

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



please ask for Sandra Hobbs
direct line 0300 300 5257
date 20 December 2012

NOTICE OF MEETING

EXECUTIVE

Date & Time

Tuesday, 8 January 2013 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 4 December 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 and Key Decisions**

To receive the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 February 2013 to 31 January 2014 (to follow).

Decisions

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
8.	Draft Budget 2013/14 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2013 to 2017	17 - 70

The report proposes the draft Budget for 2013/14 and updates the Medium Term Financial Plan as previously approved by Council in February 2012.

9.	Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2016/17	71 - 88
	To allow Executive to consider the draft capital programme (excluding HRA) for the four years from 1 April 2013.	
10.	Draft Budget Report for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Service) Business Plan.	89 - 110
	To consider the draft budget report for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Service) Business Plan.	
11.	Council Tax Support Scheme	111 - 218
	The purpose of the report is to provide Executive with an overview of the outcomes from the public consultation and make recommendations to Council for a local Council Tax Support Scheme from 1 April 2013.	
12.	Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Policy	219 - 256
	The report summarises changes to the Treasury Management Policy and the Treasury Management Strategy.	
13.	School Funding Reforms - Schools Block	257 - 260
	The report sets out the proposed distribution for the Dedicated Schools Grant – School Block.	
14.	CCTV Plan 2013-2017	261 - 278
	The report proposes the adoption of a CCTV Plan 2013-2017 for Central Bedfordshire that sets out how the CCTV Service will operate and develop.	
15.	Leisure Facilities Strategy Adoption	279 - 340
	To adopt the Leisure Facility Strategy.	
16.	Leisure Facilities Capital Programme	341 - 350
	Include the schemes set out in Table 6 Appendix A in the draft capital programme 2013-2017 and Flitwick Leisure Centre Phase 2 as a reserve scheme to be considered by Executive on 5 February 2013.	

17. **Procurement of Leisure Management Contract** 351 - 356
- To approve the procurement of a new leisure management contract for Flitwick Leisure Centre, Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre, Sandy Sports and Community Centre, with the ability to include Houghton Leisure Centre within which there will be a priced option to reopen the swimming pool.
18. **City Deal** 357 - 364
- The report proposes that Central Bedfordshire Council expresses an interest to develop a City Deal supporting the wider South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) economic area.
19. **Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013 - 2014** 365 - 392
- The report sets out the proposed Community Safety Partnership Plan for endorsement by the Executive and adoption by Council.
20. **Award of the Housing Kitchen & Bathroom Refurbishment Contracts 2013 -2016** 393 - 398
- The report proposes to award the Contract for Housing Kitchen & Bathroom Refurbishment Service 2013 -2016.
21. **Technical Call Off Contract** 399 - 402
- This report seeks approval to appoint by way of tender an organisation that can provide all this Council's requirements for technical consultancy under the terms of a publicly procured tender process.
22. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**
- To consider whether to pass a resolution under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that the consideration of the item is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Exempt Decisions

Item	Subject	Exempt Para.	Page Nos.
23.	Award of Kitchen and Bathroom Refurbishment Contract 2013 to 2016 to Council Housing Properties	3	403 - 408

To receive the exempt appendix to award the preferred contractor for this service.

This agenda gives notice of items to be considered in private as required by Regulations (4) and (5) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012.

Details of any representations received by the Executive about why any of the above exempt decisions should be considered in public: none at the time of publication of the agenda. If representations are received they will be published separately, together with the statement given in response

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 4 December 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 D Brown Mrs S Clark I Dalgarno A L Dodwell	Cllrs	D J Hopkin A M Turner B Wells R D Wenham
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	P N Aldis Mrs A Barker A R Bastable R D Berry D Bowater	Cllrs	C C Gomm Mrs S A Goodchild D McVicar J Murray B Saunders
Officers in Attendance		Mr G Alderson Mr J Atkinson Mr R Carr Ms D Clarke Mr R Fox Mrs E Grant Mrs S Hobbs Mrs J Ogley Mr C Warboys		Director of Sustainable Communities Head of Legal and Democratic Services Chief Executive Interim Assistant Chief Executive (People & Organisation) 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 Chief Finance Officer

E/12/79 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/12/80 **Members' Interests**

None were declared.

E/12/81 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman confirmed his agreement to taking a report on the new permitted development rights for domestic properties as an additional item of business as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972, as the Council had to respond to the Government's consultation which closed on 24 December 2012.

E/12/82 **Petitions**

No petitions were received.

E/12/83 **Public Participation**

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

1. Mr Allen

Mr Allen spoke in connection to the draft Local Area Transport Plan for Biggleswade and Sandy with specific reference to Station Road/New Road and the A1 junction as he was concerned about the traffic flow in this area.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services confirmed that he had responded to Mr Allen's concerns since the Traffic Management meeting on 27 March 2012 and that he would provide a written commentary to Mr Allen in response to his statement.

E/12/84 **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

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

E/12/85

Local Broadband Plan - Procurement and Options for Intervention

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that proposed 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. It was proposed that the primary assessment criterion for selecting a broadband provider was 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.

Reason for decision: 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.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the procurement of a broadband infrastructure provider be approved, utilising the Broadband Delivery UK 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 be in place so that Central Bedfordshire remained a competitive and attractive location to current and new investors and residents; and**
- 2. that the local priority within the procurement process be approved, 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 authorise 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.**

E/12/86

Consultation on Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services proposing consultation on draft Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in schools which, if adopted, would form the basis for the development of commissioning options for new school places in Central Bedfordshire. The outcome of the consultation exercise would be submitted to the Executive on 5 February 2013.

Reason for decision: To enable the commencement of consultation.

RESOLVED

1. **that the commencement of consultation on proposed Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools be approved. If adopted, the principles will form the basis for the development of commissioning options for new school places in Central Bedfordshire; and**
2. **that the proposals include an annual evaluation of the impact of the application of the policy principles 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 were no unintended consequences via scoring that would prejudice equality of access to a range of school places.**

E/12/87

Future of the Adult Skills and Community Learning Service

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that summarised the outcomes from a review of the Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning Service. It also proposed that the move to a commissioning based model be endorsed. Members noted that Ofsted had graded the Service as “Good” and that learner retention and achievement rates were above 85%, consistently above national rates.

Reason for decision: To provide a strategic direction for the service which was focused on community and business learning needs in a financially sustainable way. To ensure the customer experience was enhanced, and the responsiveness, flexibility and quality of the service was maintained at a reduced cost, with increased financial viability.

RESOLVED

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

E/12/88 **Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that set out the proposed Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme for Central Bedfordshire. The Scheme was intended to be a cost effective initiative aimed at improving the supply of good quality privately rented accommodation.

Reason for decision: To enable the Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme to be promoted to and implemented with private landlords and lettings agents with properties in Central Bedfordshire.

RESOLVED

that the Central Bedfordshire Private Sector Property Accreditation Scheme be approved.

E/12/89 **Site Allocations Policy MA2 - Masterplan for Land at Steppingley Road and Froghall Road, Flitwick**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that set out the proposed masterplan for land at Steppingley Road and Froghall Road, Flitwick. The masterplan set out the aims for the proposed development and identified the constraints and opportunities which the subsequent outline planning application would address.

The Executive Member advised that a transport assessment to test the footpath network particularly underneath the railway bridge was being undertaken and would be submitted alongside the outline planning application. It was proposed that the speed limit on Froghall Road would also be lowered from 60mph to 30mph for the safety of cyclists and pedestrians.

The Executive Member confirmed that the proposals did take account of Central Bedfordshire Council's Parking Strategy and that adequate storage provision would be made for wheelie bins.

Reason for decision: 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 Development Planning Document.

RESOLVED

that the masterplan be adopted as technical guidance for Development Management purposes.

E/12/90 **Dog Warden and Kennelling Service Contract**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services that proposed the retender of the Dog Warden and Kennelling Service Contract for Central Bedfordshire. The retendering of the contract would enable the continuation of the essential service from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2017, with a one year extension.

Reason for decision: To ensure that a dog warden and kennelling service was 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.

RESOLVED

1. **that the procurement of the Dog Warden and Kennelling contract in accordance with the Council's Code of Procurement Governance be approved; and**
2. **to 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.**

E/12/91 **Urgent Item of Business - New Permitted Development Rights for Domestic Properties**

The Executive received a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development that outlined the Government's proposals to relax permitted development rights and the negative consequences of this action. The Government was proposing to allow residents to extend their property to the rear at ground floor up to 8m for detached houses and up to 6m for all other houses.

The Council could serve an Article 4 Directive to remove the Permitted Development Rights, but it would then become liable to potential compensation claims associated with the use of this power.

Reason for decision: The relaxation of permitted development rights would lead to unsightly and obtrusive development and neighbour disputes.

RESOLVED

that the following motion be endorsed:

This Council notes the Government's intention to extend permitted development rights for householder extension applications as announced by the Secretary of State on 6 September 2012.

This Council believes that this change is unnecessary and dilutes the democratic control of sustainable and suitable development in our local area.

This Council states that democratically elected and accountable councillors are best placed to make the right decisions on development and evidence shows that councils across the country have a demonstrable record of achieving the correct balance between promoting sustainable and suitable development while having proper regard for residents' objections.

This Council resolves to write to the Planning Minister and our local MPs to highlight our concerns on this issue and also to propose that the Government uses the Growth and Infrastructure Bill gives councils the powers to set out permitted development rights locally, thereby allowing local policies to boost small scale development or facilitate change of use to stimulate growth in a way that caters to local needs and is accountable to local people.

E/12/92

Quarter 2 Revenue Report 2012/13

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided information on the revenue position as at Quarter 2. It also set out spend to date against the profiled budget and the forecast financial outturn.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing explained that Officers were actively working to identify self funders for care services, to meet their information requirements.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources confirmed that provision was being made to object to the Development Consent Order for a large waste to energy facility in Rookery Pit, Stewartby by petitioning Parliament against the proposal.

Reason for decision: To enable the financial position of the Council to be monitored.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Revenue forecast of a projected overspend of £1.4m, be noted; and**
- 2. to request officers to continue with their efforts to achieve a minimum balanced outturn or an under spend.**

E/12/93 **Quarter 2 Capital Report 2012/13**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided information on the Capital position as at Quarter 2 and the forecast outturn position for 2012/13.

Reason for decision: To monitor the delivery of the Capital Programme.

RESOLVED

that the overall forecast spend of £79.7m (proposed deferral of £31.9m into 2013/14 and £2.6m overspend), be noted.

E/12/94 **Quarter 2 Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Report 2012/13**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided information on the 2012/13 Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital position as at Quarter 2 and the forecast outturn position.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing explained that tenant arrears were monitored on a monthly basis, but residents' circumstances had to be considered during this financial climate.

Reason for decision: To enable the financial position of the Council to be noted.

RESOLVED

that the Housing Revenue Account financial position as at the end of September 2012 be noted.

E/12/95 **Quarter 2 Performance Report**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided the Quarter 2 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council's Medium Term Plan indicator set.

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

RESOLVED

that the overall strong performance in Quarter 2 be noted, in 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.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.08 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated

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Meeting: Executive

Date: 8 January 2013

Subject: Draft Budget 2013/14 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2013 to 2017

Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources

Summary: The report proposes the draft Budget for 2013/14 and updates the Medium Term Financial Plan as previously approved by Council in February 2012.

Advising Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer

Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Executive

Key Decision No

Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) Not applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Decisions on the Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan need to be taken in the context of the Council's priorities (set out in paragraph 12 below).

Financial:

The financial implications of the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan are set out in the report.

Legal:

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 stipulates that the Council must set an amount of council tax payable for the financial year 2012/13 by 11 March 2013. Before calculating the level of council tax payable, the Council must consult representatives of non-domestic ratepayers in its area.

The Council's Constitution requires the Executive to publish a timetable for making proposals to the Council in respect of the budget.

There are statutory requirements in relation to consultation with employees and employee representatives. Where there are issues arising from budget proposals which require such consultation, the Council complies with these requirements.

Risk Management:

In considering the budget proposals, it is necessary to take account of the associated risks and in particular paragraph 41 below. The final budget report to Full Council in February will include a statutory section on the Section 151 Officer's assessment of the key risks to the Council.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

Staffing implications are set out in the report and appendices.

Equalities/Human Rights:

Where appropriate, Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out for proposals.

Community Safety:

Amendments to some budgets may have an impact on the delivery of community safety priorities in the future. Specific proposals will be subject to detailed review by officers.

Sustainability:

Key sustainability issues, such as climate change, represent opportunities for the Council to make efficiency savings by decreasing energy use and the total spend on energy. Failure to take action leaves the Council vulnerable to the impact of increasing energy prices.

Overview and Scrutiny:

Overview and Scrutiny Committees will consider the budget proposals in their January cycle of meetings.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. that the Executive:

approves the draft budget proposals for 2013/14 as the basis for consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and other interested parties.

<i>Reason for Recommendation:</i>	<i>To enable consultation on the draft Budget 2013/14 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-2017 prior to recommendations by the Executive to Full Council in February 2013</i>
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Executive Summary

The Council approved the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2012/13 to 2015/16 in February 2012, following the Comprehensive Spending Review which announced substantial reductions in funding for local authorities. The MTFP has been updated and extended to 2016/17 and an initial draft budget for 2013/14 prepared reflecting further changes in funding and cost pressures and efficiencies, including building on those realised in 2012/13.

INTRODUCTION

1. The MTFP is intended to set out a sustainable and affordable financial plan that addresses the Council's priorities over the next four years. It should provide for realistic levels of spending, not dependent upon the use of one-off reserves. It should provide for a prudent level of reserves for contingencies.
2. The Budget for 2013/14 sets out the Council's finances for 2013/14 and identifies the efficiencies required to produce a balanced budget in the light of the ongoing reduction in funding from Central Government and other pressures. £14.3 million of efficiencies are identified for 2013/14 to produce a balanced budget. A further £24.7 million of efficiencies are required over the subsequent three years to achieve the proposed MTFP.
3. The Capital Programme is not included within this budget report as it is subject to a separate report to Executive on this agenda. However, the revenue implications of the draft capital programme as set out in that report are reflected here.
4. A separate report in respect of the Housing Revenue Account is presented to this Executive.
5. Fees and Charges will be separately considered in forthcoming Overview and Scrutiny meetings before inclusion in the final budget report.
6. The report also sets out at paragraph 43, the proposed timetable for consideration of the budget and MTFP leading up to their approval at Council in February 2013.
7. This report presents the draft budget based on available information to date. However, at the time of writing, the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 5 December had not yet been made and, as a consequence, the Local Government finance settlement was not available. The availability of this information may require substantial changes to the Budget Assumptions and this is discussed further in paragraph 19.

BACKGROUND

8. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been updated against a background of significant challenges. In 2012 new legislation was introduced by the coalition that presaged significant changes to both the distribution and level of Local Authority Funding, including:
 - devolving responsibility for awarding Council Tax Benefit to local authorities, coupled with a 10% reduction in Council Tax Benefit funding from Central Government;
 - technical changes to Council Tax with the abolition of two classes of statutory exemption;
 - overhauling the system for redistributing National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR), involving allowing direct retention by Local Authorities of a portion of collected Rates and altering the Formula Grant distribution quantum and methodology; and
 - rolling in previously distinct grants such as the Early Intervention Grant and the Learning Disabilities and Health Reform Grant into the Formula Grant mechanism.
9. There remains considerable uncertainty around some major grants such as Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG), which has again required estimates to be made.
10. The national and European economies remain in an uncertain state, with major concerns around the future of the euro currency and other European economies. The UK economy has been through a second bout of recession, but has returned some mild growth starting the second quarter of 2012/13. Some commentators are warning that this momentum in growth is unlikely to be sustained given the uncertainty over the economic outlook. Inflation has reduced from a peak of 5.2% (CPI) and 5.6% (RPI) in September 2011, to 2.7% (CPI) and 3.2% (RPI) in October 2012. Interest rates remain very low, with base rate fixed at 0.5%.

Against this unsettled background it is important that the Council establishes a level of reserves which allows it to withstand unanticipated financial impacts of future developments at a local and national level.

11. There are significant social and economic drivers of change within Central Bedfordshire across the medium term and beyond, particularly:
- demographic growth from 2012 - 2016, including a:
 - 5% increase in the population;
 - 16% increase in the over 75's population; and
 - 24% increase in the over 85's population
 - increased demand for Looked After Children; mainly in the light of the Baby Peter case;
 - schools moving to Academy status and out of local authority control; and
 - the transfer of public health responsibilities to local government in 2013.

Additionally, technological change is having a profound impact on the delivery and public access to services; this is reflected in the use of the internet and social media.

Council priorities

12. The Council approved the following revised priorities in June 2012:
13. Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.

Improved educational attainment – promoting health and wellbeing, and protecting the vulnerable.

Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport.

Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries.

Value for money – freezing council tax.

Economic Outlook

- 14 (a) Inflation

As explained already, the national and European economies remain in an uncertain state, with major concerns around the future of the euro currency and European economies with economic problems.

UK inflation has started to fall from a high of more than 5% in 2011 although there was a small rise in October resulting in inflation of 3.2% (RPI) and 2.7% (CPI). Interest rates remain very low, with base rate fixed at 0.5% since March 2009.

15. (b) Quantitative Easing

The Bank of England announced a £50 billion extension to quantitative easing (QE) in July. The Monetary Policy Committee met in November and decided against a further round of QE.

16. (c) Economic Growth and Unemployment

The Bank's Quarterly Inflation Report for August was a continuation of its previous bleak outlook for economic growth, noting that growth was likely to remain muted in the near term and that credit growth was weak. The unemployment rate for July - September 2012 was 7.8%, down 0.2% from April to June 2012. There were 2.51 million unemployed people, down 50,000 from April to June 2012.

Budget Objectives

17. The principal objectives of the 2013/14 Budget have been:

- to produce a sustainable plan which allows Council priorities to be delivered;
- realistic spending year on year not dependent on reserves;
- reserves increased to and then maintained at, or above, an agreed level which reflects the risks faced by the Council;
- zero Council Tax increases over the MTFP period;
- cuts to front line services to be avoided; and
- commitment to efficiency as a means of delivering savings.

Medium Term Financial Plan

18. Formula Grant funding within the revised MTFP over the three years 2013/14 – 2015/16 reflects the amounts presented in the MTFP to Council in February 2012 as modified by the changes to funding principles noted above and is shown below at Table 1, which is extended to include 2016/17.

Table 1

	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
Formula Grant, including Retained Business Rates	54.4 ¹	51.9	50.5	50.5
Council Tax Freeze Grant 2010	3.2	3.2	-	-
Council Tax Freeze Grant 2011	-	-	-	-
Council Tax Freeze Grant 2012	1.3	1.3	-	-
Total Funding	59.2	55.9	50.0	50.5
Council Tax revenue	116.9 ¹	116.9	117.6	118.9
Total Income	175.8	173.3	168.1	169.4

Note 1: There is an increase in Formula Grant compared to 2012/13 and a corresponding decrease in Council Tax due to the effects of Council Tax Support as discussed in paragraph 22.

19. However, it should be noted that although following CSR10 the Government initially specified Formula Grant up to 2014/15 it is widely anticipated that the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 5 December will review all years from 2013/14 onwards. All amounts above therefore represent estimates based on latest available information and it is possible that there will be significant changes to these figures.
20. Funding assumptions include the Council Tax Freeze Grant announced in November 2010, which lasts for the period of the CSR10 (i.e. to 2014/15), but current plans see this being removed in 2015/16. In addition there are one-off Council Tax Freeze Grants for each of the years 2013/14 and 2014/15 which were announced in October 2012. There is no assumed increase in the Council Tax rate during the MTFP period but the tax base is assumed to grow by 0.65% each year.
21. The key elements of the draft MTFP for 2013/14 to 2016/17 are shown at Appendix A. Table 2 below shows a summary of this plan.

Table 2

	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
Total Income	(175.8)	(173.3)	(168.1)	(169.4)
Total Planned Spend	190.1	183.2	179.2	173.2
Efficiencies identified	(14.3)	(9.8)	(7.2)	(2.4)
Efficiencies to be identified	-	(0.1)	(3.9)	(1.4)
Net Balance	-	-	-	-

22. The impact of the localisation of Council Tax Support (CTS) is that Council Tax revenues have reduced by 10.3%, based on the draft Scheme, approved by Executive in August 2012, although this is partly offset by additional income of 1.4% as a result of increases to the taxbase and other changes. Central Government have also announced plans for a Council Tax Support Grant to further offset the Council Tax reduction, but the value of this grant was not confirmed at the time of writing. Full details of the proposed CTS scheme are discussed as a separate Agenda item.
23. In previous years local councils have received funding through the Formula Grant that is determined using a number of factors to establish local resourcing needs. This has been largely funded by a redistribution of NNDR (commonly known as Business Rates). From 2013/14 onwards this mechanism has been radically altered. Councils can now directly retain a portion of collected Business Rates with the remaining portion going back to central Government towards a national redistribution. The amount of Business Rates retained locally is subject to a complicated system of tariffs / top-ups and levies / safety nets (designed to protect Councils from severe funding shortfalls). Although the Government have indicated that Councils will be able to retain 50% of any local growth over a given baseline, the tariff / top-up system means that the amount retained in practice may be somewhat lower.

24. In a further complication to the funding arrangements, several grants have been 'rolled up', or disaggregated from, the Formula Grant. The Early Invention Grant, Learning Disabilities and Health Reform Grant and the Homelessness Prevention Grant (together worth nearly £20m in 2012/13) will now be included within the settlement and not separately identified, while LACSEG has been disaggregated and is likely to be substantially reduced from the 2012/13 implied value of £6.3m.
25. There are a number of significant changes that are likely to have an impact upon the Council's finances in the medium term that are currently unquantifiable:
26. a) Welfare Reform

The Welfare Reform Bill was introduced in Parliament in February 2011 and the Act received Royal Assent in March 2012. The Act means significant changes to the welfare system. It provides for the introduction of a 'Universal Credit' to replace an existing range of means-tested benefits and tax credits for people of working age, starting from 2013. The current proposal is to include Housing Benefit but not Council Tax Benefit. The Act follows the November 2010 White Paper, 'Universal Credit: Welfare That Works' that set out the government's proposals for reforming welfare to improve work incentives, simplify the benefits system and tackle administrative complexity.

In addition to introducing Universal Credit and related measures, the Act makes other significant changes to the benefits system. These include:

- restriction of Housing Benefit entitlement for social housing tenants whose accommodation is larger than they need;
- up-rating of Local Housing Allowance rates by the Consumer Price Index; and
- capping of the total amount of benefit that can be paid.

A phased implementation is due to commence in October 2013. However, it is clear that this will have significant operational and resource implications for the Council but at this time these remain unquantifiable.

27. b) Localism Act 2011

Aside from the Housing Revenue Account self-financing proposals, there are other implications including:

- granting of a 'general power of competence' to provide councils with the legal power to do anything which is not specifically prohibited;
- new rights and powers for communities including 'community right of challenge' and 'community right to buy'; and
- planning system reforms including changes to the community infrastructure levy with a proportion going to neighbourhoods affected by the developments.

The full implementation of the provisions of the Act may have significant service implications and hence budgetary implications for the Council.

Draft 2013/14 Budget

28. The Budget process for 2013/14 was a modified version of the process undertaken for 2012/13. Introduced for the first time was a system of “Head of Service Reviews” at an early stage during the process. These reviews involved each Head of Service presenting a budget overview which:

- provided an overview of the service;
- split the budget into activities and explained the basis for the total budget for each activity;
- identified pressures and efficiencies, both existing in the previous MTFP and new items;
- outlined potential options for further savings; and
- provided benchmarking information on performance and cost.

The baseline position for the budget reviews was the 2012/13 agreed budget.

29. A themed approach was taken to targeting areas for efficiencies as per paragraph 37. The total budget was then subject to further reviews to address the budget ‘gap’ by means of challenges to the identified pressures and seeking additional efficiency savings.

As a result the budget process was accelerated compared to the previous year allowing for more consideration of where savings should be made.

30. The high level budget position was presented to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October, to which all Members were invited. This presentation covered the changes in Government Funding, the budget process and the high level MTFP figures as they then stood.

31. The full draft Capital Budget is considered elsewhere on the Agenda.

The adoption of the proposed Capital Programme will place additional pressure on the revenue budget due to additional borrowing and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charges that are statutorily required. The assumption set out in the table below is an 80% delivery rate against the Capital Programme from 2013/14 across the entire medium term to 2016/17. The table shows the year on year increase in capital financing costs associated with the proposed capital programme.

Table 3

	Opening Base Budget £m	Movements			Closing Budget £m
		Interest Charges £m	MRP £m	Total change £m	
2013/14	12.60	(0.65)	0.46	(0.19)	12.41
2014/15	12.41	0.58	1.14	1.72	14.13
2015/16	14.13	0.91	0.61	1.52	15.65
2016/17	15.65	(0.30)	1.38	1.08	16.73

32. **Assumptions**

The budget is based upon and includes, the following key assumptions:

Economic

- For 2013/14 and all years of the MTFP, inflation of 1% on pay, 2% on supplies and services and 2% on income.
- Interest rates remain constant throughout the plan period, in line with forecasts from treasury advisers.

Financial

- Reserves increasing by £1.4m in 2013/14 and so exceeding the previously identified minimum prudent level of £11.2m. The reserves position needs to reflect additional risks and uncertainties in the formula funding model.
- Zero increase in council tax over plan period.
- Phased harmonisation of council tax to assimilate Band D equivalent to the lower rate in the former Mid Bedfordshire District area as at 1 April 2013. At this point in time the rates will be fully harmonised (see paragraph 33).
- Previously announced Council Tax Freeze Grants valued as follows:
2.5% of Council Tax revenues for each of the four years from 2011/12 to 2015/16;
An additional 2.5% of Council Tax revenues in 2012/13 only; and
An additional 1% of Council Tax revenues in each of 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Operational

- Demographic changes (see Economic drivers for change, paragraph 10 above).
- Implementation of the Your Space 2 (was the Medium Term Accommodation Plan) to optimise the use of administrative and operational buildings.
- Procurement savings through tendering and contract management in waste management, highways, care services, cross cutting services.
- A move to a Council focussed on outcomes.

External

- Impact of introduction of Universal Credit (see paragraph 26 for detail) is excluded from the model.
- Impact of localisation of council tax benefit (see paragraph 22 for detail).
- Impact of localisation of NNDR (see paragraph 23 for detail).
- Comprehensive Spending Review funding was relatively clear for 2012/13 but subject to variation thereafter. The assumed position on funding has been complicated by the factors identified in this report. The overall budgeted position has been validated against modelling carried out by the Local Government Association and the Society of County Treasurers. However, at the time of writing this report the Local Government financial settlement has not been announced and this may yet substantially alter the position.
- Public Health will be transferred in April. Expenditure will be fully funded by a ring-fenced grant with no net impact for the Council. The final Budget Report will discuss this transfer in more detail.

Council Tax

33. There is no increase in Council Tax over the plan period with the differing rates between North and South to be harmonised at the lower North rate from 2013/14. Table 4 below shows the Council Tax rates planned for each year.

Table 4

Band D Rate £	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
North	1,308.33	1,308.33	1,308.33	1,308.33	1,308.33
South	1,326.64	1,308.33	1,308.33	1,308.33	1,308.33

34. Table 5 below summarises the latest position for the Council's finances in 2013/14 based upon the draft budget as per Appendix A.

Table 5

	£m
Net Base Expenditure Budget 2012/13	179.2
Net Inflation	2.4
Unavoidable Cost Pressures	8.5
Efficiencies	(14.3)
Net Expenditure 2013/14	175.8
Funding	175.8
Budget Requirement	-

35. Cost pressures are identified at Appendix B with the major items relating to:
- increased demand for care services from an ageing population £1.8m;
 - increased demand for adult disability services £1.3m;
 - increased numbers of child protection referrals £1m;
 - increased numbers of children looked after £1.2m;
 - additional Pension Contribution following Actuarial Review £1.6m;
 - various pressures as a result of increased infrastructure and housing associated with growing population; and
 - debt financing (cost of borrowing to fund the capital programme) becomes significant in the later years of the MTFP.

36. All of the £14.3m efficiencies have been identified and are shown at Appendices C and D. A summary of these is shown below at Tables 6 and 7.

37. Certain consistent efficiency themes which impact across Directorates within the Council were used in the budget preparation and Heads of Service reviews. These were:

- A – Moving from institutional investment to personal solutions;
- B – Early Intervention and enabling independence²;
- C – Squeezing the pips out of contracts;
- D – Income generation - new sources and methods;
- E – Self service through digital channels; and
- F – Rationalisation.

The themes encapsulate the Council’s approach to delivering financial efficiencies whilst maintaining the outcomes from services delivered. Table 6 below groups the efficiencies by these themes.

Note 2: This theme will be developed further in future iterations of the budget process.

Table 6

Ref	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
A	2.8	2.5	2.5	1.0	8.8
B	-	-	-	-	-
C	5.6	2.8	2.8	1.0	12.2
D	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.1	1.7
E	0.6	0.2	0.1	-	0.9
F	4.7	3.8	1.3	0.3	10.1
Total	14.3	9.8	7.2	2.4	33.7

Table 7 – Efficiencies by Directorate

Efficiencies	2013/14 Savings £m
Directorates:	
Social Care Health & Housing	4.7
Children’s Services	1.7
Sustainable Communities	4.1
Corporate Resources	2.8
Corporate Costs	0.9
Total	14.3

Summary

38. Table 8 sets out the Medium Term Financial Plan across all financial years to 2016/17 and incorporates all the funding and spend assumptions included in this report.

Table 8

Medium Term Financial Plan	2013/14 £M	2014/15 £M	2015/16 £M	2016/17 £M
Resources				
Formula Grant and Retained Business Rates	57.60	55.11	50.46	49.47
Council Tax	116.92	116.88	117.64	119.90
Council Tax Freeze Grant 2012	1.28	1.28	-	-
Total Resources	175.80	173.27	168.10	169.37
Planned Revenue Budget				
Opening Base Revenue Expenditure	364.70	362.93	364.06	362.71
Cost Inflation	4.06	6.23	6.33	6.31
Pressures	8.51	4.90	3.41	2.73
Base Income	(185.75)	(187.13)	(190.79)	(194.61)
Income Inflation	(1.38)	(3.66)	(3.82)	(3.90)
Total Planned Spend Before Savings	190.14	183.27	179.19	173.24
Efficiency Savings	(14.34)	(9.77)	(7.23)	(2.39)
Efficiency Savings to be allocated	-	(0.23)	(3.86)	(1.48)
Total Planned Spend After Savings	175.80	173.27	168.10	169.37

Reserves

39. One of the key objectives of the Budget carried forward from 2012/13 is to increase General Fund reserves to a risk assessed prudent minimum level. The outturn position for 2011/12 and the anticipated outturn for 2012/13 indicate that the previously identified minimum prudent level will be achieved at the start of 2013/14. However, very significant changes are being made to the basis of funding and this has added levels of complexity and uncertainty. In light of this it is prudent to aim to hold a higher level of reserves at least until clarity is obtained. The draft budget also includes a contingency element of £2m. This is to reflect the significant uncertainties over future funding already described within this report. There is also the recognition of significant risks within the budget, against which sufficient reserves must be held to be prudent.
40. The assessment of the appropriate level of reserves will be kept under review. Table 9 below shows the reserves by year.

Table 9

£M	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Opening Balance	10.9	12.3	13.7	13.7	13.7
Planned Contribution	1.4	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Closing Reserves	12.3	13.7	13.7	13.7	13.7

The General Fund balances shown in the above table set out the planned General Fund levels at the end of each financial year. The 2012/13 General Fund opening balance was £10.9m with subsequent planned annual contributions of £1.4m per annum until the start of the 2014/15 financial year.

Risk Management

41. All budget proposals incorporate a degree of risk. Whilst the Council has a good track record of delivering the required budget savings to date, the following are highlighted as key risks within the proposals:
- Demand: The wider impact of the current economic climate on local residents is placing further demands on the Council's services, at a time when the Council needs to reduce spending due to constraints on public expenditure.
 - Reputation: If stakeholder engagement is not managed effectively, the need for the Council to take difficult decisions in response to the contraction of public expenditure will not be understood.
 - Delivery: The delivery of the agreed savings proposals, including those which cut across more than one directorate will need to be effectively managed to ensure they are realised in practice. Some require major organisational change programmes.

- Increases in children and older people in care.
- Ability to achieve £14m savings in 2013/14 and £39m over plan period.
- Reductions in Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG), Early Intervention Grant and changes to High Needs Block.
- Next Comprehensive Spending Review expected to be very challenging and current funding assumptions may be optimistic.
- Impact of Localisation of Council Tax Support (including ability to collect) and performance on Retained Business Rates.
- Impact of Universal Credit.
- Inflationary pressures greater than assumed.
- Impact of transfer of public health.
- Changes to the Pensions regime including the potential impact of Auto-Enrolment and the actuarial review due in 2013.

Consultation

42. The Council has a responsibility to consult with residents and charge payers on its budget.

Last year, in preparation for the production of the Council's four year Medium Term Financial Strategy, Central Bedfordshire Council embarked on a comprehensive campaign to engage local people in determining this strategy.

The campaign comprised three phases of activity. Firstly, market research was conducted through a survey to all households and to a representative sample of residents. This was reported to Members as the budget proposals were developed. Subsequently a consultation was conducted on the proposals and finally, once the budget strategy had been confirmed, feedback on the Council's decisions was communicated to residents and stakeholders.

Given the scope of engagement that influenced the Council's four year financial strategy and the lateness of the Local Government settlement, it is proposed that the priority for 2013/14 will be to ensure that residents, businesses and stakeholder organisations are consulted on the specific proposals for next year's budget.

This consultation will commence as the draft budget (to be considered by Executive in January 2013) is published on 20 December. All communication channels will be used to raise awareness of the proposed budget and feedback will be invited on line and through more conventional written responses. Bespoke briefings for advocacy groups and representative organisations will also be delivered.

All feedback will be assimilated and reported to Executive and Full Council as decision making on the budget takes place in February 2013. Following the conclusion of the budget process for 2013/14, communication about the final decisions and implications for residents will take place through a mixture of social media, conventional media relations and a household leaflet that will be delivered with the Council Tax notices in the spring.

Timetable

43. The key milestones in the timetable for Council to agree its budget in February are set out in Table 10 below:

Table 10

Date	Body	Outcome
December 2012	Public	Public Consultation commences
January 2013	Overview & Scrutiny	Consideration of efficiencies and savings and draft budget proposals
8 January 2013	Executive	Considers Draft Budget
5 February 2013	Executive	Recommends Final Budget
21 February 2013	Council	Approves Budget

Appendices:

- Appendix A – Summary of Medium Term Financial Plan
- Appendix B – Schedule of Cost Pressures
- Appendix C – Schedule of Efficiencies by Theme
- Appendix D – Schedule of Efficiencies by Directorate

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL - Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-14 - 2016-17

Medium Term Financial Plan	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Expressed at outturn prices	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Formula Grant & Council Tax				
Formula Grant	58,875	56,385	50,461	50,461
Council Tax	116,922	116,880	117,643	118,911
Total resources (Excl. schools DSG)	175,797	173,265	168,104	169,372
Growth		-1.44%	-2.98%	0.75%
Planned Revenue Budget				
Base Revenue Expenditure	364,701	362,933	364,058	362,714
Cost Inflation	4,057	6,225	6,331	6,306
Pressures	8,511	4,899	3,407	2,725
Base Income	(185,753)	(187,136)	(190,793)	(194,610)
Income Inflation	(1,383)	(3,657)	(3,817)	(3,892)
Total planned spending before savings	190,133	183,264	179,186	173,243
Growth before savings (%)		-3.61%	-2.23%	-3.32%
Efficiency Savings	(14,344)	(9,765)	(7,234)	(2,388)
Efficiency Savings still to be allocated	8	(234)	(3,848)	(1,483)
Total planned spending after savings	175,797	173,265	168,104	169,372
Growth after savings (%)		-1.44%	-2.98%	0.75%

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	2013/14 £'000s	2014/15 £'000s	2015/16 £'000s	2016/17 £'000s	Total £'000s
Social Care Health & Housing	3,637	3,556	3,268	3,341	13,802
Children' Services	2,422	340	124	45	2,931
Sustainable Communities	739	60	190	41	1,030
Corporate Resources	1,838	263	87	-	2,188
Sub-total	8,636	4,219	3,669	3,427	19,951
Corporate Costs	(125)	680	(262)	(702)	(409)
Total	8,511	4,899	3,407	2,725	19,542

Central Bedfordshire Council

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Social Care Health and Housing

Ref	Detail of pressure	Implications/impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
ASC1	Ageing Population - predicted increase in the cost of care services for older people due to projected population growth for 70+ age group - 4.0% over the period		1,750	1,700	1,700	1,773	
ASC2	Transitions from Children to Adults with Disabilities New Starts 2013/14 60 new service users - 55 Learning Disability and 5 Physical Disabilities. Also includes full year effect of 12/13 new starts.		1,259	1,238	1,238	1,238	This covers a range of customers including those with moderate learning disabilities.
ASC3	Ordinary Residence - estimated package costs for 17 Learning Disability service users with a number of providers located in Central Bedfordshire. De-registration of their services will mean that responsibility for their funding passes from the current host		-	518	330	330	2013/14 funded by earmarked reserve. Later years are base budget increases.
ASC4	FYE of 12/13 care package changes		718	-	-	-	
ASC5	Public Health Funerals unfunded Statutory Duty		10	-	-	-	Public Funerals are a statutory responsibility
ASC6	Use of earmarked reserves		(100)	100	-	-	
Total			3,637	3,556	3,268	3,341	

Central Bedfordshire Council

Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-14

Children's Services

Ref	Detail of pressure	Implications/impact	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	Comments
CP1	Child Protection - Increased LAC / cover from Agency for NQSW	Increasing numbers of all categories of child protection referrals in future years. It is hoped that the rate of increase will level off. A rolling programme of social care recruitment is ongoing to try to reduce this agency pressure.	1,045	100	50	-	This is minimum cover and includes placements savings and an element of re-procurement, which has been netted off with 2013/14 Efficiencies of £629k (ref CSE01)
CP2	Foster Care Allowance	The payment rate, annually upgraded, is fixed with reference to foster carers allowances linked to RPI at present.	60	60	60	-	This is 2.3% above a 15.1% uplift last year.
CSP04	Fostering & Adoption - Increased LAC and pressure on Adoption Allowances	The number of children looked after is currently rising but may level off in future years	1,247	-	-	-	£900k increased IFA's and £347k for increasing foster carer numbers. The current budget accounts for much of the 2012/13 overspend. Any costs of disaggregation will be met out of this pressure and has also been included as a risk in case this is not possible.
CSP05	Changes to regulations on use of DSG from Schools Block for Central Support Costs	No service impact, reduction in the sum permitted to be used from DSG for central overheads	250	-	-	-	This will not have a service impact
CSP06	Partnerships - recruitment against reserves in prior year, but reserves run out in 15/16	Reserves not available to cover salary commitments	-	-	14	45	The Community Engagement Manager post is externally funded and the pressure emerges part way through 15/16 when that reserves runs out.
	Use of Earmarked Reserves	Mitigate pressures in 13/14	(180)	180	-	-	2012/13 reserve of £250k originally set aside for OFSTED Action Plan partly held (£180k) to mitigate pressures in 2013/14
Pressures - total			2,422	340	124	45	

Central Bedfordshire Council

Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-14

Pressures

Sustainable Communities

Ref	Detail of pressure	Implications/impact	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	Comments
SC100	Landfill tax uplift		70	70	70	70	A small amount of residual waste will continue to be sent to landfill, however this pressure has reduced from £440k to £70k due to new residual waste treatment and disposal contracts.
SC101	New Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire		-	(100)	(100)	-	Unwinding of previous years' pressure arising from the cessation of the Joint Planning Committee with CBC producing its own Whole District Local Plan
SC102	Houghton Regis Leisure Centre		-	(65)	-	-	Unwinding of previous years' pressure to keep Houghton Regis Leisure centre dryside open . This budgetary pressure is expected to cease when the management contract for the centre is retendered.
SC103	Operational costs to support the guided busway.		250	50	50	50	This is ongoing maintenance costs (£250K) and includes grounds maintenance costs, bus stop maintenance, litter picking, graffiti removal and winter maintenance. The busway will increase the number of bus passengers including those entitled to concessionary fares under the statutory national scheme. The Council is required to reimburse bus operators for the foregone fares estimated to be £150K pre annum.
SC104	Resource to enable the Department for Transport indicator monitoring of journey time and reliability of buses to be collected.		12	-	-	-	This work fulfils DfT requirements and also be used for traffic management purposes.

Central Bedfordshire Council

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Sustainable Communities

Ref	Detail of pressure	Implications/impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
SC105	Costs related to original staff transfer to highways contractor at start of contract.		-	20	-	-	Contractual obligation on authority to meet additional employer pension costs arising from review of Local Government Pension Scheme.
SC106	Highways contract retendering resource.		50	50	-	(100)	Specialist advice and capacity required to procure a new highways maintenance contract for 1 April 2016.
SC107	Resource to enable new approach to waste contracts delivering substantial savings.		55	-	-	-	Essential to ensure delivery of saving SC34.
SC108	Increase weed control sprays to twice per year in North.		40	-	-	-	This is to harmonise services across CBC. A review is being undertaken by Waste and Highways to investigate improving the management of grounds maintenance across the area. Any changes will commence at the start of the new season in early spring 2013.
SC109	Increase in waste collection costs as a result of increase in housing growth.		15	15	15	15	Housing growth impacts on waste management costs - the pressure reflects the expected number of new homes.
SC110	Reduced level of income from bulky waste collections.		30				Increased charge in 2012/13 reduced the demand for the service
SC111	Replacement of external funding for Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Coordinator and Independent Domestic Abuse Violence Advice Service (IDVA).				115		IDVA provide advice to high risk victims of domestic abuse through MARAC. Existing funding for the MARAC Coordinator and IDVA service ceases in 2015/16. This pressure ensures services for high risk victims continue.
SC112	Libraries bookfund		25	20	40	6	To keep library stock up to date and respond to increase in library users whilst maintaining satisfaction of library users.

Central Bedfordshire Council

Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-14

Sustainable Communities

Ref	Detail of pressure	Implications/impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
SC113	Libraries - budget build error in 2012/13		112	-	-	-	Staff restructure currently being implemented. Efficiencies noted against SC170.
SC114	Flood Defence		50	-	-	-	One off saving in 2012/13 now a pressure.
SC115	Drainage Board		30	-	-	-	One off saving in 2012/13 now a pressure.
Total			739	60	190	41	

Central Bedfordshire Council

Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-14

Corporate Resources

Ref	Detail of pressure	Implications / impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Resources							
PR-RES-ICT-01	Childrens' Services Case Management- data removal (old system)		(150)	-	-	-	Removal of Temp Budget added in 2012/13
PR-RES-ASS-01	Assets - Appendix E costs associated with moving out of Technology House, estimated cost.		-	189			
PR-RES-ICT-07	Additional ICT Revenue cost as a result of major Projects (Customer First and SAP Optimisation)		392	-	-	-	
PR-RES-ASS-02	Cost estimates for CRC tax for CBC building (excluding schools), estimate from KPMG study		27	135	-	-	
PR-RES-ASS-03	Costs associated with moving out of Technology House - removal costs (50k), space planning (£100k) & minor other costs (17k)		167	(150)	-	-	
PR-RES-ASS-04	Loss of rental income and loss of catering income not included in previous MTFP		208	-	-	-	
PR-RES-ASS-05	Loss of income as the licences for aggregates end.		25	-	-	-	
PR-RES-ASS-06	Reduction in income from schools as Academies procure their own maintenance and FM services		20	-	-	-	
PR-RES-ASS-07	Increase in the costs of postal rates		20	-	-	-	
PR-RES-ASS-08	PFI - School PFI contract and budget transferred to Assets by Children's Services in line with creating a single property budget for all CBC assets within Assets.	Due to Annual Contract increase. The PFI does not allow the Council to request any further contribution from the schools. The Sinking Fund was removed.	34	35	37	-	
PR-RES-PROC-01	Restructure Procurement Team		86	-	-	-	

Central Bedfordshire Council

Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-14

Corporate Resources

Ref	Detail of pressure	Implications / impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
PR-RES-PROC-02	Due to expected drop in Procurement Rebates		25	-	-	-	
PR-RES-FCO-01	Optical Character Recognition software, printing and staff pressures		69	-	-	-	
PR-RES-FPS-01	Pressure following cessation of Bursary Service - no income from schools		135	-	-	-	
PR-RES-FPS-02	Finance Strategy team capacity to evaluate implications of changes in LA funding, increase resilience and take on ad-hoc project work from directorate support teams. To enable move to budget managers being less reliant on finance support. Funded from consultancy savings.		43	-	-	-	
PR-RES-R&B-01	Printing costs - Council Tax and Housing Benefit related and subscriptions costs.		34	-	-	-	
PR-RES-R&B-02	CTS software maintenance		13	-	-	-	
PR-RES-R&B-04	LA subsidy income and free school meal income pressure		34	-	-	-	
PR-RES-R&B-05	Reduction in Housing Benefit Administration Grant		191	60	-	-	
Total - Resources			1,373	269	37	-	
People & Organisation							
PR-P&O-CHE-01	Assistant Chief Executive costs- set up budget for new structure		(60)	-	-	-	Removal of Temp Budget added in 2012/13
PR-P&O-HR-01	Small pressures across directorate		18	-	-	-	
PR-P&O-HR-02	Removal of one off Budget for Grant Income		30	-	-	-	
PR-P&O-HR-03	Removal of CRB Budgets due to change of service provision to schools		56	-	-	-	
PR-P&O-HR-04	Additional Health & Safety Staffing		52	-	-	-	

Central Bedfordshire Council

Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-14

Corporate Resources

Ref	Detail of pressure	Implications / impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
PR-P&O-HR-05	Loss of Income due to Cessation of the Schools HR Service		138	-	-	-	
PR-P&O-L&D-03	Extra printing costs due to increase of childcare cases.		15	-	-	-	
PR-P&O-L&D-04	Increase in postage cost in Registers of Electors due in Stamp price increase		15	-	-	-	
PR-P&O-L&D-06	Uncontrollable pressure as increase in post mortem costs		21	-	-	-	
PR-P&O-L&D-07	One off pressure in 2013/14 Coroner's Service for dilapidation costs for coming out of 8 Goldington road		15	(15)	-	-	
PR-P&O-POL-02	ICT Licence fees £9k per year from 2014/15		-	9	-	-	
EFF-P&O-POL-01	PeopCI1: Potential to capitalise one member of Community Insight staff for Web Strategy work (one off)		-	-	50	-	One off efficiency in 2012/13 becomes a pressure in 2015/16.
PR-P&O-CS-01	Unachievable 12/13 Efficiency on Rationalisation of customer service delivery		128	-	-	-	Total 12/13 efficiency was £303k. £228k shortfall less £100k compensatory savings found.
PR-P&O-POL-01	Unachievable 12/13 Efficiency on Review of staffing in Community Insight (1FTE reduction)		37	-	-	-	12/13 Ref - PeopPol1 (total of 50k) less £13k compensatory savings found. The efficiency related to capitalising staff costs, but backfill is required.
Total - People & Organisation			465	(6)	50	-	
Total			1,838	263	87	-	

Central Bedfordshire Council

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Corporate Costs

Ref	Detail of pressure	Implications/impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
	Employer's Pension Contribution		1,561	542	-	-	Actuarial review - revised contribution rate agreed.
	Capital Financing - MRP		460	1,140	610	1,380	To reflect revised interest and MRP assumptions
	Capital Financing - Interest Payable		(650)	580	910	(300)	To reflect revised interest and MRP assumptions
	Capital Financing - Interest Receivable		200	200	-	-	To reflect revised interest and MRP assumptions
	New Homes Bonus		(2,035)	(1,782)	(1,782)	(1,782)	
	Customer Service Migration (prior year's efficiency not achievable)		339	-	-	-	
	New pressures - total		(125)	680	(262)	(702)	

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Appendix C
Efficiencies

Category Summary

Ref	Category	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
A	Moving from institutional investment to personal solutions	2,775	2,475	2,480	1,025	8,755
B	Early Intervention and enabling independence	-	-	-	-	-
C	Squeezing the pips out of contracts	5,637	2,833	2,843	1,027	12,340
D	Income generation - new sources and methods	616	453	477	75	1,621
E	Self service through digital channels	560	213	100	-	873
F	Rationalisation	4,756	3,791	1,334	261	10,142
Total		14,344	9,765	7,234	2,388	33,731

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Appendix C
Efficiencies

Category Summary

ASCHH

Ref	Category	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
A	Moving from institutional investment to personal solutions	2,775	2,475	2,480	1,025	8,755
B	Early Intervention and enabling independence	-	-	-	-	-
C	Squeezing the pips out of contracts	1,762	962	987	245	3,956
D	Income generation - new sources and methods	165	90	-	-	255
E	Self service through digital channels	24	-	-	-	24
F	Rationalisation	32	182	142	23	379
Total		4,758	3,709	3,609	1,293	13,369

Children's Services

Ref	Category	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
A	Moving from institutional investment to personal solutions	-	-	-	-	-
B	Early Intervention and enabling independence	-	-	-	-	-
C	Squeezing the pips out of contracts	611	1,221	983	600	3,415
D	Income generation - new sources and methods	-	-	-	-	-
E	Self service through digital channels	-	-	-	-	-
F	Rationalisation	1,066	475	242	18	1,801
Total		1,677	1,696	1,225	618	5,216

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Appendix C
Efficiencies

Category Summary

Sustainable Communities

Ref	Category	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
A	Moving from institutional investment to personal solutions	-	-	-	-	-
B	Early Intervention and enabling independence	-	-	-	-	-
C	Squeezing the pips out of contracts	2,381	125	628	104	3,238
D	Income generation - new sources and methods	391	328	353	70	1,142
E	Self service through digital channels	197	-	-	-	197
F	Rationalisation	1,213	446	213	67	1,939
Total		4,182	899	1,194	241	6,516

Corporate Services

Ref	Category	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
A	Moving from institutional investment to personal solutions	-	-	-	-	-
B	Early Intervention and enabling independence	-	-	-	-	-
C	Squeezing the pips out of contracts	483	125	245	78	931
D	Income generation - new sources and methods	60	35	124	5	224
E	Self service through digital channels	339	213	100	-	652
F	Rationalisation	1,895	288	537	153	2,873
Total		2,777	661	1,006	236	4,680

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Efficiencies

Category Summary

Corporate Costs

Ref	Category	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
A	Moving from institutional investment to personal solutions	-	-	-	-	-
B	Early Intervention and enabling independence	-	-	-	-	-
C	Squeezing the pips out of contracts	400	400	-	-	800
D	Income generation - new sources and methods	-	-	-	-	-
E	Self service through digital channels	-	-	-	-	-
F	Rationalisation	550	2,400	200	-	3,150
Total		950	2,800	200	-	3,950

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Efficiencies

	2013/14 £000s	2014/15 £000s	2015/16 £000s	2016/17 £000s	Total £000s
Social Care Health & Housing	4,758	3,709	3,609	1,293	13,369
Children' Services	1,677	1,696	1,225	618	5,216
Sustainable Communities	4,182	899	1,194	241	6,516
Corporate Resources	2,777	661	1,006	236	4,680
Sub-total	13,394	6,965	7,034	2,388	29,781
Corporate Costs	950	2,800	200	-	3,950
Total	14,344	9,765	7,234	2,388	33,731

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Appendix D
Efficiencies

Social Care Health and Housing

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications/Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
EA32	Housing: Harmonise Housing Needs with Private Sector Housing.	Reduce operational cost of the two services to deliver a more efficient and joined up service	-	100	50	-	Need to consult employees.	F
EA37	Direct Services: Modernisation of Services for Older People	Review of available facilities over the next four years to provide day opportunities encompassing the personalisation and reablement agenda.	-	-	225	-	There is a plan to consult with customers, partners and relatives throughout the development of this efficiency. This is part of the move away from institutional care to more personal solutions and it is planned to offer day support alongside extra care sheltered unit developments	A
EA53	Commissioned Services: Continue to maximise use of all contracts for Domiciliary Care for Older people, Adults with Learning Disabilities and supported housing.	May result in opposition from current providers.	362	362	362	245	Contract negotiations need to be carried out.	C
EA44	Commissioned Services: Continue to renegotiate high cost Learning Disability and Physical Disability residential placements and other changes to block purchasing for these groups.	May result in opposition from current providers. No impact on the quality of care to customers.	600	200	200	-	Contract negotiations need to be carried out.	C

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Social Care Health and Housing

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications/Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
EA51	Commissioned Services: Continue to reduce the usage of residential care.	We will continue to invest money in preventative solutions and reablement to support more people but reduce expenditure on residential care. This may be adversely impaired by the number of people funding their own care requiring the Council to fund their placements.	1,200	800	600	-	None - managed through Adult Social Care management team.	A
EA46	Commissioned Services: Continue the development of a joint approach with the health service to deliver an improved care and reablement service which will have a more positive outcome for customers.	Improved outcomes for some customers who will be diverted from requiring social care support and therefore will enjoy an improved quality of life.	600	600	600	350	None.	A
EA48	Business Systems: Business Process Re-engineering of procurement, brokerage and customer finance functions.	More efficient use of ICT and staff resources.	-	50	50	-	Need to consult employees.	F
EA54	Housing: Continue to effectively manage gypsy and traveller sites.	Continue to improve income collection arrangements and introduce water meters at all sites.	55	-	-	-	2014/15 the net budget is zero and the sites are self financing	D
EA55	Commissioning: Seek further efficiencies from Mental Health services	Reduce administration and management costs within the current contract Mental health by 5%.	150	150	150	-	Contract negotiations are required	C
EA68	Commissioning: Seek further efficiencies from Domiciliary and Community Care services.	Maximise the impact of joint commissioning arrangements for customers	225	250	275	-	Contract negotiations are required	C

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Social Care Health and Housing

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications/Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
EA61	Direct Services: Extend the Reablement service to all customers with domiciliary care packages	Improved outcomes for some customers who will be diverted from requiring social care support and therefore will enjoy an improved quality of life.	550	450	350	250	None.	A
EA64	Housing: Extra Care Housing Scheme 1. HRA Capital investment to achieve revenue savings.	Project Management capacity and agreed investment as part of HRA Self Financing	-	200	80	-	Consultation with customers, providers and stakeholders will be carried out during the development of this efficiency.	A
EA65	Extra Care Scheme 2. Capital investment to achieve revenue savings.	Strategic Business Case agreed over the reprovision of accommodation need for Older people	-	-	200	-	Consultation with customers, providers and stakeholders will be carried out during the development of this efficiency.	A
EA66	Direct Services: Deliver efficiencies within 65+ Older People Care packages	May result in opposition from current providers. No impact on the quality of care to customers.	273	-	-	-	Contract negotiations are required.	C
EA67	Direct Services: Deliver efficiencies within care packages for People with a Physical Disability	Reviewing the approach to delivering care for adults with a physical disability. May result in opposition from current providers. No impact on the quality of care to customers.	152	-	-	-	Contract negotiations are required and there may be a need to consult with employees	C
EA69	Business & Performance: Reduce delays of Financial Assessments	Continue to improve income collection arrangements	90	90	-	-	None	D
EA70	Business & Performance: Increase contributions to strategic workforce training programme	Increase external support for the Strategic Workforce training resource	20	-	-	-	None	D

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Social Care Health and Housing

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications/Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
EA73	Housing: Deliver savings within Private Sector Housing and Housing Needs by better use of ICT and further income generation activity	More efficient use of ICT and staff resources.	32	32	42	23	Need to consult employees.	F
EA74	Direct Services: Review of all Care Packages within Learning Disabilities	May result in opposition from current providers. No impact on the quality of care to customers.	425	425	425	425	Contract negotiations are required.	A
EA76	Customer First		24	-	-	-		E
Total efficiencies			4,758	3,709	3,609	1,293		

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**Appendix D
Efficiencies**

Children's Services

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications/Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
CS1	Strategic commissioning of social care placements and interventions	This is a previous MTFP efficiency and is built on CSE01. The new efficiency is a continued focus on best value and recommissioning contracts.	100	100	100		- This planning is on going and is a follow on of work on commissioning started in 2011/12. This is in addition to the Child Protection Efficiency CSE01 of £695k for 2013/14 which has been netted off against pressures CSP02.	C
CS3	Special Educational Needs	This is a previous programme of MTFP efficiencies in Special Educational Needs. This saving will not affect the outcomes for children. A focus on local placements will continue.	100	100	100		- Moving to accommodate children within "in authority" special schools rather than placements with out of county schools. This is the Special Recoupment budget.	C
CS4	Post 16 Transport Policy	Policy changes have already been consulted on and agreed by Executive and are shown in the MTFP	211	-	-		- This is the 2nd year of implementation of the Post 16 Transport Policy	C
CS9	Reduction to Out of County Placements	Reducing Out of County Placements now that the Chiltern Area School is established. This was in the previous MTFP	200	-	-		- Moving to accommodate children within "in authority" special schools rather than placements with out of county schools. This is the Out of County Budget.	C
CS10	Reallocation of school improvement activity	Reallocation of school improvement activity towards school to school support and increased in traded school support activity	110	221	-		- Efficiency amended from draft budget version	F

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Children's Services

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications/Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
CS11	Further application of grant to core budget as the Early Intervention Grant increases.	Savings from core budget due to services being supported by Early Intervention Grant as previous projects cease or become recommissioned.	-	279	-	-	See the risk associated with Early Intervention Grant.	C
CS13	Removal of three consultant posts	Work in support of vulnerable learners will be commissioned from Teaching Schools and other schools with outstanding and innovative practice.	40	-	-	-	These staff have left and this is the full year effect.	F
CSE 01	Child Protection - Increased LAC / cover from Agency (pressure) offset by the chance of 3 residential placements (efficiency)	There was an original efficiency of £629k for 2013/14 which has now been netted off with the pressure CSP02.		729	200	600	The target is to provide three more places by April 2013.	C
CSE 02	Children with Disabilities - Use of EIG to fund Core services	This assumes the Gov does increase the EIG as indicated but no new activity will ensue	-	187	190	-	Efficiency 2014/15 - This switches core funding with Early Intervention Grant	F
CSE 03	Early Intervention and Prevention - Use of EIG to release core funding and recommission of service	This assumes the Gov does increase the EIG as indicated but no new activity will ensue	62	16	-	-	13/14 - £15K of Core Budget for Young Carers, to be released and use EIG to make-up shortfall. £47K – First year savings in bringing a currently commissioned contract in-house. 14/15 – £16K – additional savings from bringing service in-house which are not fully possible in year one due to redundancy / TUPE costs in year 1	F

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Children's Services

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications/Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
CSE 04	Partnerships & Workforce Reduction in generic workforce opportunities that are core funded.	Reduction in training and workforce development and seeking opportunities to sell services. Existing 2013/14 agreements to be honoured.	-	41	40	-	Efficiency 2014/15 - reduction in delivery of face-to-face generic workforce learning opportunities that are core funded and the development of an enhanced blended learning opportunities at all levels with e-learning. Marketing this offer more widely.	F
CSE 05	School Organisation & Capital - Restructure deleting post	Efficiency 2013/14 – removing post from structure	46	-	-	-	This is a small team however as more work on school organisation goes on line this will be achievable	F
CSE 06	Transport CWD - reviewing policies	Rationalising of existing transport for children with disabilities	-	13	10	-	Efficiency 2014/15 – parents will be travelling different distances. This follows on from the realignment of Ivel Valley where parents will provide transport themselves. Part of the improvements from the disability review.	C
CSE 07	Transport Mainstream - Walking assessments (April 2014), policy reviews	This saving will not be achievable unless walking assessments are carried out by April or Sept 2014	-	-	573	-	Efficiency to take effect 2015/16 if agreed in 2014.	C
CSE 08	Partnerships	This is a planned reduction in partnership funding	-	10	12	18	These savings represent 10% of the team's total budget and can be achieved by a 10% reduction in the grants/contracts to Citizen's Advice Bureau and Voluntary Community Sector organisations and a reduction in the operational costs	F

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Children's Services

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications/Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
CSE 09	Contribution to DSG from core funding no longer required	This is a planned reduction in contribution in line with Government policy	550	-	-	-	Due to the LACSEG funding reforms the contribution is no longer required.	F
CSE 10	5% Vacancy factor (excluding DSG funded cost centres)	This is applying the vacancy factor to Learning, Commissioning and Partnerships for the first time.	258	-	-	-	This will put a pressure on these budgets and may mean some activities are reduced, however this brings the team in line with other councils services	F
Total efficiencies			1,677	1,696	1,225	618		

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Efficiencies

Sustainable Communities

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications / Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
SC2	Development of car parking strategy	Improve effectiveness and efficiency with the introduction and extended use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology and development of in-house service.	30	20	10	-	Later years' impact of major saving in 2012/13, strategy now adopted, implementation continues.	D
SC4	Capitalise some highways revenue expenditure through revised working practices.	Reduce short term reactive repairs work, and increase planned maintenance programmes.	770	-	-	-	Capital programme to be revised.	F
SC5	Negotiate further efficiencies with highways contractor	Investment of additional £4m capital spend results in savings.	200	100	100	-	Later years' impact of saving implemented from 2012/13.	C
SC6	Passenger Transport Review savings	Review to further increase community and voluntary sector delivery of subsidised passenger transport services.	50	-	-	-	Saving to be achieved through service cost reduction not service reduction. This is a continuation of previous years' savings.	F
SC8	Revenue savings from implementation of Street Lighting Strategy	Project to ensure structural integrity of Street Lights through replacement of life expired columns and replacement of lanterns with low maintenance energy types. Revenue maintenance and energy costs reduced.	99	83	-	-	This saving is a continuation of saving implemented in 2012/13 and is dependent on continuing capital investment.	F
SC15	Adult & Community Learning Service efficiencies	3-year plan to cover core management and administration costs from external funds.	50	10	-	-		F

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Sustainable Communities

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications / Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
SC22	Economic Growth restructure	Reduce staffing levels whilst maintaining outcomes.	-	-	50	-	This will follow a comprehensive review in 2014.	F
SC24	Development planning cost savings	Reduce operating costs and staff savings.	50	-	-	-		F
SC25	Countryside & Access 500 efficiency programme	Further efficiency savings through local application of national efficiency project.	-	75	75	-		F
SC30	Reduction in contract management costs.	Rationalisation of contract management to reduce costs whilst maintaining levels of control.	100	-	-	-	Review of Highways & Transportation Management concluded in 2012/13.	C
SC34	Waste Services Contract Reviews	Renegotiation of recycling treatment and disposal contracts	800	-	-	-	Reductions from renegotiation and retendering enabled by pressure SC107.	C
SC36	Libraries and Arts Development Savings	Back office reductions following Library Service review	50	-	-	-	Continuation of previously agreed improvement programme.	F
SC 150	National planning income increase		150	-	-	-	Increase in nationally set planning application fees and charges.	D
SC 151	Community Infrastructure levy (CIL) administration fee			100	150	-	Some of the CIL charge can be used as administration fee.	D
SC 152	Further development management income		-	-	100	-	Reflection of anticipated increase in fee income as a consequence of approval of strategic housing sites in the south.	D
SC 153	Local sustainable transport expenditure to be funded from grant following successful bid to Central Government.		50	-	(50)	-	Expenditure to be met from within grant funding - this ceases March 2015 requiring budget to be re-instated.	D

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Sustainable Communities

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications / Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
SC 154	Reduce development plan consultancy budget		-	150	-	(150)	Reduction of development planning budget at conclusion of the current Local Plan development process and re-instatement in 2016/17 at commencement at next Local Plan review.	F
SC 155	Reduction in legal and specialist support in countryside service		-	18	-	-	Reduction in specialist support for village greens and associated area due to reduction in demand (removal of part time post).	F
SC 156	Minerals and waste SLA savings		25	-	-	-	Reduction in resource following conclusion of Minerals and Waste Local development process. The saving is to be split with Bedford and Luton as this is a shared service. The saving shown is the CBC element.	F
SC 157	Development management - removal of trees and landscape officer		30	-	-	-	Remove vacant tree and landscape officer post . This is the net effect of the transfer for responsibility of Council's amenity tree stock to Highways contractor.	F
SC 158	Countryside sites - wider provision of services to provide increased income		-	-	50		Additional income and savings to be generated from the countryside service	D
SC 159	Securing external parking contracts		10	-	-	-	Provision of parking enforcement service in private "off street" car parks within the CBC area.	D
SC 160	Change in contractor delivery of auditing and environment monitoring if Highways contract.	Saving in contractors costs of undertaking auditing and environment monitoring	30	-	-	-	Contractor to undertake these roles through different approach, thereby reducing costs.	C

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Sustainable Communities

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications / Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
SC 161	Improved management of fleet	Improved management of fleet	70	-	-	-	More flexible fleet to meet changing requirements of service needs.	F
SC 162	Domestic Abuse Integrated Domestic Abuse Perpetrator (IDAP) Programme pilot completed		-	25	-	-	IDAP offers a wide range of partners a service to support long-term reductions in domestic abuse. Community Safety funded a short-term pilot to evidence a business case to gain on-going multi-agency funding contributions.	D
SC 163	Community Safety service rationalisation		19	25	40	15	Review of operational budgets, service level agreements and partnership working arrangements whilst maintaining outcomes for CBC residents.	F
SC 164	CCTV maintenance contract savings		13	-	-	-	Contract efficiencies.	C
SC 165	Public Protection - operational and salary savings		120	-	50	50	Financial Investigations Unit to be self financing and contribute to cost of base budget Public Protection services.	D
SC 166	Review of CCTV		-	-	-	15	Pending Executive consideration of CCTV plan 2013 to 2017.	F
SC 167	Reduction in waste fleet maintenance cost		56	-	-	-	Reduced maintenance costs due to replacement of north residual fleet by contractor.	C
SC 168	Income from landfill gas generation at Sundon landfill site		25	-	-	-	It is anticipated that income will continue until 2016/17 but after this the efficiency will need to be reviewed as the level of gas generation will reduce over time.	D

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Sustainable Communities

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications / Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
SC 169	Saving from retender of residual disposal contracts for both north and south areas		600	-	-	-	Also reduces Landfill Tax pressure from £440k to £70k.	C
SC 170	Intergration of Leighton Buzzard theatre and library and further improvements to working practices across the service.		-	50	50	85		F
SC 171	Reduction in shared library hub back office costs		-	-	(37)	102	This will require ICT investment and capacity.	F
SC 172	Review of Library link and housebound service		-	-	35	-	This will improve the quality and effectiveness of the service to users whilst reducing costs.	F
SC 173	Additional libraries income and Leighton Buzzard theatre		6	13	13	10	Additional focus on marketing and income will improve performance in this area.	D
SC 174	Business support & regeneration - private sector contributions		-	-	30	10	Service to seek further private sector contributions.	D
SC 175	Recovery of additional adult and community learning back office costs from external grant		-	170	-	-		D
SC 176	Back office - service development restructure		-	35	-	-	Removal of a post.	F
SC 177	Long term waste mangement contract saving from the BEaR project and wind down of the project team		582	25	528	104		C
SC 178	Customer First		197	-	-	-	Service implication of corporate project.	E
Total efficiencies			4,182	899	1,194	241		

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Corporate Services

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications /Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Corporate Resources								
EFF-RES-ICT-02	Review of the licensing of the Application and Database		20	-	-	-		C
EFF-RES-ASS-01	Retendering of the Cleaning contract		20	-	-	-		C
EFF-RES-PERF-0	Remove the Invest to Save budget		400	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-ASS-02	Reduce revenue staffing costs - more accurate recording and allocation of profession and project management costs to Lifecycle and Capital Build projects		64	15	16	-		F
EFF-RES-ASS-03	Increased income generation - achieve by increasing: rents for commercial and farm properties; and occupancy levels for commercial properties from 87% to 90%.		25	30	30	-		D
EFF-RES-ASS-04	Implementation of new assets management system will eliminate the need for a Property Information post.		28	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-ASS-05	Re-engineering of post room and courier service, efficiency savings of two posts.		46	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-ASS-06	Review and retendering of Facilities Management contracts e.g. consumables.		30	35	35	-		C
EFF-RES-ASS-07	Facilities management staff reductions as we move out of Technology House.		-	-	50	-		F

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Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications /Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
EFF-RES-ASS-08	Removal of the energy price increase contingency		77	-	-	-	Energy Price contingency has not been used for the past 2 years, any increase in energy prices will need to be funded from the Corporate Contingency fund.	F
EFF-RES-ASS-09	Rationalisation of senior management structure in Assets - Full year effect of removing AD posts in Assets and IT.		80	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-ASS-10	Review of Schools Capital team structure		100	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-PROC-01	Reduction in Agency Budget due to expected recruitment of Permanent HoS		55	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-PERF-02	Reduction in Corporate Subscriptions by negotiating reduced fees and the removal of CBC's £40k contribution to the Director of Public Health.		50	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-PERF-03	Review of P&PM team structure following introduction of new performance reporting system.		-	-	55	-		F
EFF-RES-ICT-06	Transfer of adjusted budget (i.e. net of the % saving) to budget holders with retained central administration of contract and invoice payments.		-	-	20	20		F

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Appendix D
Efficiencies

Corporate Services

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications /Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
EFF-RES-ICT-07	Transfer of adjusted budget (i.e. net of the % saving) to budget holders with retained central administration of contract and invoice payments.		-	-	20	20		F
EFF-RES-ICT-08	Application Portfolio reduction & Contract renegotiation to achieve a substantial reduction in the number and variety of IT Applications used across CBC - consolidating down to a core set of business applications and accepting the loss of some niche functionality.		-	-	55	55		F
EFF-RES-ICT-09	Retender for a combined Corporate and school voice and data network		-	-	140	-		C
EFF-RES-ICT-10	Admin Charge generation for running the schools network		-	-	39	-		D
EFF-RES-ICT-11	Smart sourcing of support services - focussing on single points of specialist technical or functional knowledge that command high market salaries.		-	-	20	28		C
EFF-RES-ICT-12	Providing that process rationalisation delivers streamlined and automated efficiencies - Reduce the headcount in the Business & Commissioning Team.		-	-	-	28		F

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Appendix D
Efficiencies

Corporate Services

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications /Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
EFF-RES-ICT-13	Savings on maintenance costs for hardware and software - Contract and vendor renegotiation to reduce maintenance charges.		230	-	-	-		C
EFF-RES-ICT-14	Update contract renegotiation		60	-	-	-		C
EFF-RES-ICT-15	Reduction to agency staff budget		30	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-ICT-16	Reduction to overtime budget		30	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-ICT-17	Income generation - internal recharge for ICT training to contribute to the cost overhead of providing training.		30	-	-	-		D
EFF-RES-ICT-18	Microsoft Enterprise agreement		-	-	50	50		C
EFF-RES-ICT-19	Rationalisation of ICT senior management structure		49	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-CFO-01	Reduction in consultancy costs (funding FM post Strategy)		44	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-FCO-01	Reduction in Financial Control staff costs from restructure & multi-skilling		41	93	-	-		F
EFF-RES-FCO-03	Reduction in specialist advice (VAT & Treasury)		-	10	-	-		C
EFF-RES-FPS-01	Financial Performance Team restructure		-	57	115	-		F
EFF-RES-AUD-02	Reduction in external audit fee		123	-	-	-		C
EFF-RES-AUD-03	Removal of one Internal Audit post (full year effect)		33	-	-	-		F
EFF-RES-R&B-01	Reduction of 2FTE following introduction of the Risk Based Verification Software		28	28	-	-		F

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Efficiencies

Corporate Services

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications /Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
EFF-RES-R&B-02	Reduction of 5FTE in Revs and Benefits as a result of Customer First		64	63	-	-		E
EFF-RES-PROC-0	5% vacancy target- Procurement (£19k), Performance & Projects (£20k) & Assets (£135k)		174	-	-	-		F
Total Resources			1,931	331	645	201		
People and Organisation								
EFF-P&O-HR-01	Net Efficiency of bringing Payroll Function in house		19	-	-	-		F
EFF-P&O-HR-02	Review of staffing levels following payroll integration, improved use of technology and management development.		-	150	100	-		E
	Various Efficiencies across directorate		21	-	-	-		F
EFF-P&O-L&D-02	Savings on Members Pensions Costs (£50k) & Executive Restructure (£12k)		62	-	-	-		F
EFF-P&O-L&D-03	Rent and rates saving due to reduction of buildings occupied in Coroner's Service		13	12	-	-		F
EFF-P&O-L&D-04	Efficiencies in Counsel Fees in Legal Services		-	80	-	-		C
EFF-P&O-L&D-05	Reduction in Legal Services Staffing		-	-	50	-		F
EFF-P&O-L&D-06	Reduction in Education Appeals Costs		-	12	-	-		F
EFF-P&O-L&D-08	Savings resulting from reduced canvass costs following the proposed introduction of revised legislation for Individual Electoral Registration in 14/15.		-	-	100	-		F
EFF-P&O-L&D-09	Savings due to Registration Service's move from Pilgrim House to Ampthill Court House		-	-	-	30		F

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Appendix D
Efficiencies

Corporate Services

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications /Impact	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	Comments	Cat
EFF-P&O-COMM-01	Remove staff allowance costs and other small staff items		25	-	-	-		F
EFF-P&O-COMM-03	Increase in News Central income		5	5	5	5		D
EFF-P&O-COMM-04	Reduction in print and distribution costs for News Central		-	16	6	-		F
EFF-P&O-POL-02	Review and remove small budget lines within Policy budget		35	-	-	-		F
EFF-P&O-POL-03	PeopC11: removal of Previous Efficiency Adjustment		-	-	50	-		F
EFF-P&O-CS-01	Savings from reduction in Face to Face Provision (£25k reception merger, £30k merging functions)		-	55	-	-		F
EFF-P&O-CS-02	Savings due to Customer First in the Contact Centre		200	-	-	-		E
EFF-P&O-CS-03	Appointments system		75	-	-	-		E
EFF-P&O-CS-05	Increase of income resulting from Customer Services Staff multitasking to carry out JCP work		-	-	50	-		D
EFF-P&O-P&O-VAC-01	5% vacancy target People & Org		391	-	-	-	Comms £31k, Cust Serv £95k, Policy £13k, Cust & Comm Insight £4k, People £118k, L&D £130k	F
Total People and Organisation			846	330	361	35		
Total efficiencies			2,777	661	1,006	236		

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Appendix D
Efficiencies

Corporate Costs

Ref	Detail of efficiency proposal	Implications/Impact	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Comments	Cat
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
CCE02	Remove contribution to redundancy reserve		750	-	-	-		F
CCE03	Cease contribution to General Fund reserves following achievement of minimum prudent level		-	1,400	-	-		F
CS7	Passenger Transport Review - Build on Phase 1, efficiencies to be achieved through implementing transport policies, improved passenger routeing, service provision and procurement.	This is the third year of the cross cutting transport efficiency relating to recommissioning of transport.	400	400	-	-	Held on EIG as cross cutting for 12/13.	C
CCE05	Accommodation- prior year's efficiencies unachievable, as based on savings from early exit from Technology House. Subsequent years' targets achievable as CBC will exercise break clause by March 2014, so saving lease, service and utility costs.		(200)	900	200	-		F
CCE06	Centralisation and rationalisation of directorate IT support and development activities	ICT driven - dependent on directorates not duplicating efficiency savings	-	100	-	-		F
Total new efficiencies			950	2,800	200	-		

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2016/17
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: To allow the Executive to consider the draft capital programme (excluding HRA) for the four years from 1 April 2013.

