to raising the standards and quality of dementia care.</p>							

C 6 MTP Clients receiving self directed support (ASCOF1c)																			
Unit	Good is	High	%	2010/11		2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	29.8 CIPFA 2010/11	Report comparison	Quarter on Quarter	Performance Judgement	
				Outturn	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4	Outturn	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1	Qu 2						Qu 3
				30.42	60.0	32.20	35.3	40.0	52.9	52.9	52.9	66.2	54.7	100					R
<p>Comment: The number of customers receiving self-directed support has continued to increase, with 3,001 customers now receiving self-directed support in the last 12 months; an increase of 438 since June 2012. Of which 1,296 customers are in receipt of direct payments. Self-directed support is being offered to all new customers and through the review process to existing customers. As previously reported, a challenging target has been set nationally for 2012/13, but the year to date figure (from April 2012) is 74.8% shows a significant improvement in performance since March 2012 and whilst it has been recognised that the target is unlikely to be achieved, efforts are being made to get as close to the target as possible. Over the next few months, consideration will be given on how to capture and report on the reasons customers refuse self-directed support, to enable the likely outturn to be predicted.</p>																			

C 7 MTP NHS Health checks (percentage of people aged 40 to 74 years of age offered a health check).																		
Unit	Good is	High	2010/11		2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	Report comparison	Annual	Performance Judgement	↕	R
			Outturn	116%	Outturn	101%	Outturn	103%	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4						
Percentage offered a health check	Target	Number	12,999	20,822	5,828	5,828	5,828	5,828	5,828	23,312								
	Actual	Number	14,923	21,466	5,057					5,057								
Number of Health checks delivered	Target	%	115%	103%	87%					22%								
	Actual	Number	6,500	10,411	2,914					11,656								
			7,547	10,499	1,992					1,992								
			116%	101%	68%					17%								

Comment: NHS Health Checks provide an assessment of an individual's future risk of vascular disease and referral on to preventative services or treatment for those at high risk. This check is offered 5-yearly to every person aged between 40 – 74 years who is not already on a cardiovascular disease register. Early identification and treatment will prevent or delay the consequences of disease. Each year many people are newly identified as having high blood pressure or type 2 diabetes, without the Health Checks programme these people would most likely have been identified at a much later stage of the condition (or died as a consequence of it) requiring more costly interventions and increasing the potential severity/impact. At present around 60% of the eligible population in Central Bedfordshire do not take up this offer when contacted by their GP.

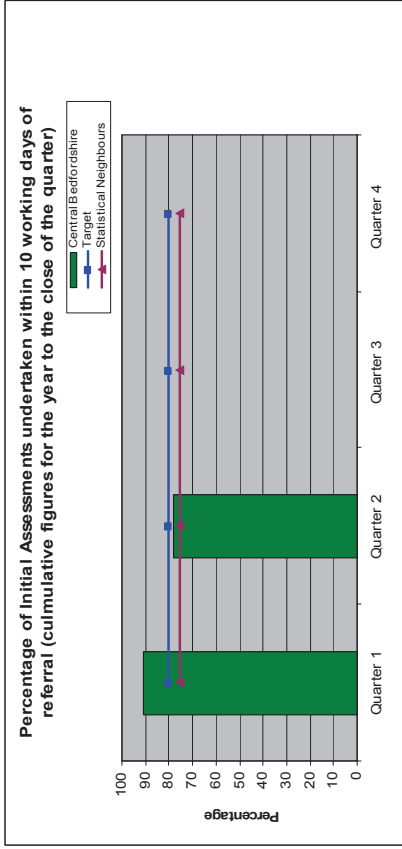
Performance in Quarter 1 2012/13 is behind target with the number of people offered a health check at 5,057 being below the target of 5,828. This is also reflected in the reduced number of checks delivered at 1,992 against a target of 2,914. This performance needs to be set in the context of the changes that have been made to the target for this year. The 2012/13 target for the number of people offered a health check is a 12% increase over the 2011/12 outturn and is a 30% increase on the 2011/12 target. In 2011/12 less than half of Primary Care Trusts achieved their targets (Central Bedfordshire was one of the ones that did), which gives an indication of the additional challenge resulting from a 12% increase this year. To increase the take up of health checks action is being taken to further raise awareness of their availability and importance including articles in CBC publications and the use of bill board posters in prominent sites. It is recognised that repeated awareness raising with individuals is needed to increase up take. To support this Public Health has commissioned Horizon Health Choices to deliver additional health checks from the Active Transport Hub in Dunstable in collaboration with Central Bedfordshire Council's Active Transport Team, starting in November 2012.