Advising Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer
Contact Officer: Ralph Gould, Head of Financial Control
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision No
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** Not applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

As a key part of the Council's overall financial plan the Capital Programme supports the delivery of all the organisation's priorities.

Financial:

1. As a component of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) the financial implications of the proposed changes to the Capital Programme are set out within the body of the report.

Legal:

2. The Capital Programme forms part of the Council's budget as defined in the Constitution. It includes funding that is required to enable the authority to discharge its statutory obligations and failure to approve the Capital Programme may therefore have implications on the Council's ability to comply with these obligations.

3. The Local Government Act 2003 (as amended) emphasises the importance of sound and effective financial management. In relation to capital financing, there is a statutory requirement for each local authority to set and arrange their affairs to remain within prudential limits for borrowing and capital investment. There is a statutory duty on the Chief Finance Officer to report to the Council, at the time the budget is considered and the council tax set, on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of financial reserves.

Risk Management:

4. The affordability and sustainability of the proposed Capital Programme is particularly dependent on the generation of capital receipts, external grants and contributions, the level of interest rates and the Council's ability to access external borrowing. The Council seeks to manage the various risks associated with funding its capital plans through a number of regularly updated strategies and policies (e.g. the Medium Term Financial Plan, the Treasury Management Strategy and prudential indicators etc). Performance against the capital plan is regularly monitored and reviewed and the Council aims to maintain a prudent level of General Balances and liquidity.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

5. Not Applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

6. Where appropriate, Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out for proposals.

Public Health:

7. Not Applicable.

Community Safety:

8. Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the Council has a duty to consider community safety issues across all of its functions. In developing and implementing the detailed business cases supporting the various Capital Programme projects officers have considered relevant community safety issues.

Sustainability:

9. Schemes include works to promote more sustainable modes of travel and improve the lifespan of assets and reduce energy consumption.

Procurement:

10. The delivery of the programme is reliant on a number of external suppliers to successfully deliver the capital schemes to a sufficient standard whilst ensuring value for money within statutory and legislative requirements.

Overview and Scrutiny:

11. The proposed Capital Programme will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 January 2013 as part of the development of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. approve the draft 2013/14 to 2016/17 Capital Programme (as per Appendix A) for consultation with Overview and Scrutiny and other stakeholders.**

<i>Reason for Recommendation:</i>	<i>To progress the development of a Capital Programme for the Council's MTFP 2013 – 2017.</i>
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Executive Summary

12. The Council's Capital Programme and estimated capital receipts have been reviewed for the purposes of revising the 2012/13 capital budgets and developing a Capital Programme within the MTFP for the period April 2013 to March 2017.
13. The financial impact of a reduction in capital receipt forecasts has been offset by decreases in the estimated Minimum Revenue Provision following amendments to the calculation methodology. A review of borrowing requirements has also reduced the estimated revenue costs of borrowing.
14. The capital review has proposed the addition of a number of new projects offset largely by reductions in existing projects. The review of past performance supports the use of a 20% Capital Programme deferral factor in forecasting for the MTFP period.
15. The Capital Programme proposed for the 2013 – 2017 MTFP includes the funding of significant capital works associated with the Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling (BEaR) Project and Woodside Link. Various assumptions have been made about the potential funding sources for these projects and further work is ongoing to establish the potential external contributions with greater certainty. As currently modelled, the significant revenue costs associated with the two projects are not incurred until 2015/16 and would peak in 2016/17. It is proposed that a review of the Capital Programme is carried out during the summer of 2013 when more certainty regarding the financial requirements of both the BEaR and Woodside Link projects has been established.
16. The assumption that the Council would not need to incur any new borrowing before the first half of 2014 is based on past experience and any significant adverse changes to cash flows would require external borrowing to take place before that date. The borrowing strategy is based upon maintaining a minimum prudent level of balances and stable interest rates and this position will continue to be monitored closely.

Background Information

17. The Council's capital programme was reviewed during the 2012/13 financial year and a number of changes to profiles, reductions and additions were recommended to Council by the Executive on 6 November 2012.

18. In particular Council on November 2012 agreed to a number of additions with specific funding requirements and these have been carried forward to the new programme. These are :
- (a) To include in the Capital Programme a maximum of £35m to support the BeaR Project from 2013/14 to 2015/16 as outlined in the Capital Review report. It is anticipated this will be funded by Prudential Borrowing, with its associated revenue implications as set out in the report.
 - (b) That the estimated capital receipts for the periods 2016/17 and 2017/18 be earmarked to repay any Prudential Borrowing undertaken in respect of the BeaR project.
 - (c) 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 Capital Review report, whilst noting that officers continue working to confirm the extent of external contributions to the scheme.
19. Council on 29 November also agreed the addition of the Central Bedfordshire Alternative Provision Free School scheme within the Capital Programme. The amount approved was £3m in 2013/14 all of which will be externally funded.

Summary of Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2016/17

20. Capital investment is required to ensure the delivery of the Council's priorities but the programme needs to be both affordable and sustainable. Capital expenditure that is not financed through existing capital resources (e.g. grants, developer contributions and capital receipts) will reduce revenue resources over the longer term by incurring additional capital financing costs.
21. The table below shows a summary of the draft capital programme reflecting the revisions agreed by Council on 29 November 2012, including a Central Bedfordshire Alternative Provision Free School scheme, provision for recurring programme items in 2016/17 and a planning assumption of 20% per annum deferral in programme spend. The detailed draft programme is presented in Appendix A.

22.

Table 1 – 2013/17 Draft Medium Term Financial Plan Capital Programme (Excluding HRA and assuming 20% annual programme deferral)

	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000
Gross Expenditure	84,959	54,224	79,272	46,272
Deferral b/f from prior year	12,870	16,992	11,669	15,614
Estimated Deferral in year	(16,992)	(11,669)	(15,614)	(9,803)
Gross Expenditure after deferral	80,837	59,547	75,327	52,083
Funded by:				
Grants & Contributions	(43,751)	(23,443)	(20,687)	(22,536)
Capital Receipts	(1,450)	(6,308)	(11,897)	(14,963)**
Borrowing*	(35,636)	(29,796)	(42,743)	(29,547)
Total Funding	(80,837)	(59,547)	(75,327)	(52,083)

* Includes internal borrowing whilst cash balances permit. It is estimated that some external borrowing will be required by 2014.

** Estimated capital receipts of £14,963k in 2016/17 are earmarked to repay external debt incurred in respect of project BEaR.

23.

By including an assumption of 20% of expenditure on capital schemes being deferred, there is recognition that dependencies within the capital programme exist (for example on third parties, including external funders) and often capital schemes are deferred from one year to the next as delivery is delayed. Excluding assumed scheme deferral, gross expenditure in 2013/14 would be £84,959k and can be broken down into the following ranked criteria:

24. **Table 2 – 2013/14 Draft Capital Programme by Ranked Criteria (Excludes 20% slippage)**

	Gross Expenditure	Grants & Contributions	Net Expenditure
	£000	£000	£000
A. Externally funded schemes.	39,935	(39,935)	0
B. Schemes which are statutory.	5,902	(1,726)	4,176
C. Schemes where choice exists.	18,926	(4,302)	14,624
D. Schemes which are invest to save.	20,196	0	20,196
Total	84,959	(45,963)	38,996

Financing of the Capital Programme

25. The full financing cost of the proposed Capital Programme, including what has been reflected in the current and draft MTFPs and assuming 20% scheme deferral is set out in Table 3 below. Estimated revenue costs are lower from 2013 – 2014 than the current MTFP estimates. This is because of revisions to the methodology for calculating the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) as well as revised assumptions on estimated borrowing costs.

26. **Table 3 – Estimated General Fund Capital Financing costs – interest and Minimum Revenue Provision**

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
MTFP 2012 – 2016 (February 2012)	14,020	14,721	14,125	N/A
Increase or (reduction)	(1,613)	(588)	1,524	N/A
Capital Finance revenue costs MTFP 2013 - 2017	12,407	14,133	15,649	16,724

27. Table 3 above sets out the draft position over the medium term. Although there is less certainty in determining future spend and financing, the table shows that the Capital Programme will continue to produce additional cost pressures without further generation of new capital receipts and external grants and contributions.

28. The medium term forecast includes substantial new capital receipts in 2015/16 and 2016/17 in respect of the Local Development Framework project. However, these capital receipts are heavily dependant with regard to timing and valuation upon progress with planning and the state of the housing market. Forecast Capital Receipts are summarised in Table 4 below.

29. **Table 4 Forecast Capital Receipts 2013 - 2018**

£000	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Surplus Land	200	3,000	1,500		
LDF		3,308	9,797	14,963	16,538
Potential for Disposal	1,250		600		
Total	1,450	6,308	11,897	14,963	16,538

Major Capital Projects included in the draft capital programme

30. The financial impact of additions identified in the 2012 Capital Programme Review was largely offset by reductions. To establish a proposed Capital Programme for the MTFP period April 2013 to March 2017 rolling programme schemes such as Highways, property and ICT capital renewals have been reflected in 2016/17 and two additional major projects have been included. The two new projects are the:

- BEaR project
- Woodside Link.

31. The BEaR project has been under development since 2009 and has now reached the stage where detailed tenders will be required. One funding option that is available for tenderers is the availability of financial support using the Council's prudential borrowing facilities.

32. The BEaR project will be initially funded from borrowing with the forecast Local Development Framework related capital receipts in the two years 2016/17 and 2017/18 being earmarked for the specific purpose of redeeming the majority of any BEaR related prudential borrowing.

33. The actual borrowing requirement for BEaR, if any, will be determined only when final tenders are received in June 2013.

34. The Woodside Link is a crucial piece of transport infrastructure needed to promote employment, facilitate development and improve the quality of life and the environment in Central Bedfordshire. The road will support the delivery of the improved infrastructure, in particular the M1-A5 link road and de-trunking of the A5, thereby underpinning the regeneration of Dunstable town centre. The Executive agreed on 2 October 2012 to consult on this scheme prior to an application being made for development consent from the Planning Inspectorate, to add £450,000 to the 2012/13 Capital Programme for the costs of design and planning application development, to include the scheme in the review of the Capital Programme and instruct officers to do all they can to secure funding for the scheme.
35. External contributions to the Woodside Link development will be achieved, but it is likely that there will be a lag between expenditure on the project and the receipt of these contributions. The Council will therefore need to forward fund part of the scheme costs before full recovery takes place. There will therefore be an element of funding by prudential borrowing to bridge this gap.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Draft Capital Programme 2013 - 2017

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None.

Appendix A

Summary Table

Directorate	2013/14 Capital Budget			2014/15 Capital Budget			2015/16 Capital Budget			2016/17 Capital Budget			Total Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17		
	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
Childrens Services	26,613	-25,913	700	6,518	-5,818	700	6,518	-5,818	700	6,518	-5,818	700	46,167	-43,367	2,800
People & Organisation	300	0	300	300	0	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	600	0	600
Resources	12,396	0	12,396	2,526	0	2,526	2,231	-5,000	-2,769	2,231	0	2,231	19,384	-5,000	14,384
Social Care Health & Housing	8,352	-5,191	3,161	4,052	-1,380	2,672	3,310	-638	2,672	3,310	-638	2,672	19,024	-7,847	11,177
Sustainable Communities	37,298	-14,859	22,439	40,828	-11,168	29,660	67,213	-8,542	58,671	34,213	-8,542	25,671	179,552	-43,111	136,441
Total	84,959	-45,963	38,996	54,224	-18,366	35,858	79,272	-19,998	59,274	46,272	-14,998	31,274	264,727	-99,325	165,402

Childrens Services

Scheme Title	2013/14 Capital Budget			2014/15 Capital Budget			2015/16 Capital Budget			2016/17 Capital Budget			Total Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17		
	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
New School Places	18,677	-18,677	0	5,818	-5,818	0	5,818	-5,818	0	5,818	-5,818	0	36,131	-36,131	0
Temporary Accomodation	400	0	400	400	0	400	400	0	400	400	0	400	1,600	0	1,600
Schools Access Initiative	300	0	300	300	0	300	300	0	300	300	0	300	1,200	0	1,200
Schools Capital Maintenance	2,000	-2,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,000	-2,000	0
Schools Devolved Formula Capital	938	-938	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	938	-938	0
LPSA & LAA Grant payout	898	-898	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	898	-898	0
University Technology College	400	-400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	-400	0
Alternative Secondary Provision (Free School)	3,000	-3,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,000	-3,000	0
Total	26,613	-25,913	700	6,518	-5,818	700	6,518	-5,818	700	6,518	-5,818	700	46,167	-43,367	2,800

People & Organisation

Scheme Title	2013/14 Capital Budget			2014/15 Capital Budget			2015/16 Capital Budget			2016/17 Capital Budget			2017/18 Capital Budget			Total Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17		
	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
Channel Shift / Customer First	300	0	300	300	0	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	600	0	600
Total	300	0	300	300	0	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	600	0	600

Resources

Scheme Title	2013/14 Capital Budget			2014/15 Capital Budget			2015/16 Capital Budget			2016/17 Capital Budget			Total Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17		
	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
Houghton Lodge/Regis - (Originally shown in the Corporate Property Block)	37	0	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	0	37
Replacement of ex Incuba car park and upgrade of Watling House Accomodation Plan	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100
Public Services Network (PSN)	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100
Beeches Car Park Redevelopment	150	0	150	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	150	0	150
Priory House - (Originally shown in the Corporate Property Block)	105	0	105	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	105	0	105
CBC Corporate Property Rolling Programme Fees	50	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	50
Enterprise Content Management (KEY ECM) Implementation	180	0	180	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	180	0	180
Integrated Asset Management System	150	0	150	150	0	150	0	0	0	0	0	0	300	0	300
Capital Re-modelling to Facilitate Moves (MTAP) from Technology house.	165	0	165	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	165	0	165
Data Centre Migration	125	0	125	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	125	0	125
Consolidation of Applications	138	0	138	50	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	188	0	188

Scheme Title	2013/14 Capital Budget			2014/15 Capital Budget			2015/16 Capital Budget			2016/17 Capital Budget			Total Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17		
	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
ICT Infrastructure - Software (From Rolling Programme)	110	0	110	110	0	110	110	0	110	110	0	110	440	0	440
ICT Infrastructure - Professional Services (From Rolling Programme)	164	0	164	164	0	164	69	0	69	69	0	69	466	0	466
Carbon Reduction Improvements	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100
Medium Term Accomodation Plan ICT Infrastructure	300	0	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300	0	300
ICT Infrastructure - Hardware (from Rolling programme)	192	0	192	152	0	152	152	0	152	152	0	152	648	0	648
Ivel Medical Centre (Biggleswade)	900	0	900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	900	0	900
LDF related costs for land in Arlesey, North of Houghton Regis, North of Luton and Stratton Park Biggleswade.	500	0	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500	0	500
Asbestos / Health & Safety	400	0	400	400	0	400	400	0	400	400	0	400	1,600	0	1,600
A1 South Roundabout (Biggleswade)	5,000	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	-5,000	-5,000	0	0	0	5,000	-5,000	0
CBC Corporate Property Rolling Programme	3,430	0	3,430	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	0	1,500	7,930	0	7,930
Total	12,396	0	12,396	2,526	0	2,526	2,231	-5,000	-2,769	2,231	0	2,231	19,384	-5,000	14,384

Social Care, Health & Housing

Scheme Title	2013/14 Capital Budget			2014/15 Capital Budget			2015/16 Capital Budget			2016/17 Capital Budget			Total Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17		
	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
Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme	3,000	-588	2,412	3,000	-588	2,412	3,000	-588	2,412	3,000	-588	2,412	12,000	-2,352	9,648
Empty Homes	270	0	270	160	0	160	160	0	160	160	0	160	750	0	750
Renewal Assistance	150	-50	100	150	-50	100	150	-50	100	150	-50	100	600	-200	400
Review of Accommodation/Day Support, "New Approaches to Outcome"	347	-347	0	742	-742	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,089	-1,089	0
NHS Campus Closure	3,674	-3,674	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,674	-3,674	0
Timberlands and Chiltern View Gypsy and Traveller Sites	911	-532	379	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	911	-532	379
Total	8,352	-5,191	3,161	4,052	-1,380	2,672	3,310	-638	2,672	3,310	-638	2,672	19,024	-7,847	11,177

Sustainable Communities

Scheme Title	2013/14 Capital Budget			2014/15 Capital Budget			2015/16 Capital Budget			2016/17 Capital Budget			Total Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17		
	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
Highways Structural Maintenance Additional Expenditure	3,841	0	3,841	3,822	0	3,822	3,967	0	3,967	3,967	0	3,967	15,597	0	15,597
Highways Structural Maintenance Block	4,004	-4,004	0	3,571	-3,571	0	3,500	-3,500	0	3,500	-3,500	0	14,575	-14,575	0
Highways Integrated Schemes	1,338	-1,338	0	1,882	-1,882	0	1,882	-1,882	0	1,882	-1,882	0	6,984	-6,984	0
Highways Fixed Cost Services (Lump Sums)	1,790	0	1,790	1,790	0	1,790	1,790	0	1,790	1,790	0	1,790	7,160	0	7,160
Highways Planned Maintenance	450	0	450	950	0	950	1,000	0	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	3,400	0	3,400
Highways Street Lighting (Efficiency)	850	0	850	840	0	840	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,690	0	1,690
Highways Street Lighting Maintenance Backlog	750	0	750	750	0	750	750	0	750	750	0	750	3,000	0	3,000
Highways Holistic Infrastructure Projects	315	0	315	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	315	0	315
Highways Bridge Assessment and Maintenance	950	0	950	750	0	750	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,700	0	1,700
Highways Flooding & Drainage	374	0	374	340	0	340	340	0	340	340	0	340	1,394	0	1,394
Stratton Street Railway Bridge	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,500	0	2,500	0	0	0	2,500	0	2,500
West street Car park Leighton Buzzard	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,500	0	1,500	0	0	0	1,500	0	1,500
Fleet replacement programme	764	0	764	300	0	300	300	0	300	300	0	300	1,664	0	1,664
Car Park Improvements & Ticket Machines	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100
Highways Improving Walking Routes to Schools	480	0	480	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	480	0	480
Integrated Transport Unit ICT System	30	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	30

Scheme Title	2013/14 Capital Budget			2014/15 Capital Budget			2015/16 Capital Budget			2016/17 Capital Budget			Total Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17		
	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
Dunstable A5/M1 Link Road Strategic Infrastructure	1,020	-1,000	20	20	0	20	20	0	20	20	0	20	1,080	-1,000	80
Luton Dunstable Busway	30	0	30	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	6,030	0	6,030
Land Drainage Work (Non Highways)	60	0	60	60	0	60	60	0	60	60	0	60	240	0	240
Local Flood Defence Scheme Section 278 Schemes	333	0	333	333	0	333	334	0	334	334	0	334	1,334	0	1,334
Woodside Connection Strategic Infrastructure Projects	3,000	-3,000	0	3,000	-3,000	0	3,000	-3,000	0	3,000	-3,000	0	12,000	-12,000	0
Woodside Link	60	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	0	60
Woodside Link	750	0	750	8,000	0	8,000	16,000	0	16,000	12,000	0	12,000	36,750	0	36,750
Outdoor Access and Greenspace Improvement Projects	316	-100	216	250	-100	150	250	-100	150	250	-100	150	1,066	-400	666
Rights of Way Network and Countryside and Heritage Sites - Structural Renewal and Improvement Works Option 1	200	0	200	200	0	200	200	0	200	200	0	200	800	0	800
Swiss Garden Heritage Lottery Fund Project	100	0	100	100	0	100	58	0	58	58	0	58	316	0	316
Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)	1,015	-1,015	0	395	-395	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,410	-1,410	0
Leisure Strategy Implementation Invest to Save Project	2,111	0	2,111	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	8,111	0	8,111
Leisure Centre Stock Condition/Asset Management Plan	310	0	310	500	0	500	500	0	500	500	0	500	1,810	0	1,810
Leisure Facilities Saxon Pool & Sports Centre Extension	1,539	-600	939	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,539	-600	939
Astral Park Leighton Buzzard Cemeteries Grant to Town & Parish Councils	1,025	-1,025	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,025	-1,025	0
Waste & Recycling Containers - Provision of Replacement bins & containers.	50	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	50
Waste & Recycling Containers - Provision of Replacement bins & containers.	150	0	150	150	0	150	170	0	170	170	0	170	640	0	640
Sundon / Bluewater Landfill Sites BEar Project	265	-100	165	205	-100	105	92	-60	32	92	-60	32	654	-320	334
Waste Infrastructure Grant	4,000	0	4,000	6,000	0	6,000	25,000	0	25,000	0	0	0	35,000	0	35,000
Libraries Remodelling	557	-557	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	557	-557	0
CCTV	250	0	250	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	250	0	250
Biggleswade TC Masterplan	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100
Biggleswade TC Masterplan	20	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	20
Leighton Buzzard South Redevelopment	285	0	285	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	285	0	285
Local Broadband Infrastructure	2,620	-2,120	500	2,620	-2,120	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,240	-4,240	1,000
Dunstable Town Centre Regeneration Phase 2	1,096	0	1,096	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,096	0	1,096
Total	37,298	-14,859	22,439	40,828	-11,168	29,660	67,213	-8,542	58,671	34,213	-8,542	25,671	179,552	-43,111	136,441

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: Draft Budget report for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Service) Business Plan

Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources and Cllr Mrs Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing.

Summary: The report sets out the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) during the first year of the Self Financing regime and presents the proposed 30 year Landlord Service Business Plan. The report also looks at the budget setting process for 2013/14, and the assumptions that have been made in arriving at the projections in the Plan, to create the financial framework for the Landlord Service to operate within. There is a further proposal concerning the average increase to tenants' rents.

Within this report, recommendations are made concerning debt repayment over the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), together with proposals that will effectively make resources available, to enable the Council to achieve the ambitions proposed in the developing Housing Asset Management Strategy (HAMS).

Advising Officer: Julie Ogle, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing and Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer
Contact Officer: Tony Keaveney, Assistant Director Housing
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Those in which council houses are situated, entirely in the south of Central Bedfordshire.
Function of: Council
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The report relates directly to the Council's priority to manage Growth effectively, to balance regeneration aims with Growth, through investment to promote economic benefit, employment and renewal.

Financial:

1. The Self-financing regime introduced on 1 April 2012, has given the Council greater control of the finances relating to its housing stock. This new regime has required the Council to take on a debt of £165m but preferential rates of interest were secured, along with the balanced portfolio of debt.

The Business Plan shows rental income will exceed the anticipated costs of managing the stock over the 30 year period which will provide annual surpluses that could support regeneration aims, specifically to invest in the existing stock as well as to develop new build provision, for example Extra Care Housing. This provision could result in efficiency savings to the General Fund, as a result of reduced adult social care expenditure.

The HRA has embarked on an efficiency programme which is forecast to deliver £0.400m of savings in current year, 2012/13, which could be used to deliver additional investment in the stock.

Legal:

2. The Local Government Act 2003 (as amended) emphasises the importance of sound and effective financial management.

The HRA revenue and capital programme forms part of the Council's budget as defined in the Constitution. The draft budget report sets out the resources that are required to enable the authority to discharge its statutory obligations.

Risk Management:

3. In considering the budget proposals, it is necessary to take account of the associated risks and in particular the assumptions contained within paragraph 53 below. Any changes to these could impact on the financial position of the HRA Business Plan.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 introduced a universal credit, which will simplify the benefits system by amalgamating a number of separate benefit payments, including Housing Benefit, into a single payment. This credit will now be made directly to clients, giving them the choice over how to spend this income. This is a significant change from the current system where Housing Benefit for Council tenants is an internal transfer that takes place within the Council, from the Revenues and Benefits Service to the Housing Service.

Therefore there is a risk that some tenants may not prioritise payment of rent and the level of arrears may increase. The Housing Service is taking action on this matter by informing tenants of these changes and allocating further staff resources to monitoring arrears and supporting tenants with this change.

The universal credit is planned to be introduced for working age customers making a brand new claim from October 2013, and it will be phased in for existing customers over four years.

The draft Universal Credit Regulations and Housing Benefit (Benefit Cap) Regulations 2012 are to come into force from April 2013. It is proposed to introduce an accommodation size regulation for social tenants of working age, allowing for one bedroom for each person or couple living as part of the household. An under-occupation deduction is made at 14% for a bedroom entitlement one fewer than in the property occupied, or 25% for a bedroom entitlement that is two or more fewer than in the property occupied.

The other main risks are in relation to the HRA Treasury Management Strategy. The variable rate loans, representing 27% of the debt portfolio, are secured at very low interest rates. Any increases in these rates would present additional cost and therefore close monitoring of financial market conditions is essential to mitigate the impact.

The fixed rates loans will begin to mature in 2024. At this point any new loans taken to replace the current portfolio could be at higher rates of interest and therefore would also have the potential for increased liabilities. As with the variable rate loans, close monitoring of financial market conditions is required to secure the best investment options for the HRA.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. Consultation with staff is underway, in relation to proposals for a restructure of the Housing Service, so as to be better positioned in the future to take advantage of the benefits and opportunities which Self Financing offers. Whilst there are no direct staffing implications related to the budget, the proposals for change are intended to deliver improved Value for Money; better outcomes and improved customer focus.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. There are no Human rights or equality implications arising directly from this report, although the re-provision and re-modelling of sheltered housing, which this report could make possible through increased investment, would be subject to Equalities Assessment in taking any specific proposals forward.

Community Safety:

6. The Council has a statutory duty to do all that it can to prevent crime and disorder as part of its statutory duties under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. The ambitions set out in the developing Housing Asset Management Strategy include options to increase the investment in housing estates and in so doing ensure that it considers carefully how that investment will make a positive contribution to community safety and crime reduction.

Housing is a key element of supporting both victims and perpetrators of crime and disorder, be that through supporting victims of domestic abuse or the Integrated Offender Management programme, where the lack of available accommodation is often a key stumbling block to moving away from offending, or working with the vulnerable in sheltered housing.

Addressing financial hardship issues and debt is a way to change behaviours that can often break cycles of offending and low level crime. The options set out in the report provide valuable opportunities to work with community safety partners to ensure the best outcomes for Central Bedfordshire.

Sustainability:

7. If approved the new provision of Extra Care Housing will not only address the additional accommodation needs for older people but will also contribute to the regeneration of our town centres and provide wider economic benefits and employment.

Other sustainability issues, such as climate change, represent opportunities for the Council to make buildings more efficient thus delivering savings by decreasing energy use and the total spend on energy. Failure to take action leaves the Council vulnerable to the impact of increasing energy prices.

Procurement:

8. Not applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny:

9. The revenue and capital budgets set out in this draft budget report will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during January 2013.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Executive approves the draft budget proposals for 2013/14 as set out below for consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and other interested parties:

- (a) note the HRA's debt portfolio and interest payments due in 2012/13;**
- (b) approve the proposal for no principal debt repayments in the current financial year or during the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), namely 2012/13-2016/17;**
- (c) approve the creation of a new reserve, to be called the Strategic Reserve;**
- (d) approve funding of the HRA's 2012/13 Capital programme from the negative HRA Capital Financing Requirement, thereby releasing additional funds for the Sheltered Housing Re-Provision Reserve (SHRR) and Strategic Reserve (SR);**
- (e) approve the HRA Draft Revenue Budget for 2013/14 and the Landlord Service Business Plan summary at Appendix A;**
- (f) approve the 2013/14 to 2016/17 HRA Capital Programme at Appendix B;**
- (g) approve the average rent increase of 4.67% for 2013/14 in line with the national rental increase as per the Government's Rent Convergence Policy;**

(h) approve the proposed allocation of £0.2m to support financial advice, money management and debt problems for customers.

Reason for Recommendation: To facilitate effective financial management and planning for the HRA under self-financing.

Executive Summary

10. The Localism Act 2011 brought about fundamental reform to council housing finance. The anachronistic housing subsidy system was abolished on 1 April 2012, in favour of self-financing, which allows councils greater autonomy and influence over the financial management of their housing assets.
11. These changes are a key element of the Government's Localism agenda, serving to devolve power to local authorities. These changes also support the Council's broader objectives for economic regeneration; offer the potential for new build council housing for rent or shared ownership and enable the Council to promote social mobility, as part of a change agenda that includes the Council's first Tenancy Strategy, which proposes to move to new fixed term tenancies from 1 April 2013.
12. On 28 March 2012, the Council took on a debt of £165m; this amount being a proportionate share of the national housing debt, that was re-distributed between all stock holding local authorities, as a once and for all settlement, to enable the anachronistic housing subsidy system to be abolished. Fortunately this occurred during a period when interest rates are at a historic low. The overall effect on the HRA business plan shows rental income will exceed the anticipated costs of managing the stock over the 30 year period. The predicted annual surpluses can either be used for debt repayment; or to invest in local regeneration projects that support employment and deliver economic benefit within the Central Bedfordshire area as well as making the housing estates better places to live.
13. An extensive independent survey of the Council's housing stock indicates that the stock is in good condition overall, and that the current level of capital investment will maintain the stock in that condition, in the medium term. This is in line with the Council performance in maintaining the stock at the Decent Homes standards over recent years. However, a number of sheltered schemes are in need of improvement to bring them up to modern standards, and there are other parts of the stock that would benefit from remodelling, as part of a strategic regeneration plan, that is set out within the developing Housing Asset Management Strategy.
14. This report proposes that the Council defer debt principal repayment, until at least 2017/18, to enable resources to be invested, to achieve strategic impact through increased investment in the local economy and wider regeneration aims. In addition an adjustment to the Capital Financing Requirement is proposed, that will effectively increase the level of Reserves that are available as at the end of the financial year, to fund new investment projects.

- | |
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| 15. The budget proposes to increase tenants' rents by an average of 4.67%, in line with the Government's rent restructuring policy. |
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Introduction

16. The Landlord Service Business Plan is intended to set out a sustainable and affordable plan that addresses a range of Council priorities in relation to its housing stock and to provide a housing management service to tenants and leaseholders over a 30 year period.
17. Under the self-financing regime, the Council must balance asset management objectives for the existing stock with the opportunities for new investment, including new build housing, broader regeneration aims and more targeted objectives that are set out within the developing Housing Asset Management strategy, against the need to manage debt effectively and to make debt repayments in line with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.
18. A Sheltered Housing Re-Provision Reserve (SHRR) has been set up as a source of funding for investment in new build Extra Care accommodation and improvements to the existing sheltered accommodation.
19. A further reserve, to be called the Strategic Reserve (SR), is proposed. This Reserve could be used to finance specific projects or to finance the building of general needs housing.
20. The Business Plan has been devised to maintain a prudent level for HRA balances for contingencies.
21. The Business Plan includes annual proposed budgets for the HRA Capital programme, split between the existing programme required to maintain stock in its current condition and an allocation for Sheltered Housing Re-Provision. The financing of the programme is comprised of capital receipts retained after housing pooling, revenue contributions and Reserves. The revenue implications of the proposed programme are reflected in the Expenditure section of the Business Plan.

Implementation of Self Financing

22. Central Bedfordshire Council was required to make a settlement payment of £164.995m on 28 March 2012, as part of the self-financing arrangements that were legislated for, in the Localism Act 2011.
23. Due to the discretionary rates of interest made available by the Government, as part of the national debt settlement and as a one time only offer to local authorities, the entire loan portfolio was arranged via the Public Works Loan Board, with the constituent loans presented in the table below:

Loan Type	Amount £m	Maturity Date	Rate %	Annual interest payment £m
Fixed	20.000	2024	2.70	0.540
Fixed	20.000	2026	2.92	0.584
Fixed	20.000	2028	3.08	0.616
Fixed	20.000	2030	3.21	0.642
Fixed	20.000	2032	3.30	0.660
Fixed	20.000	2034	3.37	0.674
Variable	44.995	2022	0.58 (variable)	0.261
TOTAL	164.995		2.41 (average)	3.977

24. The Council decided upon a mixed portfolio of debt, comprising variable rate and fixed rate debt. The variable rate debt is redeemable, as and when required, with no early redemption penalties and therefore affords an element of flexibility.
25. Due to the prevailing low level of interest rates the Council has saved a significant sum in the current financial year by taking out 27% of its debt portfolio on a variable basis, as that rate has been confirmed at an average of 0.58% for the year. Whilst interest rates could rise in the future the current expectation in financial markets is for rates to remain low in the short to medium term.
26. All loans have been taken on a maturity (interest only) basis. This approach enables money to be released, for investment purposes, in the early years of the Plan. At the same time surpluses generated over a 30 year period should still enable the Council to repay the entire HRA debt by 2039. The assumption within the Business Plan is that the total debt of £165m will be repaid and the projection of overall surplus generated within the Plan period are sufficient to achieve this aim. Indeed, the aim can still be achieved on the basis that no repayments of principal debt are made in the period up to 2016/17.
27. The debt taken to finance the settlement has resulted in approximately a doubling of the Council's existing debt portfolio. The existing portfolio was entirely General Fund (GF) debt, with the HRA being debt free prior to self financing.
28. Following consultation with the Council's auditors the HRA's self-financing debt has been allocated to a separate "pool" from the GF debt. This means that there will not be an average interest rate across all the Council's loans, so the HRA only will be charged the annual average interest rate on the loans it took out for self-financing. The principle of a ring fence between the General Fund and HRA was retained as part of the Self Financing settlement.

The Benefits of Self-Financing

29. Whilst the Council took out loans for £164.995m, the HRA's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) currently stands at £157.256m, the difference being comprised of £7.739m of negative CFR (over funding).

30. Under self financing the authority's debt cap is set at £164.995m. This enables the Council to increase borrowing (the CFR) fully up to this level.
31. It is proposed to make a one off adjustment and use the majority of the negative CFR (£6.352m) to fund the HRA's capital programme for 2012/13, thereby releasing an equivalent amount from the HRA's revenue budget to transfer to Reserves, in readiness for future investment. This will leave a residual negative CFR balance of £1.387m.
32. After interest payments for 2012/13, the HRA is forecast to make a surplus of £5.396m due to budgeted contributions to reserves, additional rental income, and monies set aside. If the proposals above relating to the CFR are adopted this creates a total potential surplus of £11.748m, which could be allocated to Reserves, to invest in new build or to achieve regeneration aims.
33. Freed from the constraints of the Subsidy system, the HRA is forecast to generate surpluses after interest repayments of approximately £5m each year for the next 4 financial years. This compares favourably to the Subsidy system, where approximately £10m a year was paid to Central Government, to be re-distributed to other local authorities. The Council has therefore benefitted from the new Self Financing regime.

The Case for Investment in Regeneration and Extra Care

34. One of the key social and economic drivers of change within Central Bedfordshire is demographic growth, particularly amongst older people. Overall the population of Central Bedfordshire is expected to increase by 18% over the next 30 years. This growth is distorted by the increased life expectancy of people aged over 75 years, as this group of people are expected to increase in number, by 193% between 2009 and 2030.
35. There is a need for additional accommodation for older people, to replace existing sheltered provision and to meet the support and care needs of frail older people. The demographic growth referred to above is likely to place increasing demand on the care system in general, and on Adult Social Care budgets within the General Fund. There is also increasing demand to adapt the homes of older people, to enable them to remain safe and independent.
36. The Council is taking a strategic approach to meeting the care, support and housing needs of older people; specifically to develop new provision of extra care housing across Central Bedfordshire in the period up to 2020. The expansion of extra care housing is likely to be delivered by the Council and partners working to a common aim. The Landlord Service can take a leading and significant role in the expansion of extra care housing, in part to provide an alternative to, or to replace the existing provision of sheltered housing, some of which is outmoded and potentially costly to re-model. The Landlord service is investigating potential development opportunities for Extra Care housing in the Central Bedfordshire area.

37. This analysis of potential development opportunities, on a site specific basis, has taken into account surpluses/deficits occurring over a 45 year period, break even points and net present value, whilst also giving consideration to location, size of scheme, and the potential for economic benefit as well as wider regeneration aims.
38. A proposal is emerging, for the Landlord Service to develop an extra care housing scheme in Dunstable town centre during 2014, as part of a larger development, which incorporates nursing care provision and also residential development. This proposal will achieve strategic impact in terms of town centre regeneration.
39. The anticipated total cost for this scheme is £12.300m, spread over the financial years 2013/14 and 2014/15. Whilst partial funding will be sought from the Homes and Communities Agency there is the possibility that the complete cost will fall to the HRA. A detailed report will be presented to the Executive early in 2013, to consider this investment opportunity.
40. In addition to the cost of the Extra Care scheme, there are a number of Sheltered housing schemes that are in need of improvement to bring them up to modern standards. The Council's Sheltered Tenants Action Group (STAG) is working closely with the Landlord Service to evaluate individual schemes, in terms of investment need and preferred outcome, on a scheme by scheme basis.
41. There are also other investments projects that have been identified through work undertaken to develop a draft Housing Asset Management Strategy for consultation. Work is underway to determine the best options in each situation, as these projects are challenging mainly because they require consideration as to the best use of the asset, which could be an alternative use; or disposal; or re-development; or investment and re-modelling. In many cases an input of financial resources will be required, to enable a preferred option to be achieved.
42. The Landlord Service Business Plan, as summarised in Appendix A, indicates that more significant surpluses will materialise after the first 10 years of the 30 year plan, allowing for greater repayment of debt in the longer term. In the first ten years of the plan a net operating income of £130m is forecast, compared to a figure of £472m in the next 20 years.
43. This pattern indicates that repayment of debt in the early years of the Business Plan will constrain investment capability to a far greater extent than will debt repayment that occurs further on into the Business Plan period. Essentially, there is greater scope to repay debt in the medium to longer term.
44. The Business Plan allows the Council to have flexibility as to whether it repays debt in the early years of the plan or chooses to invest its surpluses to meet a range of objectives that include sheltered housing re-provision; targeted investment projects; new build provision and broader regeneration aims.

45. In order to avoid early redemption penalties, any debt repayments that occur in the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) would be made from the variable rate proportion of the debt (which totals £44.995m). It is worth noting that currently the average interest charge on this debt is only 0.58% per annum, and the interest cost for the year is just £0.261m.
46. If the Council does choose to redeem debt it is very unlikely that it would be able to borrow in the future at these low rates of interest.
47. Given the current low cost of financing for its variable debt, together with the benefits to tenants of potential new investment, it is proposed to defer any repayments of debt principal, for the period of the MTFP. That is, not to repay debt until 2017/18 at the earliest. This position would be kept under review during this period; and any new investment proposals would be subject to approval by the Executive on a case by case basis. This would afford the Executive an opportunity to consider whether the benefits of investment in this period continue to outweigh the risks and financial consequences of an approach where debt is not repaid in the relatively short term, to 2017.
48. In the meantime it is proposed that the interest rate on variable debt should be carefully monitored. Since this rate only changes every 6 months there would be an opportunity to react if rates were to increase. However this is not predicted to occur.
49. If the above measures are implemented, the surplus of £11.748m referred to above could be allocated to the Sheltered Housing Re-provision Reserve (SHRR) and the Strategic Reserve (SR). It is proposed that the greater majority of this sum - £8.653m - is transferred to the SHRR to allow funding for the development of an Extra Care scheme, with £3.095m transferred to the SR.
50. Over the last 5 years the HRA Balances have been maintained at or around £4.000m (current balance £3.905m). This was a sensible contingency during the era of the Subsidy system, when strategic planning was constrained by the requirement to pay negative subsidy of about £10m per year to Central Government.
51. Given the changes brought about by the Self Financing regime, an updated risk assessment has been carried out and it is proposed to reduce this balance to a still prudent level of £2.000m, as a more suitable contingency. The residual £1.905m will be used to enhance the SR so the balance of the SR reserve carried forward as at 31 March 2012 is £5.000m. Having reviewed the Landlord Service Business Plan, together with the investment plans identified within this report, the Responsible Finance Officer, (S151 officer) has assessed the proposed allocation of HRA Balances as being appropriate to provide a buffer against unexpected financial developments. In the context of the Self Financing regime it is important to hold some balances for this purpose, whilst optimising the resources available for the development of the service.

Budget Objectives

52. The principle objectives of the 2013/14 Budget have been:

- i. Produce a sustainable plan which enables the Landlord Service to achieve the objectives within its Asset Management Strategy, by maintaining investment in the existing stock, consistent with the level of investment that was achieved in the period 2002-2012 and in accordance with the Stock Condition Survey, to maintain the asset in good condition;
- ii. Maintain a realistic level of expenditure on supervision and management;
- iii. Provide for debt related interest costs based on a prudent estimation of interest rate charges;
- iv. Maintain HRA Balances at £2.000m;
- v. Allocate sufficient resources to the SHRR to enable the commencement of works at the Council's first new build Extra Care scheme and the capability to undertake other projects to enhance the Council's existing Sheltered Accommodation;
- vi. Allocate resources to the SR to support the business plan, for example to fund other regeneration projects;
- vii. A continuing commitment to efficiency as a means of reducing unit costs; increasing income and maximising business efficiency.

53. Assumptions

The budget is based upon, and includes, the following key assumptions:

Economic

- i. For 2013/14, inflation of 1% on pay, 2% on supplies and services and 4% on rental income (2% on service charge income);
- ii. Inflation of 2% on pay, supplies and services and capital programme expenditure up until 2016/17, with 3.5% in the following years;
- iii. Inflation of 4% on income for years 2013/14 – 2015/16 to allow for the increases in rent required to achieve rent convergence in April 2015, and 3.5% in the years that follow; and
- iv. 3% average interest rate on debt in 2013/14, increasing to 3.5% for 2014/15 and 2015/16, 4% up to 2022/23, and 5% for the remainder of the plan. This reflects the potential for variable interest rates to rise in the medium term and for interest rates to be higher when the Council comes to refinance its longer term fixed interest debts.

Financial

- i. HRA Balances to remain at approximately £2.000m until such time as the debt is repaid, thereby reducing debt related costs rather than building up unnecessary levels of reserves;
- ii. Surpluses that remain after revenue expenditure, capital expenditure, and debt interest costs are to be allocated to the earmarked reserve for Sheltered Housing Re-provision (SHR) and the Strategic Reserve (SR). The SR is then available to support the business plan, e.g. for further investment;
- iii. 2% allowance for voids in calculation of rental income over plan period;. Voids performance is improving which has enabled the Landlord Service to achieve an efficiency saving during 2012/13.
- iv. A Value for Money (VFM) strategy relating specifically to the Efficiency Programme that is set out within the Landlord Service Business Plan Summary, which identifies a saving of £0.190m against the cost of the landlord service in 2013/14, and projects year on year savings over the life of the plan; and
- v. A prudent approach to treasury management with a debt profile balanced between an element of variable rate loans and fixed rate loans in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

Operational

- i. The plans for stock investment are in line with the stock condition survey data over a 30 year period;
- ii. The delivery of the priorities set out in the Housing Asset Management Strategy; and
- iii. A continuing improvement in the Council's offer to tenants and leaseholders, as well as delivery of estate improvements and wider regeneration aims.

External – Changes to Right to Buy

- i. Potential loss of income arising from an increased number of Right to Buy (RtB) sales will not adversely affect the Landlord Service Business Plan.
- ii. New RTB discounts and proposals for re-investing the capital receipts came into effect from April 2012, which increase the maximum discount available to tenants from £0.034m to £0.075m.
- iii. Central Government are keen to incentivise tenants to exercise their Right to Buy, as it is the intention to replace each property sold in this way with a new build property.

- iv. The self-financing settlement was based on the average amount of RtB sales in the 4 preceding financial years, and therefore did not take into account the changes to discounts.
- v. Government have altered the Housing Pooling regulations to compensate Local Authorities for this change, so that the proportion of debt attributable to those properties sold by RtB is deducted from the sale receipt prior to the calculation of the amount to be transferred (or “pooled”).
- vi. The calculation of pooling takes into account the receipts for the Council and Government as modelled into the self-financing calculations. The residual (or “surplus”) receipt is retained by the Council, under the strict condition that the Council facilitates new build on a one for one basis for each property sold.
- vii. For the additional properties sold as a result of increased discounts there is a resultant loss of rental income, which affects the 30 year cash flows in the Business Plan. However there will also be a reduction in expenditure on each of these properties, which will vary depending upon the archetype and condition of each property.
- viii. In the majority of cases, each property will add a financial value to the Business Plan so there is a loss experienced as a result of the extra RtB sales. The surplus receipt will mitigate this loss.
- ix. Careful monitoring of RtB sales will be required. Current projections suggest that these will not have a material impact on the Business Plan, particularly if the number of new build properties exceeds the properties sold. However if annual RtB sales were to make up a significant percentage of the Housing Stock , such that it diminished by 10% or more over the period to 31 March 2017, then this would pose a threat to the surpluses predicted both in the medium to longer term.
- x. If a high rate of sales continued into the medium term the viability of the Council’s HRA could be called into question as unit costs would be likely to increase.

Other

- i. Future governments will not re-open the debt settlement and increase the amount payable.

2013/14 Budget

- 54. Following the base budget build exercise undertaken for the 2012/13 budget cycle, a similar approach has been adopted for 2013/14. The starting point for the budget build has been the forecast outturn position for 2012/13 taking account of the budget management information as at 31 July 2012.

55. This base budget position was adjusted for inflation and efficiencies secured and have now been used to populate the Landlord Services Business Plan.
56. The budget predicts total income for the year of £27.378m with expenditure of £17.665m, delivering a net operating income before debt costs of £9.713m. If proposals on debt repayment are approved this would result in a net surplus of £4.805m (after interest costs of £4.908m).

Landlord Service Business Plan

57. There has been a legislative requirement for stock retaining authorities to keep and maintain a Financial Plan since the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act.
58. Generally Landlord Service Business Plans are presented over a 30 year basis. This is due to the requirement to plan ahead for significant capital investment over the longer term. The housing stock is comprised of a variety of property archetypes constructed at different times. Careful analysis is needed to prepare for peaks in expenditure related to repairs and maintenance over this period.
59. A stock condition survey of the entire stock was completed during 2012/13. The information gathered in this survey has been used to inform the development of a 30 year Housing Asset Management Strategy, which forecasts repairs, maintenance and capital costs. These are reflected in the Landlord Service Business Plan summary, attached at Appendix A.
60. Income from rents and service charges form the main funding for the HRA. The model assumes that rents will rise in line with inflation, as measured by the Retail Prices Index. This is consistent with the policy of rent restructuring, which was introduced by Central Government in April 2002 in line with the Rent Convergence policy.
61. The national Rent Convergence policy is distorted to some extent by the introduction of the new Affordable Rent regime, at rents of up to 80% of market rents. At this time, Council rents are typically in the range of 50% to 55% of market rents in Central Bedfordshire. Looking to the future, and on the basis of current national Policy, it is likely that council rents will remain within this range, relative to market rents, in the medium to long term.
62. Table 1 below shows a summary of the plan for the period of the Council's Medium Term Landlord Service Business Plan (MTFP).

Table 1

£M	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Income	(27.4)	(28.5)	(29.5)	(30.5)
Spending on Revenue	11.4	11.3	11.5	11.8
Direct Revenue Financing*	6.5	6.2	6.3	6.4
Debt costs (interest)	4.9	5.7	5.7	6.5
Efficiency Savings	(0.2)	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)
Contribution to SHRR**	3.9	4.2	5.5	5.0
Contribution to SR***	0.9	1.2	0.6	0.9
Net Balance	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

* Financing of Capital programme by Revenue

** Sheltered Housing Re-provision Reserve

*** Strategic Reserve

Value for Money (VfM)

63. VfM benchmarking analysis, undertaken on an annual basis, has provided activity-based comparisons with other providers on cost, quality and performance. This exercise has produced options for efficiency savings across the service.
64. The analysis provided by benchmarking 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.
65. The 2012/13 HRA efficiency programme is on target to deliver £0.400m of savings. A further efficiency programme has been designed, incorporating £0.530m of savings over 4 years.
66. The VfM Strategy will drive improvements in Performance, on the basis that the Council should aim to be “high performing at low cost”.

Rent increase

67. The Government’s Rent Convergence Policy aims to ensure that the rents for similar properties in the same area are the same, whether managed by a Council or Housing Association landlord. The Policy essentially uses a formula to determine rent levels, which includes three main factors: property size; market value and local earnings to determine what rents should be in an area. Council rents, and also the rents of Aragon Housing Association, (AHA) (as mainly the stock of the former Mid Beds District Council) are typically below the level of rent which the formula determines as the prescribed rent level in Central Bedfordshire.

68. Over recent years, Council rents and also the rents of AHA have been increasing at a rate that is above inflation, in line with the formula, so as to converge by 2015/16 with the prescribed level of rents that is set by the formula itself. Currently, Council rents are in the range of 50-55% of current market rents, which is affordable and within limits that are eligible for Housing Benefits.
69. The formula prescribes and also limits the rate of increase. The proposed rent increase for 2013/14 is based on an increase in rent of RPI + 0.5% + a contribution to close the gap between average local authority rents and Housing Association Rents. The contribution element is reliant upon the convergence timeframe, which has been set by Government at 3 years.
70. It is proposed that rents are set in line with the Government's recommended guideline rent increase (i.e. the formula), which is an increase of 4.67% on average for Central Bedfordshire Council tenants. This will result in an average increase per week of £4.58 from the 2012/13 average weekly rent of £97.78 to £102.36. In a limited number of cases the weekly increase is higher, up to 6.41%.
71. It is recognised that some customers are experiencing financial hardship and in particular, are experiencing problems related to money management and debt. The Housing Management team is focussed on financial inclusion and assisting people to be able to budget, to ensure they are able to pay their rent as well as meet other financial obligations and ordinary living costs.
72. It is proposed that a £0.200m provision is made within the budget, specifically to be able to support financial advice; and tackle money management and debt problems for customers. Further work will be undertaken to develop the proposal, which could include innovative ideas to relieve hardship, for example, the possibility of nominal zero interest hardship loans to customers, in specific circumstances. The resource will be used to promote financial inclusion, at a time of economic hardship for some customers.
73. The Council is developing its first Tenancy Strategy 2013-18, which proposes to introduce fixed term tenancies, for a period of five years, from 1 April 2013. The impact of the proposed change, from 2018/19 onwards is difficult to predict but there is a potential for increased rent income loss and also increased Voids costs, when a property is re-let. This may be offset by Government proposals, which include 'Pay to Stay', which could result in increased income to the Business Plan. The risk to income is not immediate or predictably significant in terms of value. Therefore, no adjustment has been made at this time, in the forecast either of void cost or rental income over the 30 year business plan.

HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

74. The draft 2013/14 – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) detailed Capital programme is attached at Appendix B.
75. The capital programme is financed by capital receipts from RtB and land sales, contributions from retained rentals (revenue contributions), and contributions from Reserves.

76. A breakdown of this financing is shown at the bottom of Appendix A.

CONCLUSION

77. Central Bedfordshire Council is ideally positioned to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the self-financing regime, to benefit the local economy and to support wider aims including regeneration and to manage effectively what is a valuable asset. The Landlord service is well placed to invest in new build housing for rent and shared ownership as well as Extra care housing to meet the needs of older people and to replace outdated sheltered provision.
78. As the first year of self-financing draws to a close, Central Bedfordshire Council is already benefiting from the ability to be more strategic in planning how best to manage the asset, to benefit tenants and residents, as well as to achieve wider council objectives .
79. For the first time in over 30 years the Council has the potential to build new homes and by focussing on the needs of an older population, there is scope to also achieve General Fund efficiency savings, through provision of Extra Care housing.
80. Self-financing also transforms the Housing Offer to existing tenants by delivering the potential for estate improvement and re-modelling of sheltered and general needs stock.
81. The debt portfolio selected for the self-financing settlement has delivered lower than anticipated interest rate costs, to make available additional resources to fund the Housing Asset Management Strategy.
82. As a result of the flexible debt strategy, the Council has an opportunity to increase the resources available to deliver its district wide objectives by deferring debt repayments. It is proposed to defer debt repayments during the course of the MTFP, whilst monitoring closely fluctuations in interest rate costs.
83. It is also recommended that the HRA's Capital programme for 2012/13 is financed by the negative CFR, thus releasing further resources for investment over the MTFP.
84. If these proposals are approved it is forecast that the HRA will have a total of £15.653m in its Reserves as at 31 March 2013, comprised of £8.653m in the Sheltered Housing Re-provision Reserve, £5.000m in the Strategic Reserve, and £2.000m in HRA Balances.

Appendices:

- Appendix A 30 year forecast of Landlord Service capital and revenue expenditure; and also income, which is the summary of the Landlord Service Business Plan model
- Appendix B Draft 2013/14 – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) detailed Capital programme

Background/Briefing Papers (open to public inspection):

Implementing self-financing for council housing. Department for Communities and Local Government, February 2011

Modelling business plans for council landlords. Local authority financial model user guide. Department for Communities and Local Government, February 2011

Self financing: planning the transition. Department for Communities and Local Government, February 2011

All stated papers are located at Watling House, Dunstable, Rm 46, High Street North, LU6 1LF. Alternatively, they are available online at www.communities.gov.uk, or on request from Tony Keaveney, Assistant Director Housing.

LANDLORD SERVICE BUSINESS PLAN

Revenue Account	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023-24	TOTAL
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Income	-27,378	-28,463	-29,555	-30,604	-31,688	-32,784	-33,921	-35,096	-36,314	-37,573	-1,101,940	-1,425,315	
Expenditure													
Housing Management	4,152	4,140	4,158	4,176	4,282	4,390	4,501	4,614	4,730	4,848	125,720		
Financial Inclusion	200	204	208	212	220	227	235	244	252	261	7,636		
Asset Management	965	984	1,004	1,024	1,060	1,097	1,136	1,175	1,216	1,259	36,849		
Corporate Services	1,320	1,347	1,373	1,401	1,450	1,501	1,553	1,608	1,664	1,722	50,405		
Maintenance	4,528	4,555	4,678	4,893	4,973	5,147	5,327	5,513	5,799	5,906	172,260		
Debt Related Costs	119	121	126	130	134	139	144	149	154	160	4,674		
Direct Revenue Financing	6,570	6,180	6,309	6,440	6,672	6,913	7,162	7,420	7,686	7,962	234,906		
Landlord Service Efficiency Programme	-190	-130	-130	-80	-83	-86	-89	-92	-95	-98	-2,878		
Total Expenditure	17,665	17,401	17,725	18,196	18,708	19,329	19,969	20,631	21,407	22,019	629,572	822,622	
Net Operating Expenditure	-9,713	-11,062	-11,830	-12,408	-12,979	-13,456	-13,951	-14,465	-14,907	-15,554	-472,368	-602,693	
Interest payments	4,908	5,726	5,726	6,544	6,544	6,431	6,299	6,147	5,974	5,782	60,335	120,417	
Debt Repayment	0	0	0	0	2,835	3,299	3,796	4,326	4,802	5,496	139,054	163,608	
Net surplus	-4,805	-5,336	-6,104	-5,864	-3,600	-3,726	-3,856	-3,991	-4,131	-4,276	-272,979	-318,668	
Memorandum													
Debt Repayment Profile													
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) b/fwd	157,256	163,608	163,608	163,608	163,608	160,773	157,474	153,678	149,352	144,550	139,054	139,054	
Increase in CFR (in/next borrowing)	6,352	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reduction in CFR (principal repayment)	0	0	0	0	-2,835	-3,299	-3,796	-4,326	-4,802	-5,496	-139,054	0	
CFR c/fwd	163,608	163,608	163,608	163,608	160,773	157,474	153,678	149,352	144,550	139,054	139,054	139,054	
Sheltered Housing Re-provision Reserve													
Balance Brought Forward	-8,653	-8,439	-4,371	-5,716	-6,541	-5,891	-5,891	-5,367	-4,723	-4,215	-3,596	-3,121	
Contribution to Reserve (from Net Surplus)	-3,912	-4,182	-4,470	-4,950	-3,600	-3,726	-3,856	-3,991	-4,131	-4,276	-125,147	-167,240	
Contribution from Reserve (to fund expenditure)	4,125	8,250	4,125	4,125	4,250	4,250	4,500	4,500	4,750	4,750	122,500		
Balance Carried Forward	-8,439	-4,371	-5,716	-6,541	-5,891	-5,367	-4,723	-4,215	-3,596	-3,121	-5,768		
Strategic Reserve													
Balance Brought Forward	-5,000	-5,893	-7,047	-7,681	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	
Contribution to Reserve (from Net Surplus)	-893	-1,154	-634	-914	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Contribution from Reserve (to fund expenditure)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Balance Carried Forward	-5,893	-7,047	-7,681	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	-8,595	
HRA Balances													
Balance Brought Forward	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	
Contribution (to)/from Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Balanced Carried Forward	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	
Capital Programme													
Existing HRA Programme	6,770	6,380	6,509	6,640	6,872	7,113	7,362	7,620	7,886	8,162	238,906	310,220	
Sheltered Housing Re-provision	4,125	8,250	4,125	4,125	4,250	4,250	4,500	4,500	4,750	4,750	122,500	170,125	
Total Capital programme	10,895	14,630	10,634	10,765	11,122	11,363	11,862	12,120	12,636	12,912	361,406	480,345	
Financed by:													
Capital Receipts	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	4,000	6,000	
Revenue Contributions	6,570	6,180	6,309	6,440	6,672	6,913	7,162	7,420	7,686	7,962	234,906	304,220	
Reserves	4,125	8,250	4,125	4,125	4,250	4,250	4,500	4,500	4,750	4,750	122,500	170,125	
Total Capital programme	10,895	14,630	10,634	10,765	11,122	11,363	11,862	12,120	12,636	12,912	361,406	480,345	

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE CAPITAL PROGRAMME
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Title and Description of the Scheme	Revised Draft Capital Programme for 2013/14				Revised Draft Capital Programme for 2014/15				Revised Draft Capital Programme for 2015/16				Revised Draft Capital Programme for 2016/17			
	Gross Expenditure		Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure		Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure		Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure		Net Expenditure	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
General Enhancements (formerly Minor Works)	255	0	255	260	260	265	0	265	271	0	271	271	0	271	0	271
Various one-off projects required on an ad hoc basis and not identified in a specific capital project, eg defective damp-proof.																
Garage Refurbishment	51	0	51	52	52	53	0	53	54	0	54	54	0	54	0	54
To ensure our garage block sites are in a safe and secure condition.																
Paths & Fences siteworks	61	0	61	62	62	64	0	64	65	0	65	65	0	65	0	65
Identification of defects and design, plan and install improvements.																
Estate Improvements	255	0	255	260	260	265	0	265	271	0	271	271	0	271	0	271
Improvement to the amenities and appearance of our neighbourhood.																
Energy Conservation	255	0	255	260	260	265	0	265	271	0	271	271	0	271	0	271
Improve the energy efficiency of the housing stock.																
Roof Replacement	248	0	248	253	253	258	0	258	263	0	263	263	0	263	0	263
A programme of replacement where the roof covering is inadequate.																
Central Heating Installation	1,071	0	1,071	1,092	1,092	1,114	0	1,114	1,137	0	1,137	1,137	0	1,137	0	1,137
Delivery of affordable warmth and improvement to thermal comfort while reducing harmful emissions.																
Rewiring	347	0	347	354	354	361	0	361	368	0	368	368	0	368	0	368
Improvement to wiring for efficiency and safety reasons.																
Kitchens and Bathrooms	1,122	0	1,122	1,144	1,144	1,167	0	1,167	1,191	0	1,191	1,191	0	1,191	0	1,191
Identify properties that will fail the Decent Home Standard and institute remedial action.																
Central Heating communal	180	0	180	183	183	187	0	187	191	0	191	191	0	191	0	191
To deliver affordable warmth and improve thermal comfort while reducing harmful emissions.																
Secure door entry	357	0	357	364	364	371	0	371	379	0	379	379	0	379	0	379
Replacement of front and rear doors with quality composite doors.																
Structural Repairs	153	0	153	156	156	159	0	159	162	0	162	162	0	162	0	162
Correction of structural defects arising from subsidence.																
Aids and adaptations	887	0	887	905	905	923	0	923	942	0	942	942	0	942	0	942
Where it is not possible to relocate to adapted properties the resource enables us to adapt the clients current property.																
Capitalised Salaries	350	0	350	357	357	364	0	364	371	0	371	371	0	371	0	371
Capitalise salary costs within Asset Management for time spent on the capital programme.																
Asbestos management	131	0	131	133	133	136	0	136	139	0	139	139	0	139	0	139
Identify, monitor, and dispose of asbestos correctly.																

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE CAPITAL PROGRAMME
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Title and Description of the Scheme	Revised Draft Capital Programme for 2013/14				Revised Draft Capital Programme for 2014/15				Revised Draft Capital Programme for 2015/16				Revised Draft Capital Programme for 2016/17			
	Gross Expenditure		Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure		Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure		Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure		Net Expenditure	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Stock Remodelling Various projects that have been identified to enhance the stock: eg. improve insulation, convert bedsits to flats, convert flat to pitch roofs, construct lift shafts, etc.	458	0	458	0	470	0	470	0	479	0	479	0	485	0	485	0
Drainage & Water Supply A programme of improvements to water supplies and water mains systems where these systems have deteriorated due to age.	181	0	181	0	75	0	75	0	78	0	78	0	80	0	80	0
Plasticisation Changing wooden fascia and soffit boards for plastic ones.	408	0	408	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sheltered Housing Reprovision Renewal of Sheltered Accommodation with focus on Extra care provision.	4,125	0	4,125	0	8,250	0	8,250	0	4,125	0	4,125	0	4,125	0	4,125	0
Total	10,895	0	10,895	0	14,630	0	14,630	0	10,634	0	10,634	0	10,765	0	10,765	0

Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: Council Tax Support Scheme
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources

Summary: The purpose of the report is to provide the Executive with an overview of the outcomes from the public consultation and make recommendations to Council for a local Council Tax Support Scheme from 1 April 2013.

Advising Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Financial Officer & section 151 officer
Contact Officer: Gary Muskett, Head of Revenues & Benefits
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:

By protecting vulnerable and elderly people as well as providing incentives to work, the proposed Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme is designed to support the Council's Medium Term Plan priorities of:

- Promoting health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
- Improved educational attainment.

Financial:

1. Provisional Government funding to local authorities for Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes is based on a 10% cut in the forecast Council Tax Benefit (CTB) expenditure for 2012/13. There are indications that this is a low estimate and the real figure could be as high as 14%. The funding will be an up-front allocation for all billing and major precepting authorities, and will not be ring-fenced. The Council will not obtain confirmation of the grant receivable until mid December 2012, as part of the 2013/14 Local Government Settlement.
2. The gross CTB expenditure within Central Bedfordshire is presently £16.7m and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) indicative funding will leave a shortfall of about £2.5m for the Council to deliver a local CTS scheme.

3. The proposed reduction in funding represents a significant financial risk, as it will not include any provision to manage increased take up which is likely to happen due to the number of new properties being built within Central Bedfordshire during the short and medium term. The current CTB is the most under-claimed of all benefits, which again indicates that there is considerable scope for an increase in take up under the new CTS scheme.
4. There will be an increase in the administration costs to the Council for administering the new scheme and it is not clear whether this will be fully funded by DCLG. The Council has received an initial grant for implementation costs and is expecting to receive a further new burdens grant in 2012/13. The administration grant for the existing Housing Benefit scheme will be reduced by £190,821 in 2013/14.
5. There are anticipated to be further consequential costs arising from the implementation of the local CTS scheme. These are expected to include an impact on cash flow arising from delays in collecting Council Tax, increased levels of Council Tax non collection and hence an increase in the bad debt provision, increased costs of Council Tax collection from increased volumes of notices impacting upon paper, enveloping, postage and printing costs.

Legal:

6. The current Council Tax Benefit system will be abolished on 31 March 2013 under Section 33 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012, which received Royal Assent on 8 March 2012. The Local Government Finance Bill received Royal assent on 31 October 2012. Regulations and secondary legislation were issued in November 2012.
7. The Local Government Finance Act states that for each financial year, Council must consider whether to revise its Council Tax Support scheme or replace it with another scheme and that such decisions need to be made by 31 January in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to take effect. If the Council does not approve a Council Tax scheme by 31 January 2013, a default scheme will be imposed on the Council which will be effective from 1 April 2013.

Risk Management:

8. The transfer from Council Tax Benefit to localised Council Tax Support is likely result in increased demand with a consequent increase in costs.
9. The Council and its precepting partners will need to monitor closely local social and economic changes and ensure there is a contingency for possible future shortfalls in funding. This may mean that the scheme designed needs to allow for these risks by providing for savings in excess of the currently known reduction in funding.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

10. In the short term, the introduction of a local CTS scheme is likely to lead to a significant increase in the number of customers who contact the Council. These contacts will need to be managed by the Revenues and Benefits teams and Customer Services.

Equalities/Human Rights:

11. Public authorities have a statutory duty to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and 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.
12. A full equality assessment is provided at Appendix B as part of the approval process to ensure that due regard is given to the impact of the proposed scheme on the Council's residents, particularly those who are vulnerable and hard to reach.

Public Health:

13. Not Applicable.

Community Safety:

14. Not Applicable.

Sustainability:

15. Not Applicable.

Procurement:

16. Not Applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny:

17. The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this matter on 18 December 2012. The Committee endorsed the Council Tax Support scheme for approval and adoption by the Executive and Full Council respectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **acknowledge the findings and outcomes from the Council Tax Support scheme consultation carried out with residents and stakeholders as set out in sections 33 to 46 of this report and the Consultation report attached as Appendix A;**
2. **note the estimated financial implications arising from the recommended scheme for the Council's local Council Tax Support scheme with effect from 1 April 2013;**

3. recommend to Full Council on 24 January 2013 to approve the local Council Tax Support scheme as proposed with this report;
4. approve the Council Tax Discretionary Discounts policy attached as Appendix D; and
5. recommend to Full Council on 24 January 2013 to approve the payment of a Council Tax Support Grant to each parish as proposed with this report in sections 67 to 71.

<i>Reason for Recommendations:</i>	<i>So that Full Council can endorse the Central Bedfordshire Council local Council Tax Support scheme. If the scheme is not approved by 31 January 2013, the Council will have to award local Council Tax Support in accordance with the Government's default scheme which will result in the cost of the scheme exceeding the Government grant to the Authority for local Council Tax Support.</i>
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Executive Summary

18. In November 2010 the Government announced a major overhaul of the current benefits system (the Welfare Reform Bill). Part of this reform included the abolition of Council Tax Benefit (CTB). This will be replaced by local Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes administered by individual billing authorities.
19. The CTS reforms require local authorities to design their own schemes to deliver Council Tax Support. The schemes will be implemented from April 2013 but must be agreed by Full Council by 31 January 2013.
20. On 21 August Executive approved the proposed draft scheme for Central Bedfordshire Council and consultation on that scheme was undertaken from 21 August to 14 November. Following the consultation period it is now necessary for the final scheme to be approved.
21. People of pension age have been protected from any cuts in local Council Tax Support and their Support must be calculated in the same way as the present Council Tax Benefit scheme. The local Council Tax Support scheme has therefore had to be devised for people of working age.
22. The Central Bedfordshire Council scheme seeks to achieve cost neutrality, i.e. the cut in Government funding is to be offset by making reductions in the amount of support that working age households can receive and by removing existing discounts and exemptions on empty homes and second homes. A scheme that is not cost neutral is likely to result in either additional efficiency savings or cuts to Council services.

Background

23. The government has made provision within the Local Government Finance Act to replace the current national Council Tax Benefit (CTB) scheme from 1 April 2013 with localised schemes for Council Tax Support (CTS) devised by individual (or groups of) local authorities (LA's).
24. Responsibility within central Government for Council Tax Support has passed from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) (responsible for the existing national scheme) to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (responsible for the localised provision from April 2013).
25. Local CTS schemes will be funded by a fixed grant unlike the current Council Tax Benefit scheme which has demand-led funding. The fixed grant will result in an immediate reduction to funding when compared to current levels of subsidised expenditure. The headline reduction is 10% but draft figures issued by DCLG indicate that the reduction for the Council is closer to 14%.
26. Local Authorities have a duty to run a local Council Tax Support Scheme within their area that must contain the following:
 - Pensioner claimants will be protected from changes to their existing CTB award through the provision of a statutory scheme. The protection for pensioner claimants will result in the 10% financial saving referred to in section 25 above falling disproportionately on working-age claimants unless it can be met through other arrangements.
 - Schemes must support work incentives. The CLG Policy Statement of Intent does not give a recommended approach to be taken but indicates the considerations of the scheme design that may impact upon work decisions and which local authorities may want to consider.
 - Under the Local Government Finance Bill, the Council must, in the following order, consult with major precepting authorities (i.e. the Police & Fire Authorities), publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit and consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.
 - The Council must make its scheme and publish it in such manner as it thinks fit. The decision to make the scheme is reserved for Full Council and cannot be delegated.
 - Once a local Council Tax Support scheme has been made by the Council, it cannot be revised for at least one financial year. A Billing Authority must however *consider* whether to revise or replace its scheme with another one on an annual basis. In practice, this would require any proposals to amend the scheme to be drafted in the summer months to enable consultation and decision making processes to be concluded in time for Council Tax annual billing preparations.

- Any revision to a scheme must be made by the Council by the 31 January immediately preceding the financial year in which it is to take effect and will require consultation arrangements to be applied. Additionally, in future, consideration must be given to providing transitional protection where the support is to be reduced or removed.
- Existing CTB claimants on 31 March 2013 including those that have applied for Benefit but not had their entitlement determined at that time, will not need to reapply for CTS as their application will be treated as though it were made for Council Tax Support. This was outlined within the CLG'S Policy Statement of Intent dated 17 May 2012.
- The implementation of the local Council Tax Support scheme coincides with other major reforms to the Welfare system including Universal Credit; the overall Benefit income cap; Housing Benefit restrictions for under-occupation in the social sector; and the devolvement of certain Social Fund functions from central to local government. This is likely to result in some claimants being affected by multiple changes arising from the reforms.

The Council's Proposed CTS scheme

27. The Council undertook consultation concerning its proposed draft scheme which comprised the key principles and features set out below for working age claimants:

Principle 1: Affordability

The Council Tax Support scheme needs to be affordable and sustainable for the Council in the longer term rather than drawing on Council reserves, which can only be used once, or having any impact on frontline Council services.

Principle 2: A fair contribution, those who can pay, should pay

At present, claimants in receipt of income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance or income-related employment and support allowance and other claimants not receiving these but with an income equal to or below the required level for their basic living needs, generally receive 100 per cent Council Tax Benefit (CTB) and therefore pay no Council Tax.

The Council proposes that all working age claimants (unless protected) should pay at least 25 per cent of their Council Tax under the Council Tax Support scheme (CTS).

Principle 3: The scheme should incentivise work

At present, the first £5 of a single claimant's earnings, £10 of a couple's earnings, £25 of a single parent's earnings and £20 in certain circumstances are not counted when calculating their weekly income for the purposes of determining their entitlement to council tax benefit.

The Council proposes to increase this level by an additional £10 a week under its proposed scheme for single claimants, couples and single parents. This would mean that the first £15 of a single claimant's earnings, £20 of a couple's earnings, £35 of a single parent's earnings and £30 of earnings in certain circumstances would not be counted when calculating their entitlement to CTS.

Principle 4: The most vulnerable claimants should be protected (from the minimum contribution)

Claimants will be protected from the 25 per cent minimum contribution if they fall into any of the following categories:

- The claimant must or his partner or dependants must be entitled to one of the following:
 - (i) any of the disability premiums (awarded within the CTS scheme or income support, income- based jobseeker's allowance or income-related employment and support allowance)
 - (ii) disabled earnings disregard
 - (iii) Disabled Persons' Reduction for Council Tax purposes
 - (iv) War Disablement Pension or War Widow's Pension; or
- The claimant must be a lone parent with a child under the age of 5; or
- The claimant must be a single person and on Carer's Allowance; or
- The claimant must be on Carer's Allowance and where they have a partner, the partner is also on Carer's Allowance;
- The claimant must be a single person and on Carer's Allowance; or
- The claimant must be on Carer's Allowance and where they have a partner, the partner is also on Carer's Allowance.

28. Other general features of the proposed scheme were as follows:

Feature 1: Rate of allowances and premiums to be frozen at 2012/2013 levels

Premiums and personal allowances used to determine basic living needs (Applicable Amount) for a claimant and their family when calculating entitlement to CTS shall be held at the rates applied for 2012/13.

Feature 2: Removal of second adult rebate scheme for working age claimants

The current second adult rebate scheme (whereby claimants whose own income/capital is too high to receive CTB, but have other adults(s) in the household whose income is low, can receive a Council Tax discount of up to 25%) is to be abolished for working age claimants.

Feature 3: Extended payments for working age claimants

The current extended payment scheme (whereby claimants can receive 4 weeks extra Council Tax Benefit when they or their partner start work, including self employment or their hours or earnings from current employment increase) is to be retained with our local CTS scheme.

Feature 4: Income in respect of Children

Currently the amount of income we use for benefit purposes can be lowered depending on what kind of income it is. This means that a claimant can have more money coming in before we begin to reduce the amount of benefit they receive. We propose to continue disregarding income from Child Benefit and Child maintenance when we calculate a claimant's income.

Feature 5: Everyone in the household should contribute

At present, a deduction is generally made from potential weekly Council Tax Benefit entitlement in respect of other adults aged 18 or over living in the claimant's home. These are referred to as non-dependants. **A non-dependant is a person who is living with the claimant but who is not dependent upon them, and not living in their home on a commercial basis, (i.e. as a joint tenant or sub tenant).** Non-dependants include an adult son or daughter, a mother or father, friend etc of the claimant.

These people are assumed to be giving the claimant some money towards their Council Tax regardless of whether or not they are actually doing so. This assumed contribution is based upon the non-dependant's circumstances. Non-dependant deductions are being retained.

29. The Council's proposed scheme has been established with due regard to the Council's statutory obligations, consultation responses and in order to attempt to distribute the reduced funding available amongst those claimants most in need of financial assistance, while still achieving the necessary financial savings to meet the funding deficit. The detailed legal implications concerning these including the public sector equality duty are set out later in this report.
30. The permutations of options and variations for a localised Council Tax Support scheme are almost infinite and a variety of options and variations were considered prior to the consultation process by officers and through discussions with senior Members. These were used to arrive at the proposed draft scheme which formed the basis of public consultation.

31. The proposed local scheme for consideration by Full Council will consist of both statutorily prescribed requirements as defined for claimants of pensionable age and persons from abroad who are to be excluded from entitlement if they are subject to immigration control and/or not otherwise treated as being in Great Britain. There will also be local requirements for working age claimants which have been developed based upon the Council's set of key principles and accompanying technical mechanisms. These represent variations from the existing CTB scheme for working age claimants.
32. The local Council Tax Support scheme complies with the Government's key principles of protecting Pensioner claimants from changes in their existing CTB award, supports work incentives and gives appropriate consideration to support other vulnerable groups, including those which may require protection under other statutory provisions including the Child Poverty Act 2010, the Disabled Persons Act 1986 and the Equality Act 2010, amongst others.

Consultation Arrangements

33. The consultation period of 21 August to 14 November was in accordance with the 12 weeks recommended in the Government's Code of Practice on consultation.
34. Full detail of the consultation and analysis of results is included in the Consultation report attached as Appendix A to this report.
35. In compliance with the Council's consultation obligations, a range of approaches were used to obtain views and comments for the proposals of the Council's local Council Tax Support Scheme as set out below:
 - All consultation documentation including the questionnaire was available on our website.
 - 500 telephone interviews with a cross section of our residents.
 - 18,000 questionnaires posted to existing claimants, Council Tax payers and landlords potentially affected by changes to discounts or exemptions, external and internal partners such as CABs, Social Landlords and Welfare Rights Group.
 - A feature was published in the Autumn edition of News Central magazine sent to every Central Bedfordshire Council household.
 - Meetings and presentations were held with organisations, including the, Citizens Advice Bureau, Older People's reference group, work clubs, Houghton Regis & Dunstable Children's Centre, Child Poverty Strategy Group, Social Landlords forum, Tenants Panel, Learning & Disability Forum and Carers Forum. Proposals were outlined and comments were recorded by Council representatives.

- Paper copies of the documentation were distributed upon request and were available at each of the Central Bedfordshire Council Libraries and Customer Service Offices.
 - Letters outlining the consultation arrangements and how to access the consultation documentation were also sent to the three Central Bedfordshire MP's.
 - Posters advertising the consultation and how to access documentation were displayed at all Council offices.
36. Correspondence with Council officers and records of Question and Answer sessions at public meetings and forums have been logged and have helped to inform the analysis of the consultation feedback and the findings of this report.

Consultation Responses – Analysis

37. The questionnaire used for the consultation was made available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period and printed copies of the document were distributed at all meetings and forums attended. Printed copies were also available upon request and were available at Central Bedfordshire Council libraries.
38. Respondents were asked a series of questions about how the funding gap should be bridged, the various elements of our proposed scheme such as the protected groups e.g. disabled claimants and whether the level of discounts for empty, uninhabitable and second homes should be varied.
39. There were 1,689 consultation questionnaire responses received.
40. Additionally there were letters and emails received from stakeholders and partners such as Towns and Parish Councils, Housing Associations, Landlords and Voluntary Sector organisations.
41. The size of the consultation questionnaire response represents approximately 10 per cent of the total Benefits caseload. It should also be noted that some respondents only answered part of a question or in the case of free text answers, gave more than one response for consideration. In other cases, no responses were given to a question. Consequently, the weight attached to the results obtained from the responses received should be considered accordingly.
42. The profile of the consultation respondents is provided in Appendix A. There was a good mix of different types of people who responded however, the age profile showed that there was a under-representation of people aged between 30 and 49 years of age and an over representation of people aged 70 and over. This is to be expected considering that we wrote to all existing claimants, approximately half of whom are pensioners.
43. A number of the proposals submitted for consideration were proposed by only one respondent and these cannot be achieved due to operational constraints or are administratively complex to operate. Other proposals have already been included within the draft scheme such as those for pensioners and the disabled.

44. From the telephone survey, the majority (55%) supported the Council's proposed approach to bridging the funding gap i.e. "change who gets a reduction". However, just under half of the consultation questionnaire responses (47%) supported this proposal although it was the most favoured approach from the consultation question.
45. The Combined Fire Authority (CFA) response suggested using a combination of all three measures to fill the funding gap, i.e. "increase Council Tax, Cut Services or change who gets a reduction", they said "The CFA are keen to reduce any detrimental effect financial impact upon itself arising from any reduction in the number of band equivalents across its constituent authority areas." Using a combination of options was also suggested by some consultation respondents too. Finding efficiencies in the running of the Council, reducing waste and reducing salaries were also suggestions.
46. Each of the proposed options has been considered with regard to their suitability and feasibility. In some cases suggestions have not been progressed as the proposed scheme already provides for protection (e.g. disabled and pensionable age) or because they would be administratively complex to apply, financially unviable, or cannot be achieved due to operational constraints. Other suggestions have however been considered and it is proposed that these be included within the proposed scheme as is the case for example in the following two cases:
- Consider increasing Premiums and Personal Allowances used to determine basic living needs (Applicable Amount) for a claimant and their family when calculating entitlement to CTS from 2014/15 at the rate of inflation.
 - Establishing a Hardship Fund to enable applications made under existing powers contained within the Section 13A of the LGFA 1992 to be paid where appropriate.

Risks and assumptions of the recommended scheme

47. The level of our funding deficit cannot be determined with precise accuracy as the government will not be issuing final funding allocations until mid to late December. Any relevant announcements will be updated at the Executive meeting.
48. The amendments to Council Tax exemptions and discounts outlined within this report have been modelled to mitigate £1.7M of the funding deficit, but clearly collection of this amount cannot be predicted with precise accuracy.
49. It is intended that changes to the Council Tax exemptions and discounts will have a social benefit in bringing more empty properties into use in Central Bedfordshire. While this would reduce the savings quoted in the model, each house brought into occupation would attract a New Homes Bonus equivalent to the Council Tax Band D level for each property. Although the extent of this is difficult to predict as it relies on owners' and landlords' behaviour, there would be a net gain to the Council for each of the properties affected.

50. Actual future caseload and expenditure growth cannot be determined with precise accuracy although estimates based on the profiles of current expenditure and caseload has been applied to the financial modelling.
51. The Council Tax collection rate for the claimants affected by the changes cannot be predicted with accuracy as many have not previously been required to pay Council Tax, and are also on low incomes. To this extent, estimates have been used.
52. The combined effects of the wider welfare reforms and the recommended Council Tax Support scheme may result in demographic changes to the Central Bedfordshire population and influence residents decisions concerning where they live and work. This could potentially impact upon demand for other services such as schools admissions and housing although any impact may not be apparent until the scheme has been in operation for some time.
53. If the Council is unable to agree its scheme before 31 January 2013, the “default” scheme will have to be applied with the effect that the level of financial savings required to meet the funding gap will not be achieved. This would require the shortfall to be found either by making savings elsewhere or increasing Council Tax levels. Budget planning for 2013/14 will be at an advanced stage at this point and there will be limited time to implement plans that would enable full year savings to be achieved from other initiatives.

Council Tax discounts and exemptions

54. Following separate consultations, DCLG are proposing to allow Local Authorities discretion concerning some of the currently nationally-set Council Tax discounts and exemptions. Broadly, these are as follows:
 - Class A exemptions (i.e. properties requiring major repair works or structural alterations to bring them back into a habitable condition) currently attract up to a 12 month exemption period. The proposal will permit LA's to award a discount within a range of 0% to 100% for the 12 month period.
 - Class C exemptions (i.e. unoccupied and unfurnished properties) currently entitle their owners to up to a six month exemption period. The proposal will permit LA's discretion to award a discount or discounts within the range of 0% to 100% for specified periods of time within the 6 month period.
 - Second homes discount (empty furnished properties, including both genuine second homes and rented properties vacant between tenancies) currently entitles owners of the property concerned to a 10% discount. The proposals permit removal of this discount.

- Long-term empty properties currently require their owners to make full payment of Council Tax. The proposals permit LA's to apply a multiplier or premium after the property has been empty for over two years of up to 150% of the Council Tax liability to encourage their owners to bring them back into use.
- Repossessed properties are currently exempt from Council Tax. The proposal is that mortgagees who are in possession of an empty property should be liable for the Council Tax charge.

55. The local Council Tax Support scheme consultation questionnaires and surveys included the proposed changes to discounts and exemptions. Broadly speaking the respondents are in favour of the removal of discounts and exemptions in respect of empty homes although only 49% of survey respondents and 61% of the consultation respondents were in favour of removing the exemption on Class A uninhabitable properties.
56. The table below shows the effects of the changes (subject to Full Council approval) proposed for Council Tax discounts and exemptions. Subject to approval, and based on a 95% collection rate for the additional Council Tax debit raised the CTS funding gap may be mitigated by approximately £1.7m.

Type of discount/ exemption	Current Position	Proposed Change	Additional Charges
Class A – uninhabitable	12 month exemption	0% discount	£100,000
Class C – Unoccupied & unfurnished	6 month exemption	0% discount	£1,625,000
Second homes	10% discount	0% discount	£50,000
Long term empty homes	100 Council Tax payable	150% Council Tax payable	£240,000
Repossessed properties	Open ended exemption	100% Council Tax payable	£50,000
Total			£2,065,000
Less Police & Fire share (13.8%)			£295,320
Less 5% bad debt			£107,000
CBC total share			£1,662,680

Council Tax - Discretionary Discounts (Hardship Fund)

57. Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA) dwellings may be exempt from Council Tax if they fall within one of the specified classes as set out in Section 4 of that act (SI 1992/558).
58. The amount of Council Tax payable may be subject to a discount under Section 11 LGFA 1992 where there is no resident, or all but one of them fall to be disregarded.

59. Under the provisions of Section 13 LGFA 1992 the amount may be reduced where it is occupied by a disabled person.
60. Billing Authorities did not have the discretion to grant any further discounts until 2003, when Section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003 inserted a new section 13A into the LGFA 1992. This gave Authorities a broad discretion to reduce the amount of Council Tax payable. This power may be exercised in individual cases or classes of cases.
61. There is a general rule of law that where the Council has a discretionary power, it must not fetter its discretion by having a set of rules that are inflexible. Therefore the criteria contained in the proposed policy represent clear guidance, but it is permissible for the decision maker to come to a different decision than indicated if the information before them justifies such a decision.
62. Any reductions in Council Tax charges will be funded locally by reducing the collectible debit.
63. It is proposed to limit any reduction to a maximum of £500 having due regard to the Council's finances.
64. Each case will be given careful consideration to determine if it is equitable to grant a further discount taking into account the possible impact on cash collection, services and the level of Council Tax set currently and in the future.
65. Any award granted will cease at the end of the relevant financial year and a re-application will be required for consideration of an ongoing discount.
66. The proposed policy is attached at Appendix D.

Funding to Support Town & Parish Councils

67. The result of changing from a subsidised system of Council Tax Benefit to one of reductions in Council Tax will be to effectively reduce the Tax Base across all Parishes in Central Bedfordshire. In May 2012 DCLG published a consultation on how it intends to make funding available to help offset the reduction in Tax Base.
68. The consultation also provided an indicative level of funding allocations including an amount attributable to the local precepting authority (Town and Parish Councils) element of Council Tax. In the case of Central Bedfordshire the indicative funding for Town and Parish Councils amounted to £801,000.
69. The Government has stated its expectation that billing authorities work with local precepting authorities to put in place arrangements to pass on a proportion of the Council Tax Support grant to assist local precepting authorities facing a reduction in their Council Tax Base, in order to avoid excessive rises in the local precept component of Council Tax bills.
70. This report recommends that the indicative grant for local precepting authorities of £801,000 is passed on in full to the local precepting authorities on a proportionate basis, dependent upon the forecast level of Council Tax Support discounts to be awarded in each Parish in 2013/14.

71. The amount of grant set out above, may be subject to amendment, once the Local Government Financial Settlement has been announced. At the time of writing this report this announcement is still awaited. The final amount to be distributed will be confirmed in the final Budget proposals presented to Council in February 2013.

Appendices:

- Appendix A – Consultation report and analysis
- Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix C – Central Bedfordshire Council CTS scheme
- Appendix D – Council Tax Discretionary Discounts Policy

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

1. Welfare Reform Act (March 2012)
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/pdfs/ukpga_20120005_en.pdf
2. Localising Support for Council Tax in England (Government Consultation paper: August 2011)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/8463/19510253.pdf
3. Localising Support for Council Tax in England Government's response to the outcome of consultation (December 2011)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/8467/2053712.pdf
4. Central Bedfordshire Council Draft Council Tax Reduction Scheme
5. The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2885/pdfs/uksi_20122885_en.pdf
6. Local Government Finance Act 2012, Chapter 17
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/17/pdfs/ukpga_20120017_en.pdf

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Draft Council Tax Scheme Consultation Results

Introduction

The consultation included two separate exercises; the consultation and a survey.

The consultation was widely publicised to the public, various stakeholders, partners, landlords and voluntary organisations. We also wrote directly to all existing 18,000 claimants inviting them to have their say.

The consultation was open to all for a 12 week period between August 2012 and November 2012.

Targeted face to face discussions were held with specific vulnerable groups and claimants such as the unemployed, single parents, disadvantaged families and carers.

We also carried out a telephone survey with 500 members of the public who were broadly representative of our population.

Responses

1,689 consultation response forms were received by the closing date. We also received a number of letters and emails from stakeholders and partners.

The profile of the consultation respondents is provided in Appendix A. There was a good mix of different types of people who responded however, the age profile showed that there was a under-representation of people aged between 30 and 49 years of age and a over representation of people aged 70 and over. This is to be expected considering that we wrote to all existing claimants, approximately half are pensioners.

The survey however, was carried out with a representative sample of adults to ensure we have a more balanced response to compare the consultation responses to.

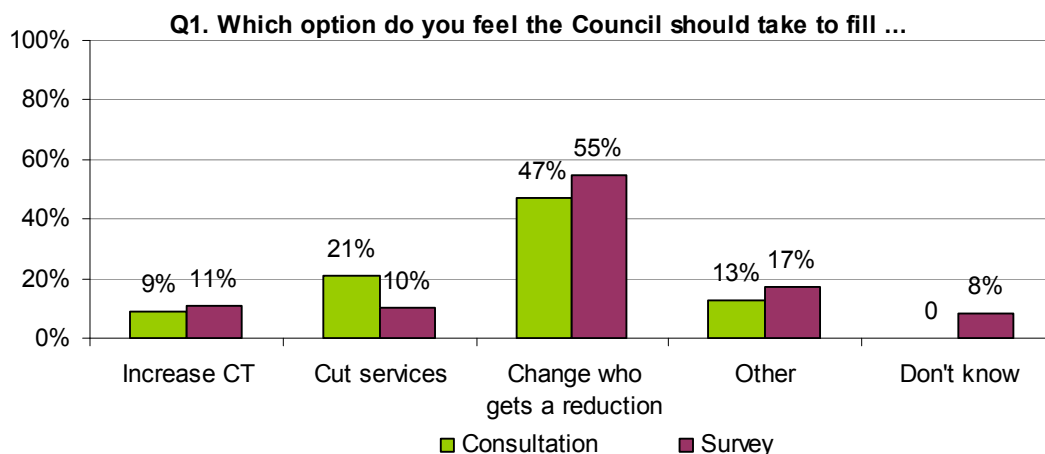
All of the above has been summarised in this report along with the feedback from the face to face discussions.

Results

The tables and charts below show the overall response from both the consultation and the representative telephone interviews.

Q1. Which option do you feel the Council should take to fill ...

	Consultation	Survey
Increase Council Tax	9%	11%
Cut services	21%	10%
Change who gets a reduction	47%	55%
Other	13%	17%
Don't know	0	8%
No answer	10%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%



From the survey, the majority (55%) supported the council’s proposed approach to fill the funding gap, however just under half of the consultation responses (47%) supported this approach although it was the most favoured approach from the consultation.

The Combined Fire Authority suggested using a combination of all three measures to fill the funding gap, they said “The CFA are keen to reduce any detrimental effect financial impact upon itself arising from any reduction in the number of band equivalents across its constituent authority areas.” Using a combination of options was also suggested by some consultation respondents too. Finding efficiencies in the running of the council, reducing waste and reducing salaries were also suggestions. Some examples of these comments are provided below.

“Cut down on the upper management levels to make up the funding.”

“Increase council tax on properties in the highest bands only.”

“Make changes to increase Council Tax to all and only cut benefit slightly.”

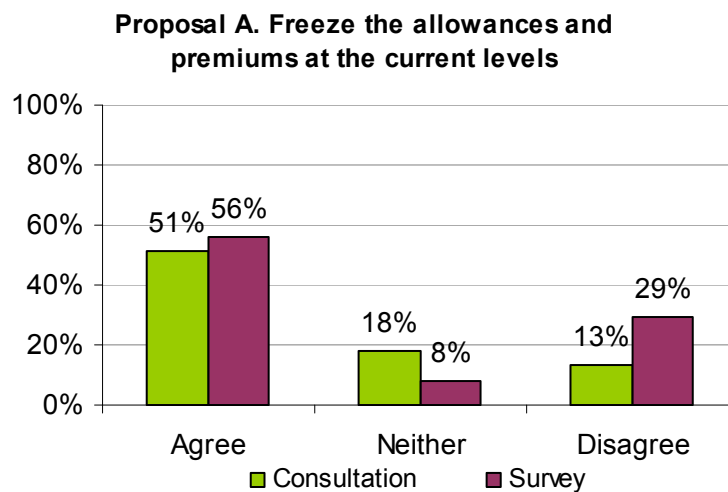
“Cut money for councillors and top wage earners.”

“Cut unnecessary expenditure in house at the council.”

Q2. How far do you agree or disagree with each of the following changes.....

Proposal A. Freeze the allowances and premiums at the current level

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	15%	18%
Agree	36%	38%
Neither	18%	8%
Disagree	9%	16%
Strongly disagree	4%	13%
Don't know	9%	6%
No answer	8%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%



Half of the survey respondents (56%) and the consultation respondents (51%) supported the proposal to freeze allowances and premiums at the current levels. There was less support for this proposal from people under 30 years of age (40% agree).

From the comments it was clear that people who opposed this proposal did so because they felt this would create greater hardship in years to come and that the allowances and premiums should reflect inflation. Some typical quotes are provided below.

"Allowances and premiums should rise with inflation."

"Because a minimum amount to live on each week is essential to those on low incomes. To freeze it would mean they had a lesser amount each year, which can only cause problems."

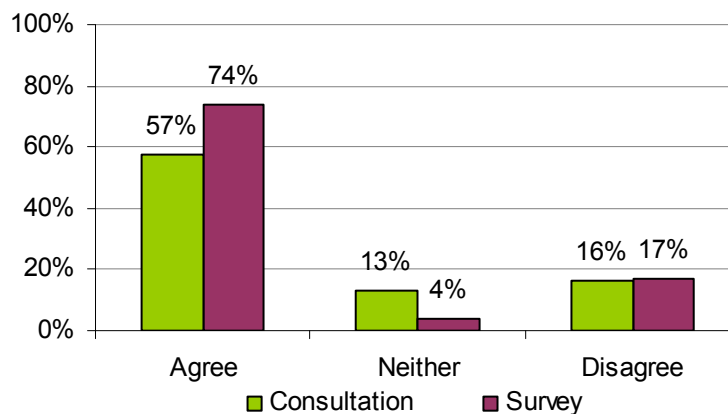
"I'm concerned that if allowances and premiums are frozen indefinitely, as benefit levels rise over the years vulnerable groups (such as lone parents) who are supposedly protected from these changes are going to have to make an ever increasing contribution to payment of their Council Tax. This could cause real

hardship in years to come..... I think that a (say) five yearly review/increase of the allowances and premiums would be a fairer way forward."

Proposal B. All working age claimants (except vulnerable groups) will pay a minimum of 25% of their Council Tax

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	14%	38%
Agree	43%	36%
Neither	13%	4%
Disagree	8%	11%
Strongly disagree	9%	6%
Don't know	6%	4%
No answer	7%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Proposal B. All working age claimants pay minimum of 25% of their Council Tax



Almost three-quarters (74%) of the survey respondents agreed with the proposal that all working age people (except vulnerable protected groups) should pay a minimum contribution of 25%. This proposal was also supported by the majority of the consultation respondents too but to a lesser degree (57%). This proposal was particularly supported by those in permanent full time work (63%) and those aged 70 and over (68%).

Respondents who opposed this proposal were concerned about how, particularly people on low income/ unemployed were going to afford to pay. The Citizen Advice Bureau stated "they don't think those on JSA, IB and other passported benefits could be classed as *those who can pay should pay* as they cannot pay due to low income".

"People on low pay or any sort of benefits cannot afford to pay any more."

"I'd like to know how I'd pay Council Tax from £35.00 per week JSA with myself, newly graduated unemployed daughter to support (she refuses to suffer the indignity of signing on) - and her 2 cats; having also just kitted out my son

Appendix A

for university, leaving his strays to feed too. I paid full Council Tax 'til April when I finally ran out of savings and pension age increase forced me to sign on - give me a break please."

Others said that expecting those on low incomes to pay would only serve increase the poverty gap and this proposal is not in line with the council's agenda to tackle poverty, particularly child poverty.

"Proposal B will impact significantly people on low incomes, including those working on low wage, resulting in serious deprivation."

A few people suggested a lower minimum contribution.

"25% of Council Tax is far too high, people won't be able to pay and will result in lost revenue. With so many people unemployed they are at a real disadvantage. 5% would be much fairer and much more affordable."

Some also questioned the cost to the council for administering a new scheme or debt recovery from people who have not paid.

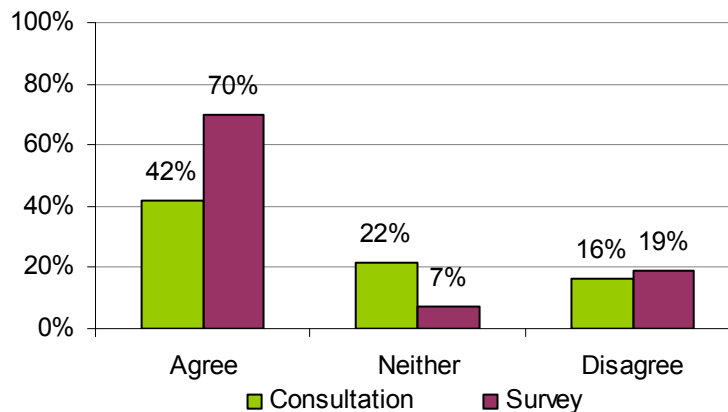
There were many comments throughout the consultation that Council Tax benefits should be based on individual circumstances or be means tested not a blanket rule for specific groups.

"Disagree with working age claimants having to pay 25% of Council Tax. Should be calculated on individual basis and what claimant can afford. Could give more debt to claimant. May not be able to work and find employment that covers bills and childcare costs if having to pay a lot of Council Tax."

Proposal C. Abolish the second adult rebate

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	14%	39%
Agree	28%	31%
Neither	22%	7%
Disagree	9%	13%
Strongly disagree	7%	6%
Don't know	11%	4%
No answer	9%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Proposal C. Abolish the second adult rebate



Although the majority of the survey respondents (70%) supported this proposal there was significantly less support from the consultation respondents where less than half supported it (42%). Those respondents who are currently in receipt of second adult rebate were less supportive of this proposal (16% agree). Also those currently living with a partner (31%), living with a non-dependant adult (31%) or living with a dependant adult (34%) were also less supportive. However, those respondents with a household income of over £30,000 were more supportive (56% agree).

Those who opposed the abolition of second adult rebate were concerned that this would penalise families who had adult children living with them who could not find work or adult children who were ill or disabled and were unable to contribute to the household bills.

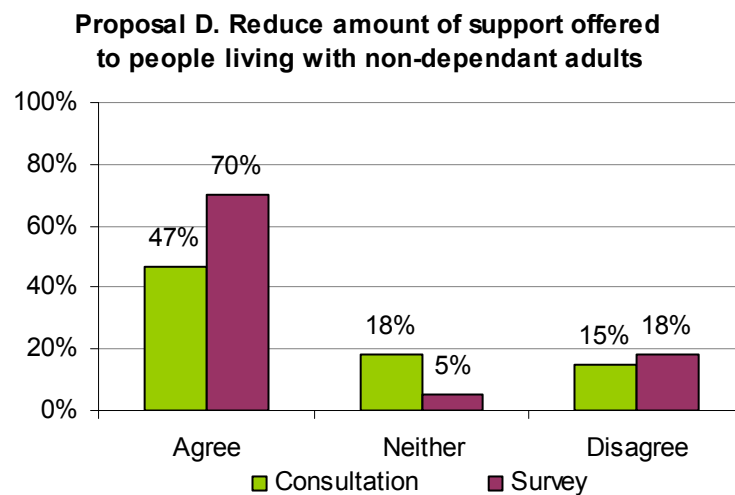
“Proposal C will affect families with adult children who cannot find work.”

“My mentally ill son lived with me. I currently support him as much as I can. However a further increase in the cost of looking after him would result in me having to ask him to leave. The council could then house him and pay his Council Tax and other bills for him.”

“The second adult may be an invalid on long term sick.”

Proposal D. Reduce the amount of support offered to people living with non-dependant adults

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	13%	27%
Agree	34%	43%
Neither	18%	5%
Disagree	9%	12%
Strongly disagree	6%	6%
Don't know	9%	6%
No answer	11%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%



Similar to the second adult rebate proposal, although the majority of the survey respondents (70%) supported this proposal there was significantly less support from the consultation responses where just under half supported it (47%). Those respondents whose household income is between £20,000 and £30,000 were more supportive (62% agree) as were those with an income of £30,000 or more (69%). Those currently living with non-dependant adults were understandably less supportive (34%).

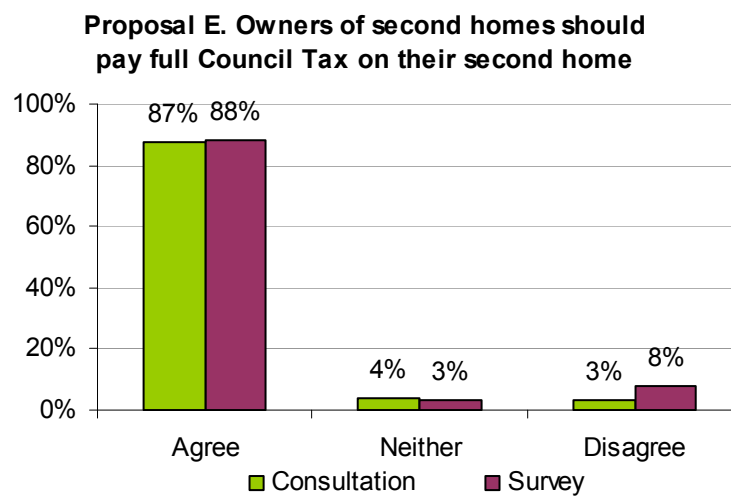
Respondents who opposed reducing the amount of support offered to people living with non-dependant adults cited similar reasons to those who opposed the abolition of the second adult rebate proposal.

"Very difficult to manage when I only work part time and have a son at college full time."

"People who have an older child living with them have higher expenses already without added council charges. In an ideal world they would have a job and help out but in many cases that is not possible."

Proposal E. Owners of second homes should pay full Council Tax on their second home

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	62%	64%
Agree	26%	24%
Neither	4%	3%
Disagree	1%	3%
Strongly disagree	2%	5%
Don't know	2%	2%
No answer	3%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%



There was strong support for the proposal to charge second home owners full Council Tax from both the survey respondents (88%) and the consultation respondents (87%). Those respondents currently in receipt of a discount or exemption were the least supportive of all of the proposed changes to discounts and exemptions, for example, only 35% of these respondents supported this proposal. However, we should note that this is only based on 26 respondents.

There were many comments supporting this proposal because respondents felt the wealthy should pay more and if you can afford two homes you can afford to pay more Council Tax.

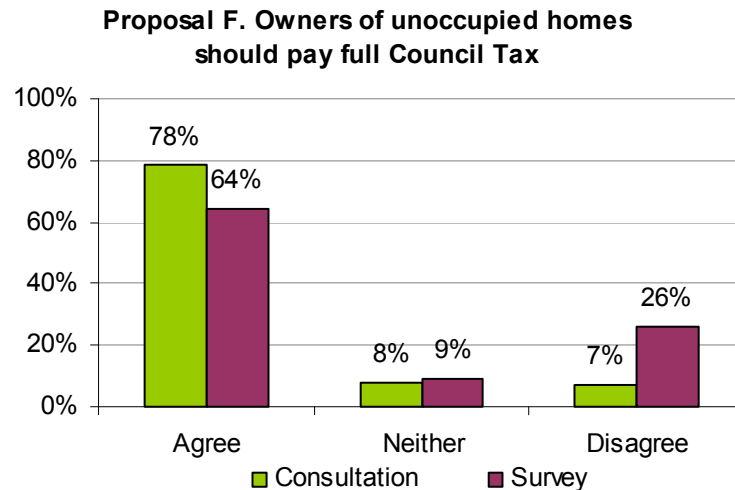
"I believe people who can afford a second home and unoccupied homes (if working) should pay full Council Tax."

However, respondents who opposed this proposal felt it was not fair to assume that everyone with a second home was wealthy. For example, some were second homes while another property was being repaired. Others said they should only pay Council Tax on one home because they won't be using council services (i.e. bin collection) from both properties.

"Owners of second homes already pay full Council Tax on their primary residence. They already pay 90% on their second home but will not use all council facilities."

Proposal F. Owners of unoccupied homes should pay full Council Tax

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	51%	35%
Agree	27%	29%
Neither	8%	9%
Disagree	4%	15%
Strongly disagree	3%	11%
Don't know	2%	2%
No answer	4%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%



Although there was majority support for the proposal to make owners of unoccupied homes pay full Council Tax from both the survey and the consultation there was more support from the consultation respondents (78%) than the survey (64%). There was less support for this proposal from respondents with a household income of between £20,000 and £30,000 (62%) and £30,000 or more (66%).

People opposed to this proposal said if the property is vacant then there is no-one there to use the council services so why should they have to pay Council Tax. There was also some recognition that properties are sometimes unoccupied through no fault of the owner and that the owner would be penalised.

"It's not their fault that their property is sitting empty due to the current recession."

"The fact of Council Tax is to provide services into the local population - if someone is not resident (not using bins or local amenities etc) then why should they be charged for services they don't receive?"

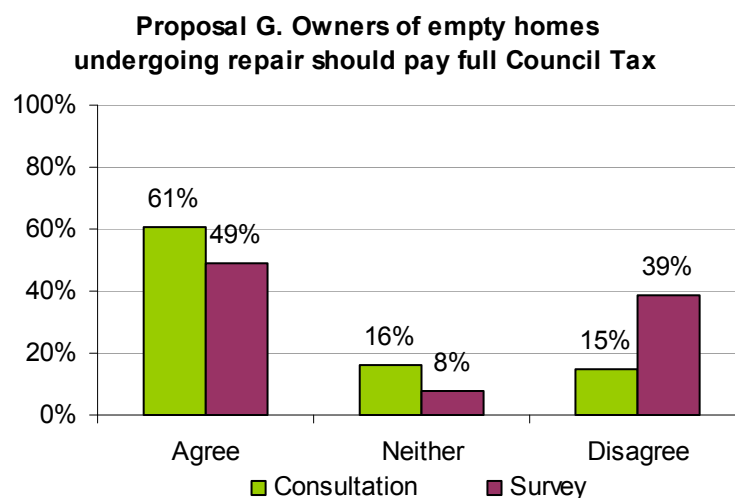
There was some concern that if the six month exemption was removed Landlords will be less willing to complete repairs or redecoration between tenants, which will reduce the quality of local housing and the increased costs to landlords will just be passed on to tenants through increased rents.

“As a landlord of a property it is not always possible to re-let without any gap in tenants. Usually a property will need some refurbishment between tenants. To remove the 6 month exemption completely will make it hard for landlords to maintain their properties to a good standard and could end up with more properties being let in a poor condition.....I understand that the Council needs to increase revenue but a shorter exemption rather than none would be preferable, allowing at least for some works to be carried out between tenants.”

On a positive note, some empty homes owners may be financially encouraged to actually sell or rent their but there were also concerns that there may be more disputes over whether a property is empty or not and in the future some empty home owners may try and disguise the fact that they are really empty.

Proposal G. Owners of empty homes undergoing repair should pay full Council Tax

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	33%	21%
Agree	27%	28%
Neither	16%	8%
Disagree	11%	24%
Strongly disagree	4%	15%
Don't know	4%	4%
No answer	4%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%



Just under half (49%) of the survey respondents supported this proposal but there was majority support from the consultation respondents (61%).

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Many of the comments opposed to this proposal were similar to those raised about removing the six month exemption to unoccupied properties. They were also worried that this would deter people from repairing unfit properties. Some felt this would not be fair where someone has inherited a property that they need to repair for sale. Some examples of these comments are provided below.

"This will discourage people from improving empty homes."

"Give 6 months grace for repairs."

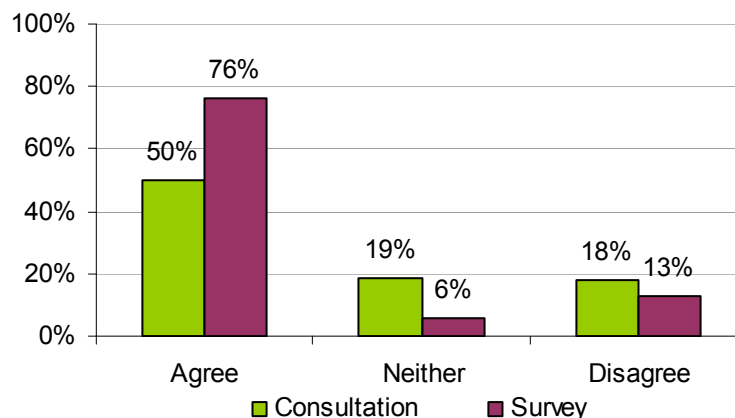
"Empty home being repaired not rentable so non profitable. Reduced amount of tax payable??"

"Owners of these homes may have died, it sometimes takes time to sort out the Will etc & sell the property."

Proposal H. Mortgagees of repossessed homes will be required to pay full Council Tax

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	26%	48%
Agree	24%	28%
Neither	19%	6%
Disagree	13%	9%
Strongly disagree	5%	4%
Don't know	7%	5%
No answer	6%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Proposal H. Mortgagees of repossessed homes will be required to pay full Council Tax



Three-quarters (76%) of the survey respondents supported this proposal but there was less support from the consultation respondents with half supporting it (50%). There was more support for this proposal from respondents with a household income of £30,000 or more (61%) or those who were aged 30 or under (61%).

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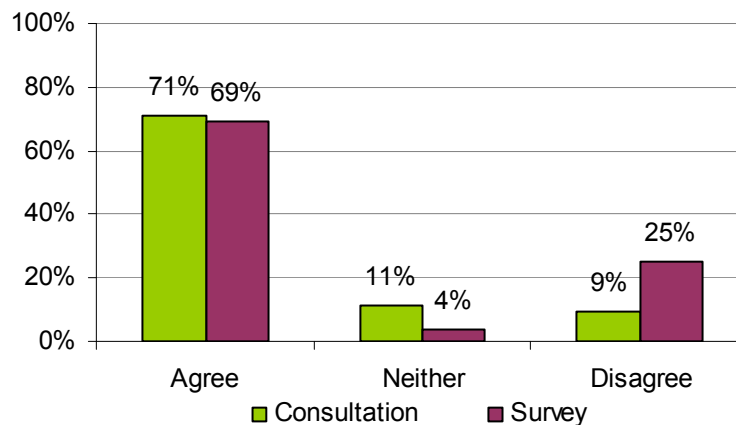
There seemed to be some confusion, some comments suggested people thought we were proposing to ask the person who has had their property repossessed to pay Council Tax, an example is provided below although this is not the proposal. This was the only objection raised against this proposal.

"I don't think its right that people who have lost their homes should have to pay tax on their lost home."

Proposal I. Owners of long term empty homes should be required to pay 150% of their Council Tax.

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	42%	35%
Agree	29%	34%
Neither	11%	4%
Disagree	6%	15%
Strongly disagree	3%	10%
Don't know	5%	2%
No answer	4%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Proposal I. Owners of long term empty homes should be required to pay 150%



The majority of the survey respondents (69%) and the consultation respondents (71%) supported the proposal to charge long term empty home owners 150% Council Tax.

Some of the concerns raised about the proposal to remove the six month exemption period for unoccupied properties were also raised in respect of this proposal too. Although some people who opposed this suggestion did recognise that this may help to reduce the number of long term empty homes the objectors did not feel that asking them to pay 150% was reasonable.

"Don't understand the theory of paying 150% Council Tax. If the home is empty, they are not even using the services. Doesn't seem to make sense."

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"Owner should begin to set time limits to repair empty properties before paying full Council Tax."

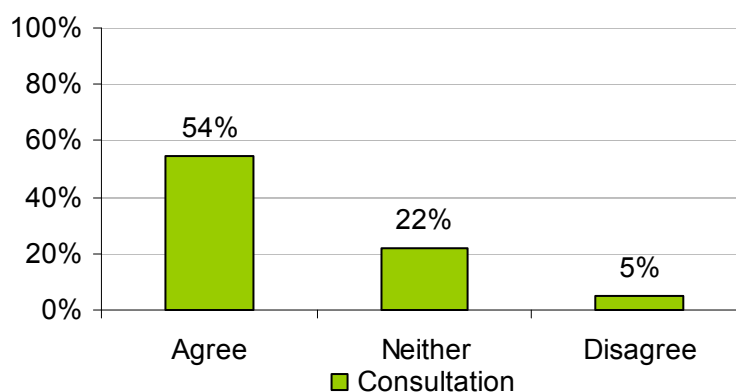
"Having inherited a very run down property a few years ago, the Council Tax was a drain on my resources, when I was trying my best to sell the property. How can you expect owners of long term empty homes to pay 150% Council Tax - surely this is a misprint??!!"

The Combined Fire Authority and the Town and Parish Councils who submitted letters support the reduction in the level of support for long term empty properties to incentivise their reoccupation.

Proposal K. Increase the earnings disregard by an additional £10 to support people who start work or increase their earnings

	Consultation
Strongly agree	18%
Agree	37%
Neither	22%
Disagree	3%
Strongly disagree	2%
Don't know	11%
No answer	7%
TOTAL	100%

Proposal K. Increase the earnings disregard by an additional £10



Just over half of the consultation respondents (54%) supported this proposal. This proposal is very complex to explain so was not included in the representative survey.

There were very few comments made about this proposal. Some people commented that they did not understand it. The feedback from the comments relating to this proposal suggested that some people felt it did not go far enough, we should incentivise work even more.

"Increasing the earnings disregard by £10 is pathetic and will help no one, if you are going to do it, then increase it substantially and give people a real motive to

get out and earn. This is a huge grey area and a massive banana skin for people with children trying to get back into employment."

Although there was general agreement that we should incentivise work there were some strong messages that there are no jobs for people. A few suggested that Council Tax support should be available for those unemployed for a set period.

Q4. How far do you agree or disagree that each of the following vulnerable groups should be protected from paying the minimum contribution of 25%?

There were many comments about the specific protected groups and comments in general that Council Tax support should be means tested, based on individual circumstances. Respondents were concerned that some protected groups may actually be wealthy or working and not need a reduction in their Council Tax, whereas some families on low income or with no income would not get any support with their Council Tax.

"Any protection should be based on ability to pay rather than membership of a particular group."

"It has to be income based e.. a single mum has a 3 month old baby but earns £35,000.00 per year."

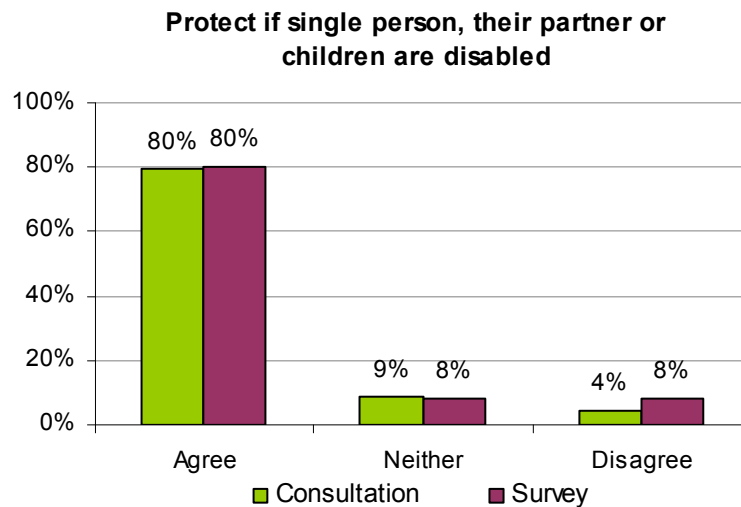
On the other hand, there were some people who felt that everyone should pay and no-one should be protected.

"Everyone has a responsibility to pay something."

"People on pensions and benefits have continued to have increases in their allowances over the last few years whilst working people have seen reduction in incomes and increase in expenses.....simply unfair ...all should be charged the same."

Q4a. A single person, their partner or children are disabled

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	37%	50%
Agree	43%	30%
Neither	9%	8%
Disagree	3%	6%
Strongly disagree	1%	2%
Don't know	3%	4%
No answer	5%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%



There was strong support for this proposal from both the survey (80%) and the consultation (80%). There was less support from respondents with a household income of £30,000 or more (66%).

A few respondents raised some concerns about protecting disabled people. These comments were, in the main, reflecting the general feeling that this should be means tested and that these people are already likely to be receiving some sort of benefit.

"People who have disabled children receive disability allowance which is more than a single person receiving normal benefit."

"A disabled person could be working full time & earning a high salary. it needs to be people in receipt of ESA."

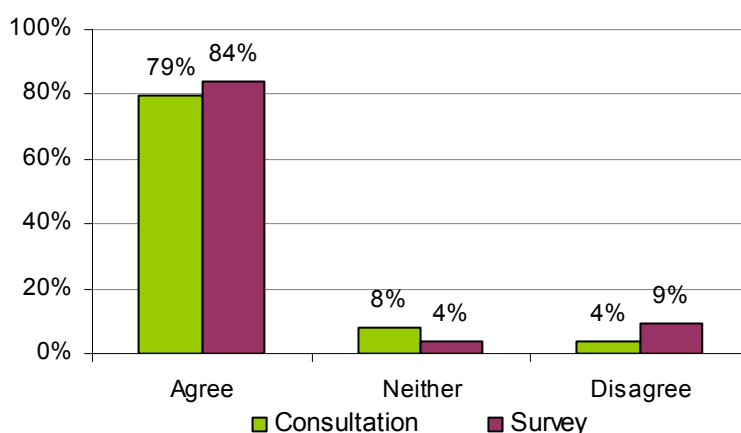
Interestingly, a couple of people were concerned that this protected group did not go far enough and should be extended to include ill family members. The Equality Forum was also concerned about this. For example, not all people with learning disabilities get disability benefits so would not be protected (i.e. those with Autism) and these people find it difficult to get a retain employment. A few people questioned weather mentally ill people would also be expected to pay.

"We have a child with a long term illness and we don't qualify for any help."

Q4b. Single person with caring responsibilities (for elderly or disabled relatives for example)

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	36%	41%
Agree	43%	43%
Neither	8%	4%
Disagree	3%	8%
Strongly disagree	1%	1%
Don't know	3%	3%
No answer	6%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Single person with caring responsibilities



There was strong support for this proposal from both the survey (84%) and the consultation (79%).

From the comments there were a few respondents who were concerned that carers already receive support so they should be able to pay a contribution towards Council Tax.

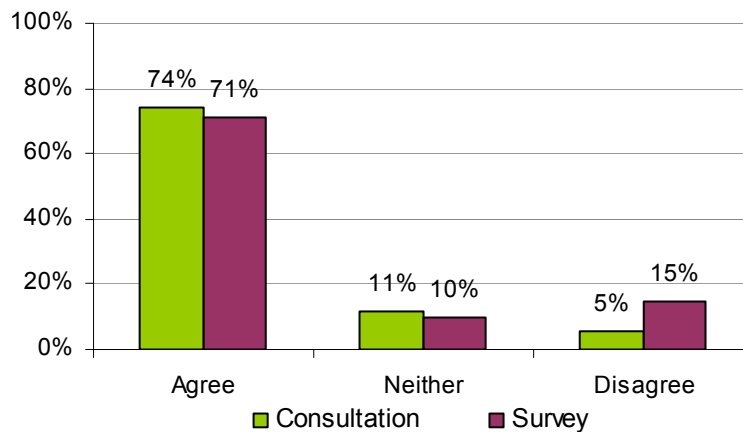
"Even though these people are carers, if they have even part time jobs then Carers Allowance/ wages cover the Council Tax contribution."

"Someone who has people to care for does not mean that they are unable to work, I had to do both for many years and they will be claiming other benefits."

Q4c. Couples who both have caring responsibilities (for elderly or disabled relatives for example)

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	32%	29%
Agree	42%	42%
Neither	11%	10%
Disagree	4%	12%
Strongly disagree	2%	3%
Don't know	4%	5%
No answer	5%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Couples who both have caring responsibilities



Again there was strong support for this proposal from both the survey (71%) and the consultation (74%). There was less support from respondents with a household income of £30,000 or more (56%).

There was slightly less support for couples with caring responsibilities than single carers, although the majority did still support this proposal.

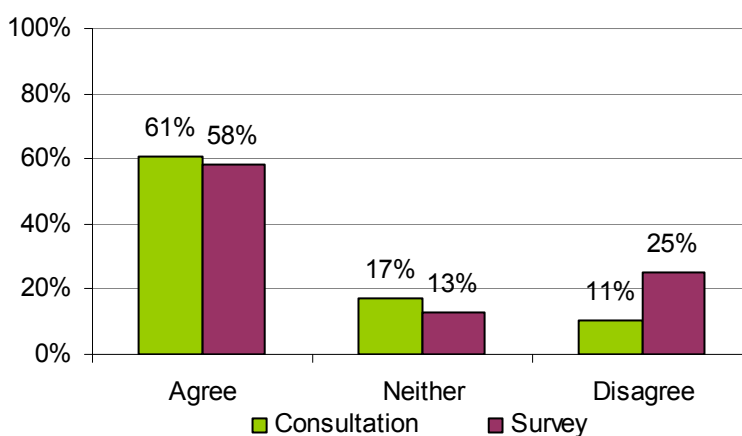
From the comments there was some concern that it was possible for them to continue earning and therefore not need support or that support should be based on an assessment of their individual circumstances.

"Just because a couple both caring, one of them can make contributions, one can work part time."

Q4d. Single parents with children under the age of five

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	23%	21%
Agree	38%	37%
Neither	17%	13%
Disagree	8%	20%
Strongly disagree	3%	5%
Don't know	4%	4%
No answer	8%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Single parents with children under the age of 5



There was majority support for this proposal from both the survey (58%) and the consultation (61%). There was less support from respondents with a household income of £30,000 or more (44%) or without children (58%). However, there was more support from those respondents who were looking after the home (86%) and those aged 30 or under (80%).

This proposal received a lot of comments, people felt that single parents already get support and that giving the more support will make it more appealing to continue to have children and live off benefits.

"With medical technology birth control etc people should not have children if single only time of benefit if widowed or a widower."

"Single parents need to pay their way find a job and contribute to this country."

"A single parent with children under 5 could still get part time work. My daughter did."

"Single parents with children get huge benefits already."

Others were concerned that asking for a contribution from single parents with children under five years of age would potentially affect the quality of the care the children receive. A few people felt this proposal should be extended to include

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children older than five, some suggested 11 years of age should be the cut off and others suggested support until they leave full time education.

"I believe that single parents with a child under 5 could pay no more than £5 per week, that is fair. Any more and the child will suffer, same with jobseekers. Most people want a job but it's never that easy to get one. some people are not responsible with money so charging them too much will affect the child."

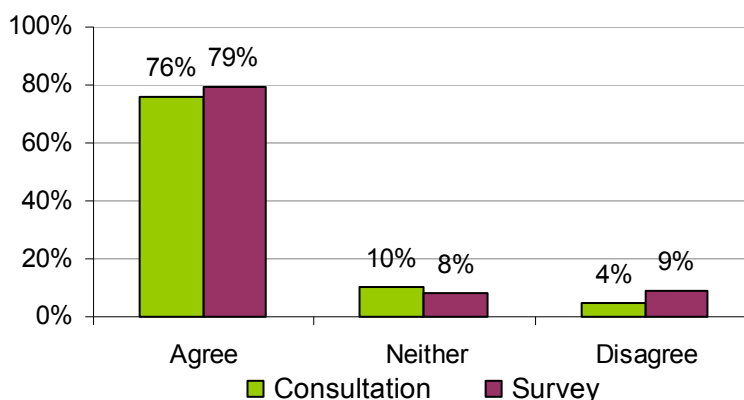
"All single parents should be protected as long as their child is in full time education."

Some stakeholders commented that some single parents have maintenance (income) which is completely ignored in benefit calculations and this is not even handed. This fits with the general feedback that support should be based on an assessment of the individual's financial circumstances and that maintenance payments should be included in this.

Q4e. People claiming War Disablement or War Widow's Pension

	Consultation	Survey
Strongly agree	36%	41%
Agree	40%	38%
Neither	10%	8%
Disagree	3%	8%
Strongly disagree	2%	1%
Don't know	4%	4%
No answer	6%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

People claiming War Disablement or War Widow's Pension



There was strong support for this proposal, over three-quarters of both the survey (79%) and the consultation (76%) supported it.

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There were only a few comments made about this proposal, again they were concerned that some of these people may not need support and may be quite wealthy. The support should be based on individual circumstances.

"People getting war disablement, widows pension do they also get state pension?
These people are better off than other people."

"Some people on disablement can work. it is not what you can't do, it is what you
could or can do."

The British Legion requested that we fully disregard any military compensation payments when calculating Council Tax support.

Appendix A

Appendix A – Consultation Respondent Profile

Q6 Are you responding as an

	Frequency	Percent
	25	1.5
Individual	1650	97.7
Organisation (go to question 22)	14	.8
Total	1689	100.0

Q7 What is your age

	Frequency	Percent	CBC population % (2011 Census)
No answer	76	4.6	
Under 30	55	3	16.0
30-49	270	16	38.0
50-69	590	35	32.0
70+	698	41	14.0
Total	1689	100.0	100.0

Q8 What is your gender

	Frequency	Percent	CBC population % (2011 Census)
No answer	45	2.7	
Female	937	55.5	50.0
Male	707	41.9	50.0
Total	1689	100.0	100.0

Q9 Is your gender identity the same as it was at birth

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	65	3.8
No	3	.2
Yes	1598	94.6
Prefer not to say	23	1.4
Total	1689	100.0

Q10 Are you disabled

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	76	4.5
No	631	37.4
Yes	982	58.1
Total	1689	100.0

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Q11 What is your religion

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	76	4.5
Christian	1200	71.0
No religion	265	15.7
Buddhist	7	.4
Jewish	7	.4
Muslim	5	.3
Sikh	4	.2
Hindu	3	.2
Other	122	7.2
Total	1689	100.0

Q12 What is your ethnicity

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	66	3.9
British	1491	88.3
European	40	2.4
Irish	23	1.4
Gypsy/ Romany/ Irish Traveller/ Show People	3	.2
Other White background (please specify)	7	.4
Caribbean	5	.3
African	6	.4
Bangladeshi	1	.1
Indian	7	.4
Pakistani	2	.1
Chinese	2	.1
White & Asian	2	.1
White & Black African	2	.1
White & Black Caribbean	2	.1
Other (please specify)	30	1.8
Total	1689	100.0

Q13 What is your sexuality

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	225	13.3
Heterosexual	1236	73.2
Bisexual	20	1.2
Lesbian/ gay woman or man	18	1.1
Prefer not to say	158	9.4
Other	32	1.9
Total	1689	100.0

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Q14 Current economic activity

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	55	3.3
Permanent employee in full-time job (30 hours plus per week)	87	5.2
Permanent employee in part-time job (under 30 hours per week)	92	5.4
Temporary employee in full-time job (30 hours plus per week)	1	.1
Temporary employee in part-time job (under 30 hours per week)	13	.8
Self employed full or part-time	45	2.7
On a government supported training programme (e.g. Modern Apprenticeship/ Training for Work)	2	.1
Full-time education at school, college or university	6	.4
Unemployed and available for work	100	5.9
Wholly retired from work	922	54.6
Permanently sick/disabled	251	14.9
Looking after the home	48	2.8
Doing something else	67	4.0
Total	1689	100.0

Q15. Annual household income

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	143	8.5
Less than £10,000	983	58.2
Between £10,000 and £20,000	457	27.1
Between £20,000 and £30,000	42	2.5
Over £30,000	64	3.8
Total	1689	100.0

Q16 Marital status

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	76	4.5
Single	1047	62.0
Married or civil partnership	509	30.1
Living with partner	57	3.4
Total	1689	100.0

Q17 Do you have any of the following adults living with you?

	Frequency	Percent
Adult (over 18) members of your family who are not dependant on you	187	11.1
Adult (over 18) members of your family who are dependant on me	191	11.3
No adult members of your family live with you	955	56.5
Total	1689	100.0

Q18 Do you have children?