C 8 MTP Percentage of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments (Cumulative)																				
Unit	Good is	High	2010/11			2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	75.0 NFER (2010/11)	Report comparison	Quarter on quarter	Performance Judgement	↑	G
			Outturn	56.0	Target (Outturn)	60	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4	Outturn	78.5	Target (Outturn)							
			56.0	60	60.2	67.2	71.5	78.5	78.5	78.5	82.1	82.9								

Comment: The target of 75% was achieved in Quarter 2. This improvement in performance tells us that assessments are focussing correctly on the right children who need our services.

To support changes required in response to the Munro Review of Safeguarding, it is expected that this indicator will be replaced in 2013/14 as this is a process indicator. The Council may choose to retain it as a local indicator however.

Percentage of children's social care initial assessments undertaken within ten working days of referral (Cumulative)																		
C 9 MTP	Good is	Unit	%	2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	73.3 NFER (2010/11)	Report Comparison	Quarter on quarter	Performance Judgement	↕	A
				Target (Outturn)	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4	Outturn	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1							
				85.0	82.7	81.3	84.1	86.4	86.6	85.0	90.7	78.1						
<p>Comment: Although the percentage of initial assessments completed in 10 days is showing a dip in performance this quarter it is anticipated that performance will level out and that the end of year target of 85% will be achieved. The causes underlying this reduction in performance have been identified and addressed where necessary.</p> <p>To support changes required in response to the Munro Review of safeguarding, it is expected that this indicator will be replaced in 2013/14 as this is a process indicator. The Council may choose to retain it as a local indicator however.</p>																		



Percentage of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year that were reviewed																		
C10 MTP	Good is	Unit	%	2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	97.1 NFER (2010/11)	Report comparison	Quarter on quarter	Performance Judgement	↕	G
				Target (Outturn)	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4	Outturn	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1							
				100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100						
<p>Comment: Performance remains on target. Reviews are a key element in delivering Child Protection Plans and effective reviews should ensure the provision of good quality interventions to keep children safe and protected. This target should remain on 100% and graphical representation is not relevant.</p>																		

Average time in days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted																			
C11 MTP	Unit	Good is	Low	2011/12		2012/13			2013/14			Latest comparator group average	560 NFER 2008-11	Report comparison	Quarter on quarter	Performance Judgement	↑	G	
				Outturn	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4 / Outturn	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3								Qu 4 / Outturn
	Days																		
	Target	New		639	639	639	639	639	639	568	568	568							
	Actual	579		576	552														

Comment: Performance is within the target timescales, demonstrating that children are placed in their permanent home without undue delay which is particularly important in enabling very young children to form positive emotional attachments.

This is a new indicator recently introduced by DfE based on a rolling 3 year cohort. Targets are established by DfE.

Better infrastructure - improved roads, broadband reach and transport

Percentage resident satisfaction with road and pavement repairs. (Data taken from Resident's Survey undertaken twice a year in April and September)																	
D 1 MTP	Unit	Good is	Resident's Survey		Targets					Latest comparator group average	N/A	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	↔	A	
			Baseline	Sept 2012 Reported in the Qu2 2012/13 Performance Report	April 2013 Reported in the Qu1 2013/14 Performance Report	2012	2013	2014	2015								2016
	%	High	April 2012														
	Percentage of residents who are satisfied with road and pavement repairs.		32%	31%	No target set	No target set	No target set	No target set	No target set	No target set	40%						
	<p>Comment: Quarter 2 update: The latest Resident's Survey data shows a one percent decrease in the proportion of residents who are satisfied with road and pavement repairs. The size of the change is not statistically significant so in performance terms it has been recorded as no change however this latest result does validate the new results following the move from postal to telephone methodology.</p> <p>The Resident's Surveys in April and September 2012 were undertaken using telephone interviews with 500 residents.</p> <p>These telephone tracker surveys are designed to provide an indication of direction of travel in between the main postal surveys. The next resident's postal survey will be undertaken in autumn 2014.</p> <p>The national average (taken from the LGA Insight survey 2011) was 40% and used a telephone methodology so is comparative to the latest tracker survey results.</p> <p>The Council is reviewing key areas of service delivery to meet resident's expectations and ensuring that residents can be fully informed and engaged with this service.</p>																