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	89	5.3
No (go to Q20)	1311	77.6
Yes	289	17.1
Total	1689	100.0

Appendix A

Q19a How many children under 5

	Frequency	Percent
0	12	.7
1	60	3.6
2	25	1.5
3	3	.2
Total	100	5.9
No answer	1589	94.1
Total	1689	100.0

Q19b How many children between 5-11

	Frequency	Percent
0	12	.7
1	84	5.0
2	24	1.4
3	5	.3
5	1	.1
Total	126	7.5
No answer	1563	92.5
Total	1689	100.0

Q19c How many children 12+

	Frequency	Percent
0	13	.8
1	119	7.0
2	28	1.7
3	4	.2
Total	164	9.7
No answer	1525	90.3
Total	1689	100.0

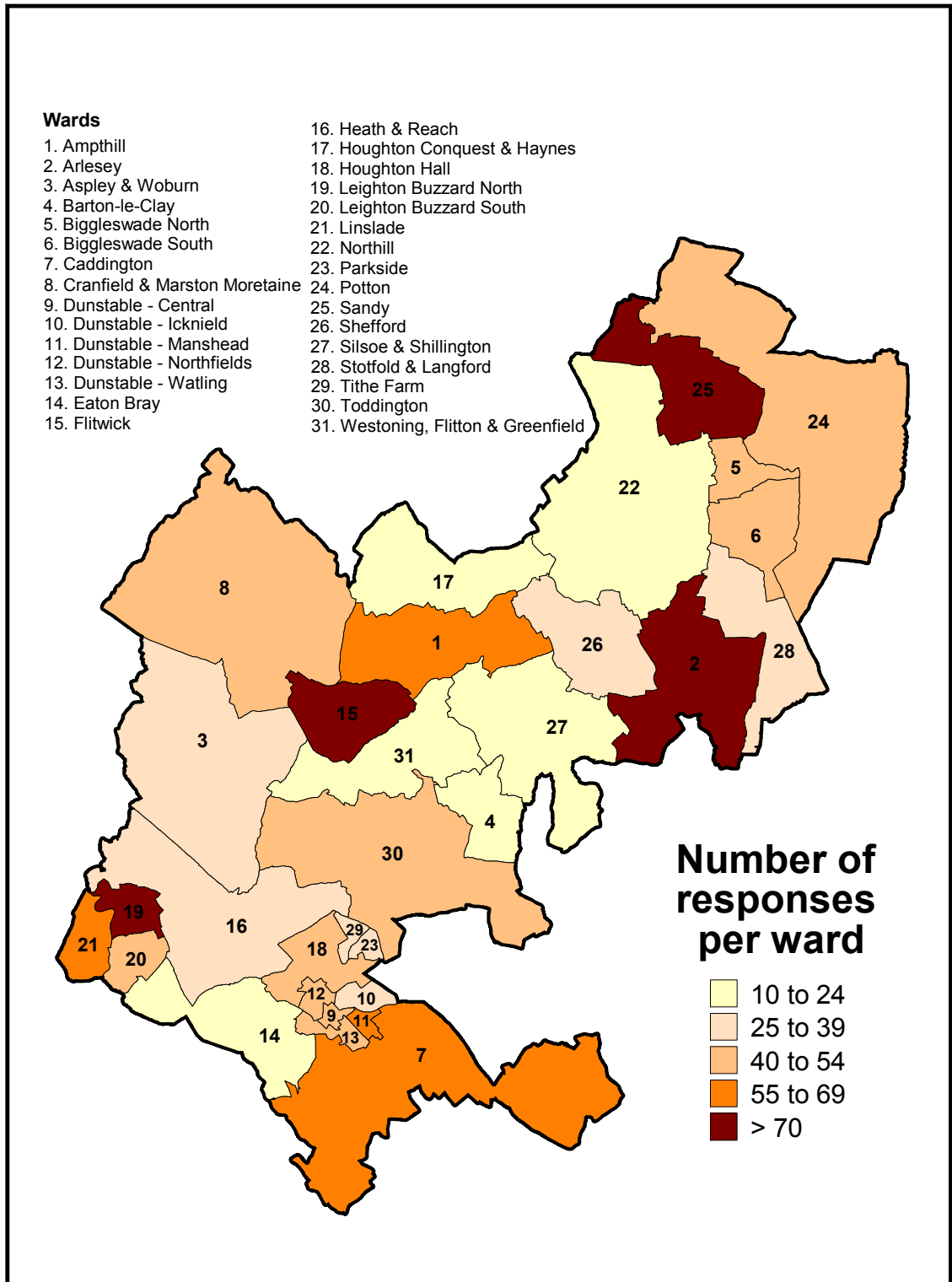
Q20 Are you currently in receipt of.....

	Frequency	Percent
Jobseekers Allowance, income related Employment and Support Allowance or Council Tax Benefit for low income	951	56.3
Disability premiums	256	15.2
Carers Allowance	138	8.2
Second Adult Rebate for Council Tax	83	4.9
Non-Dependant Adult deductions for Council Tax	64	3.8
Discounts or Exemptions for second home, empty property or a repossessed home	26	1.5

Q22 Type of org

	Frequency	Percent
No answer	1675	99.2
Housing Association or Social Landlord	4	.2
Voluntary Organisation or Charity	3	.2
Private Landlord	2	.1
Housing Developer	1	.1
Town or Parish Council	1	.1
Other	3	.2
Total	1689	100.0

Consultation Responses by Ward.



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The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Duty requires public bodies to have **due regard** to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (elimination of discrimination only)
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Due Regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Duty as part of the process of decision-making. For example:

- How they act as employers
- How they develop, evaluate and review policy
- How they design, deliver and evaluate services
- How they commission and procure from others

Advancing equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people because of their protected characteristics
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed in discrimination law. This could mean making use of an exception or positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way that is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic.

Officers should:

Keep an adequate record showing that the equality duties and relevant questions have been actively considered.

Be rigorous in both inquiring and reporting to members the outcome of the assessment and the legal duties.

Final approval of a proposal, can only happen after the completion of an equality impact assessment. It is unlawful to adopt a proposal contingent on an equality impact assessment



Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

Title of the Assessment:	Council Tax Support	Date of Assessment:	23/07/12 Sept.2012 Nov.2012
Responsible Officer	Name: Title: Email:	Gary Muskett Head of Revenues & Benefits gary.muskett@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk	Extension Number: 74097

Stage 1 - Setting out the nature of the proposal and potential outcomes.

Stage 1 – Aims and Objectives	GU
<p>1.1 What are the objectives of the proposal under consideration?</p> <p>In April 2013 Council Tax Benefit, the current means of helping people on low incomes meet their Council Tax obligation, will be replaced by a new localised support scheme known as Council Tax Support (CTS). The Government has said that it wishes to protect pensioners in the scheme. For all other recipients, there is a requirement to agree local eligibility criteria. This means that for working age people, local councils are required to design their own scheme to provide help with Council Tax.</p> <p>The Government’s proposals have three stated objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating the right incentives to get more people into work by ensuring that work always pays, • protecting the most vulnerable people, and • delivering fairness to those claiming benefit and to the taxpayer. <p>Under the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme, the Council generally receives 100% from the Government for the amount of Council Tax Benefit it pays out to local claimants. However, under the new system it will be given a specific sum by the Government to make support payments. This sum will be at least 10% less than the amount that is currently paid out as Council Tax Benefit.</p> <p>This also means that any increases in CTS expenditure during the year, such as an increase in the number of claimants claiming support, will need to be funded by the Council in addition to the immediate ten per cent reduction. This is currently anticipated to amount to £2.5 million for 2013/14.</p> <p>Each local authority must carry out a consultation exercise concerning their draft scheme proposals and must define and publish its local CTS scheme by 31 January 2013. If the scheme is not defined and published by this date, a default scheme will be imposed by the government and the funding reduction will need to be met from other means including for example, increasing Council Tax levels or reducing other service expenditure.</p>	
<p>1.2 Why is this being done?</p> <p>In November 2010 the Government announced a spending review, which in turn included a major overhaul of the current benefits system (the Welfare Reform Bill). Part of this reform included the abolition of Council Tax Benefit (CTB). This will be replaced by local Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes administered by individual billing authorities. The CTS reforms require local authorities to design their own schemes to deliver Council Tax Support. The schemes will be implemented from April 2013 but must be agreed by Full Council by 31 January 2013.</p> <p>Under the current national CTB system there is no “cap” on CTB expenditure with the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) fully reimbursing billing authorities for CTB expenditure. The DCLG will instead provide local authorities with an un-ringfenced specific grant that authorities can then use as they see fit to meet the CTS liabilities that their own schemes commit them to.</p>	



Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

1.3 What will be the impact on staff or customers?

Council Tax Benefit currently received by pensioners must not be reduced as a result of the introduction of the new Council Tax Support scheme. The Government wants to ensure that low income pensioners, who would struggle to pay Council Tax without additional support, and whom the Government does not expect to work to increase their income, will continue to receive the same level of support against their Council Tax bills.

Pensioners within Central Bedfordshire currently receiving Council Tax Benefit will receive the same level of support via our localised Council Tax Support Scheme. Pensioners currently make up 48% of our Council Tax Benefit caseload.

The Government’s consultation paper highlights that Councils need to protect vulnerable groups, although the Government has not fully specified its intentions in this regard other than to say ‘*Local authorities already have clearly defined responsibilities in relation to, and awareness of, the most vulnerable groups and individuals other than pensioners in their areas*’. This includes, for example, through their responsibilities under:

- The Child Poverty Act 2010
- The Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986, and Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- The Housing Act 1996, which gives local authorities a duty to prevent homelessness with special regard to vulnerable groups.

The Central Bedfordshire Council local scheme will also take account of the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty and proposes to protect existing Council Tax claimants who are lone parents with children under five years of age, disabled persons receiving specific forms of disability income and claimants who are in receipt of foster care or carers allowance.

1.4 How does this proposal contribute or relate to other Council initiatives?

The collection of Council Tax contributes to the achievement of the Council’s six key priorities:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.
- Improved educational attainment.
- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
- Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport.
- Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries.
- Value for money – freezing council tax.

The Council has also published a child poverty strategy setting out its intentions to maximise opportunities for families in poverty to access employment and all available financial assistance.



Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

1.5 In which ways does the proposal support Central Bedfordshire’s legal duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

National research indicates that over the last 30 years, three groups below retirement age stand out as suffering particularly large and persistent employment disadvantages or penalties:

1. disabled people;
2. lone mothers with a child under 11 and partnered women with children under 11.
3. Pakistani and Bangladeshi women.

They are all significantly more likely to be out of work regardless of their qualifications or where they live. The effect of non-employment in their working years continues to cause these groups additional disadvantage in older age.

Multiple markers of disadvantages can also drastically reduce the probability of being employed:

- Disabled people have very low rates of employment when their disability is accompanied by other factors, such as lone parenthood, belonging to an ethnic minority group or a lack of educational qualifications.
- Pakistani and Bangladeshi women are more likely to have three additional disadvantaging characteristics other than ethnicity: having young children, lower educational qualifications and living in an area with relatively high unemployment rates.

The scheme currently proposes to protect existing Council Tax claimants who are lone parents with children under five years of age, disabled persons receiving specific forms of disability income and claimants who are in receipt of foster care or carers allowance.

In addition the CTS scheme will continue to be applicable to anyone assessed as being on a low income, regardless of gender, age, age of children, ethnic background etc. The Council proposes to adopt the current national Council Tax Benefit regulations, which define what amount people need to live on, how to treat income and capital, who is treated as part of household etc along with the mathematical calculation. However the base-line at which we calculate entitlement may be reduced from 100% to 75% unless the customer is in one of the stated vulnerable groups. There will therefore be a significant number of non-vulnerable customers who will remain entitled to CTS, all be it a lower amount than they would have received under CTB.

Further detail of the proposed scheme is provided in section 2.5.

1.6 Is it possible that this proposal could damage relations amongst groups of people with different protected characteristics or contribute to inequality by treating some members of the community less favourably such as people of different ages, men or women, people from black and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, carers, people with different religions or beliefs, new and expectant mothers, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities?

As part of the Comprehensive Spending Review the current benefits system is undergoing a major overhaul which is impacting upon vulnerable groups. In developing the local scheme the Council has wanted to fully understand the potential impact of these changes in order to ensure that vulnerable groups can be supported as much as possible. These issues are explored in

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Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

section 2 of the EIA. The Council is also undertaking extensive data analysis and consultation with local residents and stakeholders in order to ensure that any potential adverse impacts are identified and considered prior to a final decision being taken.

Stage 2 - Consideration of national and local research, data and consultation findings in order to understand the potential impacts of the proposal.

Stage 2 - Consideration of Relevant Data and Consultation

In completing this section it will be helpful to consider:

- **Publicity** – Do people know that the service exists?
- **Access** – Who is using the service? / Who should be using the service? Why aren't they?
- **Appropriateness** – Does the service meet people's needs and improve outcomes?
- **Service support needs** – Is further training and development required for employees?
- **Partnership working** – Are partners aware of and implementing equality requirements?
- **Contracts & monitoring** – Is equality built into the contract and are outcomes monitored?

2.1. Examples of relevant evidence sources are listed below. Please tick which evidence sources are being used in this assessment and provide a summary for each protected characteristic in sections 2.2 and 2.3.

Internal desktop research

<input type="checkbox"/>	Place survey / Customer satisfaction data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Demographic Profiles – Census & ONS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local Needs Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Monitoring / Performance Information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other local research	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Third party guidance and examples

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	National / Regional Research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Analysis of service outcomes for different groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Best Practice / Guidance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Benchmarking with other organisations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspection Reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Public consultation related activities

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consultation with Service Users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consultation with Community / Voluntary Sector
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consultation with Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer Feedback / Complaints
<input type="checkbox"/>	Data about the physical environment e.g. housing market, employment, education and training provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces		

Consulting Members, stakeholders and specialists

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elected Members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Expert views of stakeholders representing diverse groups
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist staff / service expertise		

Please bear in mind that whilst sections of the community will have common interests and



Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

concerns, views and issues vary within groups. E.g. women have differing needs and concerns depending on age, ethnic origin, disability etc

Lack of local knowledge or data is not a justification for assuming there is not a negative impact on some groups of people. Further research may be required.

**2.2. Summary of Existing Data and Consultation Findings: - Service Delivery
Considering the impact on Customers/Residents**

National Research on Welfare Reform:

In order to understand the potential impact on vulnerable groups of the recent and proposed changes in welfare benefits, research undertaken by University of Warwick, Centre for Local Economic Strategies, Race Equality Foundation, Fawcett Society, Demos, Age UK and the Centre for Research on Aging and Gender at the University of Surrey has been reviewed and is summarised at Appendix 1. The analysis details the main changes relating to Housing, Families, Disability and Pensions and the potential impacts. Key findings are highlighted below in section 2.2:

Local Data Analysis - Breakdown of Council Tax Support protected/non-protected groups:

The Council Tax Support modelling undertaken through the Civica Open Revenues system provides a detailed breakdown of claims falling both within the protected groups proposed under the Council Tax Support scheme, and those claims which will fall (by definition) outside of such protection. The Council Tax modelling tool uses the current case data from the Council Tax Benefit awards. As these awards are period based duplicate entries can arise and wherever possible I've reduced such duplicate entries to a minimum. However some must remain which can result in a higher number of claims being shown than would be expected, but does accurately reflect the changes that arise in claims over a period of time

The modelling tool itself reports on cases by a primary category. So, where a case is protected as being of pensionable age even though the conditions of that claim mean that protection would also apply in one or more of the other categories, they will only appear once under the pensionable age category. This is most noticeable where some of the protected categories show as a nil population.

- **Age:** e.g. Under 16 yrs / 16-19 yrs / 20-29 yrs / 30-44 yrs / 45-59 yrs / 60-64 yrs / 65-74 yrs / 75+

Key Findings of National Research:

- For the one third of pensioners aged over 65 who are tenants, cuts in HB could drive them out of their area, breaking up the social support networks on which they depend and risking their social exclusion.
- Restrictions in eligibility for Incapacity Benefit (IB) will affect older workers in poor physical or mental health. Many will be moved from IB either onto the means-tested Employment and Support Allowance or onto Jobseekers Allowance
- Along with lone parents and their children, pensioners, especially women, are among the poorest in society.
- Over half of pensioner households are poor enough to be eligible for a means tested top-up.
- A fifth of pensioners live below the official OECD poverty line (about £170/week for a lone pensioner)

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Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

- 90% of these are in persistent poverty (poor in 3 of the 4 years measured).
- Pensioners differ from working age population in having no opportunity to increase their income: those who are poor remain so, while those on slightly higher incomes face a decline into poverty and means testing as they age, due to inadequate indexing of pensions
- The shift to the Consumer Prices Index will exacerbate the trend for pensioners to sink into poverty as they age.

Local Data Analysis:

- Pensioners currently make up 48% of the Central Bedfordshire Council Tax Benefit caseload.
- Number of pension age claimants at 30 November 2012 was 8,100

Findings from Local Consultation:

Age	Frequency	Percent
No answer	76	4.6
Under 30	55	3
30-49	270	16
50-69	590	35
70+	698	41
Total	1689	100.0

- **Disability:** *e.g. Physical impairment / Sensory impairment / Mental health condition / Learning disability or difficulty / Long-standing illness or health condition / Severe disfigurement*

Key Findings of National Research:

- 26% of **disabled people** are in the poorest fifth of all households in the UK with an average income of about £10,450 per year per household. (This compares with 19% for non-disabled people.
- A further 27% of disabled people are in the next poorest quintile with an average income of £15,800.
- Average income of household with a disabled person is about a 1/5th lower than other households
- Loss to each claimant will average £2,630 over five years or about £526 per claimant per year.
- Cuts to DLA have significant impact upon the capability of disabled people to work & travel to work.
- The employment rate of disabled people is around 48% compared with 78% for non-disabled people. This gap of 30% has come down a bit since 2002 when it was 36% (ODI website).
- There are said to be 1.3 million disabled people (19% to 24% of disabled people of working age) who say they are available for work and who want to work (Demos Oct 2010, 19).
- At every level of qualification, the proportion of people with a work-limiting disability who lack, but want, paid work is much greater than those without a disability.
- With *growing* unemployment, the prospects of getting a job are not good for disabled people
- The median income of disabled people was £342 per week compared with a median for nondisabled of £424 per week. The average income of disabled people was about 81% that of the non-disabled.
- 53% of disabled people are in the poorest 40% of the population & 75% are in the poorest 60%.
- The proportion of disabled working age population who live in low-income households (that is,



Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

live in 'poverty') was double - at 36% - of the poverty rate (18%) for their non-disabled counterparts

Local Data Analysis:

- 800 disabled claimants will be protected
- Number of claimants attracting disability premiums at 30 November 2012 was 2,811, this includes pension age claimants

Findings from Local Consultation:

Disability	Frequency	Percent
No answer	76	4.5
No	631	37.4
Yes	982	58.1
Total	1689	100.0

- There was strong support for the proposal to protect **A single person, their partner or children if they are disabled** from both the survey (80%) and the consultation (80%). There was less support from respondents with a household income of £30,000 or more (66%). A few respondents raised some concerns about protecting disabled people. These comments were, in the main, reflecting the general feeling that this should be means tested and that these people are already likely to be receiving some sort of benefit.

Interestingly, a couple of people were concerned that this protected group did not go far enough and should be extended to include ill family members. The Equality Forum was also concerned about this. For example, not all people with learning disabilities get disability benefits so would not be protected (i.e. those with Autism) and these people find it difficult to get a retain employment. A few people questioned weather mentally ill people would also be expected to pay

- Carers: *A person of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help due to illness, disability, mental ill-health or a substance misuse problem*

Key Findings of National Research:

- Carer Allowance benefits are low compared to other countries in the European Union. The indexation change will reduce CA
- Someone caring for a person who loses disability living allowance will also lose carers allowance. A carer in this situation would have to move onto universal credit. It is not clear whether they would then be expected to look for work, even though they are still responsible for full time care.

Local Data Analysis:

- 140 claimants receiving carers allowances will be protected
- The number of single people in receipt of Carer's Allowance at 30 November 2012 was 67
- The number of couples where both receive Carer's Allowance at 30 November 2012 was 73



Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

Findings from Local Consultation:

- There was strong support for the proposal to protect a **Single person with caring responsibilities (for elderly or disabled relatives for example)** from both the survey (84%) and the consultation (79%).

From the comments there were a few respondents who were concerned that carers already receive support so they should be able for pay a contribution towards Council Tax.

- Again there was strong support for the proposal to support **Couples who both have caring responsibilities (for elderly or disabled relatives for example)** from both the survey (71%) and the consultation (74%). There was less support from respondents with a household income of £30,000 or more (56%).

There was slightly less support for couples with caring responsibilities than single carers, although the majority did still support this proposal.
From the comments there was some concern that it was possible for them to continue earning and therefore not need support or that support should be based on an assessment of their individual circumstances.

- Gender Reassignment: *People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex*

Key Findings of National Research:

- Changes to benefits and the move from IB to JSA for people deemed 'fit for work' also has implications for the **trans community**. Under the previous system, claimants were able to start work and if they were unable to cope they could move back to IB with the same level of benefit. With the focus on sustainable employment, if trans communities are unable to cope with the demands of the workplace it is unlikely that they will be able to move back onto IB at all.

Local Data Analysis: N/A

Findings from Local Consultation:

Is your gender identity the same as it was at birth	Frequency	Percent
No answer	65	3.8
No	3	.2
Yes	1598	94.6
Prefer not to say	23	1.4
Total	1689	100.0

- Pregnancy and Maternity: *e.g. pregnant women / women who have given birth & women who are breastfeeding (26 week time limit then protected by sex discrimination provisions)*

Key Findings of National Research:

- **The Health in Pregnancy Grant** was abolished in January 2011. It was a universal grant of £190 available to all mothers to promote child and maternal health and engagement with health services.



Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

- **Eligibility for the Sure Start Maternity Grant** was restricted to the first child only from April 2011, thus penalising families who have any subsequent children. The grant is a one-off payment available to low-income households receiving an out-of-work benefit, to help towards the cost of maternity and baby items. This cut amounts to a loss of £500 for low-income mothers and will affect 150,000 families

Local Data Analysis: N/A

Findings from Local Consultation:

There were no specific findings related to this protected characteristic

- **Race:** e.g. Asian or Asian British / Black or Black British / Chinese / Gypsies and Travellers / Mixed Heritage / White British / White Irish / White Other

Key Findings of National Research:

- As HB is paid to people on a low income, the planned cuts in benefit will affect the poorest and most vulnerable. Black and minority ethnic communities will be disproportionately affected as they are more likely to be unemployed or to have a low income.
- Approximately two-fifths of people from minority ethnic communities live in low-income households, twice the rate for white people

Local Data Analysis:

Findings from Local Consultation:

Ethnicity of respondents	Frequency	Percent
No answer	66	3.9
British	1491	88.3
European	40	2.4
Irish	23	1.4
Gypsy/ Romany / Irish Traveller / Show People	3	.2
Other White background (please specify)	7	.4
Caribbean	5	.3
African	6	.4
Bangladeshi	1	.1
Indian	7	.4
Pakistani	2	.1
Chinese	2	.1
White & Asian	2	.1
White & Black African	2	.1
White & Black Caribbean	2	.1
Other (please specify)	30	1.8
Total	1689	100.0

There were no specific findings related to this protected characteristic

- **Religion or Belief:** e.g. Buddhist / Christian / Hindu / Jewish / Muslim / Sikh / No religion /



Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

Other

Key Findings of National Research:

- Only 61% of Muslim men have jobs compared to 80% of Christian men and 82% of Hindu men. (Government Equalities Office)
- There is emerging evidence that Indian and White Muslims experience employment disadvantage when compared to Indian and White Christians. (Equality Review)
- Women from nearly all ethnic / religious backgrounds have pay between a quarter and a third less than a White British Christian man with the same qualifications, age and occupation. (National Equality Panel)

Local Data Analysis:

Findings from Local Consultation:

Religion or Belief	Frequency	Percent
No answer	76	4.5
Christian	1200	71.0
No religion	265	15.7
Buddhist	7	.4
Jewish	7	.4
Muslim	5	.3
Sikh	4	.2
Hindu	3	.2
Other	122	7.2
Total	1689	100.0

There were no specific findings related to this protected characteristic

- **Sex:** e.g. Women / Girls / Men / Boys

Key Findings of National Research:

- Cuts to Local Housing Allowance will have a disproportionate impact on women since women are the main recipients - single women constitute approximately 50% of recipients of housing benefit, with couples composing around 25% and single males 25%.
- 47% of those affected will have children, of which 32% will be lone parents.
- 19% will be disabled.
- 8% will be pensioners.
- 13% will be from BME groups who will also be disproportionately affected by the 4 bedroom cap.
- People with non-dependents (e.g. elderly relatives) living in the same house will incur extra charges
- The cap on total benefits that a family can receive will disproportionately affect **women and affect lone parents** worst of all. The DWP's own Equality Impact Assessment of this policy states:

*"We expect around 60% of customers who are likely to have their benefit reduced by the cap to be single females but only around 3% to be single men. Most of the single women affected are likely to be lone parents, this is because we expect the vast majority of households affected by this policy (around 90%) to have children. Approximately 60% of those who will be capped are single women.
Single women form around 40% of the overall benefit population."*



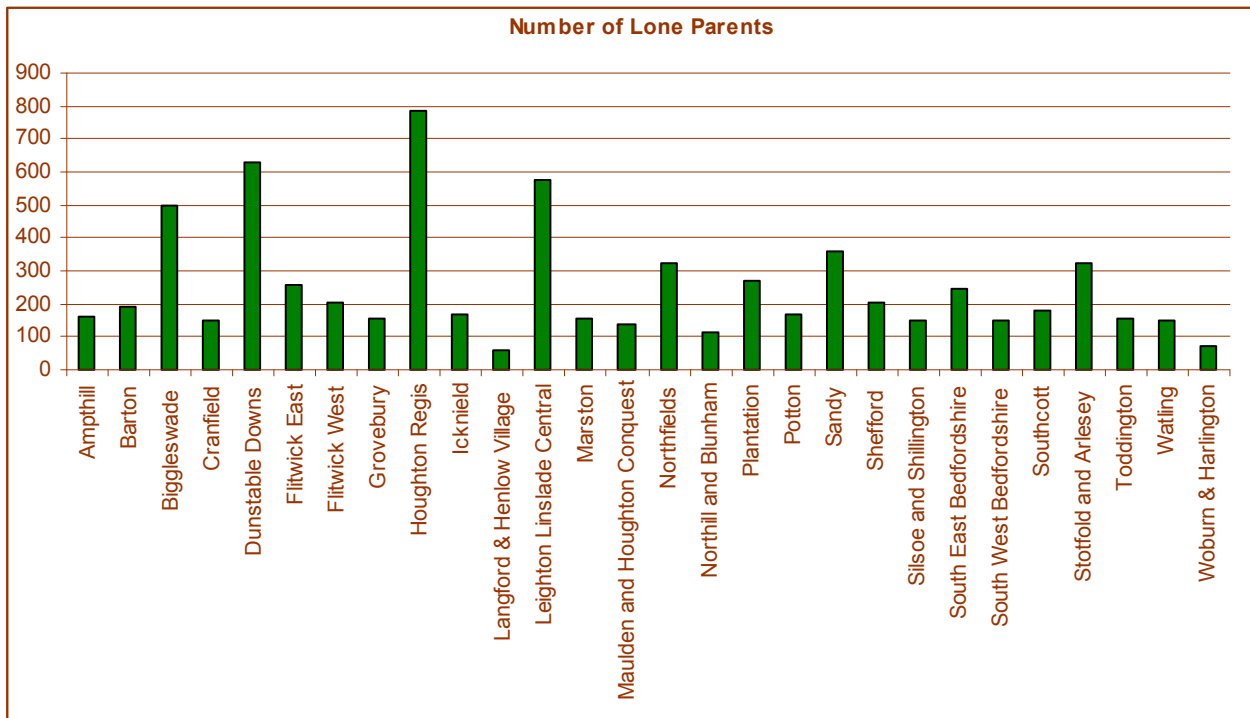
Appendix B Council Tax Support Equality Impact Assessment

The DWP argues that these impacts will be mitigated by policies to support lone parents into paid work. However this will still leave women who are unable to find work, particularly work that fits around their childcare responsibilities, facing a significant drop in income.

- Lone parents face particular barriers to entering paid work including the cost of childcare which has to be met from one salary and It can be very hard to find childcare outside ‘standard’ working hours (before 8am, after 6pm or weekends).
- Lone parents face biggest loss as a result of the tax / benefit changes to be introduced by 2014–15
- Lone parent households 92% are headed by women stand to lose the equivalent of around 18.5% of their net income, the equivalent of *one month’s income a year*

Local Data Analysis:

The highest levels of lone parenthood in Central Bedfordshire are in Houghton Regis (784 households), Dunstable Downs (622 households) and Leighton Linslade Central (568 households). However when this is calculated as a percentage of households in the Ward Northfields has the highest (11.79%), followed by Houghton Regis (11.72%) and Dunstable Downs (10.35%).



- about 1,400 lone parents with children under 5 will be protected by the proposal.
- The number of Lone parents with a dependant child aged under 5 at 30 November 2012 was 1,904

Findings from Local Consultation:

Sex	Frequency	Percent
No answer	45	2.7
Female	937	55.5
Male	707	41.9
Total	1689	100.0



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- There was majority support for the proposal to protect **Single parents with children under the age of five** from both the survey (58%) and the consultation (61%). There was less support from respondents with a household income of £30,000 or more (44%) or without children (58%). However, there was more support from those respondents who were looking after the home (86%) and those aged 30 or under (80%).

This proposal received a lot of comments, people felt that single parents already get support and that giving the more support will make it more appealing to continue to have children and live off benefits. Others were concerned that asking for a contribution from single parents with children under five years of age would potentially affect the quality of the care the children receive.

A few people felt this proposal should be extended to include children older than five, some suggested 11 years of age should be the cut off and others suggested support until they leave full time education. Some stakeholders commented that some single parents have maintenance (income) which is completely ignored in benefit calculations and this is not even handed. This fits with the general feedback that support should be based on an assessment of the individual's financial circumstances and that maintenance payments should be included in this.

- **Sexual Orientation:** e.g. *Lesbians / Gay men / Bisexuals / Heterosexuals*

Key Findings of National Research: No specific impacts identified.

Local Data Analysis: N/A

Findings from Local Consultation:

Respondents' Sexual Orientation	Frequency	Percent
No answer	225	13.3
Heterosexual	1236	73.2
Bisexual	20	1.2
Lesbian/ gay woman or man	18	1.1
Prefer not to say	158	9.4
Other	32	1.9
Total	1689	100.0

There were no specific findings related to this protected characteristic

- **Other:** e.g. *Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion, Marriage and Civil Partnership*

Key Findings of National Research:

- The number of couples with an income of less than £50 a week after rent has been paid will double
- 23% of individuals in families with at least one disabled person live in relative income poverty compared to 16% of individuals in families with no disabled member
- The national Households below Average Income figures show that children in large families are more likely to live in low income households than children in smaller families, with under three children.
- Larger families are more likely to be dependent on benefits for longer periods of time and also the rate of worklessness in larger families is higher than for parents in smaller families, often due to the affordability and availability of childcare (Barnados 2006).
- A child in a large family is between 50% and 180% more likely than a one-child family to be poor and a child in a 4 or more family is between 280% and 800% more likely to be poor than



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a one-child family

Child Poverty:

- DWP estimates that 48% of the 450 000 households affected by changes to local housing Allowance will include children
 - The value of Child Benefit will be cut by over 10% by 2014.
 - 51% spend their Child Benefit on clothes or shoes
 - 26% spend it on food
 - 16% spend it on their child’s education or related costs
- By 2014, a family with one child will be around £130 a year worse off than if Child Benefit had been increased each year in line with inflation. A family with three children will be £285 a year worse off

Changes in Child Tax Credit:

- low-income families with one child who have weekly childcare costs of £175 (the maximum childcare costs that parents of one child can claim for) will lose £17.50 a week (£910 a year) and
- low-income families with two children who have weekly childcare costs of £300 (the maximum childcare costs that parents of two children can claim for) will lose £30 a week (£1,560 a year).
- UK Parents spend 33% of their net household income on childcare compared to an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and development (OECD) average of 13%.
- 24% of mothers have had to give up work as a result of the changes.
- reduction in support through the childcare element of tax credits will particularly affect women in lone parent households” as 60% of the recipients of the childcare element of WTC are single parents
- Women in couples will also suffer as a result of this change, as they are more likely to be the ones to give up work when the household budget no longer balances
- 58% of families in extreme poverty said they are not better off working when childcare has been paid
- 40% families in extreme poverty have considered giving up work, as an average of £500 per year has been added to their childcare bill.
- 25% of families across all income demographics stated that the rising costs of childcare and reduced payments of WTC had caused them to get into debt

Local Data Analysis:

Age range of children and young people population in Central Bedfordshire, 2009

0 – 4	15,800
5 – 9	15,200
10 – 14	15,600
15 - 19	15,500

*ONS – estimates June 2009

Central Bedfordshire has 12.1% (7,452) of its children living in Poverty. This statistic is provided by Her Majesty’s Customs and Revenue (HMRC) and relates to the year 2008-2009. However this figure masks some high levels of poverty within particular areas. The five areas (equating to former wards) with the highest levels of Poverty are;

- Tithe Farm 31.4%
- Parkside 27.1%
- Manshead 25.6%
- Northfields 24.8%
- Houghton Hall 22.9%

Central Bedfordshire’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment states 27% of Children in Central Bedfordshire live in workless or low income households, rising to between 45% and 50% in parts of Houghton Regis



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and Dunstable.

In Autumn term 2010 there were about 2,850 children in Central Bedfordshire claiming free school meals

	2007	2008
Children in families in receipt of IS/JSA	4875	3640
Children in families receiving WTC & CTC, income <60% median income	590	775
Children in families receiving CTC only, income <60% median income	1370	1225
Children in families in receipt of CTC <60% median income or IS/JSA	6670	6870

It is currently estimated that there are 7,336 children (under 16) in families living in poverty who will be worse off resulting from these changes.

- The numbers in receipt of **War Disablement pension** or **War Widow's pension** at 30 November 2012 was 35
- The number of **working age claimants** at 30 November 2012 who will have to pay a minimum of 25% of their Council Tax bill was 8,552.
- The number of claimants in receipt of **Second Adult Rebate** at 30 November 2012 was 186

Findings from Local Consultation:

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
No answer	76	4.5
Single	1047	62.0
Married or civil partnership	509	30.1
Living with partner	57	3.4
Total	1689	100.0

Current economic activity	Frequency	Percent
No answer	55	3.3
Permanent employee in full-time job (30 hours plus per week)	87	5.2
Permanent employee in part-time job (under 30 hours per week)	92	5.4
Temporary employee in full-time job (30 hours plus per week)	1	.1
Temporary employee in part-time job (under 30 hours per week)	13	.8
Self employed full or part-time	45	2.7
On a government supported training programme (e.g. Modern Apprenticeship/ Training for Work)	2	.1
Full-time education at school, college or university	6	.4
Unemployed and available for work	100	5.9
Wholly retired from work	922	54.6
Permanently sick/disabled	251	14.9
Looking after the home	48	2.8
Doing something else	67	4.0
Total	1689	100.0

Annual household income	Frequency	Percent
No answer	143	8.5



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Less than £10,000	983	58.2
Between £10,000 and £20,000	457	27.1
Between £20,000 and £30,000	42	2.5
Over £30,000	64	3.8
Total	1689	100.0

Benefits	Frequency	Percent
Jobseekers Allowance, income related Employment and Support Allowance or Council Tax Benefit for low income	951	56.3
Disability premiums	256	15.2
Carers Allowance	138	8.2
Second Adult Rebate for Council Tax	83	4.9
Non-Dependant Adult deductions for Council Tax	64	3.8
Discounts or Exemptions for second home, empty property or a repossessed home	26	1.5

17% of respondents had children

- From the survey, the majority (55%) supported the council's proposed **approach** to fill the funding gap, however just under half of the consultation responses (47%) supported this approach although it was the most favoured approach from the consultation
- Half of the survey respondents (56%) and the consultation respondents (51%) supported the proposal to **freeze allowances and premiums** at the current levels. There was less support for this proposal from people under 30 years of age (40% agree). People who opposed this proposal did so because they felt this would create greater hardship in years to come and that the allowances and premiums should reflect inflation.
- Almost three-quarters (74%) of the survey respondents agreed with the proposal that all working age people (except vulnerable protected groups) should pay a **minimum contribution** of 25%. This proposal was also supported by the majority of the consultation respondents too but to a lesser degree (57%). This proposal was particularly supported by those in permanent full time work (63%) and those aged 70 and over (68%).

Respondents who opposed this proposal were concerned about how, particularly people on low income/ unemployed were going to afford to pay.
Others said that expecting those on low incomes to pay would only serve increase the poverty gap and this proposal is not in line with the council's agenda to tackle poverty, particularly child poverty.
A few people suggested a lower minimum contribution

- There were many comments throughout the consultation that Council Tax benefits should be based on **individual circumstances** or be means tested not a blanket rule for specific groups
- Although the majority of the survey respondents (70%) supported the proposal to **abolish the second adult rebate** there was significantly less support from the consultation respondents where less than half supported it (42%).

Those respondents who are currently in receipt of second adult rebate were less supportive of this proposal (16% agree).
Also those currently living with a partner (31%), living with a non-dependant adult (31%) or living with a dependant adult (34%) were also less supportive.
However, those respondents with a household income of over £30,000 were more supportive



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(56% agree).

Those who opposed the abolition of second adult rebate were concerned that this would penalise families who had adult children living with them who could not find work or adult children who were ill or disabled and were unable to contribute to the household bills

- The majority of the survey respondents (70%) supported the proposal to **reduce the amount of support offered to people living with non-dependant adults** there was significantly less support from the consultation responses where just under half supported it (47%).

Those respondents whose household income is between £20,000 and £30,000 were more supportive (62% agree) as were those with an income of £30,000 or more (69%).

Those currently living with non-dependant adults were understandably less supportive (34%). Respondents who opposed reducing the amount of support offered to people living with non-dependant adults cited similar reasons to those who opposed the abolition of the second adult rebate proposal.

- There was strong support for the proposal to charge **second home owners** full Council Tax from both the survey respondents (88%) and the consultation respondents (87%).
- Although there was majority support for the proposal to make owners of **unoccupied homes** pay full Council Tax from both the survey and the consultation there was more support from the consultation respondents (78%) than the survey (64%).

There was less support for this proposal from respondents with a household income of between £20,000 and £30,000 (62%) and £30,000 or more (66%).

People opposed to this proposal said if the property is vacant then there is no-one there to use the council services so why should they have to pay Council Tax.

There was also some recognition that properties are sometimes unoccupied through no fault of the owner and that the owner would be penalised.

There was some concern that if the six month exemption was removed Landlords will be less willing to complete repairs or redecoration between tenants, which will reduce the quality of local housing and the increased costs to landlords will just be passed on to tenants through increased rents

- Just under half (49%) of the survey respondents supported the proposal that **Owners of empty homes undergoing repair should pay full Council Tax**, but there was majority support from the consultation respondents (61%).
- Three-quarters (76%) of the survey respondents supported the proposal that **Mortgagees of repossessed homes will be required to pay full Council Tax** but there was less support from the consultation respondents with half supporting it (50%).
- The majority of the survey respondents (69%) and the consultation respondents (71%) supported the proposal to **charge long term empty home owners** 150% Council Tax.
- Just over half of the consultation respondents (54%) supported this proposal to **Increase the earnings disregard by an additional £10 to support people who start work or increase their earnings**. There were very few comments made about this proposal. Some people commented that they did not understand it. The feedback from the comments relating to this proposal suggested that some people felt it did not go far enough, and CBC should incentivise work even more. There were some strong messages that there are no jobs for people. A few suggested that Council Tax support should be available for those unemployed for a set period.
- There were many comments about the specific **protected groups** and comments in general that Council Tax support should be means tested, based on individual circumstances. Respondents were concerned that some protected groups may actually be wealthy or working and not need a reduction in



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their Council Tax, whereas some families on low income or with no income would not get any support with their Council Tax. There were some people who felt that everyone should pay and no-one should be protected

- There was strong support for the proposal to support **People claiming War Disablement or War Widow's Pension**, over three-quarters of both the survey (79%) and the consultation (76%) supported it.

There were only a few comments made about this proposal, again they were concerned that some of these people may not need support and may be quite wealthy. The support should be based on individual circumstances.

The British Legion requested that we fully disregard any military compensation payments when calculating Council Tax support

2.3. Summary of Existing Data and Consultation Findings – Employment Considering the impact on Employees – Not Applicable

- **Age:** e.g. 16-19 / 20-29 / 30-39 / 40-49 / 50-59 / 60+ **N/A**

- **Disability:** e.g. Physical impairment / Sensory impairment / Mental health condition / Learning disability or difficulty / Long-standing illness or health condition / Severe disfigurement **N/A**

- **Carers:** e.g. parent / guardian / foster carer / person caring for an adult who is a spouse, partner, civil partner, relative or person who lives at the same address **N/A**

- **Gender Reassignment:** People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex **N/A**

- **Pregnancy and Maternity:** e.g. Pregnancy / Compulsory maternity leave / Ordinary maternity leave / Additional maternity leave **N/A**

- **Race:** e.g. Asian or Asian British / Black or Black British / Chinese / Gypsies and Travellers / Mixed Heritage / White British / White Irish / White Other **N/A**

- **Religion or Belief:** e.g. Buddhist / Christian / Hindu / Jewish / Muslim / Sikh / No religion / Other **N/A**

- **Sex:** Women / Men **N/A**

- **Sexual Orientation:** e.g. Lesbians / Gay men / Bisexuals / Heterosexuals **N/A**

- **Other:** e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion, Marriage and Civil Partnership **N/A**

2.4. To what extent are vulnerable groups more affected by this proposal compared to the population or workforce as a whole?

National Research highlights that many pensioners, lone parents (the majority of whom are women), disabled people, carers and people from some ethnic minority groups are amongst the poorest in society and can face significant employment barriers. The proposed Central Bedfordshire scheme offers a continued level of protection to the most vulnerable of these groups and a slightly reduced level of protection to other vulnerable groups.

2.5. To what extent do current procedures and working practices address the above



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issues and help to promote equality of opportunity?

In relation to claimants of working age, consideration has been given by Central Bedfordshire Council to continuing the existing national Council Tax Benefit framework within a new local scheme (i.e. making no changes) and the funding implications that would apply to this, which would require the Council to find savings elsewhere in order to fund the CTS scheme.

Consideration has also been given to reducing any potential funding shortfall that would arise from the changes by reviewing the Council Tax discounts and exemptions that are currently applied to vacant properties within the district including long term empty homes and second homes. However, this alone would not fully achieve the levels of financial savings needed to meet the funding reduction

Key Principles & Features of Proposed Scheme:

The Council is keen to protect vulnerable groups as much as possible and therefore as part of the development the draft scheme the Council has identified the following key principles and features:

Principle 1: Everyone should pay something - At present, claimants in receipt of Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based) and Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) and other claimants not receiving these but with an income below the required level for their basic living needs, generally receive 100% Council Tax Benefit (CTB) and therefore pay no Council Tax. The Council proposes that all working age claimants (unless protected) should pay at least 25% of their Council Tax under the Council Tax Support scheme (CTS).

Principle 2: The most vulnerable claimants should be protected (from the minimum contribution) Claimants will be protected from the 25% minimum contribution if they fall into any of the following categories:

- they or their partner or dependants are entitled to any of the disability premiums (normally given where disability living allowance has been awarded) or disabled earnings disregard,.
- the claimant is in receipt of disabled persons reduction for Council Tax purposes,
- the claimant is in receipt of war disablement pension or war widow's pension,
- the claimant is a lone parent with a child/children under the age of 5,
- the claimant is a single claimant and has caring responsibilities (normally awarded a carers allowance),
- the claimants as a couple both have caring responsibilities

Principle 3: The scheme should incentivise work At present, the first £5 of a single claimant's earnings, £10 of a couple's earnings and £25 of a single parent's earnings are not counted when calculating their weekly income for the purposes of determining their entitlement to council tax benefit. The Council proposes to increase this level by an additional £10 a week under its proposed scheme for single claimants, couples and single parents. This would mean that the first £15 of a single claimant's earnings, £20 of a couple's earnings and £35 of a single parent's earnings would not be counted when calculating their entitlement to Council Tax Support

Principle 4: Everyone in the household should contribute - At present, a deduction is generally made from potential weekly council tax benefit entitlement in respect of other adults aged 18 or over living in the claimant's home. These are referred to as non-dependants. A non-dependant is a person who is living with the claimant but who is not dependent upon them, and not living in their home on a commercial basis, (i.e. as a joint tenant or sub tenant). Non-dependants include an adult son or daughter, a mother or father, friend etc of the claimant. These people are assumed to be giving the claimant some money towards their council tax regardless of whether or not they are actually doing so. This assumed contribution is based upon



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the non-dependant's circumstances. The draft scheme proposes using the existing levels of these contributions.

Principle 5: Benefit should not be paid to those with relatively large capital or savings - At present, working age claimants with savings and investments above £16,000 are generally not entitled to Council Tax Benefit. Our proposal is that working age claimants with capital such as savings and investments amounting to over £6,000 shall not be entitled to Council Tax Support.

Feature 1: Rate of allowances and premiums to be frozen at 2012/2013 levels Premiums and personal allowances used to determine basic living needs for a claimant and their family when calculating entitlement to CTS shall be held at the rates applied for 2012/13.

Feature 2: Removal of second adult rebate scheme for working age claimants The current second adult rebate scheme (whereby claimants whose own income is too high to receive CTB, but have other adults(s) in the household whose income is low, can receive a Council Tax discount of up to 25%) is to be abolished for working age claimants.

Feature 3: Extended payments for working age claimants The current extended payment scheme (whereby claimants can receive 4 weeks extra Council Tax Benefit when they or their partner start work, including self employment or their hours or earnings from current employment increase) is to be retained with our local CTS scheme.

Feature 4: Income in respect of Children - Currently the amount of income we use for benefit purposes can be lowered depending on what kind of income it is. This means that a claimant can have more money coming in before we begin to reduce the amount of benefit they get. We propose to continue disregarding income from Child Benefit and Child maintenance when we calculate a claimant's income.

Feature 5: Earned Income Disregards - Currently if a claimant works at least 16 hours a week, we will disregard some of their earnings when calculating their income. We propose to continue disregarding earnings for the following category of claimants:

Earned Income Disregards	Weekly Amounts
Lone parents	£25.00
Certain people who are disabled or long term sick	£20.00
Certain carers and certain people in emergency services	£20.00
Single people	£5.00
Couples	£10.00
Children who qualify for Disabled Child Premium	£15.00
Other children	£5.00

Consultation:

Central Bedfordshire Council is undertaking this consultation between the period 22 August and 14 November 2012. This timescale has been determined following receipt of policy statements of intent published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on 17 May 2012 and to permit sufficient time to evaluate responses received and to meet the Council's budget setting timetable.

Central Bedfordshire Council wants to ensure that everyone who is a resident in the district (including organisations and voluntary groups) has an opportunity to have their say about the Council's proposed future replacement for Council Tax Benefit.

Questionnaires can be obtained from the Council locations listed below during normal opening hours. Access to the Council's draft scheme is also available from the six customer service centres.



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The timetable below sets out the key milestones in terms of the consultation.

Prior to 21 st August	Consult Fire and Police (major precepting authorities)
21 st August	Executive approve the draft scheme for consultation
22 nd August	Launch consultation with public, stakeholders and partners (for 12 weeks)
September	500 telephone interviews with a cross section of the public
September/ October	Meetings and discussions with various vulnerable groups
September/ October	Special Town and Parish Council Conference
14 th November	Consultation closes
28 th November	Report available summarising the consultation feedback
December	Members consider the consultation feedback and finalise the Scheme
January 2013	Executive agree final Council Tax Scheme
January 2013	Full Council agree final Council Tax Scheme

The main consultation mechanism will be a consultation document (which sets out our plans) and a response form (which captures peoples views in a structured way). Copies of the consultation document and the response form will be made available on the council's website and in Libraries, Council offices and Customer Service Centres across the area.

In order to enable detailed analysis of the consultation feedback the consultation response form will need to collect data about the following:

- Family structure
- Number and ages of children living in household
- Nature of employment full time part-time or temporary work
- Income/ salary - explore the impact on families whose income is around £20k
- Current benefits
- Ethnicity
- Age (actual age not groups)
- Disability
- Caring responsibilities
- Home postcode

During the consultation the council will actively engage with key vulnerable groups and partners to ensure that we incorporate their views when developing our final scheme.

- Child Poverty Strategy Group 18 September 2012
- Central Bedfordshire Equality Forum 20 September 2012

The consultation included two separate exercises; the consultation and a survey. The consultation was widely publicised to the public, various stakeholders, partners, landlords and voluntary organisations. CBC also wrote directly to all existing 18,000 claimants inviting them to have their say.

Targeted face to face discussions were held with specific vulnerable groups and claimants such as the unemployed, single parents, disadvantaged families and carers.

The Council also carried out a telephone survey with 500 members of the public who were broadly representative of our population.



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2.6. Are there any gaps in data or consultation findings

1,689 consultation response forms were received by the closing date. A number of letters and emails were also received from stakeholders and partners. There was a good mix of different types of people who responded however, the age profile showed that there was an under-representation of people aged between 30 and 49 years of age and an over-representation of people aged 70 and over. This is to be expected considering that CBC wrote to all existing claimants, approximately half of whom are pensioners.

The survey however, was carried out with a representative sample of adults to ensure a more balanced response to compare the consultation responses to.

2.7. What action will be taken to obtain this information?

N/A

Stage 3 - Providing an overview of impacts and potential discrimination.

Stage 3 – Assessing Positive & Negative Impacts

Analysis of Impacts	Impact?		Discrimination?		Summary of impacts and reasons
	(+ve)	(- ve)	YES	NO	
3.1 Age	√			√	Pensioners are protected by the proposal
3.2 Disability	√			√	Disabled people are protected by the proposal. The Equality Forum highlighted a concern that people on the fringes of protected characteristics such as disability are very vulnerable because if they don't get specific disability benefits they won't be protected under this proposal
3.3 Carers	√			√	Carers are protected by the proposal
3.4 Gender Reassignment	-	-	-	-	No significant impacts identified
3.5 Pregnancy & Maternity	-	-	-	-	No significant impacts identified
3.6 Race	-	-	-	-	No significant impacts identified
3.7 Religion / Belief	-	-	-	-	No significant impacts identified
3.8 Sex	√	√		√	There was majority support for the proposal to protect Single parents with children under the age of five. A few people felt this proposal should be extended to include children older than five.
3.9 Sexual Orientation	-	-	-	-	No significant impacts identified
3.10 Other e.g.		√		√	The majority of respondents supported



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<p><i>Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion Marriage and Civil Partnership</i></p>					<p>the council's proposed approach and agreed with the proposal that all working age people (except vulnerable protected groups) should pay a minimum contribution of 25%.</p> <p>Respondents who opposed this proposal were concerned about how, particularly people on low income/ unemployed were going to afford to pay. Others said that expecting those on low incomes to pay would only serve increase the poverty gap and this proposal is not in line with the council's agenda to tackle poverty, particularly child poverty. A few people suggested a lower minimum contribution</p> <p>The child poverty group highlighted the need to fully understand the cocktail effect of all the national benefit changes in order to identify the likely impact of the Council Tax Support proposals. The Council is proposing to set a minimum payment of 25% at a time when the benefits cap will significantly reduce the incomes of many families</p> <p>There were many comments throughout the consultation that Council Tax benefits should be based on individual circumstances or be means tested not a blanket rule for specific groups.</p> <p>There was strong support for the proposal to support People claiming War Disablement or War Widow's Pension</p>
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Stage 4 - Identifying mitigating actions that can be taken to address adverse impacts.

Stage 4 – Conclusions, Recommendations and Action Planning

4.1 What are the main conclusions and recommendations from the assessment?

National Research highlights that many pensioners, lone parents (the majority of whom are women), disabled people, carers and people from some ethnic minority groups are amongst the poorest in society and can face significant employment barriers. The proposed Central Bedfordshire scheme offers a continued level of protection to the most vulnerable of these groups and a slightly reduced level of protection to other vulnerable groups.



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In addition the CTS scheme will continue to be applicable to anyone assessed as being on a low income, regardless of gender, age, age of children, ethnic background etc. The Council proposes to adopt the current national Council Tax Benefit regulations, however the base-line at which we calculate entitlement may be reduced from 100% to 85% unless the customer is in one of the stated vulnerable groups. There will therefore be a significant number of non-vulnerable customers who will remain entitled to CTS, all be it at a lower amount than they would have received under CTB.

The council has studied research, conducted data analysis and undertaken extensive consultation with stakeholders and a good cross section of local residents. There appears to be broad support for most aspects of the council's scheme although some concern has been expressed in relation to the impact the 25% minimum contribution may have on working families and job seekers and whether lone parents with older children can be supported.

4.2 What changes will be made to address or mitigate any adverse impacts that have been identified?

Further financial modelling may be helpful to see if an extension of protection is affordable

4.3 Are there any budgetary implications?

The Council will receive at least 10% less than the amount that is currently paid out by the Government as Council Tax Benefit. The Council must manage its budget effectively. The aspiration to support local residents must be considered along side the need to balance the Council's budget.

4.4 Actions to be taken to mitigate against any adverse impacts:

Action	Lead Officer	Date	Priority
Further financial modelling may be helpful to see if an extension of protection is affordable	Gary Muskett	November / December	High

Stage 5 - Checking that all the relevant issues and mitigating actions have been identified

Stage 5 – Quality Assurance & Scrutiny:
Checking that all the relevant issues have been identified
5.1 What methods have been used to gain feedback on the main issues raised in the assessment?
Step 1:
Has the Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity) reviewed this assessment and provided feedback? Yes
Summary of CPA's comments:
The CPA (E&D) has been fully involved in the development of the Equality Impact Assessment.
Step 2:
5.2 Feedback from Central Bedfordshire Equality Forum - 20 September 2012
Members of the Forum asked:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if there would a transitional period before the new scheme is introduced and were advised that this would not be possible



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- what steps were being taken to ensure that people are aware of the proposed changes – All Benefit Recipients have been contacted and invited to take part in the consultation. Recipients will be contacted again in the New Year and advised of the final decision. A telephone help line will be set up to answer any queries.

Members of the Forum expressed the following concerns:

- People on the fringes of protected characteristics such as disability are very vulnerable because if they don't get specific disability benefits they won't be protected under this proposal.
- Working families on low incomes will experience a significant adverse impact
- Property owners may be tempted to demolish empty homes rather than pay additional tax
- The proposed changes are being driven by the financial demands faced by the Government and are based on various assumptions rather than a detailed understanding of the likely impacts. It is people on the edges of the changes who will most affected.
- Disabled people are in the process of being reassessed and moved off benefits – most are powerless to resist this and don't have lobby groups to support them
- There are likely to be harder to reach Black and Ethnic Minority communities who will also suffer a significant adverse impact
- Whilst general statements are made to the effect that no one will be worse off working it's hard to believe in practice that this will be the case.
- The need to consider low income families who are unprotected by the proposal and already squeezed by benefit changes.
- The growth of debt recovery and money lending agencies highlighting the pressure that people are facing
- The evidence of growing demand for debt advice

The Bedfordshire Race & Equalities Council is actively encouraging organisations and individuals to respond to the consultation.

Members of the Forum suggested:

- Further modelling and data analysis should be undertaken to look at the impacts in different wards and for different groups of people.
- The Council should carefully consider how best to respond to the growing hopelessness that some people are experiencing by identifying a set of ethical principles to frame the scheme which will set a standard for other councils to follow.

5.3 Feedback From Central Bedfordshire Child Poverty Meeting – 18 September 2012

Attendees at the meeting expressed the following concerns:

- The need to fully understand the cocktail effect of all the national benefit changes in order to identify the likely impact of the Council Tax Support proposals. The Council is proposing to set a minimum payment of 25% at a time when the benefits cap will significantly reduce the incomes of many families
- Families with 3 or more children will find the benefit changes particularly difficult
- Landlords fearful of the charges on empty properties may rush to re-let properties and not carry out essential repairs
- People are going to be directed to Discretionary Housing Payments to make up shortfalls in housing benefits but this is a finite source of funding and unlikely to be able to meet all needs

Attendees at the meeting asked whether:

- Consideration could be given to protecting single parents with children aged 5-11
- Further data analysis could be undertaken to quantify and understand the financial impact on low paid working families. The Council's Anti Poverty Strategy Needs Assessment was cited as a potential useful source of local data.

Voluntary Organisations indicated that they would be submitting official responses to the consultation.



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Stage 6 - Ensuring that the actual impact of proposals are monitored over time.

Stage 6 – Monitoring Future Impact	
6.1	How will implementation of the actions be monitored?
6.2	What sort of data will be collected and how often will it be analysed?
6.3	How often will the proposal be reviewed?
6.4	Who will be responsible for this?
6.5	How have the actions from this assessment been incorporated into the proposal?

Stage 7 - Finalising the assessment.

Stage 7 – Accountability / Signing Off	
7.1	Has the lead Assistant Director/Head of Service been notified of the outcome of the assessment Name: <u> Gary Muskett </u> Date: <u> 7.12.12 </u>
7.2	Has the Corporate Policy Adviser Equality & Diversity provided confirmation that the Assessment is complete? Date: _____

Appendix 1 -Overview of Welfare Changes and Impacts by Protected Characteristics

1) Summary of Changes to Local Housing Allowance:

- Cut to cover the **bottom 30%** of rents rather than bottom 50%
- Linked to **Consumer Prices Index** rather than local rents meaning value likely to go down over time.
- LHA will be **capped** at various levels depending upon number of bedrooms
- **Non-dependent deductions** will increase. These are the amount deducted from housing benefit because it is assumed that a non-dependent family member is contributing to the rent
- HB for single people will also be reduced by the extension of the shared room rate to those under the age of 35 (from 25),



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- extra HB for an additional bedroom where the claimant or their partner has a disability and needs overnight care from a non-resident carer

Impact:

General:

- Setting the rate at the 30th percentile reduces the number of properties available to people receiving HB to the bottom 30 per cent of the rental market, forcing them into potentially poorer quality accommodation, for which there will be greater demand.

Women:

- Cuts to LHA will have a disproportionate impact on women since women are the main recipients - single women constitute approximately 50% of recipients of housing benefit, with couples composing around 25% and single males 25%.
- 47% of those affected will have children, of which 32% will be lone parents.
- 19% will be disabled.
- 8% will be pensioners.
- 13% will be from BME groups who will also be disproportionately affected by the 4 bedroom cap.
- People with non-dependents (e.g. elderly relatives) living in the same house will incur extra charges
- The number of couples with an income of less than £50 a week after rent has been paid will double.

Race:

- The reduction and capping of Local Housing Allowance will impact disproportionately on black and minority ethnic communities as many often need larger accommodation due to family size
- Child poverty rates for black and minority ethnic families in the UK are higher than the national average and the Housing Benefit cuts are likely to increase this disparity
- Some of the reductions in Housing Benefit do not apply to claimants with disabilities; however, black and minority ethnic claimants are less likely to claim the benefits that provide this protection
- As HB is paid to people on a low income, the planned cuts in benefit will affect the poorest and most vulnerable. Black and minority ethnic communities will be disproportionately affected as they are more likely to be unemployed or to have a low income. Approximately two-fifths of people from minority ethnic communities live in low-income households, twice the rate for white people

Child Poverty:

- DWP estimates that 48% of the 450 000 households affected will include children

Disability:

- People with learning and other disabilities are increasingly offered tenancies in the private rented sector. These properties will often have been adapted for their needs or include a support package to help them remain in the accommodation. If they have to move, they could lose access to nearby transport links & contact with informal carers and support networks. The new local authority will have to assess their needs, which could lead to gaps and delays in new arrangements being put in place.

Older People:

- For the one third of pensioners aged over 65 are tenants, cuts in HB could drive them out of their area, breaking up the social support networks on which they depend and risking their social exclusion. Some 5% of pensioners live in private rented accommodation, a quarter in social housing. Because HB will in future be indexed to CPI, the gap between HB and the rent demanded is likely to widen.



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2) Summary of the Welfare Reform Bill:

- **cap** total out-of-work benefits paid to a household at £26,000 per year. The cap will be implemented by restricting the level of housing benefit paid to households
- **introduction of a single benefits ‘taper rate’** – ensuring claimants keep at least 35p of every £1 earned when they enter work
- **a new regime of conditionality** –payments to jobseekers will be withheld, for as much as three years, if appropriate efforts are not made to progress towards work;
- **introduction of mandatory work activity**
- from April 2013 people who have received 12 months or more of JSA will have a 10% reduction in their housing benefit.

Impact:

Women:

- The cap on total benefits that a family can receive will disproportionately affect **women and affect lone parents** worst of all. The DWP’s own Equality Impact Assessment of this policy states:

“We expect around 60% of customers who are likely to have their benefit reduced by the cap to be single females but only around 3% to be single men. Most of the single women affected are likely to be lone parents, this is because we expect the vast majority of households affected by this policy (around 90%) to have children. Approximately 60% of those who will be capped are single women. Single women form around 40% of the overall benefit population.”

The DWP argues that these impacts will be mitigated by policies to support lone parents into paid work. However this will still leave women who are unable to find work, particularly work that fits around their childcare responsibilities, facing a significant drop in income

Long Term Unemployed:

- **impact for individuals who have been away from the labour market for a significant period of time.** There is a challenge of not only reduced benefit and a greater pressure to move into employment, but also increased competition for opportunities from people who have recently become unemployed and are hence a lot closer to the labour market.

Disability:

- All households with someone claiming Disability Living Allowance will be exempt from this measure.
- JSA change will particularly affect disabled people since they take longer to get jobs

Race:

- Increased conditionality for working-age claimants is more likely to impact on black and minority ethnic claimants as they are disproportionately represented among workless households
- BME communities are disproportionately represented among workless households

3) Child Benefit:

Frozen for three years, until April 2014. The value of Child Benefit will be cut by over 10% by 2014.

Impact on Families:

- 51% spend their Child Benefit on clothes or shoes
- 26% spend it on food



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- 16% spend it on their child’s education or related costs
- By 2014, a family with one child will be around £130 a year worse off than if Child Benefit had been increased each year in line with inflation. A family with three children will be £285 a year worse off

4) Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission

Lone parents who use CMEC will be charged an application fee of up to £100 and between 7% and 12% of any maintenance paid.

Impact on Lone Parents:

For many lone parents on the lowest incomes charges may act as a barrier to accessing the CMEC. They and their children may be left with no support at all from the non-resident parent, or, if they can negotiate some money it may be far less than what they would be entitled to

5) Job Seekers Allowance

From October 2011 the majority of new lone parents whose youngest child is aged 5 or over will no longer be eligible for Income Support and will have to claim Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) instead. Existing Income Support claimants will be transferred to JSA from April 2012. This means that they will be subject to the intensive work and sanctions programme.

Impact on Lone Parents:

- Lone parents face particular barriers to entering paid work including the cost of childcare which has to be met from one salary and It can be very hard to find childcare outside ‘standard’ working hours (before 8am, after 6pm or weekends).
- Lone parents face biggest loss as a result of the tax / benefit changes to be introduced by 2014–15
- Lone parent households 92% are headed by women stand to lose the equivalent of around 18.5% of their net income, the equivalent of *one month’s income a year*

6) Child Tax Credit

Child Tax Credit is a benefit paid to low-income parents, whether they are in work or not, and involves both a family element for any family with children and a child element for each child. The government provides support to low-income families for childcare costs through the ‘childcare element’ of the Working Tax Credit (WTC).

The 24 hour rule: From April 2012, the rules for eligibility for the WTC for couples with children will change. Currently, couples have to work at least 16 hours a week between both parents. From April they will have to increase their working hours to at least 24 hours, or they will lose their whole entitlement to WTC, worth £3,870 a year.

Changes to the childcare element: In April 2011, the level of childcare costs that working families can expect to be covered by the childcare element of the WTC was cut by 10% – this means that the maximum level of costs WTC covers has dropped from 80% to 70%.

Impact on Low Income Families:

- low-income families with one child who have weekly childcare costs of £175 (the maximum childcare costs that parents of one child can claim for) will lose £17.50 a week (£910 a year) and



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- low-income families with two children who have weekly childcare costs of £300 (the maximum childcare costs that parents of two children can claim for) will lose £30 a week (£1,560 a year).
- Women rely more on benefits and tax credits than men, due to both greater caring responsibilities and relative economic inequality and poverty. On average, 1/5th of women’s income is made up of welfare payments and tax credits compared to 1/10th for men. This means that, on average, *benefits make up twice as much of women’s income than men’s*.
- one in five mums are missing meals so their children can eat
- cost of childcare in the UK, is amongst the highest in the world & has risen above rate of inflation,.
- UK Parents spend 33% of their net household income on childcare compared to an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and development (OECD) average of 13%.
- Most families in this situation have a total household income of around £17,000. If they cannot find extra work, the loss of £3,870 will cause these families severe hardship
- 24% of mothers have had to give up work as a result of the changes.
- reduction in support through the childcare element of tax credits will particularly affect women in lone parent households” as 60% of the recipients of the childcare element of WTC are single parents
- Women in couples will also suffer as a result of this change, as they are more likely to be the ones to give up work when the household budget no longer balances
- 58% of families in extreme poverty said they are not better off working when childcare has been paid
- 40% families in extreme poverty have considered giving up work, as an average of £500 per year has been added to their childcare bill.
- 25% of families across all income demographics stated that the rising costs of childcare and reduced payments of WTC had caused them to get into debt

7) Universal Credit

This will replace non-contributory Job Seekers Allowance, Working and Child Tax Credits, Employment Support Allowance, Housing Benefit and Income Support. It will mean a single system of support for people moving in and out of work without needing to make separate claims. It will be paid out as a single monthly payment and the Government is proposing that for couples one person should claim the Universal Credit on behalf of the family.

Impact on Low Income Families:

- provides more support for those doing so-called ‘mini-jobs’ or part-time work, but does not address the problems that arise from the 10% cut to the level of childcare costs that **working families** can expect to be covered by the childcare element of the WTC
- while 2.8 million households will have higher entitlements under UC, 2 million (including 1.1 million with children) will have lower entitlements.
- **Single parents working 16 hours or more & some second earners** will be substantially worse off
- **Lone parents** will not be obliged to take work that does not fit around their caring responsibilities but research has shown that benefits advisors do not always show understanding of the particular situation that lone parents face, with some lone parents threatened with sanctions for refusing jobs that would be impossible to fit around their children’s needs.

8) Raising the Tax Threshold



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The 2011 Budget increased the personal allowance for income tax from £7,475 to £8,105 for those aged under-65 in 2012-13. The Treasury estimates that this will benefit around 25 million taxpayers with an average gain of £48 a year, and will lift 260,000 of the lowest paid workers - 56% of whom are women - out of income tax altogether.

Impact on Women:

- men make up the majority of those who gain the full amount: in total, men will gain £140 million more than women from this measure.
- the measure does not to boost the incomes of the record numbers of women currently out of employment, or the 4 million people who earn too little to pay tax, 73% of whom are women.

9) The Reassessment of Incapacity Benefit.

Individuals receive Employment Support Allowance at its basic rate (equal to Job Seekers Allowance for their age). Towards the end of a 13 week period, they undergo a Work Capability Assessment (WCA) and are split into a support group and a work related activity group (WRAG). The latter who are assessed as fit for work receive a lower rate of ESA. Benefit payments are lower on JSA than Incapacity Benefit; and there is equally a requirement to be actively seeking employment. There are two types of ESA – contributory and income related for those who have not made sufficient NI contributions. Contributory ESA will only be paid to people in the work related activity group for one year after which it will be means tested. If they have savings, assets or a partner who works then their benefits will stop. This will hit disabled women, women who are carers and partners of disabled people.

Impact:

- 26% of **disabled people** are in the poorest fifth of all households in the UK with an average income of about £10,450 per year per household. (This compares with 19% for non-disabled people.
- A further 27% of disabled people are in the next poorest quintile with an average income of £15,800.
- Average income of household with a disabled person is about a 1/5th lower than other households
- loss to each claimant will average £2,630 over five years or about £526 per claimant per year.
- Changes to benefits and the move from IB to JSA for people deemed ‘fit for work’ also has implications for the **trans community**. Under the previous system, claimants were able to start work and if they were unable to cope they could move back to IB with the same level of benefit. With the focus on sustainable employment, if trans communities are unable to cope with the demands of the workplace it is unlikely that they will be able to move back onto IB at all
- Restrictions in eligibility for Incapacity Benefit (IB) will affect **older workers** in poor physical or mental health. Many will be moved from IB either onto the means-tested Employment and Support Allowance or onto Jobseekers Allowance

10) The re-assessment of claimants to Disability Living Allowance.

DLA is the only benefit which compensates for the additional costs of living with a disability and is not means tested. It can be claimed even when employed since it is designed to cover the extra costs associated with disability. DLA is divided into two components – care and mobility. DLA is being cut by 20%. The total budget for DLA is being cut by 20%. Working Age DLA will be replaced with the Personal Independence Payment for which the eligibility conditions appear to be more stringent.



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Impact on Disabled People:

- Cuts to DLA have significant impact upon the capability of disabled people to work & travel to work.
- The employment rate of disabled people is around 48% compared with 78% for non-disabled people. This gap of 30% has come down a bit since 2002 when it was 36% (ODI website).
- There are said to be 1.3 million disabled people (19% to 24% of disabled people of working age) who say they are available for work and who want to work (Demos Oct 2010, 19).
- At every level of qualification, the proportion of people with a work-limiting disability who lack, but want, paid work is much greater than those without a disability.
- With *growing* unemployment, the prospects of getting a job are not good for disabled people
- The median income of disabled people was £342 per week compared with a median for nondisabled of £424 per week. The average income of disabled people was about 81% that of the non-disabled.
- 53% of disabled people are in the poorest 40% of the population & 75% are in the poorest 60%.
- 23% of individuals in families with at least one disabled person live in relative income poverty compared to 16% of individuals in families with no disabled member
- The proportion of disabled working age population who live in low-income households (that is, live in 'poverty') was double - at 36% - of the poverty rate (18%) for their non-disabled counterparts
- Disability affects 40% of individuals at age 60 and 75% of those aged over 80, while severe disability affects 20% at 60 and 50% over age 80.

11) Carer's Allowance

This is a taxable benefit payable to people who provide care to disabled people in their own homes. To be eligible for CA, a carer must earn no more than £100 per week and spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a disabled person who receives a benefit for the extra costs of disability such as DLA (middle or higher rate, care component) or attendance allowances.

Impact on Disabled People & Carers:

- CA benefits are low compared to other countries in the EU. The indexation change will reduce CA
- Someone caring for a person who loses disability living allowance will also lose carers allowance. A carer in this situation would have to move onto universal credit. It is not clear whether they would then be expected to look for work, even though they are still responsible for full time care.
- Those disabled people needing care who fail the WCA test are likely to suffer from a '**double dip**' in income; their rate of DLA will either be reduced or removed – and their carer's CA along with it

12) State Pensions and Benefits:

Since indexation of state pensions to national average earnings link was removed in 1980, the **Basic State Pension (BSP)** has declined from about 20% to about 15% of average earnings, one of the lowest state pensions in the OECD. Indexation of BSP will switch in 2012 from RPI to CPI which is between 1 and 2% lower, and the **State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS)** and **State Second Pension (S2P)** will be indexed to CPI instead of RPI from April 2011.

Impact on Older People:



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- Along with lone parents and their children, pensioners, especially women, are among the poorest in society.
- Over half of pensioner households are poor enough to be eligible for a means tested top-up.
- A fifth of pensioners live below the official OECD poverty line (about £170/week for a lone pensioner)
- 90% of these are in persistent poverty (poor in 3 of the 4 years measured).
- Pensioners differ from working age population in having no opportunity to increase their income: those who are poor remain so, while those on slightly higher incomes face a decline into poverty and means testing as they age, due to inadequate indexing of pensions
- The shift to the CPI index will exacerbate the trend for pensioners to sink into poverty as they age.

13) Pension Credit

The means tested top-up for the poorest pensioners, will be reduced by freezing the Savings Credit element for 4 years from 2011

Impact on Older People:

- Increases the proportion who experience a £ for £ loss of benefits, penalising them for having small additional pension savings.
- About 1.7 million pensioner households will lose an average of £3.20/week
- Half of pensioners live on less than £228/week
- A fifth on less than the poverty level (60% of median population income, about £170/week).
- For these pensioners on low or modest incomes, the **bulk of spending is on essentials such as council tax, heating costs, electricity and food**. Other unavoidable costs include rent, home repair/maintenance if home owner and, more rarely, a mortgage as well as extra services if disabled.
- Private tenants and low income home-owners tend to live in less energy-efficient housing so face particularly steep rises in fuel costs. Because pensioners are more likely to spend their time in their homes and are generally less mobile, it is difficult to economise on heating costs

Private Pensions and Savings which New Labour hoped would compensate for the declining value of state pensions, have not filled the gap

- Private Pensions are received by 71% of men and only 43% of women aged over 65.
- Amounts vary widely with class and gender, ranging in 2001 from £172/week for men who had worked in professional/managerial occupations to £28/week for women in routine/manual work.

14) Future Pensioners Aged 50+:

A gradual rise in the State Pension Age (SPA) from 60 to 65 for women between 2010 and 2020 is already legislated, but this is now accelerated to 65 for women in 2018 and 66 for both men and women in 2020. The age of eligibility for the national bus pass will rise in line with SPA. By 2015, the changes are estimated to affect 5.1 million individuals of working age, saving £5bn

Impact on Older People:

- Acceleration denies older workers time to plan their retirement, so many could be left reliant on means tested benefits. The change is particularly steep for some women; those



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born after 6/04/1953 will receive their state pensions at 65 but those born after 04/1954 will have to wait until they are 66.

- Further changes are likely, e.g. raising SPA to 70 by 2048 (instead of 68, as now). Lengthening working life may seem justified by increasing average longevity, but it is doubtful whether jobs will be available for all older workers. Raising SPA will hit the low paid hardest since on average they have poorer health, worse job security, shorter life expectancy and are less likely to have any private pension or redundancy pay to tide them over until SPA.
- Train to Gain scheme for older workers is to be removed, increasing risk of long term unemployment.

15) Auto-enrolled National Employee Savings Trust (NEST)

These are personal pensions, due to be introduced in 2012

Impact on Older People:

At present, contributing to NEST would not be worthwhile for many low paid workers (mainly women) due to the likelihood of means testing in retirement. Without an adequate state pension as foundation, they would risk gaining little or nothing from their contributions – the pensions poverty trap. The pensions industry has lobbied for a better state pension to avoid this deterrent to saving.

16) Overall Analysis - Institute for Fiscal Studies:

The Institute for Fiscal Studies has carried out a study of the cuts in benefits and rise in taxes across the income groups. It shows that the distributional impact of welfare measures announced in the Spending Review are clearly regressive with the largest losses (as a percentage of income) falling on the poorest income groups. Looking at *all* the tax and benefit measures to be in place by 2014/15, The IFS shows that, relative to income, the effect is clearly regressive across the lowest 90% of income earners with the **poorest 10% of households suffering the biggest loss** (of more than 5% of income).

For further information contact Clare.Harding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Appendix C



CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

LOCAL

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

Published: 24th January 2013

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Glossary of Terms

Applicable Amount

Means the combination of allowances and premiums used to determine a claimant's basic living needs and against which their income is compared for the purposes of the means test performed.

Council Tax Liability

Means the amount set by the Council as the Council Tax charge for the relevant financial year less any discounts i.e. the 25% single occupancy discount

CTS

Means Council Tax Support – the proposed local means tested scheme for providing assistance with Council Tax, which replaces Council Tax Benefit from 1 April 2013.

CTB

Means Council Tax Benefit, (i.e. the existing national scheme which operates until 31 March 2013).

CTB Regulations

Means the existing Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 – which will be abolished from the 1 April 2013

Default Scheme Regulations

Means The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012.

This is Statutory Instrument: 2012 No.2886

Excess Income

Means the amount by which a claimant's weekly income exceeds their applicable amount.

Maximum Council Tax reduction amount

Means the Council Tax liability net of other Council Tax Discounts and non-dependant deductions.

Non Dependant

A non-dependant is a person who is residing with the claimant but who is not dependent upon them, and not residing in their home on a commercial basis, (i.e. as a joint tenant or sub tenant). Non-dependants generally include an adult son or daughter, a mother or father, friend, etc of the claimant.

Prescribed Regulations

Means The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012

This is Statutory Instrument 2012 No.2885

These contain the elements of the scheme that the Council are required by Central Government to include in our local scheme.

Any requirements within the Prescribed Regulations applies to both Pensioners and Working Age where stated.

1.0 Introduction

In April 2013, Council Tax Benefit, the current means of helping people on low incomes meet their Council Tax obligations, will be replaced by a new localised support scheme defined by each Council.

The Government has stated that pensioners will be protected from the effects of the local schemes by a national framework of rules and eligibility. Working age claimants not being the subject of national rules and eligibility shall however be subject to the provisions of the locally defined scheme and not a national framework.

This document sets out:

- (i) The proposed Local Scheme for working age and
- (ii) The national scheme for pension age

The Council's proposed Local Scheme should be read in conjunction with the consultation questionnaire seeking comments and views on the proposed arrangements.

The proposals may be subject to change for example in response to findings from the consultation process and any statutory provisions made that take precedence over the scheme proposals.

However, the final scheme shall be subject to approval by the Council no later than 31st January 2013.

The Council is required to publish details of its proposed draft scheme and some of the contents of this document are by its very nature, technical in detail. However, we will be providing examples of how the proposals may affect entitlement in comparison to the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme on our web page at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations as well as responses to frequently asked questions.

1.1 Discretionary Reduction

In addition to the schemes for pensioners and working age the Council is able to reduce Council Tax Liability under its discretionary powers contained within section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

A Council Tax payer should make an application in writing or electronically to the Council.

1.2 Classes

The rules of the Council Tax Support scheme divide the persons who can claim support into various classes. The classes or groups are set by Central Government for pensioners and the classes or groups for working age applicants are set by the Council. The classes are explained in detail in this document.

2.0 The Prescribed Regulations

The government's Prescribed Regulations will ensure that local Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes operated by Local Authorities contain any requirements prescribed by the Secretary of State, which are in the Prescribed Regulations. Currently, the following requirements are to be prescribed by the Secretary of State and will therefore apply to the Council's local CTS scheme and affect both working age and non-working age claims alike.

2.1 Persons from Abroad

The government intends to apply the same restrictions as exist under the Council Tax Benefit (CTB) Regulations to exclude foreign nationals with limited immigration status and non-economically active EEA individuals who are not exercising EU treaty rights from receiving CTS. The Prescribed Regulations relating to immigration status will mean that individuals subject to immigration control under Section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and non-economically active EEA nationals who fall into various categories to be set out in Prescribed Regulations, will not benefit from CTS. This will replicate the current provisions in the CTB Regulations.

2.2 Refugees

Those persons that have recognised refugee status humanitarian protection, discretionary leave or exceptional leave to remain in the country outside of the immigration rules and who are exempt from the habitual residence test will be entitled to apply for Council Tax Support as long as their status has not been revoked.

2.3 Permitting a person to act for another person

Current arrangements for a person to act on behalf of another will continue. For example, where a person has been granted a power of attorney for a Council Tax Payer.

The proposed Local Scheme for Working Age Local CTS Scheme

3.0 Overview of scheme

The amount of support will be based upon individual circumstances and changes of circumstances will also be taken into account.

There will be six classes for each of which there will be a number of qualifying criteria. The class will determine the level of CTS that can be awarded.

A claimant is treated as a pensioner if they meet the conditions as stated in Part 1 (3) of Prescribed Regulations and therefore do not fall within the Local CTS Scheme. They fall within the national scheme for Pension age, which is detailed at section 16 of this document.

In all cases claimants must not be of a prescribed class exempt from support, such as a person from abroad with limited leave to remain. Part 2 (12) and Part 2 (13) of Prescribed Regulations exclude such claimants.

There is a capital limit of £16,000 in order to qualify for CTS.

In the case of classes E, G and I below, the amount of a claimant's maximum Council Tax reduction amount shall be **75 per cent** of the amount A / B where:

- A is the amount set by the Council as the Council Tax for the relevant financial year in which they are a resident and for which they are liable, subject to any discount which may be appropriate and
- B is the number of days in that financial year,

Less any deductions in respect of non-dependants.

In the case of classes D, F and H below, which are **Protected Groups** the amount of a claimant's maximum Council Tax reduction amount shall be **100 per cent** of the amount A / B where:

- A is the amount set by the Council as the Council Tax for the relevant financial year in which they are a resident and for which they are liable, subject to any discount which may be appropriate and
- B is the number of days in that financial year,

Less any deductions in respect of non-dependants.

The protected groups are where the claimant must (or his partner or dependants must) be entitled to one of the following:

- (i) any of the disability premiums (awarded within the CTS scheme or income support, income- based jobseeker's allowance or income-related employment and support allowance)
- (ii) disabled earnings disregard
- (iii) Disabled Persons' Reduction for Council Tax purposes
- (iv) War Disablement Pension or War Widow's Pension or
- (v) be a lone parent with a child under the age of 5 or
- (vi) be a single person and on Carer's Allowance or
- (vii) be on Carer's Allowance and where they have a partner, the partner is also on Carer's Allowance.

4.0 Classes of persons entitled to Council Tax Support

4.1 Class D

The claimant must:

- be liable to pay Council Tax in respect of a dwelling in which they are resident
- be somebody in respect of whom a Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount can be calculated
- be a person who is on Income Support, on an income-based jobseeker's allowance or on an income-related employment and support allowance
- or his partner or dependants must be entitled to one of the following:
 - (i) any of the disability premiums (awarded within the CTS scheme or income support, income- based jobseeker's allowance or income-related employment and support allowance)
 - (ii) disabled earnings disregard
 - (iii) Disabled Persons' Reduction for Council Tax purposes
 - (iv) War Disablement Pension or War Widow's Pension or
- be a lone parent with a child under the age of 5 or
- be a single person and on Carer's Allowance or
- be on Carer's Allowance and where they have a partner, the partner is also on Carer's Allowance
- have applied for the scheme

4.2 Class E

The claimant must:

- be liable to pay Council Tax in respect of a dwelling in which they are resident
- be somebody in respect of whom a Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount can be calculated
- be a person who is on Income Support, on an income-based jobseeker's allowance or on an income-related employment and support allowance
- have applied for the scheme

4.3 Class F

The claimant must:

- be liable to pay Council Tax in respect of a dwelling in which they are resident
- be somebody in respect of whom a Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount can be calculated
- not have capital savings above £16,000
- have income equal to or less than their applicable amount
- or his partner or dependants must be entitled to one of the following:
 - (i) any of the disability premiums (awarded within the CTS scheme or income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance or income-related employment and support allowance)
 - (ii) disabled earnings disregard
 - (iii) Disabled Persons' Reduction for Council Tax purposes
 - (iv) War Disablement Pension or War Widow's Pension or
- be a lone parent with a child under the age of 5 or
- be a single person and on Carer's Allowance or
- be on Carer's Allowance and where they have a partner, the partner is also on Carer's Allowance
- have applied for the scheme

4.4 Class G

The claimant must:

- be liable to pay Council Tax in respect of a dwelling in which they are resident
- be somebody in respect of whom a Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount can be calculated
- not have capital savings above £16,000
- have income equal to or less than their applicable amount
- have applied for the scheme

4.5 Class H

The claimant must:

- be liable to pay Council Tax in respect of a dwelling in which they are resident
- be somebody in respect of whom a Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount can be calculated
- not have capital savings above £16,000
- have income greater than their applicable amount
- or his partner or dependants must be entitled to one of the following:
 - (i) any of the disability premiums (awarded within the CTS scheme or income support, income- based jobseeker's allowance or income-related employment and support allowance)
 - (ii) disabled earnings disregard
 - (iii) Disabled Persons' Reduction for Council Tax purposes
 - (iv) War Disablement Pension or War Widow's Pension or
- be a lone parent with a child under the age of 5 or
- be a single person and on Carer's Allowance or
- be on Carer's Allowance and where they have a partner, the partner is also on Carer's Allowance
- have applied for the scheme
- be somebody in respect of whom amount A exceeds amount B, where

- (i) amount A is the maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount; and
- (ii) amount B is a prescribed percentage (20%) of the difference between their income and the applicable amount

4.6 Class I

The claimant must:

- be liable to pay Council Tax in respect of a dwelling in which they are resident
- be somebody in respect of whom a Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount can be calculated
- not have capital savings above £16,000
- have income greater than their applicable amount
- have applied for the scheme
- be somebody in respect of whom amount A exceeds amount B, where
 - (i) amount A is the maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount; and
 - (ii) amount B is a prescribed percentage (20%) of the difference between their income and the applicable amount

5.0 Calculation of Council Tax Support by class:

5.1 Class D

If a claimant matches the criteria in Class D, that person qualifies for CTS entitlement equivalent to 100% of their Council Tax Liability less any non-dependant deductions if applicable.

This person is in a Protected Group.

5.2 Class E

If a claimant matches the criteria in Class E, that person qualifies for CTS entitlement equivalent to 75% of their Council Tax Liability less any non-dependant deductions if applicable.

This person is not in a Protected Group.

5.3 Class F

If a claimant matches the criteria in Class F, that person qualifies for CTS entitlement equivalent to 100% of their Council Tax Liability less any non-dependant deductions if applicable.

This person is in a Protected Group.

5.4 Class G

If a claimant matches the criteria in Class G, that person qualifies for CTS entitlement equivalent to 75% of their Council Tax Liability less any non-dependant deductions applicable.

This person is not in a Protected Group.

5.5 Class H

If a claimant matches the criteria in Class H, that person's entitlement will be calculated on 100% of their Council Tax Liability less any non-dependant deductions applicable, to arrive at the Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount.

20% of the difference between their income and their Applicable Amount will then be deducted from their Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount.

This person is in a Protected Group.

5.6 Class I

If a claimant matches the criteria in Class I, that person's entitlement will be calculated on 75% of their Council Tax Liability less any non-dependant deductions applicable, to arrive at the Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount.

20% of the difference between their income and their Applicable Amount will then be deducted from their Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount.

This person is not in a Protected Group.

5.7 Non-dependent deductions

A Non-Dependant is a person who normally resides with a claimant but is not a member of his household, such as a grown-up child, as defined in Part 2 (9) of the Default Scheme Regulations.

Any such deduction will be deducted from the Council Tax liability to arrive at the Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount.

A non-dependant deduction is normally based on the income of the non-dependant, on the basis they would be expected to contribute to Council Tax. However if any of the following is applicable there will be no non-dependant deduction:

- The claimant or partner are registered blind or treated as blind
- The claimant or partner are receiving the care component of a disability living allowance, attendance allowance or the daily living component of a Personal Independence Payment

- The non-dependant is receiving state pension credit, income support, income-based job seekers allowance or income-related employment and support allowance
- The non-dependant is a disregarded person for Council Tax purposes i.e. is severely mentally impaired
- The non-dependant is a full-time student, apprentice or on Youth Training
- The non-dependant has been a hospital patient for 52 weeks or more
- The non-dependant is under 18 years of age

The table below sets out the current and proposed weekly amounts of deductions to be applied to the proposed local CTS scheme.

Description of Non-Dependant	Amount of Weekly Deduction in 2012/13 (£)	Proposed Weekly CTS Scheme Deduction (£)
Adult in receipt of state pension credit	Nil	Nil
Adult in receipt of income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance or income-related employment and support allowance	Nil	Nil
Adult in receipt of jobseeker's Allowance (Contribution Based) or employment and Support Allowance (Contribution Based)	3.30	5.00
Gross income of adult (working not less than 16 hours per week) is less than £183	3.30	5.00
Gross income of adult (working not less than 16 hours per week) is greater than or equal to £183 but less than £316	6.55	10.00
Gross income of adult (working not less than 16 hours per week) is greater than or equal to £316 but less than £394	8.25	12.00
Gross income of adult (working not less than 16 hours per week) is greater than or equal to £394	9.90	15.00
Adult working less than 16 hours per week	3.30	5.00
Any other adult not included in the above descriptions	3.30	5.00

5.8 Determination of class and award

Determination of the class a claimant is put into and the reduction they will receive will be determined in two ways:

1. In respect of Class D and Class E, by virtue of entitlement to the specified income related benefits and
2. In respect of Class F, Class G, Class H and Class I through means testing

5.9 Means-test for Classes F, G, H and I

The means-test will be based upon a comparison of income and a deemed living allowance (known as the Applicable Amount) and is detailed in the Default Scheme Regulations; with the exception of the amounts attributable to each. This is explained in greater detail below.

5.10 Applicable Amount

The claimant's Applicable Amount is made up of four elements. These are:

1. A personal allowance in respect of the claimant and partner if applicable,
2. An amount in respect of any child or young person who is a member of their family,
3. A family premium element (where the claimant is part of a family of which at least one member is a child or young person), and
4. Any premium amount that is applicable to the claimant

The financial amounts attributable to the above are as follows:

Allowances and Premiums used to determine basic living needs	Weekly Amount in £
Single claimant aged 18 or over but less than 25	56.25
Single claimant aged 25 or over	71.00
Single claimant of any age and entitled to main phase employment support allowance	71.00
Single parent	71.00
Couple	111.45
Amount for a child from their date of birth to the day before the first Monday in September following their 16th birthday	64.99
Amount for a young person from the first Monday in September following their 16th birthday to the day before their 20th birthday	64.99
In the case of a polygamous marriage where none of the members	111.45

of the marriage have reached the age of 60 and for the claimant and other party to the marriage	
In the case of a polygamous marriage where none of the members of the marriage have reached the age of 60, for each additional spouse who is a member of the same household as the claimant	40.45
Family premium	17.40
Family premium (single parent rate)	22.20
Disability premium - single	30.35
Disability premium - couple	43.25
Enhanced disability premium - single	14.80
Enhanced disability premium - disabled child rate	22.89
Enhanced disability premium - couple	21.30
Severe disability premium - single	58.20
Severe disability premium - couple (lower rate)	58.20
Severe disability premium - couple (higher rate)	116.40
Disabled child premium	56.63
Carer premium	32.60
Components employment support allowance (income related) and contributory.	
Work-related activity component	28.15
Support component	34.05

5.11 Calculation of Income and Capital

Income and capital will be calculated for a claimant in accordance with the provisions detailed in the Default Scheme Regulations, with the exception of the treatment of an award of Universal Credit.

Any amount of Universal Credit will be taken into account as income less any amount for housing costs, included in it.

Any income or capital to be disregarded in full or part is detailed in Schedule 7, 8 and 10 of the Default Scheme Regulations.

The Council proposes to replicate existing local arrangements whereby the full amount of any weekly war widow's pension, war widower's or war disablement pension are disregarded in full.

5.12 Enhanced Earnings disregard – incentivise work

The amount of earnings to be disregarded are detailed in Schedule 7 of the Default Scheme Regulations. These specify the amounts and replicate provisions within CTB. The Council proposes to increase all of the standard earnings disregards by £10 per week in order to help incentivise work.

The amount of the additional earnings disregard for those working 16 hours per week or more or 30 hours per week or more will remain unchanged.

5.13 Students

Students will be dealt with in accordance with Part 11 of the Default Scheme Regulations. These replicate the existing CTB Regulations.

Some full time students and students who are persons from abroad will be excluded from entitlement to CTS. These groups are defined in Part 11 of the Default Scheme Regulations.

5.14 Notional capital

Claimants may be treated as possessing capital of which they have deprived themselves for the purposes of securing CTS. This notional capital (which the claimant is treated as possessing) will be reduced over time to reflect payment of additional Council Tax liabilities incurred.

5.15 Tariff income

Capital up to £6,000 is not counted. Capital over £6,000 up to £16,000 will be taken into account at £1.00 for each £250 (or part of). This is known as tariff income.

5.16 Summary of calculation of Council Tax Support

Once the total income amount has been calculated, it will be compared with the Applicable Amount, to determine what class the claimant falls into.

Once the class has been identified this will dictate how entitlement to CTS is calculated as detailed above.

6.0 Extended payments

There will be provision for extended payments. This is detailed in Part 12 of the Default Scheme Regulations and Schedule 8 Part 1 of Prescribed Regulations.

This replicates current provisions set out within the existing CTB regulations.

There will be extended payments for 2 groups of claimants as follows:

6.1 Income Related Benefits

A claimant (or their partner) in receipt of income support, income-related employment and support allowance or income-based jobseeker's allowance, who ceases to receive that benefit because they have returned to work, increased their earnings or increased their hours (and where that improvement in their situation is expected to last five weeks or more and for the period 26 weeks previously received income support, income-related employment and support allowance or jobseeker's allowance), will continue to receive CTS as if they were still in receipt of these benefits for four weeks.

6.2 Qualifying Contributory Benefits

A claimant (or their partner) in receipt of contribution based employment and support allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance, who ceases to receive that benefit because they have returned to work, increased their earnings or increased their hours (and where that improvement in their situation is expected to last five weeks or more and for the period 26 weeks previously received contribution-based employment and support allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance), will continue to receive CTS as if they were still in receipt of these benefits for four weeks.

7.0 Applications

This is detailed in Schedule 7 (Part 1) and Schedule 8 (Part 2) of Prescribed Regulations: Applications for CTS must be on a properly completed approved form, to the designated office. Under the proposed scheme, an application will be required for all new claims from the 1st April 2013. If you are liable to pay Council tax, you will be able to claim via a paper form and when systems have been implemented, an electronic form.

The date of the original application will apply where claimants need to amend a properly completed application. The Council may accept amendments over the phone however there may be cases where the claimant has to confirm details in writing.

The Council will accept withdrawal of applications (where it has not yet made a decision). This will have effect on the same day any notice of withdrawal is received by the Council.

8.0 Date on which entitlement begins

The date on which entitlement to CTS begins is detailed in Parts 13 and 14 of the Default Scheme Regulations.

Generally it will begin on the first day of the first week after the application is made or treated as made.

Claims can be back-dated for a period of up to six months, provided the claimant is able to show continuous good cause for failing to make an application.

A claimant may apply for CTS up to 13 weeks prior to an event that would entitle them to CTS.

A claimant may apply for CTS up to 8 weeks prior to becoming liable for Council Tax at their home.

Schedule 8 (Part 2), para 5 of Prescribed Regulations details certain circumstances where the claim is treated as made on a specified date and therefore will affect the date entitlement begins.

9.0 Decisions and appeals

The Council will notify the claimant in writing of its decision within 14 days from the date that all relevant information and evidence relating to the application has been received by the Council or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter. The notice will include information on how to appeal or how to request further information about the decision.

Schedule 7 (Part 2) of the Prescribed Regulations sets out the procedure by which a claimant may make an appeal.

10.0 Changes of circumstance

Generally they take effect from the Monday following the date of change. If the change results in an increased amount of CTS, it will take effect from the Monday following the date the Council receive such notice (unless such notice was received within one month of the change or there was good cause for the delay).

Where the change of circumstance is a change in the amount of Council Tax, it will take effect from the day of the change.

11.0 Suspension and Termination of Council Tax Support

The Council may suspend CTS if any of the following situations apply:

- There is a doubt concerning whether the entitlement conditions for CTS are met

- There may be a recoverable excess of CTS
- The claimant or another person acting on their behalf has failed to provide information or evidence required for changing a decision concerning CTS

Where CTS has been suspended for failure to provide information or evidence and the claimant does not respond within one month or such longer period as may be considered reasonable in the circumstances, entitlement may be terminated.

These provisions are intended to replicate those in the existing CTB Regulations.

12.0 Time and manner of granting Council Tax Support

Where the claimant is entitled to CTS the Council will reduce the Council Tax liability or make a payment where the claimant has discharged their liability.

A reduction or a payment will be made within 14 days of receipt of the application or, if that is not reasonably practicable, as soon as practicable thereafter.

13.0 Annual changes to Council Tax Support Scheme

The Local Government Finance Act 2012 stipulates that a Council, each financial year must consider whether to revise or replace the existing scheme.

14.0 Existing Council Tax Benefit claimants

A claimant who is in receipt of CTB immediately before 1st April 2013 is to be treated as having made an application for the CTS Scheme.

Where a claimant has, prior to 1st April 2013, made an application for Council Tax Benefit which has not been determined by 1st April 2013, that claimant is to be treated as having made an application for the CTS Scheme.

15.0 Fraud

The Council is required to take reasonable steps to ascertain whether a claimant is entitled to any Council Tax discount: This includes CTS.

The Fraud Act 2006 and the Theft Act can be used to prosecute offenders.

The Government have stated they intend to provide further legislation (to replicate that which currently exists in CTB) under which claimants can be prosecuted for offences such as knowingly providing false information on a claim form.

National Scheme for Pension Age

16.0 Overview of scheme

The Government has stated that pensioners will be protected from the effects of the Local Scheme by a national framework of rules and eligibility. These are detailed in the Prescribed Regulations.

A claimant is treated as a pensioner if they meet the conditions as stated in Part 1 (Para 3) of Prescribed Regulations, i.e. have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit.

The amount of support will be based upon individual circumstances and changes of circumstances will also be taken into account.

There will be three classes for each of which there will be a number of qualifying criteria.

In all cases claimants must not be of a prescribed class exempt from support, such as a person from abroad with limited leave to remain. Part 2 of Prescribed Regulations exclude such claimants.

17.0 Classes of persons entitled to a reduction under the Prescribed Scheme

Class A

The claimant must:

- be liable to pay Council Tax in respect of a dwelling in which they are resident
- be somebody in respect of whom a Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount can be calculated
- not have capital savings above £16,000 (unless in receipt of guarantee credit)
- have income equal to or less than their applicable amount (as defined in Prescribed Regulations) or be in receipt of guarantee credit
- have applied for the scheme

Class B

The claimant must:

- be liable to pay Council Tax in respect of a dwelling in which they are resident
- be somebody in respect of whom a Maximum Council Tax reduction Amount can be calculated,
- not have capital savings above £16,000

- have income greater than their applicable amount (as defined in Prescribed Regulations)
- have applied for the scheme
- be somebody in respect of whom amount A exceeds amount B, where (i) amount A is the Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount; and (ii) amount B is a prescribed percentage (20%) of the difference between their income and the applicable amount (both as defined in Prescribed Regulations).

Class C

The claimant must:

- be liable to pay Council Tax in respect of a dwelling in which they are resident
- not be entitled to a Single Person Discount
- be somebody in respect of whom a Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount can be calculated
- have applied for a scheme
- be somebody who has at least one second adult living with them who is not their partner, not somebody who pays rent, not liable for Council Tax and who is on a prescribed low income and / or prescribed benefit, as set out in Prescribed Regulations

This is referred to as Alternative Maximum Council Tax Reduction (currently known as Alternative Maximum Council Tax Benefit).

18.0 Calculation of Council Tax Support by class:

18.1 Class A

If a claimant matches the criteria in Class A, that person qualifies for 100% reduction on their Council Tax Liability less any non-dependant deductions applicable.

18.2 Class B

If a claimant matches the criteria in Class B that person's entitlement will be calculated on 100% of their Council Tax Liability less any non-dependant deductions applicable, to arrive at the Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount.

20% of the difference between their income and their Applicable Amount will then be deducted from their Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount.

18.3 Class C

Under the existing national CTB scheme, the Class C reduction is known as Alternative Maximum Council Tax Benefit. This may be awarded in respect of a second adult(s) sharing the household who would normally be expected to

contribute towards the Council Tax bill but who cannot afford to do so based on their low income, as indicated by prescribed low income bands or prescribed working-age benefit indicators.

This will be a reduction of either 25%, 15% or 7.5% of the Council Tax liability, depending upon the income of the second adult(s).

18.4 Non Dependent Deductions

A Non-Dependant is a person who normally resides with a claimant but is not a member of his household, such as a grown-up child. Deductions for such Non-Dependants will be in the Prescribed Regulations.

Any such deduction will be deducted from the Council Tax liability to arrive at the Maximum Council Tax Reduction Amount.

A non-dependant deduction is normally based on the income of the non-dependant, on the basis they would be expected to contribute to Council Tax. However if any of the following is applicable there will be no non-dependant deduction:

- The claimant or partner are registered blind or treated as blind
- The claimant or partner are receiving the care component of a disability living allowance, attendance allowance or the daily living component of a Personal Independence Payment
- The non-dependant is receiving state pension credit, income support, income-based job seekers allowance or income-related employment and support allowance
- The non-dependant is a disregarded person for Council Tax purposes i.e. is severely mentally impaired
- The non-dependant is a full-time student, apprentice or on Youth Training
- The non-dependant has been a hospital patient for 52 weeks or more
- The non-dependant is under 18 years of age

The amount of the non-dependant deduction will be prescribed by Government.

18.5 Determination of Class and Award

Determination of the class a claimant is put into and the reduction they will receive will be determined in two ways:

1. In respect of Class A and Class B, through means testing of the claimant, which will be in accordance with Prescribed Regulations and
2. In respect of Class C, through means testing of the second adult(s)

18.6 Means Test for Class A and Class B

The means test will be defined within Prescribed Regulations and aligned with existing CTB Regulations for those of state pension credit age.

The means test is based upon a comparison of income defined in Prescribed Regulations and an Applicable Amount also defined in Prescribed Regulations. This is explained in greater detail below:

18.7 Applicable Amount

The claimant's applicable amount will be made up of four elements. These will be:

1. A personal allowance in respect of the claimant and partner if applicable,
2. An amount in respect of any child or young person who is a member of their family,
3. A family premium element (where the applicant is part of a family of which at least one member is a child or young person), and
4. Any premium amount set out in regulations that is applicable to the individual.

The amount of the Applicable Amount will be prescribed by Government.

18.8 Calculation of Income and Capital

Income and capital will be calculated for a claimant in accordance with Prescribed Regulations.

Any income or capital to be disregarded in full or part is detailed in Prescribed Regulations.

The Council proposes to replicate existing local arrangements whereby the full amount of any weekly war widow's pension, war widower's or war disablement pension are disregarded in full.

18.9 Notional capital

Claimants may be treated as possessing capital of which they have deprived themselves for the purposes of securing CTS. This notional capital (which the claimant is treated as possessing) will be reduced over time to reflect payment of additional Council Tax liabilities incurred.

18.10 Tariff income on capital

Once an amount of capital is calculated, net of any amounts to be disregarded, this will be treated as if it is income of £1 for every £500 (or part of £500) in excess of £10,000. This amount of tariff income will be added to the initial income calculation to give a total income amount.

19.0 Summary of calculation of Council Tax Support

Once the total income amount has been calculated, it will be compared with the applicable amount, to determine whether the individual falls into Class A (income less than applicable amount) or Class B (income greater than applicable amount).

Claimants in Class C will receive CTS based on the income/status of their second adult(s) as set out in the following table:

Second adult	Council Tax Support
<p>a) The second adult (or all second adults) are in receipt of income support, income-related employment and support allowance, state pension credit or income-based jobseeker's allowance.</p>	<p>a) 25% of Council Tax due in respect of that day</p>
<p>b) Where the gross income or aggregate gross income of any second adult(s) – disregarding any income of persons on income support, income-related employment and support allowance, state pension credit or income-based jobseeker's allowance</p> <p>b)(i) less than £180.00 per week;</p> <p>b)(ii) not less than £180.00 but less than £235.00 per week.</p>	<p>b)(i) 15% of Council Tax due in respect of that day</p> <p>b)(ii) 7.5% of Council Tax due in respect of that day</p>
<p>c) If the dwelling would be wholly occupied by one or more students but for the presence of one or more second adults in receipt of income support, state pension credit, income-related employment and support allowance or income-based jobseekers allowance.</p>	<p>c) 100%</p>

If the claimant is entitled to both Class A and Class C or Class B and Class C they will be awarded the greater of the two.

20.0 Extended payments

The Prescribed Regulations will set out where a claimant can continue to receive CTS, for a prescribed period of 4 weeks whilst they or their partner apply for state pension credit.

The pension-credit eligible age regulations will state that from the point at which the person already in receipt of CTS reaches the eligible age for pension credit they will, for the prescribed extended payment period of four weeks, be entitled to whatever award is greater – the local working age scheme award or the award under the scheme for those of state pension credit age.

20.1 Qualifying contributory benefits

The Prescribed Regulations set out that a claimant not in receipt of state pension credit who or his partner was in receipt of contribution based employment and support allowance, incapacity benefit or severe disablement allowance for at least 26 weeks, who ceases to receive that benefit because they have returned to work, increased their earnings or increased their hours (and where that improvement in their situation is expected to last five weeks or more), will continue to receive CTS as if they were still in receipt of these benefits for four weeks.

21.0 Applications

The Prescribed regulations provide that an application for CTS must be on a properly completed approved form. Under the proposed scheme, an application will be required for all new claims from the 1st April 2013. If you are liable to pay Council tax, you will be able to claim via a paper form and when systems have been implemented, an electronic form.

The Prescribed Regulations will provide that the date of the original application will apply where claimants need to amend a properly completed application. The Council may accept amendments over the phone, however there may be cases where the claimant has to confirm details in writing.

The Council will accept withdrawal of applications (where it has not yet made a decision). This will have effect on the same day any notice of withdrawal is received by the Council.

22.0 Date on which entitlement begins

Entitlement to CTS will generally begin on the first day of the first week after the application is made or treated as made, unless back-dating is applicable, as set out in the Prescribed Regulations.

Claims can be automatically back-dated for a period of up to 3 months, providing the claimant was of pension credit age at the start of the 3 month period.

In the case of new Council Tax liabilities, if the application is made or treated as made in the same week as the new Council Tax liability, CTS will start from that week.

A claimant may apply for CTS up to 17 weeks prior to an event that would entitle them to CTS.

A claimant may apply for CTS up to 8 weeks prior to becoming liable for Council Tax at their home.

23.0 Decisions and appeals

The Prescribed Regulations require the Council to notify the claimant in writing of its decision within 14 days from the date that all relevant information and evidence relating to the application has been received by the Council or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter. The notice will include information on how to appeal or how to request further information about the decision.

Schedule 7, Part 2 of the Prescribed Regulations sets out the procedure by which a claimant may make an appeal.

24.0 Changes of circumstance

The date on which a change of circumstance takes effect is detailed in Schedule 1, Part 8 of the Prescribed Regulations.

Generally they take effect from the Monday following the date of change or where it is a change in the amount of Council Tax, it will take affect from the day of the change.

There are specific rules for the treatment of any change of circumstance relating to pension credit.

25.0 Time and manner of granting CTS

Where the claimant is entitled to CTS the Council will reduce the Council Tax liability or make a payment where the claimant has discharged their liability.

A reduction or a payment will be made within 14 days of receipt of the application or, if that is not reasonably practicable, as soon as practicable thereafter.

26.0 Existing Council Tax Benefit claimants

A claimant who is in receipt of CTB immediately before 1st April 2013 is to be treated as having made an application for the CTS Scheme.

Where a claimant has, prior to 1st April 2013, made an application for Council Tax Benefit which has not been determined by 1st April 2013, that claimant is to be treated as having made an application for the CTS Scheme.

27.0 Fraud

The Council is required to take reasonable steps to ascertain whether a person is entitled to any Council Tax discount. This includes Council Tax Support.

The Fraud Act 2006 and the Theft Act can be used to prosecute offenders.

The Government have stated they intend to provide further legislation (to replicate that which currently exists in CTB) under which claimants can be prosecuted for offences such as knowingly providing false information on a claim form.

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Central Bedfordshire Council

Council Tax Discretionary Discounts Policy
(Hardship Fund)



Issue Date: 8th January 2013
Version 1.

Council Tax Discretionary Discount Policy (Hardship Fund)

1. Under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as inserted by Section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003), the Council has the power to reduce liability for Council Tax in relation to individual cases or class(es) of cases that it may determine and where national discounts and exemptions cannot be applied. It says:
 - a. Where a person is liable to pay Council Tax in respect of any chargeable dwelling and day, the billing authority for the area in which the dwelling is situated may reduce the amount which that person is liable to pay as respects the dwelling and the day to such extent as it thinks fit.
 - b. The power under subsection 1) above includes the power to reduce an amount to nil.
 - c. The power under subsection 1) may be exercised in relation to particular cases or by determining a class of case in which liability is to be reduced to an extent provided by the determination.
2. There are financial implications to awarding discounts other than those currently available under the statutory legislation as the financial burden of Section 13A discounts has to be met through an increase in the general level of Council Tax by other payers.

Statement of Objectives

3. The Council will only consider using its discretionary powers to reduce Council Tax liability for any Council Tax payer or class of payer in exceptional circumstances. The Council will treat all applications on their individual merits, however some or all of the following criteria must be met for each case:
 - There must be evidence of financial hardship or personal circumstances that justifies a reduction in Council Tax liability
 - The Council Tax payer must satisfy the Council that all reasonable steps have been taken to resolve their situation prior to application
 - The customer has applied for Council Tax Support. The localised Council Tax Support scheme exists to ensure that those on low incomes receive financial assistance with their Council Tax
 - All other eligible discounts/reliefs have been awarded
 - The Council Tax payer does not have access to other assets that could be used to pay Council Tax
 - All other legitimate means of resolving the situation have been investigated and exhausted by the applicant. If they have not been it is unlikely that an award will be made
 - The Council's finances allow for a reduction to be made
 - The situation and reason for the application must be outside of the Council Tax payer's control
 - The amount outstanding must not be the result of wilful refusal to pay or culpable neglect
 - In the case of an unoccupied property it must not be the sole or main residence of a Council Tax payer

Claiming Discretionary Relief

4. Requests for reductions in Council Tax liability must be provided in writing from the Council Tax payer, or their advocate/appointee or a recognised third party acting on their behalf.
5. The application should relate to the current Council Tax year, unless the liable person has just received an account following late valuation for a previous year(s)
6. The Council may request any reasonable evidence in support of an application.

Decision Making

7. The Head of Revenues and Benefits will determine all Section 13A applications in accordance with the delegated authority the post already holds.
8. The decisions will be recorded for transparency. Annual information regarding claims and awards shall be submitted to the Chief Financial Officer and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources.
9. There will be a limit of £500 placed on any award.
10. Any award granted will cease at the end of the relevant financial year and a re-application will be required for consideration of an ongoing discount

Notification of Decision

11. The Council will notify a Council Tax Payer in writing within 14 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision or within a reasonable period thereafter.

Review of Decision

12. Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, there is no right of appeal against the Council's use of discretionary powers. However, the Council will accept a customer's written request for a further review of its decision if it is made within 2 months of the original decision. The Council will then consider whether the customer has provided any additional information against the required criteria that will justify a change to its decision.

Fraudulent Claims

13. If a reduction has been made as a result of a false or fraudulent claim the Council reserves the right to withdraw the award. The Council will consider prosecuting any applicant who makes a false statement or provides fraudulent information/documents in support of an application.

14. An application for a reduction will not be considered for any applicant who has been prosecuted and convicted for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or Council Tax Support fraud, or received an Administrative Penalty or Caution as an alternative, in the last 6 years.

Equalities Statement

15. The Council is committed to equality and fairness. Equality is about ensuring people are treated fairly and given fair chances. It is also about ensuring that people receive fair outcomes in the standard of service they receive from the Council. This incorporates everyone, regardless of their race, gender, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and/or disability.

Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Policy
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report summarises changes to the Treasury Management Policy and the Treasury Management Strategy.

Advising Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer
Contact Officer: Ralph Gould, Head of Financial Control
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision No
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** Not applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Effective management of the Council's financial resources and the associated risks is a cornerstone to the delivery of the Council's priorities.

Financial:

1. The Council's Treasury Management Strategy and prudential indicators underpin the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
2. Treasury management is defined by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services as: "The management of the local authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

Legal:

3. The Council's treasury management activities are regulated by statute, professional codes and official guidance. The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) provides the powers to borrow and invest as well as providing controls and limits. Under the Act, Communities and Local Government has issued Guidance on Local Government Investments (revised March 2010) to structure and regulate the Council's investment activities. The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 – Statutory Instrument (SI) 3146 (plus subsequent amendments), develops the controls and powers within the Act. The SI requires the Council to undertake any borrowing activity with regard to the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The SI also requires the Council to operate the overall treasury function with regard to the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services (the Code of Practice).

CIPFA revised the Code of Practice in November 2011 to reflect developments in financial markets and the introduction of the Localism Act for English local authorities.

Risk Management:

4. The treasury management strategy and prudential indicators aims to manage the risks to the Council's finances from instability in financial markets.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

5. Not Applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

6. Not Applicable.

Public Health:

7. Not Applicable

Community Safety:

8. Not Applicable.

Sustainability:

9. Not Applicable.

Procurement:

10. Not Applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny:

11. The revised Treasury Management Policy and Treasury Management Strategy were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18 December 2012. After consideration of the policy and strategy the Committee had no comments to submit to the Executive.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to recommend Council to approve:

- 1. the Treasury Management policy statement January 2013 to January 2016;**
- 2. the Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14 to 2015/16, the Investment Strategy 2013/14, detailed counterparty criteria 2013/14 and the capital, treasury and borrowing Prudential Indicators contained within Appendix B; and**
- 3. the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) statement contained within Appendix B (section 11) which sets out the Council's policy on MRP.**

<i>Reason for Recommendations:</i>	<i>To ensure that an effective and appropriate treasury management framework is in place for the Council.</i>
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Executive Summary

12. Central Bedfordshire annually agrees its Treasury Management Strategy and, as a minimum every three years, reviews its Treasury Management Policy. In response to the greater risk and uncertainty in investment markets CIPFA revised both the Treasury Management Code of Practice and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities in November 2011. The revised strategy recognises a greater focus on risk in the two codes.

Introduction

13. Treasury management practices at the Council are developed within a statutory framework and informed by Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) and the CIPFA Code of Practice. One requirement is that the Council's annual Treasury Management Strategy is subject to scrutiny before it is considered by Full Council.
14. The Council receives reports on its treasury management policies practices and activities, including as a minimum, an annual strategy and plan in advance of the year, a mid year review and an annual report after its close, in the form prescribed in the Treasury Management Practices (TMP's).
15. The Council delegates responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices to the Executive and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Chief Finance Officer, who will act in accordance with the Council's policy statement and TMP's.
16. The Council has nominated the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies.

17. The Council's investment policy has regard to the CLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance") and the 2011 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code"). The Council's investment priorities will be security first, liquidity second, and then return.
18. Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed in Appendix B under the 'Specified' and 'Non-Specified' Investments categories as well as counterparty limits.
19. This report summarises the changes to the Treasury Management Strategy as a result of continuous review with the Council's external advisers, Arlingclose.

Treasury Management Policy

20. Minor changes have been made to the Treasury Management Policy adopted by the Council in February 2012 to reflect the Council's adoption on 29 November of the CIPFA Codes of Practice revised in November 2011. This is attached at Appendix A.
21. The Treasury Management Policy sets out the objectives and the regulatory requirements of the authority's Treasury Management Function.
22. The principal objectives of this Treasury Management Policy Statement are to provide a framework within which:
 - i) risks which might affect the Council's ability to fulfil its responsibilities or which might jeopardise its financial security can be identified;
 - ii) borrowing costs can be minimised whilst ensuring the long term security and stability of the Council's financial position;
 - iii) investment returns can be safely maximised and capital values maintained.

Treasury Management Strategy

23. CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services (the "CIPFA TM Code") and the Prudential Code require local authorities to determine their Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Prudential Indicators on an annual basis. The revised Treasury Management Statement also incorporates the Investment Strategy as required under the CLG's Investment Guidance. This is enclosed at Appendix B and where prudential indicators have been revised in respect of the financial year 2012/13 the original approved indicator and the revision are disclosed.

Counterparty Lists

24. The Strategy allows the Council's banker NatWest to be used should there be a downgrade to their credit ratings to a level below the Council's minimum criteria; the Council will continue to use the bank on an operational basis for short term liquidity investments (overnight and weekend investments) and for business continuity arrangements.

Authorised Limits and Operational Boundary

25. The Authorised Limit has been revised from £455m to £440m for 2012-13 and an Authorised limit of £471m has been set for 2013/14. This represents the maximum level of external borrowing on a gross basis.
26. The Operational Boundary has been revised from £434m to £427.4m for 2012-2013 and an Operational Boundary of £458.8m has been set for 2013/14, these limits links directly to the Capital Financing Requirement and estimates of other cash flow requirements.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Treasury Management Policy for January 2013 – January 2016

Appendix B – Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2013/14 to 2015/16

Background papers and their location: (open to public inspection)

None

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Appendix A

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT for January 2013 – January 2016

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (Revised 2011), this Council defines the policies and objectives of its treasury management activities as follows:

- 1.1 This Council defines its treasury management activities as:
“The management of the authority’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks”.
- 1.2 This Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will include their risk implications for the Council, and any financial instruments entered into to manage these risks.
- 1.3 This Council acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its Medium Term Financial Strategy. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving best value in treasury management, and to employing suitable performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management.
- 1.4 The Chief Finance Officer will produce for adoption by Full Council prior to the commencement of each financial year an annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement which will set out the borrowing and investment strategy to be adopted for the year ahead along with the associated Prudential Indicators, in compliance with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- 1.5 The Chief Finance Officer will maintain suitable Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) which will set out the manner in which this Council will seek to achieve its treasury management policies and objectives and how it will manage and control those activities.
- 1.6 The Council’s borrowing will be affordable, sustainable and prudent and consideration will be given to the management of interest rate risk and refinancing risk. The source from which the borrowing is taken and the type of borrowing should allow the Council transparency and control over its debt.

1.7 The Council's primary objective in relation to investments remains the security of capital. The liquidity or accessibility of the Authority's investments followed by the yield earned on investments remain important but are secondary considerations.

2. Objectives

2.1 The principal objectives of this Treasury Management Policy Statement are to provide a framework within which: -

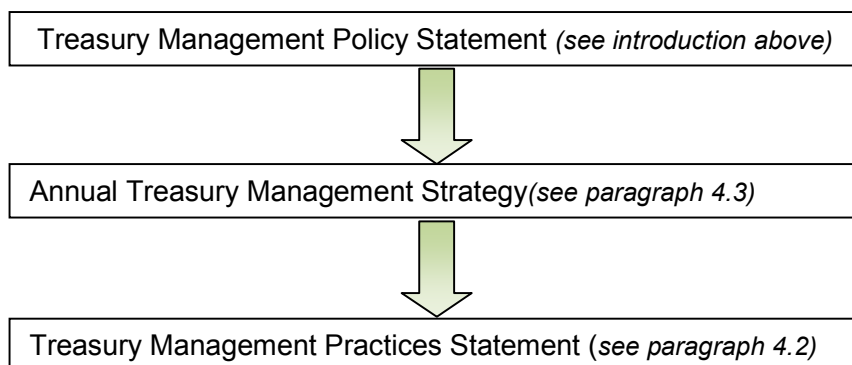
- i) Risks which might affect the Council's ability to fulfill its responsibilities or which might jeopardise its financial security can be identified and managed;
- ii) Borrowing costs can be minimised whilst ensuring the long term security and stability of the Council's financial position;
- iii) Investment returns can be safely maximised and capital values maintained;

3. Review Period

It is the Council's responsibility to approve a Treasury Management Policy Statement on a periodic basis. This policy will be reviewed every three years or whenever legislative, regulatory or best practice changes materially affect the effectiveness of the current policy. In the absence of changes, the next scheduled date for review is therefore January 2016.

4. Documentation

This document forms part of a suite of Treasury documents intended to govern and regulate treasury management activity. The hierarchy of documents is set out below and the role of each is explained



4.2 The Treasury Management Practices Statement sets out that detailed application the lies behind the policy and sets out the manner in which the organisation will seek to achieve the policy objectives, describing how it will manage and control the activities listed below:

- Treasury Risk Management
- Performance measurement
- Decision making and analysis
- Approved instruments, methods and techniques
- Organisation, clarity and segregation of responsibilities; dealing arrangements
- Reporting requirements, Management information arrangements
- Budgeting, Accounting and Audit Arrangements
- Cash and Cash Flow Management
- Money Laundering
- Staff training and qualifications
- Use of external service providers
- Corporate governance

4.3 The Annual Treasury Management Strategy integrates with the Prudential Indicators being set and will include the following:

- Links to Capital Financing and Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for the current and ensuing year
- Strategy for financing new borrowing requirements (if any) and refinancing maturing borrowing (if any) over the next year and for restructuring of debt
- the extent to which surplus funds are earmarked for short term requirements
- the investment strategy for the forthcoming year
- the minimum to be held in short term/specified investment during the coming year

- the interest rate outlook against which the treasury activities are likely to be undertaken.
- 4.4 Based on the CLG Guidance on Investments, the Council will produce as part of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy, an investment strategy that sets out
- § the objectives, policies and strategy for managing its investments;
 - § the determination of which Specified and Non Specified Investments the Council will utilise during the forthcoming financial year(s) based on the Council's economic and investment outlook and the expected level of investment balances;
 - § the limits for the use of Non-Specified Investments.

5. Basis of Policy

- 5.1 The Council will adhere to the regulatory framework set out in the following documents: -
- a) CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (Revised 2011);
 - b) The 2011 Prudential Code for Capital Finance (the 2003 document having first introduced requirements for the manner in which capital spending plans are to be considered and approved) and in conjunction with this, the development of an integrated Treasury Management Strategy;
 - c) The Council's Constitution, Code of Financial Governance and the scheme of Officer Delegations.
- 5.2 Copies of the documents listed above are available from the Chief Finance Officer, if required. The Council will be bound by the requirements of any successor documents to those listed above unless a subsequent review of this policy deems them no longer to be appropriate.
- 5.3 In arriving at treasury management decisions, due cognisance will be taken of written and verbal advice provided by Treasury Advisors but neither the Council nor its officers will be bound by such advice.
- 5.4 The Chief Finance Officer will only transact with brokers, funders and counterparties who have accepted the principles set out in the current Bank of England's "Non Investment Products Code (NIPS Code) (<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/markets/forex/fxjsc/nipscode.pdf>).

Appendix B

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy

2013/14 to 2015/16 (and where applicable revisions to 2012/13 Strategy)

1. Background

- 1.1. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services (the "CIPFA TM Code") and the Prudential Code require local authorities to determine the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Prudential Indicators (PIs) on an annual basis. The TMSS also includes the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) that is a requirement of the CLG's Investment Guidance.
- 1.2. As per the requirements of the Prudential Code, the Authority has adopted the CIPFA Treasury Management Code at a meeting of its Council on 29th November 2012
- 1.3. The purpose of this TMSS is, therefore, to approve:
 - (where applicable) revisions to Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators for 2012/13
 - Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14
 - Annual Investment Strategy for 2013/14
 - Prudential Indicators for 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16
 - MRP Statement

2. Capital Financing Requirement

- 2.1 The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This represents the cumulative capital expenditure that has not yet been financed and, together with Usable Reserves, are the core drivers of Treasury Management activities.
- 2.2 The Authority's currently has £315.5m of debt and £71.9m of investments. This is set out in further detail at **Annex A**.
- 2.3 **Money Borrowed in Advance of Spending Need:** The Council's current strategy is to minimise borrowing to below the level of its financing requirement. However, the Authority is able to borrow funds in excess of the

current level of its CFR up to the projected level in 2015/16 if it is felt the benefits of borrowing at interest rates now compared to where they are expected to be in the future, outweighs the current cost and risks associated with investing the proceeds until the borrowing was actually required. Currently the Authority is not planning to borrow in advance of its CFR needs

- 2.4 The forecast movement in the CFR in coming years is one of the Prudential Indicators (PIs). The movement in actual external debt and usable reserves combine to identify the Authority's borrowing requirement and potential investment strategy in the current and future years.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary Analysis

	2012/13 Revised Estimate £M's	2013/14 Estimate £M's	2014/15 Estimate £M's	2015/16 Estimate £M's
General Fund CFR	232.5	261.8	284.1	318.5
HRA CFR	163.6	165.0	165.0	165.0
Total CFR	396.1	426.8	449.1	483.5
Less: Existing Profile of Borrowing**	315.5	308.0	291.6	282.2
Less: Other Long Term Liabilities	17.9	17.1	16.3	15.7
Cumulative Maximum External Borrowing Requirement	62.6	101.7	141.2	185.6
Usable Reserves*	57.0	59.0	59.3	57.9
Cumulative Net Borrowing Requirement/(Investments)	5.6	42.7	81.9	127.7

*Usable reserves includes all General and Earmarked Reserves and HRA Reserves

** Lobos are profiled according to their maturity

3. Interest Rate Forecast

- 3.1 The Arlingclose interest rate forecast continues its theme of the last few years, that is, that interest rates will remain low for even longer. Indeed, the forecast is for official UK interest rates to remain at 0.5% until 2016 given the moribund outlook for economic growth and the extension of austerity measures announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement. Until there is a credible resolution of the problems that affect the Eurozone then the UK's safe haven status and minimal prospect of increases in official interest rates will continue to combine and support the theme within the forecast.

- 3.2 The economic and interest rate forecast provided by the Authority's treasury management advisor is attached at **Annex C**. The Authority will reappraise its strategies from time to time in response to evolving economic, political and financial events.

4. **Borrowing Strategy**

- 4.1 Treasury management and borrowing strategies in particular continue to be influenced not only by the absolute level of borrowing rates but also the relationship between short and long term interest rates. This difference creates a "cost of carry" for any new longer term borrowing where the proceeds are temporarily held as investments because of the difference between what is paid on the borrowing and what is earned on the investment. The cost of carry is likely to be an issue until 2016 or beyond. As borrowing is often for longer dated periods (anything up to 50 years) the cost of carry needs to be considered against a backdrop of uncertainty and affordability constraints in the Authority's wider financial position.

- 4.2 As indicated in Table 1, the Authority has a gross additional borrowing requirement of £101.7m in 2013/14. Where possible the Council will use its balances and reserves to avoid the need for external borrowing, by essentially lending its own surplus funds to itself to minimise borrowing costs and reduce overall treasury risk by reducing the level of its external investment balances. The Council will adopt a flexible approach to this borrowing in consultation with its treasury management advisers, Arlingclose Ltd. The following issues will be considered prior to undertaking any external borrowing:

- Affordability;
- Maturity profile of existing debt;
- Interest rate and refinancing risk;
- Borrowing source.

5. **Sources of Borrowing and Portfolio Implications**

- 5.1 In conjunction with advice from its treasury advisor, Arlingclose Ltd, the Council will keep under review the following borrowing sources:

- Internal
- PWLB
- Local authorities

- European Investment Bank (*NB the EIB will only lend up to 50% towards the funding of a specific project and needs to meet the EIB's specific criteria*)
- Leasing
- Structured finance
- Capital markets (stock issues, commercial paper and bills)
- Commercial banks

5.2 The cost of carry has resulted in an increased reliance upon shorter dated and variable rate borrowing. This type of borrowing injects volatility into the debt portfolio in terms of interest rate risk but is counterbalanced by its affordability and alignment of borrowing costs with investment returns. The Authority's exposure to shorter dated and variable rate borrowing is kept under regular review by reference to the difference or spread between variable rate and longer term borrowing costs. A significant narrowing in the spread (e.g. by 0.50%) will result in an immediate and formal review of the borrowing strategy to determine whether the exposure to shorter dated and variable rates is maintained or altered.

5.3 The Authority has £13.5m exposure to LOBO loans (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) all of which can be "called" within 2013/14. A LOBO is called when the Lender exercises its right to amend the interest rate on the loan at which point the Borrower can accept the revised terms or reject them and repay the loan. LOBO loans present a potential refinancing risk to the Authority since the decision to call a LOBO is entirely at the lender's discretion.

Any LOBOs called will be discussed with the treasury advisers prior to acceptance of any revised terms. The default position will be the repayment of the LOBO without penalty i.e. the revised terms will not be accepted.

6. Debt Rescheduling

6.1 The Authority's debt portfolio can be restructured by prematurely repaying loans and refinancing them on similar or different terms to achieve a reduction in risk and/or savings in interest costs.

6.2 The lower interest rate environment and changes in the rules regarding the premature repayment of PWLB loans has adversely affected the scope to undertake meaningful debt restructuring although occasional opportunities arise. The rationale for undertaking any debt rescheduling or repayment would be one or more of the following:

- Reduce investment balances and credit exposure via debt repayment
- Align long-term cash flow projections and debt levels
- Savings in risk adjusted interest costs
- Rebalancing the interest rate structure of the debt portfolio
- Changing the maturity profile of the debt portfolio

6.3 Borrowing and rescheduling activity will be reported to Council in the Annual Treasury Management Report and the regular treasury management reports presented to the Corporate Management Team (CMT)

7. Annual Investment Strategy

7.1 In accordance with Investment Guidance issued by the CLG and best practice the Council's primary objective in relation to the investment of public funds remains the security of capital. The liquidity or accessibility of the Authority's investments is secondary, followed by the yield earned on investments which is a tertiary consideration.

7.2 The Authority and its advisors remain alert for signs of credit or market distress that might adversely affect the Authority.

7.3 Investments are categorised as "Specified" or "Non-Specified" within the investment guidance issued by the CLG.

Specified investments are sterling denominated investments with a maximum maturity of one year. They also meet the "high credit quality" as determined by the Authority and are not deemed capital expenditure investments under Statute. Non specified investments are, effectively, everything else.

7.4 The types of investments that will be used by the Authority and whether they are specified or non-specified are as follows:

Table 2: Specified and Non-Specified Investments

Investment	Specified	Non-Specified
Term deposits with banks and building societies	✓	✓
Term deposits with other UK local authorities	✓	✓
Investments with Registered Providers	✓	✓
Certificates of deposit with banks and building societies	✓	✓
Gilts	✓	✓
Treasury Bills (T-Bills)	✓	✗
Bonds issued by Multilateral Development Banks	✓	✓
Local Authority Bills	✓	✗
Commercial Paper	✓	✗
Corporate Bonds	✓	✓
AAA-Rated Money Market Funds	✓	✗
Other Money Market and Collective Investment Schemes	✓	✓
Debt Management Account Deposit Facility	✓	✗

7.5 New specified investments will be made within the following limits

Instrument	Country/ Domicile	Counterparty	Maximum Counter- party Limits %/£M's
Term Deposits	UK	DMADF, DMO	No limit
Term Deposits/Call Accounts/Bill	UK	Other UK Local Authorities	No limit
Term Deposits/Call Accounts	UK	Counterparties rated at least A- Long Term (or equivalent)	£15m
Councils Banker	UK	Natwest	£25m
Term Deposits/Call Accounts	Non-UK	Counterparties rated at least A- Long Term (or equivalent) in select countries with a Sovereign Rating of at least AA+	£5m
Gilts	UK	DMO	No limit
T-Bills	UK	DMO	No limit
Bonds issued by multilateral development banks		(For example, European Investment Bank/Council of Europe, Inter American Development Bank)	30%
CNAV -rated Money Market Funds	UK/Ireland/ Luxembourg domiciled	CNAV MMFs VNAV MMFs (where there is greater than 12 month history of a consistent £1 Net Asset Value) These are currently AAA	40%
Other MMFs and CIS	UK/Ireland/ Luxembourg domiciled	Pooled funds which meet the definition of a Collective Investment Scheme per SI 2004 No 534 and subsequent amendments	£10m

Further details can be found in **Annex D & E**.

- 7.5 The minimum credit rating for non-UK sovereigns is AA+ (or equivalent). For specified investments the minimum long term rating for counterparties is A- (or equivalent). Regular advice is provided by Arlingclose on the appropriate duration of deposits and other instruments with specific eligible counterparties.

Other credit characteristics, in addition to credit ratings, that the Authority monitors are listed in section 12 below.

Any institution will be suspended or removed should any of the factors identified give rise to concern. Specifically credit ratings are monitored by the Authority on a daily basis. Arlingclose advises the Authority on ratings changes and appropriate action to be taken.

The countries and institutions that currently meet the criteria for investments are included in **Annex D**.

- 7.6 **Authority's Banker** – The Authority banks with NatWest. At the current time, it does meet the Authority's minimum credit criteria. It is the Authority's intention that even if the credit rating of NatWest falls below the Authority's minimum criteria of A- the Authority will continue to bank for short term liquidity requirements (overnight and weekend investments) and business continuity arrangements.

8. Investment Strategy

- 8.1 With short term interest rates low for some time, an investment strategy will typically result in a lengthening of investment periods, where cash flow permits, in order to lock in higher rates of acceptable risk adjusted returns. The problem in the current environment is finding an investment counterparty providing acceptable levels of counterparty risk.
- 8.2 In order to diversify a portfolio largely invested in cash, investments will be placed with approved counterparties over a range of maturity periods. Maximum investment levels relating to each counterparty will be set to ensure prudent diversification is achieved.
- 8.3 Money market funds (MMFs) will be utilised but good treasury management practice prevails and whilst MMFs provide good diversification the Authority will also seek to mitigate operational risk by utilising at least two MMFs. The Authority will also restrict its exposure to MMFs with lower levels of funds under management and will not exceed 0.5% of the net asset value of the

MMF. In the case of Government MMFs, the Council will ensure exposure to each Fund does not exceed 2% of the net asset value of the Fund.

8.4 Collective Investment Schemes (Pooled Funds):

The Authority has evaluated the use of Pooled Funds and determined the appropriateness of their use within the investment portfolio. Pooled funds enable the Authority to diversify the assets and the underlying risk in the investment portfolio and provide the potential for enhanced returns.

Investments in pooled funds will be undertaken with advice from Arlingclose Ltd. currently The Authority's has £5m investments in a Pooled property Funds, the Lime Fund which is in listed in **Annex E**. This is continually monitored and reviewed to ensure it is still meeting the Council's investment objectives.

9. **Policy on Use of Financial Derivatives**

- 9.1 Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (e.g. interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk (e.g. LOBO loans and callable deposits). The general power of competence in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 removes much of the uncertainty over local authorities' use of standalone financial derivatives (i.e. those that are not embedded into a loan or investment). The CIPFA Code requires authorities to clearly detail their policy on the use of derivatives in the annual strategy.
- 9.2 The Authority will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Authority is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be taken into account when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.
- 9.3 Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria. The current value of any amount due from a derivative counterparty will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.
- 9.4 The local authority will only use derivatives after seeking expertise, a legal opinion and ensuring officers have the appropriate training for their use.

10. Housing Revenue Account Self-Financing

- 10.1 Central Government completed its reform of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Subsidy system at the end of 2011/12. Local authorities are required to recharge interest expenditure and income attributable to the HRA in accordance with Determinations issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government.
- 10.2 The Determinations do not set out a methodology for calculating the interest rate to use in each instance. The Council is therefore required to adopt a policy that will set out how interest charges attributable to the HRA will be determined. The CIPFA Code recommends that authorities present this policy in their TMSS.
- 10.3 Loan structures and maturities were discussed and analysed with the Council's Treasury Advisors to fit in with the Council's HRA business plan and strategy, funding costs, as well as the Council's existing treasury management position and risk profile. It was decided that the Council will adopt a two-pool approach in relation to the allocation of debt between the General Fund and HRA.

11. 2013/14 MRP Statement

- 11.1 The Council is required to set an annual policy on the way it calculates the prudent provision for the repayment of borrowing (MRP). Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision has been issued by the Secretary of State and local authorities are required to "have regard" to such Guidance under section 21(1A) of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 11.2 The four MRP options available are:
- Option 1: Regulatory Method
 - Option 2: CFR Method
 - Option 3: Asset Life Method
 - Option 4: Depreciation Method

(This does not preclude other prudent methods)

- 11.3 MRP in 2013/14: Option 1 and 2 will be used for the majority of General Fund historic debt particularly that deemed to be supported through the Revenue Support Grant. For large projects where capital expenditure is funded from prudential borrowing Option 3 will be used to provide MRP over the life of the asset to which the borrowing was applied.

12. Monitoring and Reporting on the Treasury Outturn and Prudential Indicators

The Chief Finance Officer will

- Report on a quarterly basis Treasury Management activity/performance to the Corporate Management Team, Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive.
- Produce an annual outturn report on the treasury activity and prudential indicator performance to Full Council no later than 30th September after the financial year end.
- Produce a Mid year report to Full Council on performance against the approved strategy and prudential indicators

Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be responsible for the scrutiny of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy.

13. Other Items

13.1 Training

CIPFA's Code of Practice requires all members tasked with treasury management responsibilities, including scrutiny of the treasury management function, receive appropriate training relevant to their needs and understand fully their roles and responsibilities.

The Council adopts a continuous performance and development programme to ensure staff are regularly appraised and any training needs addressed. Treasury staff also attend regular training sessions, seminars and workshops. These ensure their knowledge is up to date and relevant. Details of training received are maintained as part of the performance and development process.

Council members receive education regarding treasury management as part of their general finance training. Access to additional training is provided where required.

13.2 Treasury Management Advisors

The Authority uses Arlingclose as Treasury Management Advisors and receives an agreed schedule of services which include:

- Credit advice
- Investment advice
- Technical advice
- Economic & interest rate forecasts
- Workshops and training events
- HRA support

The Authority maintains the quality of the service with its advisors by holding quarterly meetings and tendering periodically.

Annex A – Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

	30/11/12 Actual Portfolio £M's	30/11/12 Average Rate %
External Borrowing:		
PWLB - Fixed Rate	221.4	3.66
PWLB - Variable Rate	80.6	0.58
LOBO Loans	13.5	4.23
Total External Borrowing	315.5	2.90
Other Long Term Liabilities:		
PFI	17.7	
Finance Leases	0.6	
Total Gross External Debt	333.8	
Investments:		
<i>Managed in-house</i>		
Short-term investments	67.2	1
Long-term investments		
<i>Managed externally</i>		
Pooled Funds - Lime property fund	4.7	5.3
Total Investments	71.9	
Net Debt	261.9	

Annex B

Prudential Indicators [where applicable, revisions to 2012/13 and] 2013/14 – 2015/16

1. Background:

There is a requirement under the Local Government Act 2003 for local authorities to have regard to CIPFA’s Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the “CIPFA Prudential Code”) when setting and reviewing their Prudential Indicators.

2. Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement:

This is a key indicator of prudence. In order to ensure that over the medium term debt will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years.

If in any of these years there is a reduction in the capital financing requirement, this reduction is ignored in estimating the cumulative increase in the capital financing requirement which is used for comparison with **gross** external debt.

The Chief Finance Officer reports that the Authority had no difficulty meeting this requirement in 2012/13, nor are any difficulties envisaged for future years. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in the approved budget.

3. Estimates of Capital Expenditure:

3.1 This indicator is set to ensure that the level of proposed capital expenditure remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, to consider the impact on Council Tax and in the case of the HRA, housing rent levels.

Capital Expenditure	2012/13 Approved £M’s	2012/13 Revised £M’s	2013/14 Estimate £M’s	2014/15 Estimate £M’s	2015/16 Estimate £M’s
Non-HRA	78.7	64.3	80.8	59.5	75.3
HRA	6.1	6.6	11.0	14.8	10.9
Total	84.8	70.9	91.8	74.4	86.2

3.2 Capital expenditure will be financed or funded as follows:

Capital Financing	2012/13 Approved £M's	2012/13 Revised £M's	2013/14 Estimate £M's	2014/15 Estimate £M's	2015/16 Estimate £M's
Capital receipts	11.2	8.7	1.7	6.5	12.1
Government Grants	49.4	34.9	43.8	23.4	20.7
Major Repairs Allowance					
Use of Negative CFR		6.4			
Revenue contributions	5.9		10.8	14.6	10.7
Total Financing	66.5	50.0	56.2	44.6	43.5
Supported borrowing					
Unsupported borrowing	18.4	20.9	35.6	29.8	42.7
Total Financing and Funding	84.9	70.9	91.8	74.4	86.2

The table shows that the capital expenditure plans of the Authority cannot be funded entirely from sources other than borrowing. Where possible this will be achieved through internal borrowing.

4. Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream:

4.1 This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs. The definition of financing costs is set out in the Prudential Code.

4.2 The ratio is based on costs net of investment income.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2012/13 Approved %	2012/13 Revised %	2013/14 Estimate %	2014/15 Estimate %	2015/16 Estimate %
Non-HRA	7.39	6.09	7.15	8.53	10.44
HRA	0.19	14.5	14.4	13.9	13.3
Total	6.47	7.2	8.1	9.3	10.9

5. Capital Financing Requirement:

5.1 The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) measures the Authority's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. The calculation of the CFR is taken from the amounts held in the Balance Sheet relating to capital expenditure and financing.

Capital Financing Requirement	2012/13 Approved £M's	2012/13 Revised £M's	2013/14 Estimate £M's	2014/15 Estimate £M's	2015/16 Estimate £M's
Non-HRA	230.6	232.5	261.8	284.1	318.5
HRA	158.0	163.6	165.0	165.0	165.0
Total CFR	388.6	396.1	426.8	449.1	483.5

7. Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions:

7.1 As an indicator of affordability, the table below shows the notional impact of capital investment decisions on Council Tax and Housing Rent levels and represent the impact on these if the financing of the capital programme were to be funded by taxes and rents. The incremental impact is calculated by comparing the total revenue budget requirement of the current approved capital programme with an equivalent calculation of the revenue budget requirement arising from the proposed capital programme.

Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions	2012/13 Approved £	2013/14 Estimate £	2014/15 Estimate £	2015/16 Estimate £
Increase in Band D Council Tax	16.45	23.29	31.66	31.12
Increase in Average Weekly Housing Rents	0.21	0.34	0.51	0.51

8. Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt:

- 8.1 The Authority has an integrated treasury management strategy and manages its treasury position in accordance with its approved strategy and practice. Overall borrowing will therefore arise as a consequence of all the financial transactions of the Authority and not just those arising from capital spending reflected in the CFR.
- 8.2 The **Authorised Limit** sets the maximum level of external debt on a gross basis (i.e. excluding investments) for the Authority. It is measured on a daily basis against all external debt items on the Balance Sheet (i.e. long and short term borrowing, overdrawn bank balances and long term liabilities). This Prudential Indicator separately identifies borrowing from other long term liabilities such as finance leases. It is consistent with the Authority's existing commitments, its proposals for capital expenditure and financing and its approved treasury management policy statement and practices.
- 8.3 The Authorised Limit is the statutory limit for borrowing determined under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 (referred to in the legislation as the Affordable Limit).
- 8.4 The Operational Boundary has been set on the estimate of the most likely, i.e. prudent but not worst case scenario with sufficient headroom over and above this to allow for unusual cash movements.
- 8.5 The Operational Boundary links directly to the Authority's estimates of the CFR and estimates of other cashflow requirements. This indicator is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit reflecting the most likely, prudent but not worst case scenario but without the additional headroom included within the Authorised Limit.

	2012/13 Approved £M's	2012/13 Revised £M's	2013/14 Estimate £M's	2014/15 Estimate £M's	2015/16 Estimate £M's
Authorised Limit for Borrowing	422	414.5	446.7	462.8	498.2
Authorised Limit for Other Long-term Liabilities	33	25.4	24.6	23.8	23.2
Authorised Limit for External Debt	455	439.9	471.3	486.6	521.4
Operational Boundary for Borrowing	404	404.5	436.7	452.8	483.8
Operational Boundary for Other Long-term Liabilities	30	22.9	22.1	21.3	20.7
Operational Boundary for External Debt	434	427.4	458.8	474.1	508.9

9. Adoption of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code:

9.1 This indicator demonstrates that the Authority has adopted the principles of best practice.

Adoption of the CIPFA Code of Practice in Treasury Management

The Council approved the adoption of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code at its Council meeting on 29th November 2012

The Authority has incorporated the changes from the revised CIPFA Code of Practice into its treasury policies, procedures and practices.

10. Upper Limits for Fixed Interest Rate Exposure and Variable Interest Rate Exposure:

- 10.1 These indicators allow the Authority to manage the extent to which it is exposed to changes in interest rates. This Authority calculates these limits on net principal outstanding sums, (i.e. fixed rate debt net of fixed rate investments)
- 10.2 The upper limit for variable rate exposure has been set to ensure that the Authority is not exposed to interest rate rises which could adversely impact on the revenue budget. The limit allows for the use of variable rate debt to offset exposure to changes in short-term rates on investments

	Existing level at 30/11/12	2012/13 Approved	2013/14 Estimate	2014/15 Estimate	2015/16 Estimate
	£	%	£M's	£M's	£M's
Upper Limit for Fixed Interest Rate Exposure	74.5	100	100	100	100
Upper Limit for Variable Interest Rate Exposure	25.5	35	40	40	40

- 10.3 The limits above provide the necessary flexibility within which decisions will be made for drawing down new loans on a fixed or variable rate basis; the decisions will ultimately be determined by expectations of anticipated interest rate movements as set out in the Council's treasury management strategy.

11. Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate borrowing:

- 11.1 This indicator highlights the existence of any large concentrations of fixed rate debt needing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates and is designed to protect against excessive exposures to interest rate changes in any one period, in particular in the course of the next ten years.
- 11.2 It is calculated as the amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate. The maturity of borrowing is determined by reference to the earliest date on which the lender can require payment.

11.3 LOBOs are classified as maturing on the next call date i.e. the earliest date that the lender can require repayment.

11.4 The maturity of the council's fixed rated borrowing will be profiled in order that no more than 20% of the fixed rated debt matures in any one financial year.

Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing	Existing level (or Benchmark level) at 31/03/12 %	Lower Limit for 2013/14 %	Upper Limit for 2013/14 %
under 12 months	7.74	0.00	20.0
12 months and within 24 months	1.84	0.00	20.0
24 months and within 5 years	0.00	0.00	60.0
5 years and within 10 years	0.00	0.00	100.0
10 years and within 20 years	46.72	0.00	100.0
20 years and within 30 years	17.72	0.00	100.0
30 years and within 40 years	4.47	0.00	100.0
40 years and within 50 years	21.52	0.00	100.0
50 years and above	0.00	0.00	100.0

12. Credit Risk:

12.1 The Authority considers security, liquidity and yield, in that order, when making investment decisions.

12.2 Credit ratings remain an important element of assessing credit risk, but they are not a sole feature in the Authority's assessment of counterparty credit risk.

12.3 The Authority also considers alternative assessments of credit strength, and information on corporate developments of and market sentiment towards counterparties. The following key tools are used to assess credit risk:

- Published credit ratings of the financial institution (minimum A- or equivalent) and its sovereign (minimum AA+ or equivalent for non-UK sovereigns);
- Sovereign support mechanisms;

- Credit default swaps (where quoted);
- Share prices (where available);
- Economic fundamentals, such as a country's net debt as a percentage of its GDP);
- Corporate developments, news, articles, markets sentiment and momentum;
- Subjective overlay.

12.4 The only indicators with prescriptive values remain to be credit ratings. Other indicators of creditworthiness are considered in relative rather than absolute terms.

13. Upper Limit for total principal sums invested over 364 days:

13.1 The purpose of this limit is to contain exposure to the possibility of loss that may arise as a result of the Authority having to seek early repayment of the sums invested.

Upper Limit for total principal sums invested over 364 days	2012/13 Approved £M's	2012/13 Revised £M's	2013/14 Estimate £M's	2014/15 Estimate £M's	2015/16 Estimate £M's
	25	25	25	25	25

14. HRA Limit of Indebtedness:

14.1 The purpose of this limit is to report the level of debt imposed on the authority at the time of the implementation of self-financing by the department for communities and Local Government.

	2012/13 Approved £M's	2012/13 Revised £M's	2013/14 Estimate £M's	2014/15 Estimate £M's	2015/16 Estimate £M's	2016/17 Estimate £M's
HRA	165.69	165.0	165.0	165.0	165.0	165.0

Annex C – Arlingclose’s Economic & Interest Rate Forecast

	Dec-12	Mar-13	Jun-13	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14	Jun-14	Sep-14	Dec-14	Mar-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Dec-15
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk				0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Central case	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25
3-month LIBID													
Upside risk	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Central case	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25
1-yr LIBID													
Upside risk	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Central case	1.10	1.10	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25
5-yr gilt													
Upside risk	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Central case	0.80	0.80	0.90	0.90	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.20
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25
10-yr gilt													
Upside risk	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Central case	1.90	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.20
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25
20-yr gilt													
Upside risk	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Central case	2.75	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.90	2.90	2.90	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50
50-yr gilt													
Upside risk	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Central case	3.25	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.60	3.60
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50

Underlying Assumptions:

- Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) has fallen further to 2.2% from a peak of 5.2%. Near term CPI is likely to be affected by volatility in commodity prices and its decrease towards the 2% target is expected to be slower than previously estimated.
- Strong Q3 growth data has provided encouragement with the larger than expected 1% rise in GDP. Consumers are yet to loosen purse strings and businesses are still reticent to make long-term investments. The momentum in growth is unlikely to be sustained whilst uncertainty over the economic outlook persists.
- Having voted to increase asset purchases (QE) by £50bn in July, the MPC will wait to assess its effectiveness and that of the Funding for Lending Scheme (FLS) which started in August.
- Despite poor underlying growth resulting in much weaker public finances than forecast and a slower pace of fiscal consolidation, the Chancellor is expected to maintain the deficit-cutting strategy in the Autumn Statement.

- The US Federal Reserve has responded to the slowdown in growth and employment with QE3, with large scale asset purchases of \$40bn a month until the outlook for the labour market improves substantially. The US public finance ‘fiscal cliff’ nevertheless remains a serious risk unless a political solution is reached soon.
- The Eurozone is making slow headway (the European Stability Mechanism is now operational, announcements on the OMT programme, some progress towards banking union) which has placated markets and curtailed some of the immediate risks. A sustainable solution to the Eurozone crisis is some way off as fiscal integration and mutualisation of Eurozone sovereign debt liabilities remain politically unpalatable.

**Annex D – Current Recommended Sovereign and Counterparty List as at
31/10/2012**

Country/ Domicile	Counterparty	Maximum Counterparty Limit £M's	Maximum Group Limit (if applicable) £M's	Maximum Maturity Limit (term deposits and instruments without a secondary market)*	Maximum Maturity Limit (negotiable instrument)**
UK	Santander UK Plc (Banco Santander Group)	15		2 years	5 years
UK	Bank of Scotland (Lloyds Banking Group)	15	22.5	2 years	5 years
UK	Lloyds TSB (Lloyds Banking Group)	15		2 years	5 years
UK	Barclays Bank Plc	15		2 years	5 years
UK	HSBC Bank Plc	15		2 years	5 years
UK	Nationwide Building Society	15		2 years	5 years
UK	NatWest (RBS Group)	25	25	2 years	5 years
UK	Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS Group)	15		2 years	5 years
UK	Standard Chartered Bank	15		2 years	5 years
Australia	Australia and NZ Banking Group	5		2 years	5 years
Australia	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	5		2 years	5 years
Australia	National Australia Bank Ltd (National Australia Bank Group)	5		2 years	5 years
Australia	Westpac Banking Corp	5		2 years	5 years
Canada	Bank of Montreal	5		2 years	5 years
Canada	Bank of Nova Scotia	5		2 years	5 years
Canada	Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce	5		2 years	5 years
Canada	Royal Bank of Canada	5		2 years	5 years
Canada	Toronto-Dominion Bank	5		2 years	5 years
Finland	Nordea Bank Finland	5		2 years	5 years
Finland	Pohjola	5		2 years	5 years
France	BNP Paribas	5		2 years	5 years

France	Credit Agricole CIB (Credit Agricole Group)	5	7.5	2 years	5 years
France	Credit Agricole SA (Credit Agricole Group)	5		2 years	5 years
France	Société Générale	5		2 years	5 years
Germany	Deutsche Bank AG	5		2 years	5 years
Netherlands	ING Bank NV	5		2 years	5 years
Netherlands	Rabobank	5		2 years	5 years
Netherlands	Bank Nederlandse Gemeenten	5		2 years	5 years
Singapore	DBS Bank Ltd	5		2 years	5 years
Singapore	Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation (OCBC)	5		2 years	5 years
Singapore	United Overseas Bank (UOB)	5		2 years	5 years
Sweden	Svenska Handelsbanken	5		2 years	5 years
Switzerland	Credit Suisse	5		2 years	5 years
US	JP Morgan	5		2 years	5 years

** 2 years is the maximum approved duration for term deposits and non liquid investments (those without a secondary market), although in practice the Authority may be investing on a shorter term basis depending on operational advice of the Authority's treasury management adviser.*

** 5 years is the maximum approved duration for negotiable instruments such as Certificates of Deposits, Medium Term Notes and Corporate Bonds, although in practice the Authority may be investing for shorter periods depending on operational advice of the Authority's treasury management adviser.*

This list could change if, for example, a counterparty/country is upgraded, and meets our other creditworthiness tools or a new suitable counterparty comes into the market. Alternatively, if a counterparty is downgraded, this list may be shortened.

Group Limits - For institutions within a banking group, the council executes a limit of 1.5 times the individual limit of a single bank within that group.

Annex E – Non-Specified Investments

Total non -specified investments are limited to an overall maximum of 25m

Instrument	Maximum maturity	Max £M's of portfolio	Capital expenditure?	Example
Term deposits with banks, building societies which meet the specified investment criteria (on advice from TM Adviser)	2 years	£25m	No	
Term deposits with local authorities	5 years	£25m	No	
CDs and other negotiable instruments with banks and building societies which meet the specified investment criteria (on advice from TM Adviser)	5 years	<u>£25m</u>	No	
Gilts	15 years	No limit	No	
Bonds issued by multilateral development banks	15 years	<u>£25m</u>	No	<i>EIB Bonds, Council of Europe Bonds etc.</i>
Money Market Funds and Collective Investment Schemes	N/A	N/A	No	<i>Investec Target Return Fund; Elite Charteris Premium Income Fund; LAMIT; M&G Global Dividend Growth Fund</i>
Corporate and debt instruments issued by corporate bodies purchased from 01/04/12 onwards	N/A	N/A	No	
Collective Investment Schemes (pooled funds) which do not meet the definition of collective investment schemes in SI 2004 No 534 or SI 2007 No 573 and subsequent amendments	These funds do not have a defined maturity date	£10M	Yes	<i>Way Charteris Gold Portfolio Fund; Aviva Lime Fund</i>

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: School Funding Reforms – Schools Block
Report of: Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children’s Services
Summary: The report sets out the proposed distribution for the Dedicated Schools Grant – School Block. These proposals have previously been subject to full consultation with all Maintained Schools and Academies and more recently to consultation with and agreement of the Schools Forum.

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

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

This report supports the Council to deliver the following priority:

- Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people.

Financial:

1. Funded by Dedicated School Grant (ring fenced)

Legal:

2. Not applicable.

Risk Management:

3. Not applicable:

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. Not applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. Not applicable.

Community Safety:

6. Not applicable.

Sustainability:

7. Not applicable.

Procurement:

8. Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to approve the distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant - Schools Block for 2013-14.

Background

9. Since the beginning of the financial year 2006/07 councils have received allocations of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to finance the Schools Budget. The full DSG received must be applied to the Schools Budget in each Council; although Councils may provide additional resources in support of the Schools Budget should they decide to do so.
10. Two statements are signed annually by the Chief Finance Officer, after taking advice from the Director of Children's Services confirming that the DSG had been fully deployed in support of the School's Budget in accordance with the condition of the grant and the School Finance Regulations.
11. The School Finance Regulations govern the school funding distribution mechanism and currently allow authorities to use up to 37 funding factors within their formulae. Any changes to the distribution mechanism are proposed and decided by the Council, however, the Schools Forum must be consulted and voting by the Forum is restricted to school members only. DSG distribution has not previously been subject to Executive approval in that the changes to the scheme agreed with School Forum have tended to be amendments to the existing scheme. However, new and significant changes are proposed for distribution in 2013-14 which are set out below and the approval of the Council's Executive is sought.
12. The Department for Education held two Consultations in 2011; first, 'Rationale and Principles' and 'Proposals for a fairer system'. The second consultation proposed replacing the current schools funding distribution mechanism with a common, more transparent, fairer and less complex system. A third consultation was launched in March 2012 'Next steps towards a fairer system' built on these consultations outlining how the proposed system is to be implemented and operated. The final arrangements for 2013/14 were announced on 28 June 2012 and resulted in local consultation and the proposals which follow.

Schools Block - Arrangements for 2013/14

13. From 2013/14 the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) will be split into three funding blocks; (i) Schools, (ii) Early Years and (iii) High Needs. Councils, acting in their role as Local Authorities, are free to move funding between the blocks provided that they comply firstly with the requirements of central expenditure limits and secondly with the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG), which has been set to prevent a drop of more than 1.5% of funding per pupil for 2013/14 and again for 2014/15. The Schools block must be delegated to Schools with very few exceptions.
14. In order to support the movement towards a national funding formula (described in 13 above), all councils are required to simplify local arrangements for distributing funding to schools and to other providers. The current School Funding Regulations allow councils, acting in their role as Local Authorities, to use up to 37 funding factors within their formulae. Central Bedfordshire's local arrangements currently operate with 27. However, from 2013/14 only 12 factors will be permitted, two of which are not applicable to Central Bedfordshire. The 5 elements of those criteria allowable under the new rules that have been included in the new formulae are listed in paragraph 16 below.
15. A number of small school factors (infant class size, small school protection) are not permitted from 2013 and this may have a significant impact on small rural schools in future years after 2014. Once the protection from diminishing levels of funding provided to schools by the MFG reduces, it is likely that some schools will need to consider more cost-efficient organisational structures such as can be achieved through federating, amalgamating or by becoming part of an Academy chain. Schools on split sites will still be given funding per site under the new regulations. This is in line with the suggestion from the Secretary of State that encouragement be given to schools to merge or federate.
16. The following funding formula factors have been proposed by the Council, consulted on with schools and received agreement from the School Forum for distribution of the DSG in the 2013/14 financial year:
 - Basic Entitlement for Primary, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4
 - Deprivation based on weighted banded IDACI data. (The IDACI deprivation index is approved by the DfE for use in the distribution of Designated Schools Grant from 2013)
 - Lump Sum £120,000
 - Split Site £120,000
 - Rates based on actual cost

Growth Funds

17. Funds can be centrally retained from the Schools Block before allocation to schools and with agreement of Schools Forum, for funding significant pre-16 pupil growth and to fund expenditure that is incurred in order to make provision for extra classes (to comply with School Admissions [Infant Class Sizes] Regulations). Funds must be used on the same basis for the benefit of both maintained schools and Academies. The School Forum agreed at its meeting in November 2012 that £800k would be centrally retained to deal with applications by schools for funding for significant growth or infant class size regulations.
18. Any funds remaining at the end of the financial year must be added to the following year's DSG and reallocated to maintained schools and Academies through the local formula.
19. Local Authorities are required to produce criteria and to obtain Schools Forum agreement before growth funding is allocated. Central Bedfordshire's criteria were agreed by School Forum on the 26 November 2012 and will be submitted to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) as part of the submission required in January 2013.
20. A full consultation on the proposals was held with schools during September 2012 and received wide support from schools.

Education Funding Agency approval

21. The Council submitted the draft school budget pro-forma to the EFA containing information about their simplified formula at the end of October 2012. This has been checked for compliance with regulations and has been confirmed as meeting the requirements.
22. A final submission is required to the Education Funding Agency by the 18 January 2013 following pupil census numbers and the final settlement.
23. In the past the formula has not changed significantly from year to year and has not therefore required Executive approval. However, due to the significance of the changes proposed in the formula for 2013/14 and the potential implications of these changes for small rural schools in future years, Executive approval is being sought prior to submission of the formula to the Education Funding Agency.

Appendices:

None

Background papers and their location: (open to public inspection)

None

Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: CCTV Plan 2013-2017
Report of: Cllr Brian Spurr, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services
Summary: The report proposes the adoption of a CCTV Plan 2013-2017 for Central Bedfordshire that sets out how the CCTV Service will operate and develop.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Jeanette Keyte, Head of Community Safety
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 provision of CCTV supports our priorities to enhance our local communities by:

- Reducing levels of crime by 10% from 3312 in 2010/11 by 10% to 2980 by 2016.
- Decreasing levels of ASB from 2011/2012 recorded incident figures by 10% to 2016.

Financial:

1. Following a service review and subsequent report to Executive in September 2010 the CCTV Service achieved efficiency savings of £95K in 2011/12 by reducing the number of operators, changing terms and conditions and reducing the hours of pro-active monitoring to peak demand times.

£100K is allocated in the capital programme to support additional investment that may be required to further develop the CCTV Service in line with the proposed CCTV Plan.

The proposed CCTV Plan does not impact upon the current revenue budget at this time. The plan does set out the need to identify how best to develop the service so that it remains effective whilst giving value for money, and this may require additional investment. Where this is the case, business cases will be developed and submitted for consideration through the agreed budget and committee processes.

The net budget for CCTV is £119K (excluding salaries).

Legal:

2. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory duty on the Council: without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. The provision of CCTV, whilst a discretionary service makes a significant contribution to reducing crime and disorder in its area.

Risk Management:

3. CCTV provides a key service in relation to reducing crime and disorder and promoting public confidence and reducing the fear of crime, all of which are high priorities for our communities. The service also provides significant support for key stakeholders, including Bedfordshire Police, reducing and detecting crime and disorder.

Specific risks relating to the implementation of the CCTV Plan include:

- Reputational risks, both with communities and partners, including poor public perception
- Failure to meet Corporate objectives/required outcomes
- Failure to discharge statutory responsibilities, and
- Financial risks, including the failure to deliver the required efficiency savings and failure to obtain external contributory funding.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. There are no immediate implications on staffing.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. 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.

A CCTV equality impact assessment has been undertaken. This has highlighted that young people and vulnerable adults can be subject to more antisocial behaviour and crime than other members of the community. National evidence highlights that there is also an under reporting of antisocial behaviour, domestic abuse and serious acquisitive crime by vulnerable members of the community. Changes to camera numbers, and the levels of pro-active monitoring and recording are likely to have an impact on the experience of crime. Priorities for proactive monitoring need to take into account the safety of vulnerable groups and those at greatest risk such as taxi drivers. These issues will be considered in developing the CCTV Service.

Public Health:

6. CCTV supports the identification and support of vulnerable individuals often with alcohol and drug dependencies. In addition CCTV can help to reduce fear of crime which in turn can reduce social isolation amongst vulnerable groups, thereby impacting positively upon their health and wellbeing.

Community Safety:

7. As set out under legal implications and risk implications, significant changes to the CCTV Service may impact on the Council's, and partners, ability to deter, detect and reduce crime and disorder, anti social behaviour and environmental crime. This in turn impacts on public confidence and fear of crime. With this in mind, the proposals set out in this paper identify how the CCTV Service will be developed to add value and continue the existing service provision where it is needed most and look to ways to provide sustainability in the most cost effective way.

Sustainability:

8. Sustainability relies upon improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of our area and the people who live in the area. Being safe and feeling safe in an area supports the economic, social and environmental aspirations for Central Bedfordshire. CCTV as part of the wider community safety resources available to our area means that at a very practical level we are putting measures in place to make communities sustainable.

Procurement:

9. Collaborative working on developing longer term options for CCTV will involve looking at several options, and following further investigation into operational feasibility and affordability an appropriate procurement route will be selected to demonstrate value for money through a competition.

Overview and Scrutiny:

10. This matter was considered by Overview and Scrutiny on 13 December 2012.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. agree and adopt the CCTV Plan for Central Bedfordshire; and**
- 2. delegate authority to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services, to implement the actions set out in the CCTV Plan.**

<i>Reason for Recommendations:</i>	<i>So that the Council can develop the CCTV Service to add value, provide CCTV where it is needed most and look to ways to provide sustainability in the most cost effective way.</i>
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Executive Summary

11. The Executive is being asked to agree and adopt the CCTV Plan 2013-2017 for Central Bedfordshire.

Background

12. The Council CCTV Service comprises of 93 cameras located in Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Leighton Buzzard, Biggleswade and Sandy. The service makes a significant contribution to community safety and crime prevention as a tool that helps to detect crime and disorder whilst providing a level of reassurance to individuals, communities and businesses where CCTV is located.
13. To support the continued development of the service, whilst ensuring value for money and efficiency, the Council needs to provide clarity, to residents and key stakeholders, as to how we intend to do this in the medium term.
14. The proposed CCTV Plan 2013 to 2017 (Appendix A) sets out the Councils intentions for the management and development of CCTV from April 2013 until March 2017.

Intelligence Led CCTV and Redeployable Cameras

15. To ensure that CCTV provides an effective service in Central Bedfordshire we need to provide CCTV, within the existing infrastructure, where it will give the best community safety outcomes.
16. A review of the current CCTV infrastructure will be carried out to assess the existing provision and identify changes that will make the service more effective and better value for money. This will include a feasibility survey to rationalise the service by moving the operation of 8 Council owned cameras in Biggleswade and Sandy from Stevenage to the Councils' CCTV Control Room in Dunstable.

17. The proposed CCTV Plan sets out how the review will be used to make changes to the existing service, including working with Town Councils who already own their own CCTV cameras.
18. The Council also owns four redeployable CCTV cameras. These cameras are used on an intelligence led basis. This may be for specific cases or for wider community safety issues in an area not already covered by static CCTV Cameras. The plan sets out how these cameras will be used.

Technology, New Public Space CCTV and Performance Management

19. CCTV technology continues to advance, offering more alternatives for how we provide CCTV. This gives the Council the opportunity to explore new or alternative ways of operating the service with potentially reduced costs.
20. The growth agenda in Central Bedfordshire may lead to an increase in demand for public space CCTV in some areas. Where this happens it is essential that new technology is used effectively and that CCTV is installed where there is a clearly evidenced need. To do otherwise runs the risk of having CCTV cameras that do not provide outcomes to support the investment in the camera.
21. The number of CCTV cameras in a given area is not an indication of an effective service, as such it is important that we show how CCTV supports our communities. The Council needs to be open and transparent about the performance of the service by publicising information and data to show how the service is performing and the impact that it has. The plan sets out how we will address these issues.

Collaboration

22. During the last 12 months, meetings have taken place with key providers and neighbouring local authorities to consider longer term options for CCTV including Public Private Partnerships. This approach has been taken in other areas where a CCTV service provider has invested in and taken over delivery of the service in partnership with the local authority.
23. These meetings provided the opportunity for further scoping discussions on joint procurement and other options that may provide efficiency savings and longer term sustainable options for CCTV. Options discussed included:
 - i. Maintain separate control rooms but look to undertake joint procurement on CCTV service contracts e.g. maintenance
 - ii. Merge CCTV Services undertaking joint procurement
 - iii. Merge CCTV Services as a Public Private Partnership
 - iv. Merge CCTV Services and fully outsource to private sector.
24. Further work is needed to identify suitable options for Central Bedfordshire, and the CCTV Plan sets out our intent to take a collaborative approach and add value for money.

Conclusion

25. CCTV in Central Bedfordshire makes a significant contribution to community safety in Central Bedfordshire. Adopting the proposed CCTV Plan 2013 to 2017 will set out the Councils approach for CCTV in the medium term, giving clarity to residents and key stakeholders alike.

Appendices:

Appendix A – CCTV Plan 2013- 2017

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

N/A



Appendix A

**CCTV Plan
2013 - 2017**

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Foreword

CCTV has become a familiar feature of modern life and is commonplace in both public spaces and those privately owned areas to which the public has ready access. It can be seen in operation daily in our high streets, on public transport, at stations and airports, and in banks and shops.

Images from CCTV are frequently seen in our own homes, via television, in appeals for information on serious crimes, or when reporting on major incidents, and whilst CCTV images are perhaps most commonly associated with the police, the majority of publicly owned, public place CCTV systems are local authority systems.

CCTV in Central Bedfordshire continues to make a significant contribution to reducing crime and anti social behaviour in our communities, and this plan sets out how it will continue to do so in an ever challenging financial and legislative framework.

Councillor Brian Spurr.
Executive Member Sustainable Communities - Services

Introduction

CCTV makes a significant contribution to community safety and crime prevention as a tool that helps to detect crime and disorder whilst providing a level of reassurance to individuals, communities and businesses where CCTV is located.

CCTV is used to identify trouble, enabling the police to be directed quickly to where they are needed. CCTV images can be of significant evidential and forensic value in criminal investigations and as evidence used in court.

Requests from members of the public for CCTV information about road traffic collisions have increased, as has the use of CCTV to identify potential hazards or accidents. CCTV continues to support the tracking of vulnerable members of the community (such as missing persons) and alerting emergency services to someone requiring assistance.

CCTV is also increasingly used in a very wide range of institutions and businesses (some public and some private) e.g. libraries, bus stations and retail parks, often being used for a wide variety of security and safety reasons.

National Perspective

In its most recent consultation on Codes of Practice relating to Surveillance Cameras the Government has set out its commitment to ensuring that the tools and technology that contribute to public security, the prevention and detection of crime, and that serve to reassure the public, remain fully available for these purposes.

The Government has introduced provisions in the Protection of Freedoms Bill providing for a new regulatory framework for surveillance cameras, giving effect to the Coalition Agreement commitment to further regulate Closed Circuit Television (CCTV). The Governments approach also encompasses other types of camera surveillance – in particular Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology given its many similarities to CCTV – providing scope to deal with other emerging technologies as necessary.

The Government does not intend that anything in their proposals should hamper the ability of the law enforcement agencies or any other organisation, to use such technology as necessary to prevent or detect crime, or otherwise help to ensure the safety and security of individuals.

The Governments approach to establishing a new regulatory framework is therefore intended to provide a means through which public confidence in CCTV, ANPR, and other such systems, is improved by ensuring that there is proper transparency and proportionality in their use.

Statutory Duties

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to consider the crime and disorder implications of all their policies and practices. Local authorities need to consider the implications of Section 17 on their decision making process and ensure that it is a routine consideration in all decisions.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 also gave local authorities in England and Wales the responsibility to formulate and implement a strategy to reduce crime and disorder in their area. A key part of many of these strategies has been the installation and/or up grading of CCTV systems.

The CCTV Service in Central Bedfordshire supports the Council and its partners in addressing the community safety priorities for Central Bedfordshire which include reducing anti social behaviour and reducing re-offending. The CCTV Service also supports the Council priority to enhance local communities by reducing crime and anti social behaviour.

Public Space CCTV in Central Bedfordshire

A significant part of the public space CCTV provision in Central Bedfordshire is owned and managed by Central Bedfordshire Council, operating 7 days a week throughout the year.

The Council service comprises of 93 cameras located in Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Leighton Buzzard, Biggleswade and Sandy

Key elements of the CCTV Service work include:

- Pro-active monitoring of cameras to prevent and detect crime and disorder including environmental crime
- Provide evidence for criminal prosecutions
- Provide support for businesses through the provision of Radiolink
- Provide traffic reports for Traffic Link
- Work in partnership with Bedfordshire Police by supporting specific operational requirements
- Provide advice and guidance with regard to CCTV to the public and partners
- Provision of monitoring services for commercial organisations

The service is funded by Central Bedfordshire Council with some income generated through monitoring of commercial premises including retail business parks and Town Centre Shopping Precincts.

In addition to the CCTV provided by the Council, Town Councils in Ampthill, Biggleswade, Sandy and Shefford provide CCTV in their towns and Caddington Parish Council in Caddington Village.

Challenges

The key challenge facing the CCTV Service is to continue delivering an effective and efficient service in a climate of austerity. The service has already reduced its operating costs by £95K in 2011/12 and will need to continue to look for opportunities to deliver its services in the most cost effective way.

It is clear, from both a financial and legislative perspective, that the service faces a number of challenges. These include:

- The continuing need to make the service more efficient
- Identifying opportunities to generate income
- The need to continue to maintain and update the system and its technology to meet evidential standards required for criminal prosecutions
- Implementing changes from new regulatory frameworks at a national level
- The impact of further restructuring of policing resources
- Managing the needs of the rural and urban areas in Central Bedfordshire
- Public perception of CCTV and its impact on local communities

Our overall aim

We will use CCTV to reduce crime and anti social behaviour affecting residents, visitors and businesses bringing reassurance that Central Bedfordshire continues to be a safe place to live and work.

Intelligence Led CCTV Provision

Public space CCTV in Central Bedfordshire uses static cameras, which, once installed, usually remain in the same location. In addition, the Council has four re-deployable CCTV cameras that, subject to feasibility, can be moved to different locations.

To ensure that CCTV is operating effectively, targeting the areas in Central Bedfordshire where there is most need the Council will:

- Complete a review of incident demand for crime and disorder across the area.
- Map incident demand against the Councils existing static CCTV camera locations to ensure these locations provide optimum benefit
- Review all existing pre-sets on cameras to ensure that the camera is providing optimal coverage

For CCTV cameras in areas where there is low incident demand the Council will:

- work with the Town or Parish Council in the areas where the cameras are located to look at alternative options, including the possibility of the transfer of ownership and costs of the cameras to Town and Parish Councils.
- Where this is not an option, re-locate static cameras to areas where there is greater incident demand and where the existing CCTV infra-structure supports re-location at minimal cost.
- If full relocation is not an option the camera heads, dependent upon suitability, will be used to replace older camera heads in other locations.

Redeployable CCTV Cameras:

To enable the Council to provide a more flexible and responsive service it will use its re-deployable cameras to provide CCTV coverage in areas where there is no CCTV. In most cases the need for re-deployable CCTV cameras is short-term (4-12 weeks) to assist in gathering evidence for specific criminal activity, disorder and anti social behaviour.

- The deployment of Council owned redeployable CCTV cameras will take an evidence led approach. This will ensure that cameras are placed where they will have the most impact on crime and disorder.
- The deployment of cameras will comply with CCTV legislation, and the Council will develop procedures setting out the criteria for use of these cameras in Central Bedfordshire.
- Where partner organisations wish to purchase re-deployable cameras for their own use the Council will provide advice and guidance.

Technology:

CCTV technology continues to develop, providing opportunities to make systems more cost effective.

- The Council will work with existing CCTV service providers to seek alternative technological options networks that may reduce service operating costs e.g. converting traditional fibre optic connections to wireless
- The Council will look at how new technology may be used to add value to the CCTV Service provided. This will include looking at the

use of Automated Number Plate Recognition already being used by the Council for parking enforcement.

Installation of new Public Space CCTV

Central Bedfordshire will see significant growth over the coming years. By 2026 it is anticipated that 27,000 new jobs will be generated, and 26,000 new homes will have been built and there will have been infrastructure improvements to town centres, community facilities, roads and countryside.

Whilst the design of public space areas will ensure that the risk of crime and disorder is minimal, it is likely that there will be additional demand for CCTV provision.

- The Council will work closely with key partners to ensure that the installation of any new CCTV provision is based on identified and predicted need in a given area and that CCTV is only installed where there is clear and supported evidence to do so.

Performance Management

The value of a CCTV system cannot simply be measured on the number of cameras in any given area. CCTV Operators actively monitor live incidents in real time, report incidents to the police, support the police in tracking and identifying offenders in addition to providing evidence for investigation of incidents that often lead to prosecution. The CCTV Service also receives numerous requests from members of the public and businesses requesting information.

- The Council will review existing CCTV Key Performance Indicators with an up-dated set made available to the public and partners via the Council website.

Collaboration

Both of Central Bedfordshire's' neighbouring local authorities operate public space surveillance systems. This provides the opportunity to work collaboratively with these, and other local authorities, to identify potential economies of scale by working together.

In addition to working with other local authorities, national CCTV providers have introduced new areas to their business whereby they work in partnership with local authorities to provide an outsourced or managed services.

- The Council will, where appropriate, work with other local authorities and interested parties to identify opportunities for reducing costs (For example joint procurement of service contracts) and making the CCTV Service more efficient and sustainable

Review

The CCTV Plan 2013-2017 will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that service developments are reflected within the Plan.

Summary of actions

Action	Activity	Timescale	Action Owner
Intelligence Led CCTV Provision	Review incident demand for crime and disorder across the area	April 2013	Community Safety Operations Manager
	Map incident demand against the Councils existing CCTV camera provide optimum benefit	April 2013	
	Review all CCTV camera pre-sets to ensure optimal coverage	April 2013	
Redeployable CCTV Cameras	Produce procedures setting out criteria for use of redeployable CCTV cameras	May 2013	Community Safety Operations Manager
Technology	Work with existing CCTV Providers to seek alternative technological options	On going activity (2013 to 2017)	Community Safety Operations Manager
	Identify new technology to add value to the CCTV service		
Installation of New Public Space CCTV	Work with partners to ensure that the installation of new CCTV provision is based upon identified and predicted need.	On going activity (2013 to 2017)	Head of Community Safety
Performance Management	The Council will review existing CCTV Key Performance Indicators with an up-dated set made available to the public and partners via the Council website	June 2013	Community Safety Operations Manager
Collaboration	Work, where appropriate, with	On going activity (2013 to 2017)	Head of Community Safety

	other local authorities and interested parties to identify opportunities for reducing costs		
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Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: Leisure Facilities Strategy Adoption
Report of: Cllr Brian Spurr Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services
Summary: To adopt the Leisure Facilities Strategy.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Jill Dickinson, Head of Leisure Services
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 Leisure Facilities Strategy will 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.
 - Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries.
 - Value for money – freezing council tax.

The Leisure Facilities Strategy will support the target to ensure the number of adults in Central Bedfordshire taking part in sport and physical activity remains above the national average.

Financial:

2. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will be used to guide investment priorities including Central Bedfordshire Council's capital investment. The capital programme, approved at Council on 23 February 2012 includes funds for Leisure Strategy Implementation and together with Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre sports hall extension totalled £8m over 4 years from 2012/13 to 2015/16.

3. The additional costs to the Council's capital programme resulting from the Leisure Facilities Strategy are set out in paragraph 39 below. In a separate Leisure Capital Programme report to Executive on 8 January, Executive is being asked to recommend that the capital programme to be considered by Executive on 5 February 2013 reflects the funding required for the schemes listed, with Phase 2 of Flitwick Leisure Centre as a reserve scheme. These costs include the Leisure Facilities Strategy requirements not currently provided for at the Council's leisure centres, for example additional sports halls and other facilities which may be developed by other stakeholders such as schools. It is proposed to develop criteria where the CBC capital programme could be used to support the development of these facilities. Underlying principles for that criteria will comprise;
- Evidence of need for that Facilities in the Leisure Facilities Strategy
 - Evidence of external partnership funding and/or invest to save opportunities for CBC
 - Scheme provides public access and increases capacity.
4. In order to secure appropriate new on-site facilities and off-site developer contributions in association with new development, an approach to setting planning standards to be adopted ultimately as Supplementary Planning Guidance will be developed. This work will be undertaken in 2013 and will involve producing a detailed fully costed action plan to identify all new or improved facilities required in the Leisure Facilities Strategy as determined by the audit and assessment and issues and options process. It will aggregate the total cost of delivering the action plan facilities across the planned development so that new development, where viable, makes a commensurate contribution, through Section 106 agreements under planning legislation in the short term. In the longer term there is the potential for the costings to be included in CBC's Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule.

Legal:

5. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality. This is dealt with in detail in the Equalities section of Corporate Implications.

Risk Management:

6. The following risks have been identified, which are considered in more detail below:
- Failure to deliver the Council's priorities
 - Reputational risks
 - Risk to customer satisfaction.
7. Development of the Leisure Facilities Strategy forms part of the Council's Medium Term Plan "Delivering your Priorities-Our Plan for Central Bedfordshire 2012-2016".

8. The production of a Leisure Strategy conforms to guidance provided by Sport England that strategic planning for sport is essential in delivering appropriate facilities in the right location. The Leisure Facilities Strategy provides defensible planning guidance for sport, including an improved evidence base for the identification of the level of developer contributions required to meet the Council's strategic objectives for sport.
9. Other risks, such as failure to discharge statutory responsibilities, failure of partnership working, procurement, environmental and financial risks could also be incurred during the implementation of the strategy. The strategy serves to minimise these risks by setting an agreed framework for development.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

10. Implementation of the Leisure Facilities Strategy will require appropriate staffing resources to ensure the Council has the capability and capacity to deliver capital investment proposals.

Equalities/Human Rights:

11. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and 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.
12. The improvements to the leisure facilities aim to enhance customer experience and promote equality of opportunity, and make sport and physical activity a regular part of life for all.

Public Health:

13. Leisure facilities are a key community health resource. The Leisure Facilities Strategy aims to ensure there is a sustainable and high quality sport and physical activity infrastructure for local communities to engage in regular physical activity to help prevent ill health, generate long term improvements in overall levels of health and wellbeing and thereby reducing the costs to society for the NHS and social care.

Community Safety:

14. Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act the Council has a statutory duty to do all that is reasonable to prevent crime and disorder with its areas. Leisure facilities and the activities that they offer provide positive opportunities, particularly to young people, who may otherwise engage in activities that may be considered anti-social.

Sustainability:

15. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will seek to extend and improve facilities so that our customers participate in sport and physical activity through a network of good quality accessible and readily available public sport and recreation facilities, reducing the need for customers to travel to other local authority areas to participate in these activities.

16. Leisure Centres are significant contributors to the Council's carbon footprint (12%) and improving energy consumption/efficiency (which also has benefits in terms of running costs) will be an important consideration as part any key emerging preferred options.

Procurement:

17. Procurement of consultants to support CBC in developing all chapters of the Leisure Strategy was undertaken via a Sport England framework compliant with CBC procurement rules.
18. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will guide the Council's leisure facilities investment decisions, and any future Executive approval for capital investment in leisure facilities will be followed by a procurement process to identify appropriate professional project management support.

Overview and Scrutiny:

19. The Leisure Facilities Strategy was considered by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 December 2012. The Committee agreed that the following recommendations be provided to the Executive to be considered prior to consideration of the emerging preferred options and the emerging capital investment priorities:-
- i. That the Committee feels the process of the review has been comprehensive to date.
 - ii. That the Committee is unable to comment in a meaningful way on the emerging preferred options for inclusion in the Strategy due to the lack of full financial information.
 - iii. That progress in relation to the development of the Leisure Facility Strategy has been slow to date.
 - iv. That the Committee urges the Executive to consider reopening Houghton Regis Swimming Pool with immediate effect with due consideration to financial implications.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Executive is recommended to:

1. **adopt Appendix A as the Council's Leisure Facilities Strategy;**
2. **in response to Overview and Scrutiny;**
 - i. **welcome the Committee's comment as to the comprehensive nature of the review;**
 - ii. **invite the Committee to review the more detailed financial information regarding the leisure capital programme when it considers the overall capital programme proposals at its meeting on 17 January 2013;**
 - iii. **note that development of the Leisure Strategy is progressing in accordance with the agreed timetable; and**

- iv. that consideration will be given to reopening Houghton Regis swimming pool once the outcome of the new Leisure Management Contract tendering process is complete where the revenue impact of doing so will be a priced option.**

BACKGROUND

20. Development of the Leisure Strategy forms part of “Delivering your Priorities-Our Plan for Central Bedfordshire 2012-2016” to make sure that we are able to keep Central Bedfordshire as a great place to live and work. The strategic purpose of the four chapters comprising the Leisure Strategy is to provide a framework for the prioritisation, provision and development of sport and recreation facilities and opportunities in Central Bedfordshire. By highlighting needs and opportunities for improvement, it will set the context for decisions about the priority and delivery of local provision up to 2031 to increase take up in sport and physical activity recreation supporting active lifestyles and improving public health.
21. The key drivers supporting the development of a Leisure Strategy for Central Bedfordshire are:
- i. To create a robust evidence base on which to base planning policy/standards.
 - ii. To secure appropriate leisure facilities & Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions to accompany new development.
 - iii. To inform Central Bedfordshire Council’s capital expenditure on new/improved facilities within its ownership.
 - iv. To support Central Bedfordshire Council’s responsibility for public health from 2013 by ensuring sustainable, high quality sport and physical activity infrastructure and opportunities are provided to enable CB residents to live active lives, prevent ill health, improve overall health & wellbeing, and reduce care costs.
 - v. To ensure the number of adults taking part in sport and physical activity remains above the national average.
22. The scope for the Leisure Strategy is broad and its implementation is phased.
- i. Chapter 1 Leisure Facilities (indoor sport and leisure centres, comprising a range of sport and leisure activities) commenced in January 2012. The need for subsequent research on facilities in community and village halls has been identified and commissioned to be reflected in a final Supplementary Planning document and will be used to inform the development of Chapter 3.
 - ii. Chapter 2 – Recreation and Open Space (a defined range of green spaces, providing formal and informal recreational activity facilities and opportunities) commenced in July 2012 and will be completed by June 2013.

- iii. Chapter 3 – Playing Pitches (outdoor formal, grass and artificially-surfaced sports playing pitches) commenced in October 2012 and will be completed by June 2013.
 - iv. Chapter 4 – Physical Activity (a defined range of physical activity classes, sports, exercises etc. undertaken indoors and outdoor) commenced in October 2012 and will be completed by May 2013.
23. Each Chapter of the Leisure Strategy has been prepared to provide guidance to assist all parties involved in its delivery. It is intended that Chapters 1 to 3 will be ultimately adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents following adoption of the Council's Development Strategy proposed for early 2014.
24. Until the Development Strategy is adopted, once approved by the Council's Executive as the Council's Leisure Facilities Strategy, it will attract some weight in decisions reached on planning applications. Chapter 4: Physical Activity Strategy will not be developed into a Supplementary Planning Document, but will provide a strategic approach to physical activity together with a detailed programme of activities.

METHODOLOGY

25. The development stages for all Chapters within the Leisure Strategy follow the same recommended methodology from Sport England and include;
26. **Audit & Assessment** - Stage 1 comprises an audit and assessment which gathers evidence using the relevant methodology and research tools for each chapter. Facilities inspections and stakeholder feedback is then combined with the audit evidence to detail both the current and future provision required to meet the sport and recreation needs of Central Bedfordshire residents now and to 2031. For the Leisure Facilities Strategy early consultation with Members and wider stakeholders in May 2012 considered initial findings.
27. **Issues & Options Report** - Stage 2 is the Issues and Options Report which presents the key findings arising from the audit and assessment of each chapter and highlights the main issues affecting provision now and in the future. These key issues are presented for consultation with a range of options to address the issues. For the Leisure Facilities Strategy consultation with Members on 8 November 2012 was followed by wider stakeholders on 19 and 21 November 2012 and with Overview and Scrutiny on 13 December 2012. The consultation has validated the audit and assessment and gained broad consensus on the key findings and issues and options.
28. **Leisure Facilities Strategy** - At stage 3, the preferred options are identified and developed into policies on provision standards and future requirements which form the final strategy.

29. **Action Plan.** Stage 4. As set out in paragraph 4 of the financial implications, once the Leisure Facilities Strategy has been approved, a detailed and fully costed action plan will be developed in 2013. This will be required to define the strategy's requirements for appropriate new on-site facilities, and to adopt an approach to the calculation of CIL and S106 developer contributions required in association with new development.
30. **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Adoption** – At stage 5 the strategy and action plans for Chapters 1 to 3 will undergo the formal consultation required for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and will be recommended for adoption by the Council as SPD's.
31. **Consultation**
- A Communications Plan for each of the Leisure Strategy chapters defines the opportunities when a variety of stakeholders would be updated and consulted on the progress of each strategy. The list below highlights the major consultation opportunities for Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy. At each stage consultation responses have been incorporated in the development of this chapter and details of these can be found in the statement of community involvement.
32. i. Mar-Jul 2012 – Site consultation with Facilities owners/operators
- ii. May 2012 - Central Bedfordshire Council Member Initial Consultation
- iii. May 2012 – Stakeholder Initial Consultation Events
- iv. Nov 2012 – Audit & Assessment Report and Issues & Options Report
- a. on-line consultation
- b. CBC Member consultation
- c. Stakeholder consultation events
- v. Summer 2013 - Supplementary Planning Document formal consultation.

LEISURE FACILITIES STRATEGY KEY FINDINGS FROM AUDIT AND ASSESSMENT

33. The main themes can be summarised as follows;
- i. There is a low supply of facilities in Central Bedfordshire. This relates to swimming pools, sports halls, squash courts, indoor bowls, indoor tennis and health and fitness equipment.
- ii. Facilities are well located to serve the needs of local residents
- iii. Overall demand for these facilities is met because residents also use facilities in neighbouring authority areas.
- iv. The leisure Facilities stock is aging with the need to invest to prevent a decline in use.

- v. Facilities are at capacity and in some cases operate above the threshold for comfortable use at peak times. Additional capacity is required to reduce pressure on these facilities.
- vi. Rationalisation of the existing stock with newly built facilities in new locations within the growth area of Leighton Linlade and Houghton Regis would not serve those growing populations any better than the existing facilities locations do and may disadvantage existing users.

LEISURE FACILITIES STRATEGY KEY THEMES

34. Leisure Facilities Strategy Key themes include;
35. (a) Planning for leisure facilities requirements by geographical areas known as Place Making areas to increase capacity of provision including;
 - i. Priorities for refurbishment
 - ii. Priorities for new facilities
 - iii. Improving public access to new and existing leisure facilities at other facilities
 - iv. Facilitating National Governing bodies sporting aspirations on Facilities provision.
36. The Leisure Facilities Strategy sets out strategic and general priorities. The strategic priorities are as follows:
 - West area: New Leisure Centre at Flitwick comprising 8 lane 25m pool and 4 court sports halls and a range of other sports facilities.
 - Leighton Linsalde/Rural South: Refurbishment of Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre. New sports hall in the growth area.
 - Dunstable/Houghton Regis: Refurbishment of Dunstable Leisure Centre. Consider reopening Houghton Regis swimming pool at existing centre for short term provision. Longer term, in the context of Houghton Regis North development, New Houghton Regis Leisure Centre comprising 6 lane 25m pool and 6 court sports hall and a range of other sports facilities.
 - East: Refurbishment of Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre. New sports hall at Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre, and a new sports hall at Eatonbury School, Arlesey.

LEISURE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

37. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will guide the Council's Leisure Capital Programme which is the subject of a separate report being considered by Executive on 8 January 2013. Each Chapter of the Leisure Strategy has been prepared to provide guidance to assist all parties involved in its delivery, and is not restricted to delivery by CBC alone.

38. The additional costs to the Council's capital programme resulting from the Leisure Facilities Strategy are set out in paragraph 39 below. The delivery of Flitwick Leisure Centre is phased. Phase 1 commences in 2013 which involves relocating football pitches. Phase 2 is re building Flitwick Leisure Centre to commence in 2014. In a separate Leisure Capital Programme report to Executive on 8 January, Executive is being asked to recommend that the capital programme to be considered by Executive on 5 February 2013 will reflect the funding required for the schemes listed, with Phase 2 of Flitwick Leisure Centre as a reserve scheme.

39.

Table 1						
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total £
	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's
Approved budget November 2012	1,000	3,050	2,000	2,000	0	8,050
Amounts approved October 2012	1040	1,446	0	0	0	2,486
Budget remaining	0	1,564	2,000	2,000	0	5,564
Requirements						
1 Leisure Strategy Development of Chapters 2, 3 and 4	0	30	0	0	0	30
2 Sandy Athletics Track and Leisure Centre	0	150	0	0	0	150
3 Houghton Regis Leisure Centre potential reopening Swimming Pool	0	150	0	0	0	150
4 Refurbish Dunstable Leisure Centre	0	0	0	2,300	0	2,300
5 Development with stakeholders	0	500	500	500	500	2,000
6 Flitwick Leisure Centre - Phase 1 - Football pitches		500	700			1,200
total	0	1,330	1,200	2,800	500	5,830
Variance		-234	-800	800	500	266

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

40. The Leisure Strategy was subject of a report to Overview and Scrutiny on 13 December 2012. The Committee agreed that the following recommendations be provided to the Executive to be considered prior to consideration of the emerging preferred options and the emerging capital investment priorities:-

41. i. That the Committee feels the process of the review has been comprehensive to date.
42. ii. That the Committee is unable to comment in a meaningful way on the emerging preferred options for inclusion in the Strategy due to the lack of full financial information.

43. iii. That progress in relation to the development of the Leisure Facilities Strategy has been slow to date.
44. iv. That the Committee urges the Executive to consider reopening Houghton Regis Swimming Pool with immediate effect with due consideration to financial implications.
45. In response to the Committee's recommendations in paragraph 41, Executive is asked to welcome the Committee's comment. Paragraphs 26 -32 of this report outline the robust methodology followed when developing this strategy, which is endorsed by Sport England.
46. In response to the recommendation in paragraph 42 the financial implication of the Leisure Facilities Strategy to Central Bedfordshire Council is set out in paragraphs 37-39 of this report which is included in the capital programme Overview and Scrutiny Committee may review when it considers the overall capital programme proposals at it's meeting on 17 January 2013.
- 47 In response to the recommendation in paragraph 43, the development of the Leisure Strategy is progressing in accordance with its agreed timetable. The scope and phasing of the Strategy is set out in paragraph 22 of this report.
- 48 In response to the recommendation in paragraph 44, procurement of a new leisure management contract for Flitwick Leisure Centre, Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre, Sandy Sports and Community Centre and Houghton Regis Leisure Centre contract will be carried out in 2013. Consideration will be given to reopening Houghton Regis swimming pool once the outcome of the new Leisure Management Contract tendering process is complete where the revenue impact of doing so will be a priced option.

CONCLUSION

49. The Leisure Facilities Strategy delivers a number of the Council's key priorities. When adopted as a Supplementary Planning document, the Council will be able to use it as robust evidence for development management purposes. It will also direct Council investment, and facilitate and enable stakeholders to encourage community access to sports facilities across Central Bedfordshire.

Appendices:

Appendix A – **Leisure Facilities Strategy**

Background papers and their location: (open to public inspection)

Audit and Assessment at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Issues and Options at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

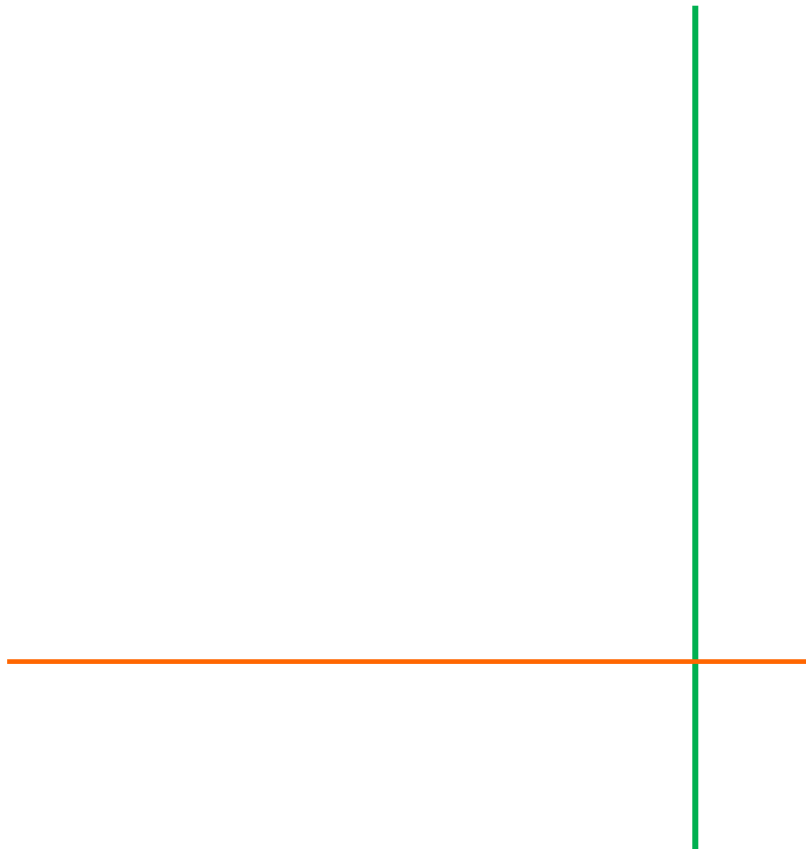
Statement of community involvement. www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Central Bedfordshire Leisure Strategy

Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy

January 2013



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mix of urban and rural settlements within Central Bedfordshire, and the historical differences in approach to leisure provision favoured by the former local authorities has resulted in a diversity of leisure provision. In broad terms the leisure facilities and services provided in both the north and south Central Bedfordshire areas are similar, however, with closer examination the differences in quality, quantity and accessibility of individual services becomes clear.

Central Bedfordshire Council Executive Committee has sought the creation of a leisure strategy in order to adopt an holistic approach to the provision of sport, leisure and recreation facilities across the Council's area. The aim of the project is to assess current facilities and services, estimate future demand and thereby create a strategy which will assist the authority to deliver and facilitate good quality, sustainable, demand-led facilities and services.

The scope of the leisure strategy comprises three facility-based chapters which incorporate a range of indoor, built facilities together with open spaces and outdoor playing pitches, and in the fourth chapter it seeks to marry the facilities currently available, and those identified as being required, with the types of physical activities needed to support Central Bedfordshire's residents in pursuing a health, active lifestyle.

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Leisure Strategy

Central Bedfordshire Council appointed Neil Allen Associates to produce four of the five chapters that will comprise the Leisure Strategy. Chapter 4, the Physical Activity Strategy is being produced in-house. The chapters are:

Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy

Chapter 2: Recreation & Open Space Strategy

Chapter 3: Playing Pitch Strategy

Chapter 4: Physical Activity Strategy

Overarching Leisure Strategy

In accordance with Government policy contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, each chapter of the Leisure Strategy will carry out an assessment of the current provision of identified leisure facilities across Central Bedfordshire in 2012, and estimate the respective leisure requirements which result from the growth in Central Bedfordshire's population up to 2031. The strategies for Chapters 1 to 3 will each be Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) which will detail an approach to facility standards and future facility requirements to be met through the planning process and will form material evidence and policy to inform the Council's emerging Development Strategy.

The purpose of the Leisure Strategy is to support the securing of new and improved facility provision, identify needs and priorities, address inequalities of provision, inform investment strategies of the Council and other bodies, provide a basis for management reviews and ensure that residents of Central Bedfordshire have access to good quality leisure and recreation facilities which enable them to be physically active. The Leisure Strategy does not include an evaluation of Central Bedfordshire Council's capital or management role in the delivery of some of the facilities in this chapter.

Status

Each element of this strategy has been prepared to provide guidance to assist all parties involved in the delivery of the Council's leisure requirements. It is intended that some parts will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents following adoption of the Council's Development Strategy proposed for early 2014. Until then this document as the Council's Leisure Facilities Strategy will attract some weight in decisions reached on planning applications.

Chapters 1 to 3 of the Leisure Strategy is derived from policies in the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire in particular Policy 22 Leisure and Open Space Provision which identifies general requirements for provision.

In addition to the emerging Development Strategy the Leisure Strategy has also had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and has been prepared in line with the methodology set out in the former planning policy guidance note PPG 17 and Sport England good practice guidance.

Chapter 4: Physical Activity Strategy will not be developed into a Supplementary Planning Document, but will provide a strategic approach to physical activity together with a detailed programme of activities.

Leisure Strategy Development

The development stages for all Chapters within the Leisure Strategy are set out below:

Audit & Assessment - Stage 1 of each chapter will comprise an audit and assessment which gathers evidence using the relevant methodology and research tools for each chapter. Facility inspections and stakeholder feedback will then be combined with the audit evidence to detail both the current and future provision required to meet the sport and recreation needs of Central Bedfordshire residents now and to 2031.

Issues & Options Report - Stage 2 is the Issues and Options Report which will present the key findings arising from the audit and assessment of each chapter and highlights the main issues affecting provision now and in the future. These key issues will be presented for consultation with a range of options to address the issues.

Strategy - At stage 3, the preferred options will be identified and developed into policies on provision standards and future facility requirements for approval by the Council's Executive Committee.

This document represents this stage of the process for Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy.

Action Plans – Stage 4 will be the preparation of an action plan to accompany each of Chapters 1 to 3. This will detail the delivery of the facility requirements identified in the strategy. In order to calculate developer contributions to inform the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106, each action plan will be fully costed.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Adoption – At stage 5 the strategy and action plans for Chapters 1 to 3 will undergo the formal consultation required for SPD's and will be adopted by the Council as Supplementary Planning Documents.

Purpose and Scope of the Leisure Strategy

Key Drivers

The strategic purpose of the four chapters comprising the Leisure Strategy is to provide a framework for the prioritisation, provision and development of sport and recreation facilities and opportunities in Central Bedfordshire. By highlighting deficiencies and opportunities for improvement, it will set the context for decisions about the priority and delivery of local provision up to 2031.

The key drivers supporting the development of the Leisure Strategy for Central Bedfordshire are:

- To create a robust evidence base on which to base planning policy/standards
- To identify appropriate locations for new/improved leisure provision to target need
- To secure appropriate leisure facilities & S106/CIL contributions, to accompany new development

- To inform Central Bedfordshire Council's capital expenditure on new/improved facilities within its ownership
- To support Central Bedfordshire Council's responsibility for public health from April 2013 by ensuring sustainable, high quality sport and physical activity infrastructure and opportunities are provided to enable CB residents to live active lives, prevent ill health, improve overall health & wellbeing, and reduce care costs
- To ensure the number of adults taking part in sport and physical activity remains above the national average

Scope

The scope for each chapter of the Leisure Strategy is detailed within the respective Audit and Assessment Reports. The following summaries the scope for each chapter:

Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy – built, indoor sport and leisure facilities

Chapter 2: Recreation and Open Space Strategy – a range of open spaces (excluding sports pitches)

Chapter 3: Playing Pitch Strategy – outdoor sports playing pitches

Chapter 4: Physical Activity Strategy – a range of sports and recreation activities undertaken indoors and outdoors

Planning for Sport and Recreation

National Guidance

In June 2006, the Audit Commission's report; "Public sports and recreation services – making them fit for the future" made a number of criticisms regarding the strategic planning of facilities, resulting in poor provision in terms of location, quality and failure to meet changing needs and customer expectations. The report's recommendations identified a need to ensure that local authorities improved their strategic planning of sport and recreation provision by assessing current and future needs, collaborating with other sectors and working across boundaries in the procurement, planning and delivery of services.

In addition, there was a need for local authorities to appraise options for facility provision in a transparent way, testing the market to ensure that the best options were identified.

As the traditional means of facility funding such as the Lottery and Building Schools for the Future (BSF) diminished, new investment was occurring via Section 106 developer contributions, the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and more recently the Community Infrastructure Levy; in order to maximise potential benefits of such investment Local Authorities required a clear strategic vision and direction.

The advent of a new planning system required Local Authorities to prepare Local Development Frameworks, and lessons learnt from early examinations of these suggested that a comprehensive needs and evidence base was necessary to ensure that future requirements were planned for accurately.

This approach is reinforced in the current Government planning policy set out in the new National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to protect the environment and promotes sustainable growth. Each council is required to prepare a Development Strategy which will be the main planning document for its local authority area, and sets out the overarching spatial strategy and development principles, together with more detailed policies to help determine planning applications. It also requires that supplementary strategies produced to

support the Development Strategy should comprise, or lead to, defensible planning guidance for sport, including an improved evidence base for the identification of the level of developer contributions required to meet the Council's strategic objectives for sport.

Sport England Guidance

Strategy production also conforms to guidance provided by Sport England that strategic planning for sport is essential in delivering appropriate facilities in the right location. In particular, this work is supported by Sport England through its Local Delivery Programme, and benefits from the lessons learned as the result of its Facilities Improvement Service. This assisted local authorities to improve the ways in which they plan for sport and recreation, enabling them to use key strategic planning tools such as Active Places Power which will allow authorities to develop a robust understanding and assessment of need which will then underpin local authorities planning for sport.

Local Policy

At a local level, Central Bedfordshire Council is a relatively new unitary authority formed in April 2009 which inherited a range of legacy policies from its predecessor authorities. In order to adopt a consistent approach to sports facility provision and provide a robust evidence base for its emerging Development Strategy, the Council identified the need for a comprehensive evaluation of leisure provision.

Health Agenda

There is increasing recognition that raising levels of physical activity provides a clear route to improving public health outcomes. The Department of Health has produced a number of reports and initiatives, 'Be Active, Be Healthy', 'Stay Active, Stay Healthy' and 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People' which identify and promote the link between activity and health improvements. When it assumes its responsibility for public health in April 2013 Central Bedfordshire Council will seek to assess activity needs and opportunities, and by working in partnership with a number of organisations, coordinate the delivery of a range of physical activity programmes. Chapter 4 of the Leisure Strategy, the Physical Activity Strategy, will detail the current national and local policies relating to healthy improvements, create a strategic and practical link between current and future activity opportunities, and enable Central Bedfordshire residents to access facilities and services which allow them to lead more active lives.

PART 2: CHAPTER 1: LEISURE FACILITIES STRATEGY

This document comprises Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy and applies to indoor, built sports facilities.

Scope

The scope of Chapter 1: the Leisure Facilities Strategy encompasses all built sports facilities which are available to the wider community, including sports halls, swimming pools, health and fitness centres, indoor bowls and tennis, and squash courts. Specialist sports facilities which cater for regional or national level sport are outside the scope of this report, but Central Bedfordshire's role in facilitating such facilities is considered where they can be accommodated within the other proposals in this report.

To capture the sport and recreation facilities and opportunities offered in the village and community halls in Central Bedfordshire, a separate study is being carried out concurrently and the results will inform the Chapter 1 Leisure Facilities Strategy.

Methodology

Chapter 1 has been prepared by Neil Allen Associates in close association with officers and members of the Central Bedfordshire Council. Comprehensive use has been made in the initial assessment of the variety of strategic planning tools available from Sport England and these are detailed below. Throughout each stage of the process, a range of consultees, including national and local organisations, governing bodies of sport, leisure operators, contractors, users, sports clubs, town and parish councils and others have been invited to comment on current and future leisure requirements at opportunities set out in the Communications Plan.

The Audit and Assessment Report for built leisure facilities and the key findings detailed in the Issues & Options Report result from a combination of site inspections, detailed desk-based research using Sport England and other planning tools, and consultation with leisure operators and managers, together with initial contact with stakeholders.