D 2 MTP Percentage of Central Bedfordshire with access to superfast broadband												
Unit	Good is	2011/12 Outturn	2012/13 (Reported in Qu4 report)	2013/14 (Reported in Qu4 report)	2014/15 (Reported in Qu4 report)	2015/16 (Reported in Qu4 report)	Latest comparator group average	N/A	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	Reported in Qu4
%	High				90			N/A				
Percentage of Central Bedfordshire with access to superfast broadband		Target										
		Actual	Not available									
Comment:												
<p>The Council has been working closely with existing broadband infrastructure providers to maximise their current rollout plans. As such BT has already upgraded exchanges in Biggleswade, Leighton Buzzard, Sandy, Dunstable and Stotfold, and has recently announced the upgrade of the Woburn Sands, Whipsnade and Shefford exchanges. These recent announcements will have the impact of increasing the access.</p> <p>The Council is working in partnership with Bedford Borough and Milton Keynes Councils to ensure a much faster rollout of the availability of broadband. This partnership will be undertaking an open market review in December 2012 as part of the Broadband Delivery UK project which will provide a new definitive percentage access figure for the area. Data will be available in Quarter 4.</p>												
<p>This indicator measures the number of residential and non-residential premises which are supported by the necessary infrastructure to enable them to access superfast broadband services. This is defined using the government's definition of 24 Megabits per second or faster. This is converted into a percentage against the total number of residential and non residential premises in Central Bedfordshire. It is not a measure of the broadband performance of individual broadband users, as some may be in an area that has access to superfast broadband but choose not to contract for this higher level of performance. Updated data is available annually. The figures used are estimates based on the predicted roll out plans of private service providers to 2015. For 2011/12 this was estimated to be 73.8%. As companies announce changes to plans the figures will be updated.</p>												

D 3 MTP Percentage of Central Bedfordshire with access to at least 2Mb broadband												
Unit	Good is	2011/12 Outturn	2012/13 (Reported in Qu4 report)	2013/14 (Reported in Qu4 report)	2014/15 (Reported in Qu4 report)	2015/16 (Reported in Qu4 report)	Latest comparator group average	N/A	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	Reported in Qu4
%	High				100			N/A				
Percentage of Central Bedfordshire with access to at least 2Mb broadband		Target										
		Actual	Not available									
Comment:												
<p>The Council is working in partnership with Bedford Borough and Milton Keynes Councils to ensure a much faster rollout of the availability of broadband. This partnership will be undertaking an open market review in December 2012 as part of the Broadband Delivery UK project which will provide a new definitive percentage access figure for the area. Data will be available in Quarter 4.</p>												
<p>This indicator measures the number of residential and non-residential premises which are supported by the necessary infrastructure to enable them to access broadband services operating at 2 Megabits per second or faster. This is converted into a percentage against the total number of residential and non residential premises in Central Bedfordshire. It is not a measure of the broadband performance of individual broadband users. Updated data is available annually. The figures used are estimates based on the predicted roll out plans of private service providers to 2015. For 2011/12 this was estimated to be 89.5%. As companies announce changes to plans the figures will be updated.</p>												

Great universal services - Bins, leisure and libraries

Percentage of household waste sent for recycling																	
E 1 MTP	2009/10		2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	47.8% PWC 2009/10	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	↕	G
	Good is	Outturn	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4	Outturn	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1							
%	High	50.30	51.6	51	53.2	54.2	50.2	46.4	51.1	51	Not available						
<p>Comment: The 51.1% outturn for 2011/12 is slightly lower than the previous year. This is due to lower tonnages of green waste and also the unstable market for wood waste recycling resulting in dirty wood being sent to Energy recovery processing rather than recycling. However, Central Bedfordshire is a high performing council. Due to external verification of data through the Waste Data Flow system by Defra and finally the Environment Agency, the final year's outturn is yet to be validated. Formal notification should be received in November.</p> <p>The target in the MTP is to reach 60% by 2020.</p>																	