Extensive use has been made in the initial stages of Sport England's strategic planning tools for sport, as follows:

- **Active Places Power (APP)** – APP is a database containing information on sports facilities throughout England. It includes local authority leisure facilities, as well as commercial and club sites. It was designed as a tool to assist in investment decisions across Government and to help local authorities carry out audits of their sports provision and develop local strategies. It also helps national governing bodies of sport in identifying and planning where they need to improve and invest in facilities for their participants. The site includes tools for detailed analysis, including thematic maps, reports, advanced queries and strategic planning tools, all of which have been utilised in this study. APP models the current situation and can examine the catchments of existing and potential facilities.

- **Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC)** - the SFC was created by Sport England to help local authorities quantify how much additional demand for the key community sports facilities (swimming pools, sports halls and indoor bowls) is generated by populations of new growth, development and regeneration areas. It is designed to be used to estimate the facility needs of discrete populations, such as sports hall and swimming pool created by a residential development. Its use has several provisos which prevent it being used solely to estimate current and future demand, but it is useful in conjunction with other tools to assess the adequacy of existing provision, and highlight future needs.
- **Facilities Planning Model (FPM)** - the FPM is a computer model which helps to assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities both now and in the future. The model has been developed as a means of assessing requirements for different types of community sports facilities on a local, regional or national scale, helping local authorities determine an adequate level of sports facility provision to meet their local needs and testing 'what if' scenarios in provision and changes in demand. This includes testing the impact of opening, relocating and closing facilities and the impact population changes would have on the needs of the sports facilities. The FPM is the most powerful tool available for estimating future need for facilities of a strategic nature.

Population Forecasting

Population figures used in the strategy were supplied by Central Bedfordshire Council, and other socio economic and demographic data were taken from Sport England's Local Authority profiles.

Vision and Objectives

Vision

The vision for Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy is:

plan and provide a network of high quality, accessible and affordable indoor community sporting and recreation facilities to meet the needs of Central Bedfordshire residents both now and into the future, through the combined efforts of the Council and other providers, and ensure that facilities remain fit for purpose, by refurbishment or replacement, throughout the term of the strategy

Objectives

The specific objectives for Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy area:

- To provide a balanced and consistent approach to the provision of indoor sports for all ages and abilities, which takes into account all needs and demands
- To make appropriate and commensurate provision for the increased demands brought about by new housing development
- To support the health agenda by making facilities for exercise appropriate and accessible to all
- To engage hard to reach groups and those not currently taking part in sport
- To sustain and increase where possible participation in indoor sports

- To ensure the number of adults in Central Bedfordshire taking part in sport and physical activity remains above the national average
- To enable a range of sports activities to flourish, including recreational, teaching, coaching, club growth and the development of excellence
- To promote principles of sustainability and good and efficient design
- To guide the investment strategies of Central Bedfordshire Council and other potential providers
- To ensure good management and value for money of Central Bedfordshire Council's facilities
- To ensure that additional facilities for sport contribute toward wider agendas including the economy, social cohesion, and community enjoyment

Consultation and Supplementary Planning Document Adoption

A Communications Plan for each of the Leisure Strategy chapters was prepared which defines the opportunities when a variety of stakeholders would be updated and consulted on the progress of each strategy. The list below highlights the major consultation opportunities for Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy. At each stage consultation responses have been incorporated in the development of this chapter and will be detailed in the statement of community involvement. This chapter also provides a summary of consultation responses in Part 4.

- Mar-Jul 2012 – Site consultation with facility owners/operators
- April 2012 - Central Bedfordshire Council Member Initial Consultation
- April 2012 – Stakeholder Initial Consultation Events
- Nov 2012 – Audit & Assessment Report and Issues & Options Report
 - on-line consultation
 - CBC Member consultation
 - Stakeholder consultation events

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Adoption

In January 2013 the Council's Executive Committee will adopt Chapter 1: the Leisure Facilities Strategy.

- Summer 2013 - Supplementary Planning Document formal consultation

PART 3: CONTEXT

General Context

The Central Bedfordshire-specific contextual information supporting Chapter 1 is detailed in the Audit and Assessment Report. The following summarises the main background data and issues that underpin the strategy.

Population

The main characteristics of the local population at present are:

- Central Bedfordshire is the largest local authority in the East region, with a population of over 255,000 in 2010
- There is a slightly higher proportion of males than average, although females are still in the majority
- There are more people than average in the 16-19 and 35-49 age groups, and fewer people in the 25-34 age group
- There is more than the national average of pensioners (though fewer than the region)
- There are a very small proportion of non-white residents (4% compared with the national average of 11%)
- There are a smaller proportion of disabled people (7% compared with the national average of 11%).

The main changes that are estimated to occur to 2022 are:

- The overall population is expected to increase by about 35,000 people to over 290,000, representing a 14% increase over 2010
- There are projected increases in all age groups in absolute terms but wide variations in percentage increases – large increases in the 10-14, 55-64 and 65+ groups, and smaller increases in the 0-4 and the 15-34 groups (the latter being main sport playing age group)
- The number of people in the 'active' age groups (i.e. mainly 5-44) is estimated to rise by about 8,000 people, but this only represents a 6% increase compared with the 14% increase in the overall population. The number of people in the 'inactive' age groups increases by 21%. It is estimated that by 2022 the number of people within the 'active' population is actually less than those who are 'inactive' (47% active/53% inactive compared with 51/49% in 2010)
- The demographic changes alone suggest that (participation and other changes aside) future sports facility provision broadly needs to increase by 6% by 2022 compared with the present, not the 14% increase estimated for the overall population increase

- Conversely the increase in the 'inactive' population means that there is a need to consider other facilities and activities for the ageing population – there will be an additional 27,000 people over 45 and approximately 15,000 between 45 and 74

Other Socio Economic Indicators

- Unemployment (5.8%) is (2011) below the average rate for the region (6.6%) and England (7.5%)
- Adult obesity is about the average, but childhood obesity is significantly lower (14% compared with 19%)
- Life expectancy is about average (79 for men, 82 for women)
- Central Bedfordshire has a low deprivation score (from the Index of Multiple Deprivation) and is ranked in the best 20% of all local authorities in the country in terms of overall deprivation

Participation in Sport

Data taken from Sport England's latest Active People Survey (2010/11), showing 3 x 30 minutes sessions or more of moderate intensity activity per week, conclude that:

- Broadly similar levels of activity were maintained in Central Bedfordshire between 2005/6 and 2009/11 (22 -22.5%)
- Activity levels in Central Bedfordshire are generally slightly higher than the regional (21.9%) or national average (21.4%)
- Male activity levels (26.9%) are much higher than female (18.1%) and higher than the national average (25.2%)
- Female activity levels are slightly below the national average (18.9%), and have declined slightly since 2005/6

In terms of the other indicators set out in the Active People Surveys, Central Bedfordshire fares as follows:

- Relatively low levels of volunteering, and some decline since 2007/8
- Low and declining sports club membership
- Low and declining amounts of sports coaching and tuition
- Average but declining levels of organised sporting competition
- Average but growing levels of satisfaction with local sports provision

Market Segmentation

As an extension to the Active People Survey findings, Sport England has analysed the data on the adult English population to produce 19 market segments with distinct sporting behaviours and attitudes.

The five main groups in Central Bedfordshire comprise almost 50% of the local population, and these include three segments with high participation rates and some with low rates, demonstrating the varied population of Central Bedfordshire. There are some geographical variations in distribution, and some areas are more characterised by inactive groups – details of the location, type and distribution of market segments are set out in the Audit and Assessment Report.

Planning Policy Context

The Leisure Facilities Strategy must be considered in the context of other national and local policies and programmes. The policies currently in place which have the most relevance to the Leisure Facilities Strategy are as follows:

- National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012
 - The NPPF is a key part of the government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible. The framework acts as guidance for local planning authorities, both in drawing up plans and making decisions about planning applications.
 - Section 70 of the NPPF says "To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:
 - plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
 - guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
 - ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community; and
 - Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services".
- Central Bedfordshire Council Emerging Development Strategy
 - The Development Strategy will be the main planning document for Central Bedfordshire. It will set out the overarching spatial strategy and development principles for the area together with more detailed policies to help determine planning applications. It is anticipated that it will be formally adopted in early 2014.
- Central Bedfordshire Council Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Documents (north) 2009 and (south) 2009
 - The Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) set out the Council's Policy for negotiating and securing planning obligations associated with new development in the North area.
 - The SPD's give guidance on when and how the Council will enter into planning obligations and the type of facilities and other benefits the Council expects developers to provide. It introduces a standard charge which may be applied for new developments.
- Central Bedfordshire Council draft Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule
 - The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), as set out in the Planning Act 2008, is a new system of charging and collecting developer contributions and is intended to supplement other public sector funding streams to ensure that new community

infrastructure (such as schools and health care facilities) can be provided to keep pace with population growth.

- CIL is set locally and will become a standard charge per square metre applied to almost all developments. Social housing, buildings used by charities and buildings into which people do not normally go are exempt. The charge will be imposed at the time planning permission is granted and normally be paid at the commencement of development.
- Whilst CIL will replace Section 106 contributions / Planning Obligations for general types of community infrastructure, Section 106 will still be used for site specific mitigation measures that are required to make a development acceptable (such as a new access road) as well as for affordable housing provision.
- CIL is to be paid according to a Charging Schedule prepared by the Charging Authority. Central Bedfordshire Council is in the process of preparing their CIL. The estimated timetable for this document is:
 - Preparation of Charging Schedule - to Winter 2012
 - Consultation on Preliminary Charging Schedule - January 2013
 - Submission of Draft Charging Schedule – Autumn 2013
 - Examination - Winter 2013
 - Approval - April 2014
- Central Bedfordshire Healthier Communities Strategy 2010-2031
 - The strategy will be delivered by the Central Bedfordshire Health Improvement Delivery Partnership in order to realise a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of local people. The partnership is a multi-agency group whose key activities include the promotion of healthier lifestyles, and the provision of help to support people to lead healthier lives and ensure they have access to the high quality services which will enable them to do so.
- Central Bedfordshire Council Sustainable Communities Strategy 2010-31
 - The strategy was prepared by Central Bedfordshire Together, (Central Bedfordshire Local Strategic Partnership) and is intended to form the basis for all plans and strategies affecting the Council's area. The strategy's vision statement for the area is; "Globally connected, delivering sustainable growth to ensure a green, prosperous and ambitious place for the benefit of all"
 - The strategy comprises two key themes to delivering this vision:
 - creating the condition for economic success and community prosperity
 - raising standards and tackling inequalities
 - There are eight priorities which underpin the key themes:
 - maximising employment opportunities & delivering housing growth to meet the needs of our communities
 - ensuring our local people have the skills to prosper
 - keeping our communities safe
 - nurturing a sense of pride and belonging
 - getting around and caring for a green and clean environment
 - promoting health and reducing health inequalities
 - educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people
 - supporting and caring for an ageing population and those who are most vulnerable
- Sport England Strategy 2012-17 Creating a Sporting Habit for Life

- Strategy and investment to create a sporting legacy by growing participation at grass roots level, particularly among young people

Implications for the Strategy

The context and demographic projections detailed in the preceding sections, and their potential implications for future policy have all been considered in the development of the Leisure Facilities Strategy. These key issues can be summarised as follows:

- Central Bedfordshire has a large population with more people in the young adult and middle aged group, but fewer in the 25-34 group and more than the national average of people over 65. This demographic distribution suggests that a wide range of facilities may be required to accommodate different needs of the differing age groups.
- The current population is mainly white and there are low levels of disability.
- The population over the next few years is likely to increase significantly, but the increase particularly in the 50+ group is likely to mean that the 'active population' will increase only slightly. There will be an increasing need to address the demands of an older population for sport and recreation, particularly in respect of supporting healthy lives.
- There are low levels of unemployment and overall deprivation. Areas of relative deprivation are identified and appropriate provision will be targeted at areas of specific need.
- There are no significant health issues and life expectancy is the national average, but nonetheless the need to encourage active and health lives and combat health issues, through sports provision.
- There are slightly higher than average participation rates in sport, but a significant imbalance between female and male activity rates. A main aim will be to redress this imbalance.
- There are low levels of participation in volunteering, club membership, coaching and training and competition, though levels of satisfaction with sports opportunities are increasing. Future sports development should increase the opportunities to improve these levels.
- The population is mixed in terms of its market segments, with three of the main groups having higher than average activity rates. The main groups with low activity rates in sport are not well represented in Central Bedfordshire. Future participation is likely to remain buoyant, but continued analysis and targeting of facilities and services is needed to address the less active groups.

PART 4: SUMMARY OF AUDIT AND ASSESSMENT

Audit and Assessment

Full details of the audit of built facility provision are set out in the separate Audit and Assessment Report. This provides detailed information on quantity, quality and accessibility of facilities in accordance with the methodologies identified above.

The summary below is set out by facility type. For each facility the baseline 2012 situation is summarised, followed by the 2022 situation which assumes an increase in population but no changes to the current facilities. Using the identified tools from Sport England, 2022 is the latest date for which reliable forecasting is possible.

This is followed by an assessment of future requirements up to 2022 assuming a number of possible facility scenarios tested using the Facilities Planning Model (FPM). The issues identified result from the scenarios which were tested and compared in readiness for the development of the main strategy covering all facility types.

Sports Halls

Overview

In general sports halls in Central Bedfordshire are well located, a high level of demand is met (with the use of halls outside the area), facility quality is variable with many old halls, however, accessibility is good by car although less so on foot. There is a current capacity issue at the main leisure centre sports halls. There is no strong evidence supporting new sports halls, but there is a clear need to increase capacity now and in the future.

Summary of 2012 Situation

- There is no justification for additional sports halls to satisfy the unmet needs of the existing (2012) population in Central Bedfordshire. Supply of halls in CB is below the national average and apparently insufficient to meet locally generated demand, when supply takes into account actual availability and demand reflects comfortable usage of halls without being crowded. Despite this, however, almost all demand from CB residents is met by halls within CB and in surrounding authority areas.
- The main current issue for sports hall provision in Central Bedfordshire is the apparent high use of the 'public' halls at Flitwick, Tiddenfoot, Houghton Regis and Dunstable Leisure Centres, as well as the dual use halls at Biggleswade Recreation Centre and Sandy Sports Centre, which the model estimates are operating well above comfortably full levels. So while there is insufficient demand to justify a new hall to meet unmet demand, consideration should be given to providing additional capacity in the peak period at these or other halls to reduce the pressure on these facilities.
- Biggleswade is the exception to the above as it is the only main town without a 'public' sports hall. The provision of an additional hall here would need to consider the displacement of demand from other facilities, such as Stratton Upper School, Sandy Sports Centre and Shuttleworth College.

- Some increase in capacity could be achieved by additional access to other 'public' sports halls in Central Bedfordshire, mainly the school halls, such as Alameda Middle School, Redborne Upper School, Manshead Upper School and Vandyke Upper School, and those at Cranfield University and Shuttleworth College. The latter two facilities are not well located to accommodate additional use, being in smaller settlements remote from the main population.
- Increasing capacity at the main 'public' halls may be difficult to achieve without major rebuild or significantly increased opening times (which may be impractical).

Summary of 2022 Situation

- Future need for facilities is dependent on any increase in population. The impact of the increased population is however, mitigated by the ageing of the population, who traditionally have lower activity rates. Supply is still relatively low, and on a crude comparison is insufficient to meet locally generated demand within Central Bedfordshire.
- However, a larger than average level of demand is satisfied in 2022 (including at halls outside the area) and what levels of unmet demand exist are still not in sufficient concentrations to justify the provision of any additional halls in Central Bedfordshire to meet this criterion alone. New halls might be built but they would only succeed in displacing demand from other existing halls nearby. One possible exception might be the Biggleswade area, where there are no 'public' halls to serve one of the main towns.
- The main concern by 2022 remains the high usage of sports halls in Central Bedfordshire, nine (of the 20) of which now exceed their comfortable capacity, and in particular the main 'public' halls in the larger towns, but also the dual use centres in Biggleswade and Sandy and the Robert Bloomfield Middle School hall. So while there is insufficient demand to justify a new hall to meet unmet demand, consideration should be given to providing additional capacity in the peak period at these (or other) halls to reduce the pressure on these facilities.
- At the same time, some halls have reduced throughput, presumably as a result of decreased attractiveness, indicating significant refurbishment may be required. As with the 2012 situation, accessing halls with spare capacity could address capacity but facilities may not be best located to absorb additional usage.

Possible Facility Scenarios 2022

- In order to calculate the hall space required to meet the needs of Central Bedfordshire's growing population to 2022, modelling of four future scenarios has been undertaken to test the impact of changes to hall provision and condition to assess the different impact these changes would have on meeting future demand.
- The four scenarios were based around the 'public' halls and modelled new halls, refurbishment of halls, and closure of some facilities. The findings of these scenarios are considered in more detail in the Audit and Assessment, and refined in the Issues and Options report, to identify preferred options used as a basis for the strategy.

Consultation

Extensive consultation was undertaken at two stages of the strategy's preparation to test the initial findings of the Audit and Assessment, and help refine the Issues and Options into preferred options. Full details of the consultation can be found in the statement of community involvement.

Consultation 1

Sports clubs, sports governing bodies and town and parish councils highlighted the following issues at the first consultation stage:

- There are considered insufficient halls for community badminton clubs to be accommodated
- School halls do not meet the need for badminton particularly at exam times
- School facilities could be coordinated to accommodate badminton and other specialist facilities throughout the area
- An 8-court specialist centre for badminton in Bedfordshire could be justified, which could be of economical design and cost
- There is a reasonable justification for a 'public' hall in Biggleswade to meet local need for sports hall activities such as badminton
- Stratton School is very amenable to additional community usage, within the constraints of the existing management structure. There is potential to accommodate specialist facilities for particular sports (e.g. indoor cricket)
- The need for local facilities for local people in smaller communities needs addressing
- The school facilities at Harlington Upper School are acknowledged to be inaccessible because of the nature of the school management

Key Issues

The Audit and Assessment led to the development of a range of issue and options which are set out in more detail in the Issues and Options Report. These form the basis of the preferred options and policies set out in the main strategy below. In summary the key issues are:

- The assessment suggests that although there is relatively low provision, it is difficult to justify any more halls in Central Bedfordshire to meet unmet demand. Evidence shows that the construction of new halls would not achieve a higher proportion of satisfied demand because existing halls are shown to be well located to serve the major settlements and identified growth areas. Equally, improving upon the 8% unmet demand is unlikely to be possible, due to the rural nature of much of Central Bedfordshire.
- Evidence shows that the main 'public' sports halls in Flitwick, Tiddenfoot, Houghton Regis and Dunstable and others are at capacity already and will become more crowded by 2022, and that additional capacity may already be required to meet this concern in 2012.

- Central Bedfordshire relies on hall provision in neighbouring local authority areas to meet much of its demand.
- School sports halls offer an opportunity for community use. Many schools provide good community access to their sports halls, but some do not. There is a need to improve community access to school halls in the evening and at weekends, and possibly a role for management of community time to be coordinated throughout the area.
- There is the need for a range of halls of various sizes and types to allow all different activities to take place, including competitions, and to permit the development of specialist facilities for particular sports. If all secondary schools have a main sports hall which is available for public use, they could be developed with a different specialist facility in order to improve provision across Central Bedfordshire; however, the strategy does not seek to address the needs of specialist sports which are outside the scope of this report.
- The majority of sports halls (mainly those on school sites but also the main 'public' halls) were built over 30 years ago, and only half of these have been refurbished. There has been very little sports hall construction in Central Bedfordshire in the last 30 years. It can be assumed from this data therefore that the sports hall stock overall is not in prime condition, and is unlikely to be fully fit for purpose far into the future.
- In the current financial climate, the best way of funding new halls or hall improvements needs to be considered.
- The additional population in the new housing areas will significantly increase the demand for sports halls in the future, though not to the same extent as the increase in the population due to the ageing of the population. New provision could take place within the new housing areas, or be more centrally located to meet the demand from both new and existing residential areas.

Consultation 2

Sports clubs, sports governing bodies, town and parish councils and individuals highlighted the following issues at the second stage of consultation:

- Some concern about the loss of any sports hall in the Dunstable/Houghton Regis area, because of current usage. Facilities at both centres should be improved and extended over the coming years rather than reduced.
- In the light of people trying to lead healthier lives, which include taking part in various forms of sport, it is imperative that no leisure centres should be closed especially when they are already well supported by the general public. It is somewhere for the young to go instead of staying inactive at home or just 'hanging out' with their friends. There is not much else in the way of entertainment for them and the older people would miss the interaction with others in the same age group.
- A joint leisure centre for Dunstable and Houghton Regis is not supported. Dunstable centre is well located for local people. A joint centre could mean classes are difficult to get on to, the pool will be too full in the mornings and no one will get a decent swim, waiting lists, queues etc. will be longer. Jointly Dunstable and Houghton are too large to be served by one centre. Don't fix what isn't broken.

- The idea of a joint centre for Dunstable and Houghton Regis is not feasible due to the ever increasing population within these two areas and the added problems of transportation and easy access across the towns.
- As a resident of Dunstable and also a member of the HRLCAG and a current user of the leisure centre and a past member who used the swimming pool, Houghton Regis should keep its current leisure centre with the addition of a refurbished swimming pool and also the consideration of a new leisure centre for 2017. With the new proposed Woodside Link and the proposal to build 5,600 new homes in the Houghton Regis area, along with the current developments at the old quarry and the new guided bus way commuter link, it appears to be even more imperative that Houghton Regis has its own leisure centre. Run 3 (see Audit & Assessment Report) are therefore supported in the short term but also Run 4, a new centre in the longer term should be implemented as part of the leisure strategy.

Swimming Pools

Overview

In general swimming pools in Central Bedfordshire are well located, demand is met (with use of pools outside the area), quality is variable with many old pools, but accessibility is good by car although less so on foot. There is a capacity issue at present at the main leisure centre pools. There is no strong support for new pools, but a need to increase capacity now and in the future.

Summary of 2012 situation

- Unmet demand in Central Bedfordshire is the equivalent in total of about one additional pool over the whole area, but this is spread too thinly to warrant a new pool in any one location that would significantly reduce the unmet demand levels. The location of pools on the edge of and outside CB fulfils an important role in meeting CB's needs, through good accessibility of local residents, and CB residents therefore have ample access to pools. CB therefore currently relies on neighbouring LA areas to meet much of its demand for swimming.
- The main current conclusion for swimming pool provision in Central Bedfordshire appears to be the apparent high use of the Flitwick, Tiddenfoot and Dunstable Leisure Centre pools, which the model estimates are operating well above comfortably full levels. So while there is insufficient demand to justify a new pool to meet unmet demand, additional capacity in the peak period is required at these (or other) pools to reduce the pressure on these facilities.

Summary of 2022 situation

- Future facility need is dependent on any increase in population. The impact of the increased population is however, mitigated by the ageing of the population, who traditionally have lower activity rates. However unmet demand is still not in sufficient concentrations to justify the provision of any additional pools in Central Bedfordshire to meet this criterion alone. New pools might be built but they would only succeed in displacing demand from other existing pools nearby.
- The main concern by 2022 remains the high usage of now all 4 main 'public' pools in the four main towns. Despite a projected reduction in the usage of the Dunstable LC pool in the face of competition from the relative increasing attractiveness of the 'new' Luton Sports Village pools, the 4 main pools are all operating at or near absolute capacity.

- There is some spare capacity at the commercial pools, which meet less community use because of their membership policies and availability. Additional capacity is therefore required to reduce the pressure on these facilities.

Possible Facility Scenarios 2022

- In order to calculate the pool space required to meet the needs of Central Bedfordshire's growing population to 2022, modelling of three future scenarios has been undertaken to test the impact of changes to pool provision and condition to assess the different impact these changes would have on meeting future demand.
- The three scenarios were based around the 'public' pools and modelled new pools, refurbishment of pools, and closure of some facilities. The findings of these scenarios are detailed in the Audit and Assessment Report, and refined in the Issues and Options Report, to identify preferred options used as a basis for the strategy

Consultation

As with halls, extensive consultation was undertaken at two stages of the strategy's preparation to test the initial findings of the Audit and Assessment, and help refine the Issues and Options into preferred options. Full details of the consultation response can be found in the statement of community involvement.

Consultation 1

Sports clubs, sports governing bodies and town and parish councils highlighted the following issues at the first consultation stage:

The Amateur Swimming Association (the governing body for swimming) did not respond to the initial consultation, but the development of new pools or improvement of existing comply with the current strategic aims of the Association and the target for swimming facilities up to 2013.

- Tiddenfoot is considered inadequate to meet all the demands on it, and in particular during the day when there is no community use (the assessments above tend to consider only the peak hours which do not necessarily correspond).
- There is a local desire/aspiration for an additional pool in Leighton Buzzard.
- The recent closure of the pool at Houghton Regis is considered to have had a serious impact on local swimming, particularly on daytime school activity.

Key Issues

The Audit and Assessment led to the development of a range of issue and options which are set out in more detail in the Issues and Options Report. These form the basis of the preferred options and policies set out in the main strategy below. In summary the key issues are:

- Considering the location, size and availability, the existing pools meet a wide demand for recreational swimming, teaching and/or club activities. Swim clubs and others still experience difficult of gaining access at their preferred times, particularly in Leighton Buzzard.

- The assessment suggests that although there is relatively low provision, it is difficult to justify any more pools in Central Bedfordshire to meet unmet demand. Evidence shows that the construction of additional pools in new locations would not achieve a higher proportion of satisfied demand because existing pools are shown to be well located to serve the major settlements and identified growth areas. Equally, improving upon the 8% unmet demand is unlikely to be possible, due to the rural nature of much of Central Bedfordshire.
- Evidence shows that the main leisure centre pools in Flitwick, Tiddenfoot and Dunstable are already at capacity and will get more crowded by 2022, and that additional capacity may be required to address this concern.
- Central Bedfordshire does rely on pool provision in neighbouring LA areas to meet much of its demand, including the new 50m pool at Luton Sports Village
- Consultation reveals that the recent closure of Houghton Regis pool highlights a need for additional swimming pool space in this area.
- Consultation reveals some concern in Leighton Buzzard about the adequacy of swimming provision in the town.
- The role of commercial pools at health clubs in meeting the local demand for swimming has some potential and could be considered.
- The current quality of pools is considered good at present, but unlikely to be fit for purpose after 2020. There is an issue of age and functionality with some pools, many of which were built before 1990, although some refurbishment has taken place. Quality improvements will differ according to whether pools are replaced or renewed. By 2022 the existing pools will in some instances be in excess of 40 years old, and without significant investment their condition will have deteriorated to a degree where they are significantly less fit for purpose. This will have a corresponding effect on their attractiveness to users.
- The decline in the used capacity at Dunstable by 2022 (from 100% to 80%) shows that the pool's age and condition mean it has become less attractive to users who will choose to swim elsewhere. Without investment a similar effect may be expected on the other pools.
- In the current financial climate, the best way of funding new pools or pool enhancements needs to be considered.
- The additional population in the new housing areas will significantly increase the demand for swimming in the future. New provision could take place within the new housing areas, or be more centrally located to meet the demand from both these and existing residential areas.

Consultation 2

Sports clubs, sports governing bodies, town and parish councils and individuals highlighted the following issues at the second stage of consultation:

- As a resident of Dunstable and also a member of the HRLCAG and a current user of the leisure centre and a past member who used the swimming pool Houghton Regis should keep its current leisure centre with the addition of a refurbished swimming pool and also the consideration of a new leisure centre for 2017. With the new proposed Woodside Link and the proposal to build 5,600 new homes in the Houghton Regis area, along with the current developments at the old quarry and the new guided bus way commuter link, it appears to be even more imperative that Houghton Regis has its own leisure centre. Run 3 are therefore supported in the short term but Run 4 should be implemented as part of the leisure strategy.
- There is some support for the proposal is to replace the current Dunstable Leisure Centre.
- HRHCBC supports the immediate re-opening of the existing pool and the need to vary the current contract to include the managing of the pool. This action would achieve additional water space and meet local demand as well as drag back demand from outside the district (as identified in Options and Issues Report). With regards to the medium and long –term development on the existing site of a new leisure centre for Houghton Regis, HRHCBC recommends that the new centre should include a 6 lane swimming pool, 100 plus station gym along with no reduction in the provision and capacity enjoyed in the current facilities. Once the new centre is built then the old facilities be closed and decommissioned.
- Support for the existing pool at Houghton Regis Leisure Centre to be re-opened as soon as possible but the Council should also adopt Run 4 as their Leisure Strategy.
- The closure of the pool in HR has been a significant detriment to the local community. HRLCAG support the immediate re-opening of the existing pool with due consideration being given to varying the current contract to include the managing of the pool. This action would achieve additional water space, meet local demand and drag back demand from outside the district (as identified in Issues and Options Report). HRLCAG support the medium to long-term development on the existing site of a new Houghton Regis Leisure Centre with a 6-lane swimming pool, with no reduction of provision and capacity enjoyed in the current facilities. This will result in the closing of the current facilities following the build of the New Houghton Regis Leisure Centre.
- Some support for the present facilities in the area and how the local residents are making use of them. It would be wonderful for those living in Houghton Regis, and for the local schools, if it were possible to reopen the pool to schools residents and clubs. Pool facilities in the Luton area have undergone several closures during the last year and despite the opening of the 'Inspire' there has been a loss of several of the smaller clubs, (including Luton Youth Canoe Group). Not in favour of the closure of Dunstable and Houghton Regis and the building of a new joint facility as this will inevitably involve users with extra travelling. People need LOCAL FACILITIES that are easily accessible. Our roads are busy enough without adding vehicles for no good reason. Dunstable Leisure Centre is conveniently placed for residents of Dunstable and the Houghton Regis Leisure Centre is well placed for its local population.
- Need for a pool in Houghton Regis. Also welcome a new facility in the future as part of the future strategy. With this in mind recommend the refurbishment and reopening of the pool at Houghton Regis.
- User of the gym and pool finds the Flitwick Leisure Centre too small, particularly the pool. Swimming is important to health and recommended by the orthopaedic surgeon.

Health and Fitness

Overview

There is an apparent shortfall of health and fitness facilities in Central Bedfordshire, but good provision in neighbouring areas contributes toward meeting demand. Some additional local provision is justified at present. Future provision needs to be made in accordance with increased demand.

Summary of 2012 Situation

- Evidence shows that there is a significant shortfall of health and fitness stations within Central Bedfordshire of up to 600 stations (a station is a piece of fixed equipment). This general conclusion is mitigated by several factors however:
 - Rest of Study Area (ROSA) has a major surplus of stations when comparing estimated demand with supply, of 1400 stations.
 - The supply of stations in Luton, the LA most closely linked to Central Bedfordshire, has increased recently with additional facilities at Luton Sports Village and Lewsey Park, and average provision here is higher than in CB, although there is still a small deficit in provision here.
 - As with other types of sports facilities, there is an evident export of demand from Central Bedfordshire to neighbouring LA area.
- It is much more likely therefore that if any shortfalls exist in Central Bedfordshire, these are localised, and indeed the operators of the main 'public' leisure centres have highlighted some shortfalls in Leighton Buzzard, Flitwick and Biggleswade. Commercial clubs are likely to be meeting the members' only demand.
- There is therefore some justification for limited additional health and fitness provision, specifically in Flitwick and Leighton Buzzard. Private clubs could provide additional capacity, if access were available for wider community use where applicable.

Future Provision

- Unlike with sports halls and swimming pools, future provision was not assessed using the FPM or other Sport England tools. Future need for facilities is, however, dependent on any increase in population. The impact of the increased population is mitigated by the ageing of the population, who traditionally have lower activity rates. Even if increased participation in accordance with any local or national targets is not achieved, it is likely that additional stations will be required in the next 10-15 years over and above any planned increases at the present.
- Positive provision for health and fitness should be made particularly in conjunction with new housing development throughout Central Bedfordshire.

Consultation

Consultation 1

Consultation took place in the same way as for sports halls and swimming pools. Sports clubs, sports governing bodies and town and parish councils highlighted the following issues at the first consultation stage:

- Provision for health and fitness needs to account for participation by young people
- Some public sector operators identify a need for additional stations (commercial managers were reluctant to provide data, and it must be assumed that there is a balance in commercial provision because of market factors)
- Flitwick Leisure Centre already demonstrates a need for more stations at peak times, while Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre managers suggest capacity has been reached.
- Houghton Regis Leisure Centre has upgraded its gym from 15 to 65 stations as part of the modernisation process recently undertaken.
- Saxon Pool & Leisure Centre gym has also been updated but the free weights section is identified as inadequate.

Key Issues

The Audit and Assessment led to the development of a range of issue and options which are set out in more detail in the Issues and Options Report. These form the basis of the preferred options and policies set out in the main strategy below. In summary the key issues are:

- The assessment has found that health and fitness provision in Central Bedfordshire is well below average. Central Bedfordshire does rely on fitness provision in neighbouring LA areas to meet much of its demand. Additional provision is indicated.
- It is clear that most health and fitness centres are in good condition, only one centre has not been built or refurbished since 2000, and the condition and range of main and ancillary facilities meets current requirements. Quality and condition need to be maintained to keep facilities fit for purpose over the period of the strategy.
- The additional population in the new housing areas will significantly increase the demand for health and fitness centres in the future. New provision could take place within the new housing areas, or be more centrally located to meet the demand from both these and existing built up areas.
- Access to health and fitness centres needs to be equitable for the whole community – there need to be enough health and fitness facilities available on a pay and play basis, and all sections of the population should be catered for, e.g. young people, senior residents, disabled.
- The scale and size of new health and fitness centres will be determined by demand, and the need to make other provision sustainable. Therefore, a new facility is only likely to be built if it is economically viable and sustainable to do so as part of other provision e.g. in conjunction with a new sports hall, swimming pool or AGP.
- The optimum size of health and fitness centres may depend on a range of factors, and there is no ideal number of stations per centre.

Consultation 2

No comments were received specifically on health and fitness facilities.

Squash

Overview

The current provision for squash is good in Central Bedfordshire, although demand is estimated as higher than the national average. Additional courts are required now and in the future to meet anticipated demand.

Summary of 2012 Situation

- Existing provision per capita across Central Bedfordshire for squash is just below the average for England, while demand is estimated from national participation rates at about 10-20% above the average. Evidence suggests that squash courts and centres are already under some pressure, particularly in the south of the county.
- Comparing supply with estimated demand, it is suggested that there is an existing shortfall of about 3-5 courts to meet current demand. In particular there is a need for venues with at least three courts.
- Quality is generally fair and overall accessibility to existing courts is good.
- Additional squash provision (minimum 3 courts) should therefore be considered either as free standing centres in 1-2 locations or more probably as part of the development of any multi-use leisure centres arising from other sections of this assessment.

Future Provision

Unlike with sports halls and swimming pools, future provision was not assessed using the FPM or other Sport England tools. Future need for facilities is, however, dependent on any increase in population. The impact of the increased population is mitigated by the ageing of the population, who traditionally have lower activity rates. It is likely that additional squash courts might be required in the next 10-15 years over and above current increased requirement to meet future demand.

Consultation

Consultation 1

Consultation took place in the same way as for halls and pools. The governing bodies of squash were consulted and highlighted the following at the first consultation stage:

- There is a lack of squash facilities particularly in the south of the county, and three court venues would be supported. In public venues, clubs should be encouraged to prosper
- There is a need to consider the provision of larger venues with at least 3 courts to satisfy the requirements of the governing body for development programmes.

Key Issues

The Audit and Assessment led to the development of a range of issue and options which are set out in more detail in the Issues and Options Report. These form the basis of the preferred options and policies set out in the main strategy below. In summary the key issues are:

- The assessment has found that squash provision in Central Bedfordshire is at about the national average, although it is likely that demand is higher. There is some evidence

from the governing bodies of a shortfall of courts to meet local demand, including in the adjacent area of Luton, where courts have recently closed.

- Quality and condition are considered to be fair/good, but need to be maintained to keep facilities fit for purpose over the period of the strategy
- The additional population in the new housing areas will significantly increase the demand for squash centres in the future. New provision could take place within the new housing areas, or be more centrally located to meet the demand from both these and existing built up areas.

Consultation 2

No comments were received specifically on squash facilities.

Indoor Bowls

Overview

The supply of indoor bowls centres in Central Bedfordshire is low but accessibility to other centres in the region is good. A case can be made for additional provision but further feasibility is required.

Summary of 2012 Situation

- There is one indoor bowls centre in Central Bedfordshire with 6 rinks, but a large number of other centres within a 30-minute drive in adjacent LA areas. Existing provision for indoor bowls in the area is very low compared with the county, regional and national averages. The supply/demand balance is also very low, although personal share is above the national average and in line with the local situation, because of the existence of the other local centres outside Central Bedfordshire.
- Almost two thirds of local residents can access a bowls centre within a 20-minute drive. Accessibility by car is good in the south of Central Bedfordshire, but poorer in the northern part where indoor bowls is only available in adjacent LA areas. Quality is broadly good.
- The SFC estimates that at present there is sufficient demand in Central Bedfordshire at normal participation rates for 2.75 centres, or about 16.5 rinks in community use. This compares with current provision of one 6-rink centre. There appears to be a significant shortfall for indoor bowls from this assessment. Due to the poor local provision for indoor bowls in the area, a case can be made for the provision of an additional centre in the central, east or west part of Central Bedfordshire at the present time. The governing body considers however, that local provision is acceptable and that the existing club is being encouraged to increase its membership. At the same time there is some spare capacity at existing clubs and centres, particularly in Luton and Bedford. Nevertheless the location of the existing centre does not meet the needs of the whole of Central Bedfordshire, which relies on neighbouring areas to meet much of its demand. Further research is required to assess whether any of the usage of neighbouring centres might be displaced if an additional or replacement centre is built in Central Bedfordshire.

Future Provision

- As with other facilities, future need is dependent on any increase in population, which is mitigated by the ageing of the population. Conversely an ageing population might offer an opportunity to increase bowls provision. It is likely that additional rink space might be required in the next 10-15 years over and above current increased requirement.

Consultation

Consultation 1

Consultation took place in the same way as for halls and pools. The governing bodies and local operators were consulted and highlighted the following at the first consultation stage:

- There is no endorsement from the NGB for additional indoor bowls in Central Bedfordshire at the present, though population changes should be monitored to take into account the future situation up to 2021.
- If Dunstable Leisure Centre were to be relocated there is merit in considering a more central location for indoor bowls in Central Bedfordshire.
- There is a need to improve the quality of the existing centre (if retained) to ensure fitness for purpose.
- Two clubs had significant spare capacity for additional members, although they suggested that the future of each facility was not in jeopardy. Membership had dropped over the years as the result of an ageing clientele, the lack of spare leisure time and the inability to attract new younger members.
- Three other clubs were operating at or about capacity, and there was little opportunity to accommodate significant additional usage. The position locally therefore is varied and maybe usage depends as much on management and promotion as underlying strategic issues.

Key Issues

The Audit and Assessment led to the development of a range of issue and options which are set out in more detail in the Issues and Options Report. These form the basis of the preferred options and policies set out in the main strategy below. In summary the key issues are:

- There is a shortage of indoor bowls in Central Bedfordshire, but local residents have good access to centres in nearby LA areas. The need for one additional centre or more in Central Bedfordshire needs careful consideration to ensure that usage is not displaced from other centres, some of which are not well used.
- The existing centre in Dunstable does not cater for residents from a large part of Central Bedfordshire wishing to play bowls, and locations for new centres elsewhere in the area should be considered, if additional provision is made.
- Overall quality of the existing centre is considered to be good, but the strategy extends into the future when the current facility will be 15 years older. The existing indoor centre needs to be refurbished to ensure that it remains fit for purpose into the future
- The additional population in the new housing areas may significantly increase the demand for indoor bowls in the future. New provision could take place within the new

housing areas, or be more centrally located to meet the demand from both these and existing built up areas.

- Indoor bowls is very specialist facility and does not easily allow other sporting usage. However the feasibility of combining additional bowls provision in the future with other new sports facility development (short mat bowls, outdoor bowls or other sports) should be considered.
- There is a need to explore participation rates and facts relating to the ageing population, in view of the current declining membership of some of the local outdoor bowls centres and clubs

Consultation 2

Comments from English Indoor Bowls Association (EIBA) to be incorporated when available.

Indoor Tennis

Overview

There are no indoor tennis centres in Central Bedfordshire, together with an apparent shortage. Any new provision needs further feasibility to ascertain specific locations and number/s of courts required.

Summary of 2012 Situation

- There are no indoor tennis courts in Central Bedfordshire although there are 5 centres with 13 courts within 30 minutes from the centre of Central Bedfordshire. Potential players in part of the area particularly around Leighton Buzzard are not accommodated.
- On the basis of the average provision in the county/region, there is shortfall of 2-9 courts (compared with the national average the shortfall is 7 courts). Using LTA data on the average court provision required to accommodate demand, there is a shortfall of up to 13 courts.
- Despite the abundance of other centres outside Central Bedfordshire, there is some justification for the provision of indoor tennis at the present time in Central Bedfordshire, in the first instance on one site with 3 courts. Additional feasibility is required to ascertain the total number of new courts required over the strategy period and the best locations within the whole county.

Future Provision

- Unlike with sports halls and swimming pools, future provision was not assessed using the FPM or other Sport England tools. Future need for facilities is, however, dependent on any increase in population. The impact of the increased population is mitigated by the ageing of the population, who traditionally have lower activity rates. However, if increased participation in accordance with SE targets is achieved, it is likely that additional indoor tennis court space will be required in the next 10-15 years.

Consultation

Consultation 1

Consultation took place in the same way as for halls and pools. The governing bodies and local operators were consulted and highlighted the following at the first consultation stage:

- There is a strong case for indoor tennis facilities in Central Bedfordshire, and the LTA is keen to work with the Central Bedfordshire Council and other NGB's to try and get some indoor facilities within the county.
- There are two possible locations based on the existing clubs in Leighton Buzzard and Flitwick.
- Joint use sites with other sports are acceptable as long as there is a dedicated tennis element on the site. It would make sense to work with the existing outdoor clubs to bring existing players to any potential new centre.

- Any type of structure or surface is acceptable dependent upon budget.
- Consultation with other local operators and clubs confirms that additional indoor courts are required both for casual play and for coaching and teaching of juniors, but that Central Bedfordshire is not necessarily the best location for a new facility in the county.

Key Issues

The Audit and Assessment led to the development of a range of issue and options which are set out in more detail in the Issues and Options Report. These form the basis of the preferred options and policies set out in the main strategy below. In summary the key issues are:

- There are no indoor tennis facilities in Central Bedfordshire, but local residents can gain access to centres in neighbouring districts, albeit that these centres are not as convenient as other indoor sports facilities. The need to accommodate indoor tennis demands within the area is an issue.
- There is an undoubted need for an indoor tennis centre with at least 3 courts in the county, but preferred locations at other existing clubs, where there is a more developed coaching and teaching infrastructure, outside Central Bedfordshire need consideration.
- The additional population in the new housing areas may significantly increase the demand for indoor tennis in the future. New provision could take place within the new housing areas, or be more centrally located to meet the demand from both these and existing built up areas.
- If a new centre is justified in Central Bedfordshire, the clubs with the best infrastructure are in Flitwick and Leighton Buzzard. It is preferable to link any new such provision with existing outdoor provision for tennis.
- The feasibility of combining limited indoor tennis provision in the future with other new sports facility development on a joint site must be considered. There may be a need for large halls for other sports e.g. netball, and these could be combined.
- The types of surface or structure, which might be appropriate in any new centres, should be considered.

Consultation 2

No comments specifically on indoor tennis were received.

Specialist Facilities

While it was outside the scope of the strategy to consider specialist facilities for sport, as the brief concentrated on community provision, nevertheless the initial consultation with governing bodies and others identified some specialist facility requirements, which have potential to be incorporated in existing or proposed new community sports halls. The results of these consultations, are set out below, and feed in to the subsequent section on issues and options.

- A need was identified for specialist facilities for gymnastics, but a realisation that this is not always feasible.
- A need was identified to consider the precise requirements of specialist gymnastics provision, either free standing or in conjunction with school or public sports hall.
- The design of new sports halls should consider incorporating gymnastics pit, additional storage and other requirements.
- The specialist needs of particular sports such as archery should be considered in future sports hall provision.
- Sports halls, in particular on school sites, may be appropriate locations for specialist use for indoor cricket and other activities.

PART 5: LEISURE FACILITIES STRATEGY

Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy - Policies

From the facilities Audit & Assessment evidence, a range of key facility issues and options were identified and refined in the Issues & Options Report. Consultation in November 2012 with Central Bedfordshire Council Members, Town and Parish Councils, sports clubs, sport governing bodies and the public, helped shape the preferred options which form the policies in this strategy. The policies are set out below.

In order to detail the delivery requirements of the policies identified below, and to prepare CIL and S106 calculations, the next stage in the Leisure Facilities Strategy will be the preparation of a costed Action Plan for the first phase of the strategy delivery 2013-2018. The table in Part 9 of this strategy sets out the next steps.

The policies below are set out in Central Bedfordshire Council's Placemaking Areas.

DUNSTABLE & HOUGHTON REGIS (DHR)

Policy	Strategic Priorities	Short Term: 1-2 years Medium Term: 2-7 years Long Term: 7+ years
DHR 1	Refurbishment of Dunstable Leisure Centre; to also incorporate facilities identified in policies DHR 7, 10 and 11 below.	Medium
DHR 2	Provision of replacement of public leisure centre for Houghton Regis close to the site of the existing leisure centre, comprising 6 court sports hall, 6 lane 25m swimming pool and a range of other facilities, may also incorporate facilities identified in policies DHR 6, and 7 below.	Medium
DHR 3	Market test re-opening of Houghton Regis pool in the short term pending longer term on development in HR.	Short
	General Objectives	
DHR 4	Provision of new and improved leisure facilities required to maintain the current accessibility, supply and quality of leisure in the Dunstable/Houghton Regis area, to be detailed in the Strategy Action Plan.	Medium to Long
DHR 5	Improve public access to existing school sports halls in the Dunstable/Houghton Regis area at Manshead and All Saints Academy Schools.	Short to Medium
DHR 6	Provision of new health and fitness facilities required to meet the needs of new residential development in the Houghton Regis growth area.	Medium
DHR 7	Provision of new and improved health and fitness facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in the Dunstable/Houghton	Medium to Long

	Regis area.	
DHR 8	Provision of new small health and fitness facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in village & community halls in locations where accessibility to large facilities is an issue.	Medium to Long
DHR 9	Improve public access to existing school health and fitness facilities in the Dunstable/Houghton Regis area.	Short to Medium
DHR 10	Provision of additional health and fitness facilities at Dunstable Leisure Centre to address the shortfall in current supply.	Short
DHR 11	Provision of new and improved squash facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in the D/HR area.	Short
DHR 12	Provision of new squash facilities (3 courts) required to meet the needs of new residential development in the Houghton Regis growth area.	Medium
DHR 13	Improve public access to other squash facilities in the Dunstable/Houghton Regis area.	Medium to Long
DHR 14	Provision of new indoor bowls centre in the East, West or centre of Central Bedfordshire, if this cannot be achieved the refurbishment of indoor bowls centre at Dunstable Leisure Centre.	Long
DHR 15	Where indoor tennis facilities are unavailable within the area, consider enabling smaller scale covered facilities.	Medium to Long

WEST (W)

Policy	Strategic Priorities	Short Term: 1-2 years Medium Term: 2-7 years Long Term: 7+ years
W 1	Provision of replacement public leisure centre for Flitwick close to the site of the existing leisure centre, comprising 4 court sports hall, 8 lane swimming pool to also incorporate facilities identified in policies W4 and W7 below.	Short
	General Objectives	
W 2	Provision of new and improved leisure facilities required to maintain the current accessibility, supply and quality of leisure in the West area, to be detailed in the Strategy Action Plan.	Medium to Long
W 3	Improve public access to existing school sports halls in the West area: Redbourne School, Ampthill.	Short to Medium
W 4	Provision of new and improved health and fitness facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in the West area.	Medium to Long
W 5	Provision of new small health and fitness facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in village & community halls in locations where accessibility to large facilities is an issue.	Medium to Long
W 6	Improve public access to existing school health and fitness facilities in the West area.	Short to Medium
W 7	Provision of new and improved squash facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in the West area.	Medium to Long
W 8	Improve public access to other squash facilities in the West area.	Medium to Long

W 9	Provision of new indoor bowls centre in the East, West or centre of Central Bedfordshire.	Long
W 10	Provision of new 3 court indoor tennis centre in the Flitwick area.	Medium to Long
W 11	Where indoor tennis facilities are unavailable, assist Flitwick Tennis Club in the development of their facility.	Medium to Long

EAST (E)

Policy	Strategic Priorities	Short Term: 1-2 years Medium Term: 2-7 years Long Term: 7+ years
E 1	Refurbishment of Saxon Pool & Leisure Centre pool, provision of new 4 court sports hall.	Short
E 2	Support development of joint use leisure facility incorporating a 4 court sports hall at Etonbury School, Arlesey.	Medium
	General Objectives	
E 3	Provision of new and improved leisure required to maintain the current accessibility, supply and quality of leisure in the East area, to be detailed in the Strategy Action Plan.	Medium to Long
E 4	Improve public access to existing school sports halls in the East area: Stratton Upper School, Biggleswade, Etonbury School, Arlesey, and Robert Bloomfield School, Shefford.	Short to Medium
E 5	Provision of new and improved health and fitness facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in the East area.	Medium to Long
E 6	Provision of new small health and fitness facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in village & community halls in locations where accessibility to large facilities is an issue.	Medium to Long
E 7	Improve public access to existing school health and fitness facilities in the East area.	Short to Medium
E 8	Provision of new and improved squash facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in the East area.	Medium to Long
E 9	Improve public access to other squash facilities in the East area.	Medium to Long

E 10	Provision of new indoor bowls centre in the East, West or centre of Central Bedfordshire.	Long
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LEIGHTON BUZZARD & RURAL SOUTH (LB/RS)

Policy	Strategic Priorities	Short Term: 1-2 years Medium Term: 2-7 years Long Term: 7+ years
LB/RS 1	Refurbishment of Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre pool and sports hall.	Short 2012/13
LB/RS 2	Provision of new 4 court sports hall in Leighton Linslade Growth Area in conjunction with proposed housing development.	Long
LB/RS 3	Provision of replacement 8 lane swimming pool on the Tiddenfoot site in the longer term in conjunction with proposed housing development.	Long
	General Objectives	
LB/RS 4	Provision of new and improved facilities required to maintain the current accessibility, supply and quality of leisure in the Leighton Buzzard/Rural South area, to be detailed in the Strategy Action Plan.	Medium to Long
LB/RS 5	Improve public access to existing school sports halls in the Leighton Buzzard/Rural South area: Vandyke School.	Short to Medium
LB/RS 6	Provision of additional health and fitness facilities at Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre to address the shortfall in current supply.	Short to Medium
LB/RS 7	Provision of new and improved health and fitness facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in the LB/RS area.	Medium to Long
LB/RS 8	Provision of new small health and fitness facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in village & community halls in locations where accessibility to large facilities is an issue.	Medium to Long

LB/RS 9	Improve public access to existing school health and fitness facilities in the LB/RS area.	Short to Medium
LB/RS 10	Provision of new and improved squash facilities required to address the shortfall in the current supply, accessibility, and quality of health and fitness facilities in the LB/RS area.	Medium to Long
LB/RS 11	Improve public access to other squash facilities in the LB/RS area.	Medium to Long
LB/RS 12	Provision of new indoor bowls centre in the East, West or centre of Central Bedfordshire.	Long
LB/RS 13	Provision of new 3 court indoor tennis centre in the LB area.	Medium to Long
LB/RS 14	Where indoor tennis facilities are unavailable, assist Leighton Buzzard Tennis club in the development of their facility.	Medium to Long

Specialist Facilities

Specialist facilities are not the priority for this strategy but the following policies are included as being capable of implementation within the overall strategy.

- SF1 Identify in consultation with NGBs the sites that provide an existing specialist function and seek to protect and enhance this specialist role, and identify existing or new centres (that are proposed elsewhere in strategy) that could be designed to meet specialist needs where appropriate.
- SF 2 Incorporate where appropriate the specialist needs of other indoor sports at existing centres or when developing and designing new sports halls
- Specialist requirements for archery, badminton and other sports not highlighted in consultation (table tennis, netball, cricket nets or other sports) should be incorporated in a hierarchy of sports halls) in a coordinated manner, particularly on school sites where management would be facilitated.
 - Pending more detailed consultation with NGBs in the area, there may be the opportunity to accommodate larger scale specialist facilities in the larger sports halls in Central Bedfordshire, including Cranfield and the other 6 court halls.
- SF 3 Implement innovative approaches to the provision of specialist facilities where appropriate.
- Specialist facilities for some sports (e.g. gymnastics centres with pit etc.) could be accommodated at existing unused industrial and other non-sport premises. The biggest challenge is securing planning permission for change of use due to loss of employment. Planning policies should take a flexible approach to conversion of appropriate units to help facilitate this, which is more realistic than a specialist centre being built.

PART 6: FUNDING, PLANNING GUIDANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

Funding

The delivery of the future leisure facility infrastructure across Central Bedfordshire will, to a large extent, be dependent on capital funding. The following proposals and comments are taken from a separate report produced for the Council in support of its capital planning.

The capital funding picture for municipal leisure facilities is in a state of flux. Local authority finances are under pressure and previous major national funding programmes such as Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and Regional Development Agency funding are no longer available. Some funding opportunities, however, still remain; for example, individual school capital grants have replaced BSF and Sport England now has more clearly defined capital available through its Places to Play Legacy funding programme. While the education capital funding programmes will continue to change over time, there will still be a need for investment to take place on school sites during the strategy period and opportunities for joint projects may arise.

Using assets innovatively will be a key feature of the next few years, as will working in partnership on a multi-agency approach. The Government is also seeking to ease planning red tape and encourage local communities to realise assets to deliver community benefits. This could mean the sale of surplus land and sites for housing and commercial uses, with receipts being released to fund prioritised community assets, which could include sports provision. The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides opportunities for investment through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Given the potential level of funding required to refurbish or redevelop the leisure facility infrastructure across Central Bedfordshire it is therefore likely that investment will only be achieved through a combination of opportunities.

The main funding delivery mechanisms for Central Bedfordshire Council and others in delivering the strategy are:

- i. **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 developer contributions:** The Leisure Facilities Strategy aims to secure developer contributions in association with new development to provide or improve infrastructure.
- ii. **Capital Grant funding:** From schools and national agencies such as Sport England, including its Iconic Facilities, Improvement Fund and Inspired Facilities programmes. National Governing Body (NGB) support could also be available to develop specific specialist facilities.
- iii. **Third party funding:** Financing capital through the forecast operational surplus and finance packages as part of the leisure management procurement process or construction contracts. Also, leisure management operators are asked as part of their consideration, to fund developments of health and fitness suites and small refurbishments of existing leisure centre sites.

- iv. **Commercial sector funding:** limited potential for investment from commercial leisure operators such as those who provide health and fitness centre and 5 a-side artificial pitch football centres.
- v. **Council funding:** including use of capital receipts from the sale of existing assets.
- vi. **Prudential Borrowing:** or 'spend to save': the local authority may choose to use revenue savings or income from its investment to pay for monies used for capital development, which may be cheaper than an operator can borrow.

Planning Policy

For many years, certainly since before PPG17 was first produced in 1991, the 'standards' approach has been a fundamental part of delivering future facility provision, on the basis of a per head level of provision e.g. 6 acres of recreational open space per 1000 people and more recently x m² of sports hall space per 1000. This enabled an easy-to-calculate method of delivery, but was inflexible, difficult to manage and implement and generally ineffective in securing larger facilities other than recreational open space. More recent advice contained in the NPPF and from Sport England is leading towards a new system based on actual needs as identified by robust assessments such as that carried out in this strategy.

This new system requires the development of sound planning policies which are derived from evidence of need, thorough assessment and consultation with stakeholders. In Central Bedfordshire's case, the timescales for this Leisure Strategy do not align with the emerging Development Strategy, so a 'hook' has been created in the Development Strategy for leisure provision, and this will be amended when the Leisure Strategy is complete (see Policy 22 Leisure and Open Space Provision). This strategy will ensure the appropriate provision of sport and recreation facilities to meet needs of the Central Bedfordshire population now and to 2031, ensure new development makes appropriate provision for new residents, addresses health issues by early intervention, preventative measures and marries with the Council's public health responsibilities from 2013.

Housing Growth

Over the next 20 years it is planned that Central Bedfordshire will see a growth of 28,700 new homes. In planning for growth Central Bedfordshire Council must ensure that its policy for indoor sports facilities seeks to provide a range of good quality, accessible facilities which support its residents in leading healthy, active lives.

The Leisure Facilities Strategy Action Plan will detail the priorities for new and improved built leisure facilities to be provided in Central Bedfordshire, together with that required in association with new development. Where applicable, particularly on large developments, on-site provision of built leisure facilities will be required. On smaller developments, however, the provision of on-site built leisure facilities is unlikely to be required in which case developer contributions would be sought towards the facility requirements identified in the Action Plan.

Developer Contributions

S106/CIL

In preceding years, local authorities have sought and secured developer contributions for local physical and social infrastructure through Section 106 (and other provisions) of the various Planning Acts. Strict regulations have controlled these contributions in order that they are reasonable and proportionate to the development, and in principle are necessary for the development to be acceptable in planning terms.

From April 2014 the legislation covering Section 106 developer contributions will change. Local authorities will no longer be able to pool more than 5 secured S106 contributions to fund infrastructure projects. Projects which currently rely on funding from a wide number of tariff-based Planning Obligation contributions will instead need to be secured via the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). For example, education contributions which were previously pooled and allocated to a new school or building extension at a later time will now have to seek such funding through CIL.

S106 agreements will remain available but in the main they may only be used to secure new or improved infrastructure which is either site specific or immediately available to the development, e.g. affordable housing, children's play facilities, community centre. A maximum of 5 contributions can be used to fund one specific infrastructure project which must not also be funded from CIL.

Adoption of CIL is not mandatory but Government regulation requires charging authorities to enter into a two stage consultation process to formally decide what CIL charges are to be introduced prior to adoption. Central Bedfordshire Council is currently developing its Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule and will be undertaking its initial consultation in January 2013, with the following consultation later in the summer. The charge must reflect the latest statutory government guidance (December 2012) and be set at a level capable of providing significant contributions to infrastructure funding but without undermining the overall viability of development in its area. In the process of adopting a charge, the Council will need to decide which infrastructure projects it intends to prioritise with CIL funds.

For projects that may be candidates to be funded in whole or part from CIL contributions, such as the main leisure centre projects, it is important for estimated costings to be provided (which can be refined and reviewed over time) which can be included in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Schedule. This document is used to demonstrate both the need for important local infrastructure and the existence of a substantial funding gap between the cost of such projects and the funding currently available to the Council.

Planning Inspectors' recent interpretation of CIL regulations in respect of ongoing S106 is that (following production of the evidence base) unless specific sports facility projects have been identified and costed that contributions will be used towards, it will not be legitimate to secure s106 contributions from that development i.e. the past practice of local authorities securing contributions from developers that would be pooled and then used towards funding projects to be identified at a later date by the local authority will no longer be supported. Local authorities will need to set out known site-specific items for which s106 contributions may continue to be sought in addition to and distinct from its CIL priorities.

A basic example of the CIL charging methodology is considered below, as a broad indication of calculating the cost of recommended provision (figures are illustrative only). The precise methodology needs to be worked up in greater detail and kept under constant review to ensure up to date information is included.

Cost of provision of new facilities in the strategy	say £15m
Cost of refurbishment of facilities	say £10m
Cost of other management solutions	<u>say £5m</u>

Total cost say £30m

Cost per house up to 2031 = £30m/35,000 = £850.

It should be noted however that Affordable Housing is not required to pay a CIL charge and that Charging Authorities, notwithstanding the extent of local infrastructure needs, cannot introduce a CIL charge unless it can demonstrate at an examination in public that the charge level is viable.

In addition, the costings will be used to update the existing Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Documents for the north and south of Central Bedfordshire and to evidence a new Unitary Planning Obligations SPD for Central Bedfordshire should the Council decide to produce such a document to accompany the introduction of its CIL charge.

Leisure Strategy Approach to CIL/S106

For large off-site projects, such as the main leisure centres, where contributions will be secured through CIL, the new legislation requires that the facility requirements identified in local authority strategies must have estimated costings. These costings can then be used to inform the Council's Infrastructure Charging Schedule.

This strategy will adopt latest guidance and prepare a costed Action Plan from which a CIL charge will be developed.

The evidence gathered in the production of this strategy indicates that the majority of investment in new and improved facilities is required to meet the needs of Central Bedfordshire's existing population in 2012. It would not therefore, be inequitable to apportion the cost of delivering the new and improved facilities solely to new housing development.

In order to meet the CIL charging tests the Strategy Action Plan Year 1 priority will be to develop a calculation which seeks to apportion appropriate facility costs to be sought from new development.

In addition, the costings will be used to update the existing Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Documents for the north and south of Central Bedfordshire.

PART 7: DESIGN GUIDANCE

New and enhanced sports facilities will be expected to be designed in accordance with the relevant Sport England and (where applicable) NGB design guidance in order to ensure that the facilities are fit for purpose and of a suitable quality.

PART 8: MONITORING AND REVIEW

This strategy has been produced to enable the development of built sports facilities within Central Bedfordshire to be provided for in a planned and co-ordinated way that meets the needs of the local population and addresses areas of greatest demand.

In order to ensure that the Leisure Facilities Strategy requirements keep pace with the large amount of growth planned for Central Bedfordshire, a costed Action Plan will be prepared for the period 2013–2018. The Plan will be then reviewed and updated annually.

A full review of the strategy will be undertaken in 2017 in readiness for the 2018-2022 action plan period. In addition to reviewing the achievements of the action plan for the 2013-2018 period, the review will need to assess the full basis of calculating sports facilities requirements for Central Bedfordshire and emerging sporting trends and health issues that will have an impact on this. This will also involve a full reassessment of the following baseline criteria:

- Housing numbers
- Population estimates, both ONS and internal projections
- Full socio-economic and demographic analysis of population projections
- Participation rates (e.g. Active People Surveys) and new sport trend analysis and uptake levels
- Updated facility data including usage, accessibility, affordability, management and facility improvements
- Evolving needs of clubs and governing bodies, and any requirements for major facilities in the area
- Analysis of funding sources and new funding opportunities for the provision/improvement of sports facilities
- Review of growth of emerging sports, their participation rates, facilities available for them and likely facilities necessary for their support and development

PART 9: NEXT STEPS

In order to detail the facility requirements identified in Part 5 of the strategy and prepare CIL and S106 calculations, a costed Action Plan will be prepared for the first phase of the strategy delivery 2013-2018. The table below sets out the next steps for completion of the Leisure Facilities Strategy.

No	Objective	Key Milestones & Task	Target Date
1	Develop a fully costed Facilities Action Plan 2013-2018 detailing the new and improved facility requirements to meet planning policy objectives	Action Plan completed Mar/Apr 2013 Action Plan costed May/June 2013	Jun 2013
2	Develop a detailed methodology for calculating contributions for CIL and S106 for inclusion in Leisure Strategy Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 Planning Obligations Strategy		Jul/Aug 2013
3	Consider Central Bedfordshire Council capital expenditure priorities	Executive Jan/Feb 2013	

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APP - Active Places Power. Sport England database containing information on sports facilities throughout England

CB - Central Bedfordshire

CBC - Central Bedfordshire Council

Community use – use of a sports facility by the wider community, either on a pay or play basis or available through block bookings by clubs.

FPM - Facilities Planning Model

Sport England facility modelling system, testing:

Satisfied demand – demand for a specific type of sports facility which is met because local residents can access it within a reasonable travel time by car, public transport or on foot (20 minutes), and there is some spare capacity within the facility

Unmet demand - demand for a facility that is not satisfied

Utilised capacity – the amount of the overall capacity of a facility that the FPM estimates is used

Personal/relative share – the share of the opportunity which people have to use facilities, taking into account the number, size and availability of facilities, and the local population which has access to them

HRLCAG – Houghton Regis Leisure Centre Action Group

HRHCBC – Houghton Regis Hard Core Badminton Club

LA – Local authority

LTA – Lawn Tennis Association

NGB – national governing body of sport

NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework published by the Government in 2011

ONS – Office of National Statistics

PPG17 – Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 published by the Government in 1991 (revised 2002) giving guidance on planning for sport, recreation and open space

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework published by the Government on 27 March 2012, key part of Government reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, to protect the environment and to promote sustainable growth

ROSA - Rest of the study area (comprising the local authority areas adjoining CB)

SFC - Sports Facilities Calculator. Sport England calculation system to assess demand for key community sports facilities

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: Leisure Facilities Capital Programme
Report of: Cllr Brian Spurr Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services
Summary: Include the schemes set out in Table 6 Appendix A in the draft capital programme 2013-2017 and Flitwick Leisure Centre Phase 2 as a reserve scheme to be considered by Executive on 5 February 2013.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Jill Dickinson, Head of Leisure Services
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 Leisure Facilities Capital programme supports 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.
 - Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries.
 - Value for money – freezing council tax.

It will also support the target to ensure the number of adults in Central Bedfordshire taking part in sport and physical activity remains above the national average.

Financial:

2. CBC capital investment is guided by the Leisure Facilities Strategy. The capital programme, approved at Council on 23 February 2012 includes funds for a number of leisure schemes. Funds for implementation of the Leisure Strategy on an invest to save basis together with Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre sports hall extension totalled £8m over 4 years from 2012/13 to 2015/16.

3. In order to support the emerging themes of the Leisure Facilities Strategy a range of potential schemes have been considered which limit the cost to the Council of borrowing capital funds, either by providing income for the Council and/or can be supported by third party contributions. Two schemes at Tiddenfoot and Saxon Pool Leisure Centres were approved by Executive on 2 October 2012 totalling £2.5m net expenditure from Invest to Save funds and from Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre.
4. Initial affordability modelling has started to identify costs and CBC capital investment to deliver CBC priorities in the Leisure Facilities Strategy from 2013/14 onwards on a phased basis.
5. This includes Facilities requirements not currently provided for at the Council's leisure centres, for example additional sports halls and other sports facilities which may be developed by other stakeholders such as schools. It is proposed to develop criteria where the CBC capital programme could be used to support the development of these facilities. Underlying principles for that criteria will comprise;
 - Evidence of need for that Facilities in the Leisure Facilities Strategy
 - Evidence of external partnership funding
 - Invest to save opportunities for CBC
 - Scheme provides public access and increases capacity.
6. Use of the leisure capital budget that has not been allocated as set out in the Executive report of 2 October 2012, and additional capital funds will be required. The financial implications are set out in Appendix A.

Legal:

7. The Council's constitution requires that the capital programme can only be approved by full Council and schemes with a whole life value of more than £500,000 require full council approval before they can be included in the capital programme. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality. This is dealt with in detail in the Equalities section of Corporate Implications.

Risk Management:

8. The following risks have been identified, which are considered in more detail below:
 - Failure to deliver the Council's priorities
 - Reputational risks
 - Risk to customer satisfaction.
9. The Leisure Facilities Capital programme is directed by the Leisure Facilities Strategy which has been developed using Sport England methodology to assess the quality, quantity and accessibility of a range of specific sports facilities. The Strategy shows the Council has aging leisure centres operating at capacity and in some cases operating above the threshold for comfortable use at peak times. The Leisure Facilities Capital programme will be used to provide improved facilities with additional capacity to reduce pressure on these facilities and prevent a decline in customer satisfaction levels.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

10. Implementation of the Leisure Facilities Capital programme will require appropriate staffing resources to ensure the Council has the capability and capacity to deliver capital investment proposals.

Equalities/Human Rights:

11. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and 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.
12. The improvements to the leisure facilities aim to enhance customer experience and promote equality of opportunity, and make sport and physical activity a regular part of life for all.