Percentage of adults in Central Bedfordshire taking part in sport or active recreation. (Data taken from the Active People's Survey)																	
E 2 MTP	2009/10		2011/12				2012/13				Latest comparator group average	47.8% PWC 2009/10	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	↕	Not scored
	Good is	Outturn	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1	Qu 2	Qu 3	Qu 4	Outturn	Target (Outturn)	Qu 1							
%	High	22.5%	22.5%	30.8%	22.3%	13.4%	0.2% above	22.5%	25.3%	Available December	Available December	Available December	Available December	Available December	Available December		
<p>Percentage of adults in Central Bedfordshire taking part in sport or active recreation</p> <p>All English authorities</p> <p>Best performing 30.8%</p> <p>Average 22.3%</p> <p>Worst performing 13.4%</p> <p>Target to remain above national average 0.2% above</p> <p>Comment: The latest results relate to Active People Survey 6 (April 2011 to April 2012) were published on 22 June 2012 with a result for Central Bedfordshire of 25.3%. The results are compared with APS1, and shows a 3.3% increase on APS1 which Sport England calculates as a significant change in the number of adults participating in sport and active recreation in Central Bedfordshire.</p> <p>The second set of rolling 12 months results for APS6 (period October 11 to October 12) will be released in December 2012.</p> <p>To support this target in the MTP, the Council is developing CBC's first Leisure Strategy. The Executive will be considering Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy in January. This will be followed by Chapters on Recreation and Open Space; Playing Pitches and Physical Activity. The overarching Leisure Strategy will go to Executive for approval in July 2013. The Leisure Strategy and associated chapters will then be agreed as Supplementary Planning Documents.</p> <p>The Active People Survey (APS), carried out by Sport England, is the largest survey in sport and active recreation undertaken in Europe. It identifies how participation in sport and active recreation varies from place to place and between different groups in the population.</p> <p>The measure shows the percentage of the adult population (age 16 years and over) in Central Bedfordshire who participate in sport and active recreation, at moderate intensity, for at least 30 minutes on at least 12 days out of the last 4 weeks (equivalent to 30 minutes on 3 or more days a week).</p> <p>Previous results are as follows: APS1 Oct 2005-Oct 2006 22.0% APS2/3 Oct 2007-Oct 2009 24.5%</p>																	

E 3 MTP Satisfaction of adults with the Library Service.												
Unit	Good is	Baseline Library Service's own Adult plus Survey 2011 (Restricted to library users)	No Library Service Adult Plus Survey to be undertaken in 2012	Library Service's own Adult plus Survey 2013 (Restricted to library users)	Resident's Survey (If included in Survey it would include non-library users)		Latest comparator group average	N/A	Report comparison	Seasonal April and September	Performance Judgement	Reported in Qu 1
%	High			93	Sept 2012	April 2013						
Percentage of adults satisfied with the Library Service.	Target			93	Would form a new baseline	Target set against the new baseline						
<p>Comment: The Library Service is working hard to deliver the Library Strategy Short term priorities. In particular the completion of self service technology installation to enable staff to spend additional time with customers who need support, increase efficient movement of stock around libraries and delivering agreed efficiencies. By the end of Quarter 2 self service technology has been installed in 4 libraries and the work programme for this and capital refurbishment works is on schedule.</p> <p>Next Survey available Q1 2013/14.</p> <p>This indicator is currently monitored through the Adult Plus element of the Library Survey, this element is not undertaken annually. The Library Service will be undertaking a cut down version of the Library Adult Plus survey in Quarter 1 2013/14. This survey would have undertaken in Quarter 3 2012/13 however, due to the rolling programme of library closures throughout 2012/13 for the installation of self service technology and building works the survey has been delayed to a time when all libraries are open and can be involved.</p>												

E 4 MTP Library usage									
Unit	Good is	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Latest comparator group average	Report comparison	Seasonal	Performance Judgement	Reported in Qu 4
Number of visitors	High	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn					
Target							2011/12		2012/13
Actual	1,126,038		1,247,914						
<p>Comment: The Library Service is working hard to deliver the Library Strategy Short term priorities. In particular the completion of self service technology installation to enable staff to spend additional time with customers who need support, increase efficient movement of stock around libraries and delivering agreed efficiencies. By the end of Quarter 2 self service technology has been installed in 4 libraries and the work programme for this and capital refurbishment works on schedule.</p> <p>The 2012/13 figures will be available at year end when the annual CIPFA return is made.</p>									
					All libraries				
					Number of visits to libraries in person		1,247,914		
					Number of books issued		1,466,739		
					Number of audio visual and other issues		76,315		
					Number of enquiries (in person)		60,880		
					Number of active users		41,758		
					Number of housebound readers		944		
					Individual library				
					Busiest library in terms of visits	Leighton Buzzard	244,360		

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