Public Health:

13. Leisure facilities are a key community health resource. The Leisure Facilities capital programme aims to ensure there is a sustainable and high quality sport and physical activity infrastructure for local communities to engage in regular physical activity to help prevent ill health, generate long term improvements in overall levels of health and wellbeing and thereby reducing the costs to society for the NHS and social care.

Community Safety:

14. Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act the Council has a statutory duty to do all that is reasonable to prevent crime and disorder with its areas. Leisure facilities and the activities that they offer provide positive opportunities, particularly to young people, who may otherwise engage in activities that may be considered anti-social.

Sustainability:

15. The Leisure Facilities capital programme will seek to extend and improve facilities so that our customers participate in sport and physical activity through a network of good quality accessible and readily available public sport and recreation facilities, reducing the need for customers to travel to other local authority areas to participate in these activities.
16. Leisure Centres are significant contributors to the Council's carbon footprint (12%) and improving energy consumption/efficiency (which also has benefits in terms of running costs) will be an important consideration as part any capital investment.

Procurement:

17. Executive approval for capital investment in leisure facilities will be followed by a procurement process to identify appropriate professional project management and delivery support.

RECOMMENDATION:

Executive is recommended to:

- 1 include the schemes set out in Table 6 Appendix A in the draft capital programme 2013-2017 and Flitwick Leisure Centre Phase 2 as a reserve scheme to be considered by Executive on 5 February 2013.**

BACKGROUND

18. Development of the Leisure Strategy forms part of “Delivering your Priorities- Our Plan for Central Bedfordshire 2012-2016” to make sure that we are able to keep Central Bedfordshire as a great place to live and work.
19. The strategic purpose of the Leisure Strategy is to provide a framework for the prioritisation, provision and development of sport and recreation facilities and opportunities in Central Bedfordshire. By highlighting needs and opportunities for improvement, it sets the context for decisions about the priority and delivery of local provision up to 2031 and informs Central Bedfordshire Council’s capital expenditure on new/improved facilities. The Leisure Facilities Strategy is being considered for approval at the same Executive meeting on 8 January 2013.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT OPTIONS

20. Delivery of the Leisure Facilities Strategy across Central Bedfordshire will, to a large extent, be dependent on capital funding. The capital funding picture for municipal leisure facilities is in a state of flux. Local authority finances are under pressure and previous major national funding programmes such as Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and Regional Development Agency funding are no longer available. Some funding opportunities, however, still remain; for example, individual school capital grants have replaced BSF and Sport England now has more clearly defined capital available through its Places to Play Legacy funding programme. While the education capital funding programmes will continue to change over time, there will still be a need for investment to take place on school sites during the strategy period and opportunities for joint projects may arise. The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will provide opportunities for investment through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
21. Given the potential level of funding required to refurbish or redevelop the leisure facilities infrastructure across Central Bedfordshire it is likely that investment will only be achieved through a combination of opportunities. Using assets innovatively will be a key feature of the next few years, as will working in partnership on a multi-agency approach. The main funding delivery mechanisms for Central Bedfordshire Council and others are set out In the Leisure Facilities Strategy and include the following:

- 22.
- i. **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 developer contributions:** The Leisure Facilities Strategy aims to secure developer contributions in association with new development to provide or improve infrastructure.
 - ii. **Capital Grant funding:** From schools and national agencies such as Sport England, including its Iconic Facilities, Improvement Fund and Inspired Facilities programmes. National Governing Body (NGB) support could also be available to develop specific specialist facilities.
 - iii. **Third party funding:** Financing capital through the forecast operational surplus and finance packages as part of the leisure management procurement process or construction contracts. Also, leisure management operators are asked as part of their consideration, to fund developments of health and fitness suites and small refurbishments of existing leisure centre sites.
 - iv. **Commercial sector funding:** limited potential for investment from commercial leisure operators such as those who provide health and fitness centre and 5 a-side artificial pitch football centres.
 - v. **Council funding:** including use of capital receipts from the sale of existing assets.
 - vi. **Prudential Borrowing:** or 'spend to save': the local authority may choose to use revenue savings or income from its investment to pay for monies used for capital development, which may be cheaper than an operator can borrow.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

23. The Leisure Facilities Strategy sets out details requirements for specific facilities by geographical catchments known as place making areas as evidenced by the robust audit and assessment of the quality, supply, and accessibility of indoor sports facilities.

24. Key strategic priorities are identified and are summarised below.
- West area: New Leisure Centre at Flitwick comprising 8 lane 25m pool and 4 court sports halls and a range of other sports facilities.
 - Leighton Linsalde/Rural South: Refurbishment of Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre. New sports hall in the growth area.
 - Dunstable/Houghton Regis: Refurbishment of Dunstable Leisure Centre. Consider reopening Houghton Regis swimming pool at existing centre for short term provision. Longer term, in the context of Houghton Regis North development, New Houghton Regis Leisure Centre comprising 6 lane 25m pool and 6 court sports hall and a range of other sports facilities.
 - East: Refurbishment of Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre. New sports hall at Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre and, and a new sports hall at Eatonbury School, Arlesey.
25. Specific investment is proposed from 2013/14 to deliver a number of schemes which include short and medium term key strategic priorities of the Leisure Facilities Strategy. The financial implications for 2013/14 to 2015/16 to implement these strategic priorities are set out in the Appendix A.
26. The allocations and profile of capital expenditure set out in Appendix A include the following schemes in paragraphs 27 – 32. The capital programme being presented for approval to Executive on 5 February 2013 will reflect the funding required for these schemes with Phase 2 of Flitwick Leisure Centre as a reserve scheme pending further project development work to determine costs. Longer term, a new Houghton Regis Leisure Centre is required. Funding for this scheme will be considered in the context of the development of Houghton Regis North.
27. • Leisure Strategy Development of Chapters 2 Recreation and Open Space, Chapter 3 Playing Pitches and Chapter 4 Physical Activity. £30k for strategy development for audit and assessment through to final strategy stage.
28. • Sandy Athletics Track and Leisure Centre. £150k is estimated for essential improvement works. The Facilities is an asset owned by CBC. The track needs resurfacing due to its age, having been built in 2005.
29. • Houghton Regis Leisure Centre reopening the swimming pool. Provision of £150k one off investment is estimated in 2013/14 to bring the swimming pool back into use. This will be required if the procurement process for a new leisure management contract which will include an option to include Houghton Regis Leisure Centre and an option for re opening the pool concludes for the pool to be re opened.

30.
 - Refurbish Dunstable Leisure Centre. The centre is aging and requires significant investment to bring the Facilities up to date in line with customer expectations and maximise its potential in achieving significant returns on investment for the Council. An outline business case has identified £2.3m for implementation in 2015/16. Further work is required before a refurbishment scheme is finalised but is likely to include improvements to wet side changing, plant, the café, reception and entrance, activity rooms and expansion of the fitness room.
31.
 - Development with stakeholders. This is for CBC to work in partnership with other stakeholders to build new additional facilities or refurbishment and/or extension to existing facilities and which provide additional access to the community, and invest to save opportunities for CBC. An example would be the provision of sports facilities by a school. £500k is identified for these types of schemes each year from 2013/14.
32.
 - New Flitwick Leisure Centre. This is a phased scheme which aims to deliver a significant improvement to the quality and supply of leisure facilities for the area when compared to the existing centre. The new centre will provide additional water space and expansion of the fitness equipment along with associated space for a range of sport and physical activities, and a café. It will also provide significant improvements to energy efficiency and avoid £2m life cycle costs associated with the existing centre. A business case requires further development but the exact specification will aim to maximise a return on the Council's capital investment. The first phase is re provision of football pitches. The scheme is required because the proposed site for a new Flitwick Leisure Centre is on existing playing pitches which must be reprovided before the leisure centre can be built. £1.2m is required so that the scheme can commence in 2013/14. The profile of expenditure is shown in Appendix A. The Football Association indicate that an application to the Football Foundation to provide additional community space to maximise secondary spend with the aim of the football Facilities covering its running costs would be considered favourably, particularly where a strong local football club is identified to manage the Facilities.
33. The Leisure Facilities Strategy sets the context for decisions about the priority and delivery of local provision up to 2031. Future investment decisions will further support delivery of strategy.

CONCLUSION

- 34 The Leisure Facilities Strategy to be considered for approval by Executive on 8 January 2013 provides the Council with a robust evidence based framework for the direction of its capital investment. Investment in leisure facilities and services, when directed in this strategic way, helps to deliver a number of the Council's priorities. Well designed, modern, accessible and attractive leisure facilities are environments where participation in sport and physical activity for all parts of the community can also provide significant opportunities for income generation for this Council.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Capital Financial Position

Background papers and their location: (open to public inspection)

Leisure Facilities Strategy www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Appendix A - Net Capital Financial Position

Table 1 Approved Budget February 2012						
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total £
	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's
Invest to Save	2,000	611	2,000	2,000	-	6,611
Saxon Pool & Leisure Centre Extension	-	1,389	-	-	-	1,389
Total	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	-	8,000

Table 2 Revised Budget November						
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total £
	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's
Invest to Save	500	2,111	2,000	2,000	-	6,611
Saxon Pool & Leisure Centre Extension	500	939	-	-	-	1,439
Total	1,000	3,050	2,000	2,000	-	8,050

Table 3 Approved Expenditure						
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total £
	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's
Invest to Save - Tiddenfoot & Saxon	529	933	-	-	-	1,462
Other Expenditure - Tiddenfoot & Saxon	511	513	-	-	-	1,024
Total	1,040	1,446	-	-	-	2,486

Table 4 Remaining Approved						
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total £
	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's
Invest to Save	-	1,149	2,000	2,000	-	5,149
Saxon Pool & Leisure Centre Extension	-	415	-	-	-	415
Total	-	1,564	2,000	2,000	-	5,564

Table 5 Lesiure Facility Strategy						
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total £
	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's
1 Leisure Strategy Development of Chapters 2, 3 and 4	-	30	-	-	-	30
2 Sandy Athletics Track and Leisure Centre	-	150	-	-	-	150
3 Houghton Regis Leisure Centre reopening Swimming Pool	-	150	-	-	-	150
4 Refurbish Dunstable Leisure Centre	-	-	-	2,300	-	2,300
5 Development with stakeholders	-	500	500	500	500	2,000
6 Flitwick Football	-	500	700	-	-	1,200
7 New Flitwick Leisure Centre	-	250	7,750	2,000	2,500	7,500
Total	-	1,580	8,950	4,800	- 2,000	13,330

Table 6 Summary						
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total £
	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's
Approved Budget - Table 1	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	-	8,000
Revised Budget - Table 2	1,000	3,050	2,000	2,000	-	8,050
Approved expenditure - Table 3	1,040	1,446	-	-	-	2,486
Remaining Approved Budget - Table 4	-	1,564	2,000	2,000	-	5,564
Reprofiling of budget :						
1 Leisure Strategy Development of Chapters 2, 3 and 4	-	30	-	-	-	30
2 Sandy Athletics Track and Leisure Centre	-	150	-	-	-	150
3 Houghton Regis Leisure Centre reopening Swimming Pool	-	150	-	-	-	150
4 Refurbish Dunstable Leisure Centre	-	-	-	2,300	-	2,300
5 Development with stakeholders	-	500	500	500	500	2,000
6 Flitwick Leisure Centre - Phase 1 - Football pitches	-	500	700	-	-	1,200
total	-	1,330	1,200	2,800	500	5,830
Variance		-234	-800	800	500	266

Notes

Flitwick Football Estimates includes partnership funding of £200k from Football Foundation in 13/14 . Application yet to be made.

Flitwick Leisure Centre. £2.5m income estimated land value Sept 2010 figure

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Meeting: Executive

Date: 8 January 2013

Subject: Procurement of Leisure Management Contract

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

Summary: To approve the procurement of a new leisure management contract for Flitwick Leisure Centre, Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre, Sandy Sports and Community Centre, with the ability to include Houghton Leisure Centre within which there will be a priced option to reopen the swimming pool.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities

Contact Officer: Jill Dickinson, Head of Leisure Services

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 procurement of this leisure management contract supports 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
- Great universal services – leisure
- Value for money.

The management of leisure centres will support the target to ensure the number of adults in Central Bedfordshire taking part in sport and physical activity remains above the national average and help deliver actions in the Council's Health and Wellbeing strategy.

Financial:

2. Sport England's National Benchmarking Survey 2012 results rate the financial performance of these facilities in the top quartile significantly better than market averages generating surplus incomes for the Council.

As the leisure facilities are an existing service, funds are provided for in base budgets and within budgets in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Legal:

3. The contract for the leisure centres at Flitwick, Saxon Pool and Sandy ends on 30 September 2013, following agreement by Executive 15 May 2012 to extend it to this date and the option to extend this contract for a further 6 months to the 31 March 2014 should this be required. This enables CBC to consider and determine its longer term role in respect of the provision and operation of leisure facilities in Central Bedfordshire, as it develops its Leisure Strategy
4. The contract for Houghton Regis Leisure Centre ends on the 31 March 2013; having operated as a dry side facility for a year, following agreement by Executive on 14 February 2012 to let the contract for one year with an option to extend on a year by year basis dependent on successful performance review. Following a review of this contract in October 2012, which demonstrated that it is achieving above targets across all areas, it has been decided to include the management of this facility in the procurement process for a longer term contract to be retendered with the three facilities at Flitwick, Saxon and Sandy, listed above.
5. The inclusion of the Houghton Regis facility in the tendering process will enable the potential economies of scale to be tested, with an option for it to be combined with the other 3 facilities, or continued to be managed as a stand alone facility. There will also be a requirement for a priced option to reopen the swimming pool.
6. This will require an extension to the Houghton Regis Leisure Centre contact so that it can be included in this procurement process. In the event that a decision on award of contract is for Houghton Regis Leisure Centre not to be included in the combined contract, then a separate procurement process will be required to determine its longer term future.
7. The Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) procurement process (part B) applies to the contract. Part B services are those that the EU consider would largely be of interest only to bidders located in the Member State where the contract was to be performed. To achieve a contract start date of 1 October 2013 an OJEU notice needs to be placed by 25 January 2013.
8. In accordance with the Council's constitution, as the total contract value is above £500,000 then the Council's Executive must be informed and their approval sought. Following approval, the Executive need only approve the award of contract where the recommended contractor's tender exceeds the approved sum, or where there are exceptional circumstances.

Risk Management:

9. This Council has identified leisure as a priority in its Medium Term Plan 'Delivering Your Priorities - our plan for Central Bedfordshire' supporting investment in leisure facilities and activities over the next 4 years and is developing a leisure strategy to help increase take up in sport and physical activity with a key focus being on increasing access and use of leisure centres. Executive is considering approval of the Leisure Facilities Strategy, Chapter 1 at the same Executive meeting on 8 January 2012. Chapter 1 is the first chapter of a suite of strategies for leisure, with subsequent chapters comprising Recreation and Open space (Chapter 2), Playing Pitches (Chapter 3) and Physical Activity (Chapter 4) being developed and concluded by June 2013.
10. The contract will be for 7 years with a clause to allow it to be extended for a further 7 years with the agreement of both parties. The recommended length of contract is shorter than considered the norm for leisure management contracts because the Council is likely to be undertaking the majority of investment in the facilities.
11. In order to award a contract for a start date on 1 October 2013 the contract specification will be developed prior to all three Chapters of the Leisure strategy being concluded. A contract start date of 1 April 2014 would enable the outcomes of the Physical Activity Chapter (4) to be incorporated into the leisure management contract specification so that the contract can support the delivery of the Council's strategy. An advantage of this will be embedding a range of stakeholders requirements into the contract to ensure local outcomes and priorities can be delivered including those from Children's Services, (Looked After Children, Troubled Families, Children with Disabilities), Social Care Health and Housing (Vulnerable Older People), and Public Health which will support the Council's priority to promote health and wellbeing and protect the vulnerable. A further advantage is that the delivery of the proposed Flitwick Leisure Centre will be more clearly defined.
12. The procurement of the contract will use guidance developed by Sport England 'A procurement toolkit'. The toolkit provides information, resources and case studies for local authorities contemplating procurement of services and / or facilities in their area.
13. The leisure management contract will need to include sufficient flexibility / change mechanisms to allow subsequent amendments to be made to take into account any changes in policy or asset stock so that the facilities remains competitive and well maintained throughout the life of the contract. Included in the contract procurement process is the identification of risks which will be developed into a contract risk matrix which sets out the proposed risk allocation for the Council, Contractor or for shared responsibility.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

14. The centres staff are employed by the current contractor. Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employees (TUPE) Regulations will apply as necessary. The proposals contained in the report do not affect any Central Bedfordshire Council employees.

Equalities/Human Rights:

15. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and 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.
16. The procurement of a new leisure management contract aims to continue to provide leisure facilities, enhance customer experience and promote equality of opportunity, making sport and physical activity a regular part of life for all.

Public Health:

17. Leisure facilities are a key community health resource. A new leisure management contract will aim to ensure there is a sustainable and high quality sport and physical activity infrastructure for local communities to engage in regular physical activity to help prevent ill health, generate long term improvements in overall levels of health and wellbeing and thereby reducing the costs to society for the NHS and social care.

Community Safety:

18. Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act the Council has a statutory duty to do all that is reasonable to prevent crime and disorder with its areas. Leisure facilities and the activities that they offer provide positive opportunities, particularly to young people, who may otherwise engage in activities that may be considered anti-social.

Sustainability:

19. Leisure Centres are significant contributors to the Council's carbon footprint (12%) and improving energy consumption/efficiency (which also has benefits in terms of running costs) will be an important consideration as part of a new contract.

Procurement:

20. The Council's Code of Procurement Governance provides that the Executive must approve expenditure before commencing any procurement over £500,000 per annum. The value of the contract exceeds this threshold. The Leisure Management contract for the facilities will be procured with the support of the Council's procurement team.
21. In preparation for the procurement process to retender the leisure management services for the 4 facilities concerned, consultants were appointed in August 2012 to undertake pre procurement work involving a market review, soft market testing exercise and affordability modelling to inform the Council's thinking with regard to future facility development and procurement of an operating partner for these facilities.

22. The findings from this pre procurement work have shown from the market review that there is positive interest in the potential for a contract with CBC from a range of commercial providers and Trusts in the industry. It is therefore anticipated that a reasonable number of operators will respond to the OJEU advert, prequalification questionnaire and submit tender bids. The work also confirmed that no private leisure operators are interested in bidding, mainly due to the limited scope for delivering sufficient financial profit margins.
23. There are a number of different procurement routes available to the Council including; Open, Restricted, Competitive Dialogue or Negotiated Procedure route. The leisure management contract is most suited to a Restricted Procedure route as the contract can be clearly specified and bidders are familiar with the process and its requirements. CBC procurement team support the use of this route.
24. With regard to any future capital investment, it is recommended that any potential capital improvements schemes would be procured separately to a leisure management contract at a time in the future when a capital scheme has been approved. This will also have the effect of maximising competition in the leisure management procurement, as a number of smaller leisure management operators could not compete for a contract including contraction works elements due to their more limited supply chains.

Overview and Scrutiny:

25. The Leisure Facilities Strategy was considered by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 December 2012. The Committee agreed a number of recommendations to be provided to the Executive including;
- That the Committee urges the Executive to consider reopening Houghton Regis Swimming Pool with immediate effect with due consideration to financial implications.

RECOMMENDATION:

Executive is recommended:

to approve procurement of a leisure management contract for Flitwick Leisure Centre, Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre, Sandy Sports and Community Centre, with the ability to include Houghton Regis Leisure Centre within which there will be a priced option to reopen the swimming pool, in accordance with the Council's Code of Procurement Governance.

Reason for Recommendation: To ensure the continuation of leisure centre provision, test economies of scale in bringing four leisure centres within one contract and market test reopening Houghton Regis Leisure Centre swimming pool.

Background

26. CBC plays a critical role in ensuring the local community has access to high quality sports and leisure facilities with the overall aim of increasing participation in sport and physical activity amongst the general population and this having a positive effect in areas such as health and wellbeing and social inclusion.
27. Procurement of a new contract supports the delivery of a number of Council priorities as set out in the Corporate Implications of this report, and supports the implementation of the Council's Leisure Strategy, with Chapter 1 Leisure Facilities Strategy to be considered for approval by Executive on 8 January 2013.
28. The proposed procurement route will enable consideration of re-opening of the Houghton Regis Leisure Centre swimming pool to be made with due consideration of the financial implications as recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Conclusion

29. Executive is recommended to approve the procurement of a leisure management contract for the facilities set out in this report.

Appendices:

None

Background papers and their location: (open to public inspection)

Leisure Facility Strategy www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: City Deal
Report of: Cllr Nigel Young, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities-
Strategic Planning and Economic Development

Summary: The report proposes that Central Bedfordshire Council expresses an interest in participating in a Milton Keynes- based City Deal, supporting the wider South East Midlands economic area.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Liz Wade, Assistant Director, Economic Growth, Skills and Regeneration
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) To respond to the timetable advised by the SEMLEP Executive Group to prepare and submit an expression of interest to Cabinet Office by the 15 January 2013.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Core purpose of the City Deal is to enable and accelerate the delivery of economic growth. This will respond directly to our corporate priorities of:

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

And

- Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport.

Financial:

1. The City Deal will appraise and develop with central government forward funding models to finance the delivery of critical infrastructure that holds back economic growth.
2. The final City Deal requires a compelling case to put to government that drives efficiency in the use of public money in the area and delivers stronger outcomes with the same or fewer resources.

3. The initial costs of the City Deal expression of interest will be covered within the current Sustainable Communities 2012-13 budgets. If the City Deal is invited to progress following this stage the need for additional resource will need to be reviewed to ensure the full engagement in the preparations and negotiations with central government.

Legal:

4. Any City Deal requires a strong governance model as part of the proposition to proceed. This could include the readiness to pool budgets and make area wide decisions on spending based on agreed economic criteria.
5. The governance arrangement will need to be appropriate and robust and operate across the whole City Deal defined area. This must include a joined up approach across the policy areas that are being addressed and political commitment into delivering the deal accepting the risk and potential rewards. The governance arrangements will need to be agreed with the parties involved.

Risk Management:

6. A risk appraisal of the City Deal will be required to assess the exposure to risk and how this can be mitigated. At this stage the risks are not identified as the components of the City Deal at this early stage have not been agreed. The City Deal is likely to include financial risk of forward funding, reputational risk of the partnership arrangements, political risk of the enduring nature of the City Deal as a key policy initiative, economic risk of delivery, governance risks and risks of the failure of partnership working.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

7. Not Applicable at this stage of expression of interest. Appropriate and additional staff resources to manage the project in the longer term may be required once the scale and type of the potential interventions is known.

Equalities/Human Rights:

8. A City Deal will need to draw on a robust evidence base of economic need and ensure that it does not unfairly discriminate. A full equality assessment and full compliance with our legal duties will be required at the time of the final agreement.

Public Health:

9. The environment and access to decent housing and employment are key determinants of public health and wellbeing in the area. The City Deal seeks to drive local economic growth and boost local economies in the context of delivering sustainable growth and therefore has a direct and positive impact on the community health outcomes.

Community Safety:

10. The growth agenda in any area has the potential to impact on community safety. Infrastructure changes, increases in housing and improving local economies all have links to crime and disorder whether that is by increasing employment and housing opportunities for offenders wishing to break their offending behaviour or for victims that may be fleeing domestic abuse and starting afresh. The Council has a statutory duty to do all that it reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder in its area, across all of the Councils functions, and as City Deal progresses consideration will need to be given to the impact on community safety as projects, surveys etc are commissioned.

Sustainability:

11. The environmental agenda and in particular the approaches to low carbon technologies and applications often feature in the first wave of City Deals. Transport and improving inter urban transport linkages promoting the use of alternative choices to the car are opportunities within the City deal that are likely to feature during the development of the agreement. The Council is already engaged with Milton Keynes and partners on this agenda through the Plugged in Places project, SEMLEP Green Economy Group and is forming a Local Transport Board in conjunction with Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes Council.

Procurement:

12. Not Applicable at this stage of negotiation. Procurement of any projects or commissions will follow the corporate procurement policies and financial procedures that safeguard public spending.

Overview and Scrutiny:

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

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development the negotiation and development of a Milton Keynes- based City Deal on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council.**

<i>Reason for Recommendation:</i>	<i>So that the Council can participate and influence the shape of the potential City Deal in securing additional tools and flexibilities to drive local economic growth.</i>
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Executive Summary

14. City Deals represent an opportunity to shift power and funding from the centre to the local level. Success will require new innovative approaches to how economic areas will work together and potentially new stronger local governance arrangements for shared decision making.

15. This report outlines the opportunity to join with Milton Keynes and potentially others in the South East Midlands Local Enterprise area to drive economic growth on the ground. 20 cities and their wider areas have been invited to compete to form a City Deal agreement with Central Government. The City Deal proposes that cities and the wider functional areas are the engines of economic growth and seeks to actively work with fast growing cities in areas such as the South East Midlands which have the potential to benefit from further devolution of power and funding from the centre to the local level to drive economic growth.
16. The proposed City Deal needs to pass the first stage of a formal expression of interest in January to be invited to work with Central Government in setting out a formal agreement at the local level. This could be a simple request for a single combined capital pot or a greater return of taxation to cities and areas over the long-term. The final agreement is anticipated to last for at least a period of at least 10-15 years. Some elements of the agreements reached in the first wave City Deals propose a period up to 30 years.

Background

17. In July 2012, Government agreed the first wave of City Deal with the eight largest cities outside London and their wider economic areas. They are Greater Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle, Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Liverpool, Nottingham and Bristol and West of England. These agreements were bespoke to reflect the different needs of the cities. Together they aim to create 175,000 jobs and 37,000 new apprenticeships over the next 20 years.
18. The aims were:
 - To give cities the powers and the tools they need to drive local economic growth
 - Unlock projects or initiatives that will boost their economies; and
 - Strengthen the governance arrangements of each city.
19. The economic challenge of the City Deal must be in full accordance with the Governments general economic strategies and policies that seek to reduce regulation, create well functioning markets, promote and enable the environment for business and boost private sector growth and investment.

Expression of Interest

20. Milton Keynes was invited alongside 19 other cities to be part of the second wave of City Deals at the end of October 2012. The advice to date received is that the City Deal requires at least one other local authority to reflect the wider functional economic area to succeed at the formal expression of interest stage required to be submitted by the 15th January 2013. The process of selection is expected to be competitive with 10-12 proceeding to the next stage following the assessment of the formal expression of interest. Inclusion is not guaranteed by Government. Results of the expression of interest stage are expected to be announced in the week beginning the 11 February 2013.

21. A draft Expression of Interest was prepared and submitted to the Cabinet Office team by Milton Keynes on the 30 November for comment. This indicated the opportunity for partnering authorities to become involved.
22. Initial informal discussions have been held at Leader and Chief Executive level with MK and SEMLEP to discuss the opportunities that this could bring forward in the delivery of our Development Strategy.

Potential City Deal Areas

23. Each City Deal will be offered the opportunity to apply for core flexibilities that are likely to apply to most areas generically in supporting economic growth and specific 'bespoke' elements tailored and evidenced by the local economic assessment.
24. The first wave of City deals has informed the generic areas of common interest. The core areas are likely to include the forward funding of utilities, skills, inward investment, localisations and use of the business rate retention. Potentially a number of other areas will develop as negotiations with Government progress in this second wave.
25. Bespoke elements will address very specific evidenced local economic needs or site specific interventions at a local level. A bespoke area could for example include specific employment sector or skill need as a tailored extension of the core offer. In the SEMLEP area this could include specific asks in terms of the engineering and advanced manufacturing and technology sectors.
26. The draft Expression of Interest has indicated the Milton Keynes interest in the following areas:-
 - (a) Capital Funding and borrowing to forward fund infrastructure.
 - (b) Housing and raising the housing debt cap to accelerate delivery to meet housing needs.
 - (c) Marketing and Inward Investment, including super fast broadband provision.
 - (d) Innovative Transport Solutions, including low carbon approaches and development of smart grids developing stronger inter urban public transport choice.
 - (e) Skills Programmes to meet current and prospective business needs, including apprenticeships.
27. Further bespoke elements can be added and could be site or sector specific, but must evidence and demonstrate the difference a City Deal will make in the driving economic growth.

Opportunities and Benefits for Central Bedfordshire

28. Our draft Development Strategy sets out our plan to deliver 28,700 new homes and 27,000 new jobs by 2031. In 2011/12 Central Bedfordshire delivered 1,310 new homes. If we are to deliver this level of growth we need to ensure all steps are taken to secure the critical infrastructure to deliver sustainable high quality communities in the planned urban extensions. The City Deal offers a new platform to achieve this in developing new models to forward fund the necessary infrastructure.
29. Creating employment opportunities to match this level of population growth is equally important. Between 1998 and 2008 Central Bedfordshire created an estimated 9,950 jobs of which approximately 4,000 have been in the private sector. If we are to meet our target of 27,000 jobs by 2031 a step change in job creation is required. The City Deal offers the opportunity to discuss across Central Government what additional help can be secured to pump prime both public and private investment to attract and secure more job growth across our area.

Assessment of Expression of Interest

30. The City Deal assessment by the Cabinet Office of the expression of interest will focus on the following five areas:
 - (a) contain proposals for stronger governance across their functional economic area, so that decisions necessary for the growth of the area as a whole can be taken quickly and effectively;
 - (b) contain proposals for harnessing significantly greater private sector input, expertise and resources;
 - (c) demonstrate strong political commitment and readiness to put resources into delivering the deal;
 - (d) present proposals that are consistent with the need to drive efficiency in the use of public money in the area, doing more with less, in pursuit of the Government's medium term goal to eliminate the deficit; and
 - (e) propose reforms for City Deal areas which represent the leading edge of the Government's general economic strategy – to reduce regulation, create well-functioning markets, promote an enabling environment for business and boost private sector growth and investment.

Conclusion and Next Steps

31. This opportunity gives Central Bedfordshire the basis for new relationship directly with Government in the delivery of our Development Strategy. It provides a national platform with all Government departments to focus on the economic challenges we face in unlocking the economic potential of this area.

32. Current Government policy identifies cities as one of the key drivers of economic growth. A specific Cities Policy Unit was created in the Deputy Prime Ministers Cabinet Office in August 2011 to work with cities and Government to deliver a new approach to economic growth. The Right Honourable Greg Clark MP has been appointed as the Minister for Cities in addition to his existing responsibilities in both DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) and BIS (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills). City Deals will be led by this unit and will consider the growth of cities and their wider functional economic areas such as the South East Midlands and continued engagement with them will be critical.
33. It is recommended that we support the next stages of the negotiation of the City Deal.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Unlocking Growth in Cities, HM Government, December 2011

http://www.dpm.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files_dpm/resources/Guide-to-City-Deals-wave-1.pdf

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013 - 2014
Report of: Cllr Brian Spurr, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services
Summary: The report sets out the proposed Community Safety Partnership Plan for endorsement by the Executive and adoption by Council.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Joy Craven, Community Safety Partnership Manager
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) Not Applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The three priorities identified in the Central Bedfordshire Community Safety Plan make a significant contribution to the quality of life of our local residents and communities and supports the Councils priority to enhance our local communities by:

- Reducing levels of crime by 10% from 3312 in 2010/11 by 10% to 2980 by 2016.
- Decreasing levels of ASB from 2011/2012 recorded incident figures by 10% to 2016.

Financial:

1. In 2012/13 the Council received £117K from the Home Office Community Safety Fund to support Community Safety Partnership work. In 2012/2013 the Community Safety Fund transfers to the Police and Crime Commissioner.
2. The transfer of the Community Safety Fund has no direct impact on the Council's base budget as the funding is treated as 'in year' income and expenditure, and there is no direct impact on existing services or posts.

3. The Community Safety Partnership will need to consider how it will commission services and work when the fund transfers, and this will involve working with the Police and Crime Commissioner to identify alternative options for commissioning work.

Legal:

4. Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council has a statutory duty to do all that it reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder in its area. The Crime and Disorder Act also places a statutory duty on the Council, along with the other Responsible Authorities, to produce an annual partnership strategic assessment which identifies crime and disorder priorities for the area.

Risk Management:

5. There is a risk to the Council's reputation for working in partnership if it does not support the priorities identified through the partnership strategic assessment process, and an inability for the CBT to deliver its 'Keeping Our Communities Safe' priority. There is also a risk of failure to discharge statutory duty of the Partnership.
6. There are potential community implications if work on the identified priorities is not undertaken as these are the three priorities which have scored highest through the risk matrix, and are known to affect Public Confidence and Fear of Crime.
7. The partnership is aware of financial risks, including failure to identify alternative sources of funds or delivery methods for commissioning work.
8. The identified risks will be monitored and reviewed and mitigating actions identified.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

9. There are no staffing implications for the Council.

Equalities/Human Rights:

10. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and 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.
11. Central Bedfordshire Council seeks to provide services which address the needs of all members of the community. As such the Council conducts Equality Impact Assessments as strategies, policies and services are developed to:
 - consider issues relating to the protected characteristics
 - obtain a clearer understanding of how different groups may be affected
 - identify changes which may need to be built into an initiative as it is developed
 - comply with legislative requirements & Identify good practice.

12. The CSP has carried out an Equality Impact Assessment which has shown three subjects that require development and research. These three subjects are consistent with the refreshed priorities of the CSP.
13. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has recently issued a follow up inquiry report focused on it's investigation into disability-related harassment. This highlights the need for Community Safety Partnerships to play a lead role in preventing and tackling disability – related harassment. The Commission will review progress in the local implementation of its recommendations in September 2013, 2015 and 2017. If progress is found to be lacking the Commission will consider invoking its formal enforcement powers.
14. The impact of working on the proposed priorities will not discriminate against individuals or groups. In fact the work around Anti-Social Behaviour, Reoffending and Domestic Abuse will support minority groups and individuals who may not have felt supported, or who may have felt ignored. By working on the three CSP priorities identified, there will be no unlawful discrimination or contradictions under the European Convention of Human Rights.

Public Health

15. The work of the CSP contributes to making Central Bedfordshire a safer place to work and live. Work on the three priorities will help support victims and lower the number of abuse incidents they have, support their wellbeing, and in turn support the local and national economy.

Community Safety:

16. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the Council to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder. Support for the plan will ensure that the Council proactively contributes to addressing the identified community safety priorities for Central Bedfordshire.
17. The detrimental impact of crime, and anti social behaviour is a high priority for local residents, and the work to be undertaken in addressing the identified priorities will improve the quality of life for our communities; help reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti social behaviour itself and promote public confidence in our services and those offered by our partners.

Sustainability:

18. Sustainability relies upon improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of our area and the people who live in the area. Being safe and feeling safe in an area supports the economic, social and environmental aspirations for Central Bedfordshire. The Community Safety Plan supports these aspirations.

Procurement:

19. The CSP follows the Procurement Procedure Rules for Central Bedfordshire Council when procuring services and goods.
20. The governance for commissioning of funds is set out within the Terms of Reference for the CSP.

Overview and Scrutiny:

21. The Sustainable Communities OSC considered the CSP Plan and priorities for 2013/14 at their meeting on 18 October 2012. The Committee agreed to endorse the plan and priorities. Whilst the Committee did not feel it was necessary to make a further recommendation Members did also ask that concerns relating to the emerging issue of metal theft be noted. It was commented that good work was being undertaken in relation to tackling metal theft and raising awareness of this issue locally and this needed to continue.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **endorse the Strategic Assessment and the CSP Priorities; and**
2. **recommend to Council the adoption of the CSP Plan 2013 – 2014.**

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

Executive Summary

22. CSPs have a statutory duty to produce a Partnership Plan. This plan is developed from the Partnership Strategic Assessment, which analyses crime and disorder in our area and identifies the emerging priorities that need to be focused on. As priorities will change over time, the Partnership Plan is reviewed annually.
23. This plan covers the period April 2013 – March 2014 and aligns to other local and countywide plans from partner agencies. It sets out what Central Bedfordshire CSP, aims to achieve, by taking an `intelligence led' approach to community safety ensuring that we get the right resources in the right place at the right time to sustain reductions in crime and disorder. The plan also sets out what it will deliver over the next 12 months, the resources available, how performance will be measured and how we will communicate and consult with local people.

Background

24. Community safety is an area of concern for all communities. It is consistently a high public priority, and one that can affect the quality of life for individuals and entire communities. It is acknowledged that community safety cannot be done by the police alone, and is dependent on a number of organisations, and services, working together to find solutions to community problems.

25. Community safety aims to reduce crime and disorder, antisocial behaviour and other behaviour affecting the local environment, as well as reducing the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, reducing the fear of crime and increasing public confidence in their safety.

Statutory Processes

26. As a responsible authority of the Central Bedfordshire CSP, the Council has a statutory duty to work with other local agencies and organisations to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder - including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, as well as the misuse of drugs in their area.

The responsible authorities for Central Bedfordshire CSP are:

- Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Bedfordshire Police
- Bedfordshire Probation Trust
- Central Bedfordshire Council
- NHS Bedfordshire

27. The responsible authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that they work together as a CSP, and using information gathered from the statutory partnership strategic assessment identify the emerging community safety priorities for the partnership area. Having identified these priorities the partnership is then required to develop a CSP Plan, which sets out the action to support its priorities over the following 12 month period (Appendix A).

28. Each year the agreed priorities are refreshed through a partnership strategic assessment. A risk matrix is used at the start of the assessment process, to assess the emerging priorities, with regard to national & local strategies, community concern, volume, impact, harm and performance.

29. The three emerging priorities identified for Central Bedfordshire for 2013-2014 are:

1. Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour – emphasis on nuisance & personal ASB.
2. Reduce Offending – emphasis on substance users and young people.
3. Reduce Violent Offences – emphasis on domestic abuse and night time economy.

30. The three priorities have been a high priority when analysing public consultation data; by way of the Residents Survey and Community Safety awareness raising events.

31. Council Members were consulted on the priorities during September 2012. The emerging priorities were taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 October 2012 where the Committee agreed to endorse the plan and priorities.

The Community Safety Plan

32. The CSP Plan covers the following areas:
- the role of Community Safety
 - aims of Community Safety
 - our priorities
 - what we will do & how we will review our progress
 - communication
33. The draft plan has been circulated to the CSP Executive members and has been approved, subject to agreement by Central Bedfordshire Together (CBT) at its meeting on 13 December 2012. Delegated authority has been given to the Chair and Vice Chair of the CSP to make any required amendments arising from CBT.
34. The partnership will target its work around the three priorities. A review of outcomes will take place after six months. The review will monitor progress made against the priorities, the partnership work taking place and it will consider if there are any other community safety risks that need to be addressed. The update report will be used to inform the Partnership and the next partnership strategic assessment.
35. Performance management is undertaken by the Community Safety Executive, which looks at overall performance, funding, the strategic assessment and Partnership Plan, and ensures that the CSP complies with statutory requirements and adopts best practice.
36. The Steering Group takes a co-ordinated, problem solving approach to identifying, planning and implementing agreed outcomes to support the priorities in the Partnership Plan. Partners will inform the group of the progress in their areas and progress towards their action plans and outcomes. The Steering Group is also required to make recommendations to the CSP Executive on various aspects of the Partnerships work.
37. Specific delivery groups sit underneath the Steering Group. These look at individual priorities, develop action plans and deliver the tactical activity required to reduce risk and improve performance.

Conclusion and Next Steps

38. As a responsible authority of the CSP, the Council is obliged to ensure that all of the statutory duties of the CSP are complied with, including identifying priorities for the area and the creation of the CSP Plan.
39. The CSP's strategic assessment priorities and CSP Plan will offer a framework for partnership working for the benefit of the local community.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Community Safety Partnership Plan

Background Papers: (open to public inspection) - None



Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013 - 2014

***“Working together to make Central
Bedfordshire a safer place to live”***

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Glossary of Terms

Acronym	
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
ASBRAC	Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference
BDAT	Bedfordshire Drugs & Alcohol Action Team
CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CBT	Central Bedfordshire Together
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
ISVA	Independent Sexual Violence Advisor
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MERJ	Mentoring & Restorative Justice Project
NHS	National Health Service
NTE	Night Time Economy
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
SAC	Serious Acquisitive Crime
SARAC	Sexual Assault Risk Assessment Conference

Introduction

Partnership Plan

Each Community Safety Partnership (CSP) across the country is required to produce a Partnership Plan. This plan builds on the Partnership Strategic Assessment¹, which sets out the analysis of crime and disorder and identifies the priorities which we will focus our efforts into addressing.

This plan covers the period April 2013 – March 2014 and sets out the expectations of Central Bedfordshire CSP, what it will deliver over the next 12 months, how performance will be measured and how we will communicate and consult with local people. The Partnership Plan is reviewed annually as priorities do not always remain relevant over long periods of time. The plan aligns to other local and countywide plans from individual and collective agencies (*see page 18 for further details*).

Why do we need a Partnership Plan?

Priorities change as time progresses and the CSP needs to ensure priorities are in line with the needs of the community.

The Partnership Strategic Assessment helps partners to understand the community safety problems and assists in setting priorities for the CSP. The Partnership Plan helps develop and plan our activities and projects to meet community needs. It provide value for money, and as each assessment is reviewed provides a clear understanding of future issues and priorities. It is about providing an 'intelligence led' approach to community safety, ensuring that we get the right resources in the right place at the right time to sustain reductions in crime and disorder.

New Legislation

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 sets out the abolition of the current Police Authorities in England and Wales, which will be replaced with a directly elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). Unlike the previous Police Authority the PCC will not be a 'responsible authority', and so will not be a member of the CSP. However there is a provision in the Act that places a mutual duty on the PCC and CSP to co-operate to reduce crime, disorder and re-offending. When putting the Police and Crime Plan together the PCC must have regard for the priorities of the CSP, and in turn, the CSP must have regard for the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan.

Due to these changes the CSP has brought forward the timings of this years Strategic Assessment and plan, in order that our priorities are identified in good time for the incoming PCC and their first Police and Crime Plan.

From 1st April 2013, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 Clinical Commissioning Groups will become a 'responsible authority' on the CSP, replacing Primary Care Trusts.

¹ A Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment is an annual statutory requirement for every CSP. Using partnership data, information and intelligence, risks and vulnerabilities are highlighted, priority areas are identified and recommendations are made. These priorities identify what the CSP should collectively work towards over the following 12 months.

Community Safety – our vision and aims

Community Safety Vision

“Working together to make Central Bedfordshire a safer place to live”

Community safety is an area of concern for all communities. It is consistently a high public priority, and one that can affect the quality of life for individuals and entire communities. Partnership approaches to tackling crime and disorder are largely built on the principle that no single agency can deal with, or be responsible for dealing with, complex community safety and crime problems.

There are a range of ways of describing what constitutes a partnership approach; however it can be described in simple terms as a co-operative relationship between organisations² to achieve a common goal.

Community Safety Aims

Community safety aims to reduce crime, disorder, antisocial behaviour and other behaviour affecting the local environment, as well as reducing the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, reducing the fear of crime and increasing public confidence in our service.

As one of the five thematic partnerships of the Central Bedfordshire Together (CBT)³, community safety has an integral role in achieving the CBT Vision to ensure Central Bedfordshire is:

‘Globally connected, delivering sustainable growth to ensure green, prosperous and ambitious place for the benefit of all’.

Delivering to the three CSP priorities we have identified for 2013 - 2014 will have a positive effect on greater economic and community prosperity, sustainable growth and raising standards across Central Bedfordshire.

² Partners in the CSP are: Bedfordshire Drugs and Alcohol Action Team, Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service, Clinical Commissioning Group, Bedfordshire Police, Bedfordshire Probation Trust, Central Bedfordshire Council, Domestic & Sexual Abuse Partnership, Housing Providers, Local Criminal Justice Board, Voluntary & Community Sector, Youth Offending Service

³ The CBT (formally LSP) is a non-statutory, multi-agency partnership, which brings together the different parts of the public, private, voluntary and community sector; allowing different initiatives and services to support one another so they can work together more effectively. The CBT has five Thematic Groups. The primary function of each group is to develop and implement action plans for their thematic area. The CSP is one of these thematic groups.

Achievements against our three priorities in 2012 - 2013

Priority One	Description
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	To help combat repeat victimisation of anti-social behaviour we will pull our resources together to support victims and their families, support vulnerable members of the community, and tackle those who commit anti-social behaviour

What has happened in 2012 – 2013?

- ◆ Between July 2011- June 2012 there were 11,359 ASB incidents, this is a decrease of 8% from the same time period in the previous year
- ◆ An Anti Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC) has been established and launched in September 2012 to hear the cases of high risk and vulnerable victims. This provides a partnership service to victims and repeat victims who would not have received joined up bespoke care, or support, if their case had not been heard at the ASBRAC.
- ◆ A new risk assessment and case prioritisation matrix has been introduced across the partnership to provide early identification of high risk victims
- ◆ Bedfordshire Police now use a call handling script to assist in the identification of vulnerable and high risk victims of ASB when they contact the police
- ◆ An on-line ASB reporting form has been created. It provides an internet based approach for those who do not want to, or can not, speak directly to a partner to report an incident of ASB
- ◆ Victim Support has agreed to accept case referrals for victims of ASB incidents that do not involve the commission of a crime
- ◆ Specialist Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) have been trained in ASB case work and legislation. These PCSO's, based in each of the Local Policing Teams in Central Bedfordshire, support the work of the ASB Team with joint activity on cases supporting victims of ASB
- ◆ The Mentoring & Restorative Justice (MERJ) project started in September 2012. Referrals are made for hotspot areas that are suffering with ASB and that involve young people. Restorative justice sessional work practitioners then use a restorative mentoring approach to engage with young people, and allow young people to see the consequences of their actions via restorative justice meetings with victims.
- ◆ Detailed guidance to those suffering noise nuisance, explaining how they can be assisted and the service they are entitled to, has been made available on Central Bedfordshire Council's website

Priority Two	Description
Reoffending	We aim to reduce the high number of offences that are committed by the small percentage of offenders who regularly commit them. We aim to support and engage with IOM ⁴

What has happened in 2012 – 2013?

- ◆ From July 2011 – June 2012 crime fell by over 17% with big reductions seen in crime types usually associated with prolific and priority offenders. Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) has reduced by 21%, domestic burglary has reduced by 30% and non domestic burglary has reduced by 50%
- ◆ The total number of reoffences committed by Central Bedfordshire offenders has decreased by 30% since the rollout of IOM in June 2011
- ◆ The percentage of Central Bedfordshire offenders at liberty who then go on to reoffend has also decreased by 40%, in comparison to 13% Countywide.
- ◆ The CSP has acknowledged the additional support that the IOM Accommodation pathway requires, and the accommodation support offenders need. Additional resources have been identified which will provide extra suitable accommodation for offenders in the area. This work will commence at the beginning of 2013.
- ◆ September 2012 saw the opening of the Substance Misuse Recover Hubs in Dunstable and Bedford. This three year service was commissioned by NHS Bedfordshire, working in partnership with the Bedfordshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team (BDAT) to ensure substance misusers in Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough received the correct care, support and service they need for their addictions. This service is available to all offenders who are supported to move away from a drug / alcohol lifestyle which leads to their offending behaviour
- ◆ Having identified a consistently low referral rate of offenders to IOM, research was undertaken to identify the reasons why. It was identified that Luton and Bedford IOM offenders significantly impact on Central Bedfordshire, with over 50% of the total offences in Central attributed to IOM offenders were committed by those living in Luton or Bedford. This research is being looked at further to increase our learning.
- ◆ Between July 2010 – June 2012 arrest data shows that the top 20 offenders arrested include three offenders who are part of IOM, but the remaining 17 are not part of the programme. This research has prompted a new identification system to be established where offenders will be flagged to the IOM team as potential new referrals based on their offending behaviour and risk to the area.

⁴ As a co-ordinated multi-agency partnership Integrated Offender Management (IOM) will work with offenders most at risk of re-offending and causing harm. The 7 offender pathways of IOM are Accommodation, Attitudes & Behaviours, Children & Families, Drugs & Alcohol, Education & Training & Employment, Finance & Debt, Physical & Mental Health

Priority Three	Description
Domestic Abuse	<p>We aim to increase the reporting of domestic abuse so that we can fully understand the scale of the issue and offer victims more support</p> <p>We aim to increase the number of repeat incidents being referred to the MARAC⁵</p>

What has happened in 2012 – 2013?

- ◆ From July 2011 – June 2012 there were 2,458 reported domestic abuse incidents a decrease of 10% from the previous year
- ◆ There has been a 42% increase in referrals to the MARAC from April – August 2012 (91 referrals) compared with 64 referrals from the previous year
- ◆ An independent MARAC evaluation is being conducted. Outcomes of the review are expected by the start of quarter four 2012 - 2013
- ◆ The Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme has been launched. The programme targets male offenders who commit domestic abuse to support a change of thinking and behaviour so they can break the cycle of abuse
- ◆ A SARAC⁶ has been established for high risk and vulnerable victims. It provides a partnership service to those who would not have received joined up bespoke care, or support, if their case can not been heard at the SARAC
- ◆ A Sexual Violence Training Programme has been launched. The training seeks to raise awareness and knowledge of professionals working with victims, or potential victims, of sexual abuse
- ◆ A Sexual Violence outreach program has been launched. Local support is provided for those who are not able to report sexual abuse, do not wish to come forward to the police, or who live in isolated communities

⁵ MARAC = Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference which addresses the needs of high risk victims of domestic abuse. These conferences bring together professionals from a range of agencies to share information and work together to put in place measures which reduce the risk to the victim and any children

⁶ SARAC = Sexual Assault Risk Assessment Conference

Work on Emerging Issues from 2012 – 2013

Within the Partnership Strategic Assessment 2011 – 2012, the following topics were highlighted as being an issue and/or needing further research, within Central Bedfordshire:

- ◆ **Night time economy (NTE)** – The CSP has implemented a NTE action plan across Central Bedfordshire, which is responsive to emerging and high risk issues within the community.
The Dunstable High Street North area was identified as having a specific need due to high levels of crime, violence, disorder, ASB and licensed premises. A partnership task group was formed to work through actions to address these issues. Enhancements have been made to PubWatch in Central Bedfordshire, ensuring that landlords contact each other when a patron has been banned, CCTV are advised of the situation, and promotion of the scheme with consequences of bad behaviour is visible for all to see. The NTE is still a high risk issue for the CSP and forms one of our priorities in 2013 – 2014.
- ◆ **Downside, Dunstable** – This area was identified as having specific needs due to low education, high unemployment, high crime, high domestic violence and a large number of young single parents. In August & September 2012, three service events were held to gain the involvement of young females and mothers to promote local services, encourage residents to re-enter education and provide them with information on healthy relationships, career options, health, fitness, sexual health and financial advice. Over 100 members of the community attended the three events seeking advice and receiving support. By providing members of the community with information we provide them with the tools to better their way of living and discover healthy relationships. This will also enable their children to grow up in happy healthy environments and hopefully encourage them to remain in education.
- ◆ **Hate Crime** – An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and has highlighted that we do not fully understand the issues surrounding hate crime within Central Bedfordshire, with a possibility of under reporting of incidents. A workshop was held with experts to establish evidence in organisations, ascertain what data is available and the understanding partners have of this issue. A report is being brought together identifying the next steps and options for the CSP, which will be discussed, and recommendations made, at the CSP Steering Group and CSP Executive in December 2012.
- ◆ **Robbery** – During 2012 Central Bedfordshire saw a rise in robberies. Long term robbery crime figures put Central Bedfordshire in one of the worst performing groups for our most similar family⁷. The increase in robbery was around the long term hotspot Dog Kennel Walk in Dunstable. This area had been agreed improvement planning, CCTV enhancement and environmental change, as a long term solution. In the short term, and to prevent further offences during the summer, a small task and finish group was established. The group arranged for communication material to be targeted at potential victims and offenders, signage to be erected in the local area, a redeployable CCTV camera to be located in Dog Kennel Walk and additional police patrols in the area. Subsequently there has been a decrease of robberies at that location.

⁷ IQUANTA grouping for Central Bedfordshire, with like community safety partnerships / police forces.

Our Priorities and Emerging Issue for 2013 – 2014

Priority One – Reducing ASB (personal and nuisance)

Findings

- Between July 2009 – June 2012 the number of ASB incidents reported to the police decreased by 26%.
- Between July 2011–June 2012 there were on average 868 incidents a month
- 28% of all incidents reported are for loutish, rowdy or noisy behaviour, 15% are for rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour, 5% nuisance vehicles & 5% nuisance motorcycles.
- The Local Residents Survey & Pride In consultations carried out indicate that ASB is a priority with our residents
- The population profile of Central Bedfordshire will change by 2021 with older people representing 20% of all people. With a growing aging population in Central Bedfordshire there is an expected increase in ASB incidents

Objectives

- Identify and intervene appropriately with offenders and in hot spot locations
- Reduce repeat victims and repeat calls of ASB
- Support repeat and vulnerable victims through the ASBRAC
- Support and work with young people referred to the MERJ Project

Outcomes

- Fewer victims
- Lowering the risk of victims who receive our support
- Reduction of ASB in hot spot locations
- Increase in community confidence

Measures

- Reduced reports to the Police and Local Authority
- Number of referrals to the ASBRAC
- Number of repeat referrals to the ASBRAC
- Increase in people who are confident

We will

- Design a performance framework for the ASBRAC
- In six months we will evaluate the outcomes of the ASBRAC
- Work with partner agencies to develop a product which maps the elderly & vulnerable population so targeted work can be conducted
- Work with the community in deprived areas, and use communication to raise awareness of ASB and how to prevent it
- Utilise consultations & surveys to understand the feelings of the local community
- Extend the ASB on-line reporting tool to other agencies
- Produce information leaflets to cover 'How to report ASB', 'ASB Services for Victims', 'ASB Information for Practitioners'
- Learn from young people on the MERJ project & the local communities where restorative justice and mediation is taking place

Priority Two – Reducing offending, specifically substance misuse and youth offending

Findings

- From April 2011 - March 2012 recorded crime reduced by 17% compared to the same time period in the previous year
- From July 2010 - June 2012 13% of all offenders arrested were under 18yrs.
- The number of average re-offences has reduced from 2.32 re-offences per offenders at Quarter 1 2011-2012 to 1 re-offence in Quarter 1 2012-2013
- In Central Bedfordshire, of the 32 IOM offenders, 15 have an alcohol dependency & 28 have a drug dependency (some offenders are dependent on both alcohol & drugs)
- British Crime Survey results show that a high percentage of victims feel the offender was taking drugs or was drunk when the offence occurred
- Surveys carried out indicate that activities for teenagers are a priority with our residents
- There have been lower numbers of IOM referrals than expected, but it has been identified that offenders who live in Bedford & Luton offend in Central Bedfordshire. These offenders significantly impact on local communities

Objectives

- Identify repeat offenders who can be referred to the IOM programme
- Identify young people on the cusp of offending behaviour and work with them to prevent an offending pattern
- Support the Substance Misuse Recovery Hubs by promoting their work and service
- Review the outcomes of the Substance Misuse Recovery Hubs

Outcomes

- Fewer victims
- Lowering offending rates of offenders
- Supporting young people and increasing their chances for a crime free life
- Decreasing the intake of harmful substances by frequent users
- Increase in community confidence

Measures

- Reduction in crime
- Reduction in reoffending
- Increase in offenders going through successful substance misuse treatment
- Increase number of young people being supported

We will

- Review the IOM Business Case and funding for 2013 – 2015
- Work on the recommendations from the review of why there are low levels of IOM referrals in Central Bedfordshire, and increase referrals accordingly
- We will research crime, drug testing and arrest data monthly and recommend potential IOM referrals
- We will commission a problem profile on youth offending, to provide a clear picture of the issue in Central Bedfordshire
- We will work with the Substance Misuse provider to review progress and performance

Priority Three – Reducing violence against the person, specifically from domestic abuse and night time economy (NTE)

Findings

- Violent crime is the second highest recorded crime type in Central Bedfordshire. Violent crime can be split in to two clear categories; domestic abuse & violent crime within the NTE
- From July 2009 – June 2012 there were 9,843 incidents of domestic abuse
- From July 2011 - June 2012 there were 2,562 incidents domestic abuse
- From July 2009 – June 2012 crimes within the hours of the NTE account for 27% of all recorded crime

Objectives

- Identify and intervene appropriately with victims of domestic abuse
- Support repeat and vulnerable victims through the MARAC & SARAC
- Work with partners and Licensees to reduce disorder and violence in NTE locations
- Increase the number of active business in Pubwatch and Radio Link

Outcomes

- Fewer victims
- Lowering the risk to victims who receive our support
- Reduction of hot spot locations and violent offences
- Increase in support for business in hotspot areas
- Increase in community confidence

Measures

- Reduction of violent crime
- Increase in referrals to the MARAC & SARAC
- Increase in Pubwatch and Radiolink participants

We will

- Improve the MARAC and SARAC following their evaluations
- Recognise our hot spot locations, conduct communication and awareness campaigns, and review long term prevention measures that can be applied
- Work with Children's Services to map out current services available for victims and offenders aged under 18
- Seek an efficient method for domestic abuse offending of the IOM cohort data to be shared with Probation
- Work with the NTE problem solving group to ensure prevention and education is available for those that are using the NTE, and also available to those young people who are looking at using the NTE

Key Emerging Issue

Metal Thefts has been identified⁸ as the key emerging issue in 2013 – 2014.

Nationally scrap metal theft has seen an increase of around 150% in the past few years. Increases are due to the continuing rise in the price of metal which has meant this crime is seen as much more lucrative and lower risk than other crimes. It is expected that metal prices will continue to rise until 2015.

Metal thefts have steadily increased in Bedfordshire since October 2010 and due to its rural nature, Central Bedfordshire has suffered a disproportionately high amount. From July 2010 – June 2012 Central Bedfordshire suffered 646 metal thefts and from January – April 2012 there was a 280% increase in the theft of catalytic converters when compared to the same time period in the previous year.

What we will do

- Work with partners and agencies to support local communities with crime prevention advice with the aim of reducing rural crime
- Work with drivers and businesses of targeted vehicles to provide crime prevention with the aim of reducing crime
- Review work of neighbouring CSPs to identify opportunities for joint working and resource sharing
- Work with partners on Operation Chinook⁹ to engage with scrap metal dealers in order to restrict the sale and movement of stolen metal

⁸ Identified from the Partnership Strategic Assessment

⁹ The aim of Operation Chinook is to engage with scrap metal dealers in order to restrict the sale and movement of stolen metal. Bedfordshire Police are leading on this operation in Central Bedfordshire

Victim Services

In May 2012 a report by the Victim Services Advocate was produced for Bedfordshire¹⁰. This report aimed to summarise current countywide support for victims, identify what victims need from services and to propose a course of action by the PCC to meet these needs.

In June 2012 the CSP Executive recommended that due to the links and interrelated activity with several partnerships, Central Bedfordshire Together (CBT) lead and co-ordinate a partnership response to the five recommendations from this report. CBT recommended that scoping work was carried out by three partnerships to identify service gaps and improvements within Central Bedfordshire.

In September a working group was established and have started to map services, draw together previous strands of work and identify gaps. The results of this work will be discussed at CBT, and put forward to the PCC. It is hoped that it will provide the PCC with the local picture of services, where there are service gaps and where additional support is required.

The CSP has mapped activity around the recommendations for Central Bedfordshire:

Recommendation	CSP Response	Gaps
<p>1. Co-ordination & collection of county-wide data & information on victims' needs, and the services available to meet them. Make gaps visible so steps can be taken to address unmet need</p>	<p>The Partnership Analyst, Safer Communities Co-ordinator and Partnership Officer review and research data, intelligence and confidence information to ascertain what our communities feel, where are vulnerable groups and areas are and where support services need to be located. Targeted work and communication is used in high risk areas, at Pride In Events and at service awareness events</p>	<p>Gap analysis needs to be made available to partnerships so areas of risk can be identified and plans to mitigate the risks can be put in place. Gaps that partnerships are uncovering need to be fed back to the office of the PCC for a full picture to be established.</p>
<p>2. Ensure that appropriate, relevant services are available to victims. Prioritise services which are able to meet victims' needs as they change & those which prevent escalation of risk</p>	<p>Joint partnership working with the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Abuse services has seen improvements in victim care and support, including the opening of the Emerald Centre in 2011. The launch of the ASBRAC in September will assist the high risk cases of ASB being dealt with in a multi agency approach, so the right level support can be to the victim</p>	<p>Service for victims who are low risk is sporadic and identification of support services / sign posting for these victims needs to take place</p>
<p>3. Ensure Bedfordshire Police engage effectively with the</p>	<p>The CSP conducts engagement events and raises awareness in the community, at these, promotion of the</p>	<p>Co-ordination is required for work with young people via existing</p>

¹⁰ The Victim Support Advocate project was commissioned by the former Victims Commissioner in anticipation of the arrival of the PCC. The full report for Bedfordshire can be found at www.victimsupport.org.uk/vsa

<p>whole community, including young people. Provide opportunities for victims to make contact with local officers and build trust and rapport</p>	<p>Safer Neighbourhood Teams; Victims Services & Public Protection Team can be given. Victim Support services are invited to attend partnership events to build up knowledge and trust within the community</p>	<p>mechanisms in place. Building trust and relationships with our communities is essential</p>
<p>4. A victim-centered approach is taken by all services. This means that all aspects of the support offered, including communication, aims to meet victims' needs, rather than simply addressing the crime committed</p>	<p>Community Safety ASB Team takes a risk assessment based approach and put the victim at the heart of the case. Contact with the victim throughout the case is essential and maintains a supportive relationship. Domestic & Sexual Abuse services are victim centered. The Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) services provide a constant level of communication to victims under their care. The establishment of the SARAC in 2011 and the ASBRAC in September 2012 also shows the commitment to a victim centered approach, bringing partners together to provide the right level of service and agency input</p>	<p>As noted in Recommendation 2, work to support those victims who are considered low risk needs to take place</p>
<p>5. Champion the development of a joined-up, county-wide approach to needs assessment and support for victims. This should include setting clear referral pathways, promoting joined-up working between services, and ensuring effective handovers between services as victims' individual needs change</p>	<p>Good communication lines when dealing with cases is essential, referral pathways must be clear and defined. Good working links are in place with Children's Services, Safeguarding, Housing, Refuges and Health providers</p>	<p>The use of Stop Hate UK in Bedfordshire needs to be promoted more widely for victims of Hate Crime. Work needs to take place to address knowledge gaps of partners and referral pathways for services in place (such as the ASBRAC, SARAC, MARAC & Safeguarding).</p>

Confidence

Central Bedfordshire is a safe place to live and work, and although crime levels are low the fear of crime is high. Increasing public confidence and reducing the fear of crime is a priority for the CSP. The CSP utilises consultations carried out by partners to ask pertinent questions, engage and consult at community events, and community meetings, to understand how our communities feel, which in turn helps us to ensure we are focused in the right areas and able to offer reassurance where and when it is needed.

Nationally, people's contact and engagement with the police and their views of how local authorities are dealing with crime and ASB is measured through the British Crime Survey (BCS), published annually. For the crime types and population it covers, the BCS has shown that crime in England and Wales has fallen considerably since 1995. However the BCS has consistently shown that overall public perception is that crime is increasing.

At a local level, the proportion of Central Bedfordshire residents who feel safe outside in their local area during the day is 89% but after dark that drops to 54%¹¹. 81% of Central Bedfordshire residents are satisfied with their local area, an increase of 6% from 2009¹². 72% of people in Central Bedfordshire thought that the police and local council were dealing with the local issues that matter most¹³.

The Residents Survey 2011 asked what was important in making somewhere good to live, and what was needed to improve the local area. The following issues (listed in alphabetical order) were highlighted as priorities:

- **Activities for teenagers**
- Job opportunities
- **Levels of crime & ASB**
- Road & pavement repairs
- Traffic congestion

The CSP holds Pride In events within identified, vulnerable locations or vulnerable communities. These events are a joint partnership and community approach to deal with specific community and environmental issues. The CSP engages with local residents and business to provide support, and works together to build confidence in the area.

At each Pride In event questionnaires are completed by local residents. These questionnaires ask residents for information on what their priorities and concerns are, but they also identify those who are willing to be involved with Street Watch, Speed Watch and/or Neighbourhood Watch. Following a Pride In, communication is circulated based on the 'You Said We Did' approach, feeding back to the community the achievements from the day. Post events, longer term issues and tasks are given as actions and partners follow up on strategic activity. The CSP are committed to these engagement events and will continue to hold Pride In events during 2013 – 2014.

¹¹ Source: Central Bedfordshire Place Survey 2008

¹² Source: Central Bedfordshire Residents' Survey 2011

¹³ Police Authority survey in 2010

Equality Impact

The CSP is committed to providing services and support which address the needs of all members of the community. As such the council conducts Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) as strategies, policies and services are developed to:

- Consider issues relating to age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion & belief and sexual orientation
- Obtain a clearer understanding of how different groups may be affected
- Comply with legislative requirements & identify good practice

The Community Safety EIA has been reviewed, which has highlighted:

Groups	Highlighted areas
Disabled People	1 in 4 have experience hate crime Disabled women are found to be twice as likely to experience domestic violence as non-disabled people
Women	30% of domestic violence starts in pregnancy 45% of women in England & Wales experience domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking during their lifetime It is estimated that 75% - 95% of rape cases are not reported to the police
Transgender	Transgender persons experience high levels of hate crime and hate incidents
Race, Religion, Belief	The Police estimate that most racial/religious hate crime is not reported because victims are too frightened or embarrassed
Sexual Orientation	The Police estimate that 90% of homophobic crime goes unreported because victims are too frightened or embarrassed 1 in 6 experiencing homophobic hate incidents in the last 3 years experienced a physical assault

The information throughout this plan has identified what has been, and is being done, within Central Bedfordshire to address our priorities and support our communities. However in the EIA we have highlighted members of the community with protected characteristics who suffer with domestic abuse, ASB and hate crime, and do not feel able to, or want to, report the incident.

The CSP Steering Group and sub groups are cognisant of this work and the requirements that any action plans created for the three CSP priorities reflect vulnerable groups and individual needs of our communities.

Over the next few months the CSP are exploring options for carrying out a piece of work that will enable us to have a better understanding of the true level and types of hate crime in Central Bedfordshire; identify the barriers that stop victims from reporting incidents of hate crime and identify groups and individuals particularly at risk. The options for this work will be considered at the CSP Steering Group and then recommended to the CSP Executive, together with identified next steps.

Links with wider agencies, partners and strategies

The Sustainable Communities Strategy for Central Bedfordshire is a prospectus for the area and sets out what sort of place residents want it to be. The strategy looks at a number of key issues which Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedfordshire Police, Fire, Health, education, business and the voluntary and community sector want to address in the years to come. The community safety section of the strategy outlines the priorities which have been agreed, and the steps that we aim to take to address them.

The Central Bedfordshire Community Engagement Strategy outlines what community engagement activity will take place across Central Bedfordshire. Part of the engagement activity is the 'Let's Talk Together Meetings'. These meetings ensure that communities can ask advice, obtain information, receive details of services and challenge any areas of concern they have. Community safety partners are in attendance at each of these meetings to assist community members with their issues, offer support and signpost people to services that can assist them.

The Central Bedfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) has recently been refreshed. This assessment is the overarching primary evidence base for Health and Well-Being boards to decide on key local health priorities. The CSP are linked to this process and have provided robust information to inform the JSNA and support the development of future health, care and well-being needs of the local population.

A Central Bedfordshire Prospectus has been developed, and is available on the Central Bedfordshire Council website, which assists all candidates standing for PCC. The prospectus is intended to raise understanding and awareness of the make up and key issues in Central Bedfordshire.

The Police and Crime Plan 2013 – 2017 will be a plan created by the PCC. It will set out the priorities for Bedfordshire Police, objectives for policing and reducing crime and disorder in the area, how resources will be allocated and agreements for funding and reporting on work. The CSP and the PCC will have due regard for each others priorities and plans.

The Alcohol Strategy for Central Bedfordshire is being developed. A partnership event took place in the summer which identified what needs to happen at a local level and at a county level. The next steps in this process will be for partners to come together to write the strategy and action plan, identify a lead officer for Central Bedfordshire and potentially bring together an Alcohol Strategy Group to monitor progress towards the action plan. These developments will take place from September – January 2013.

Work is underway with the Criminal Justice Domestic Abuse Group, a sub group of the Local Criminal Justice Board. The work of the group is focussed on criminal justice in relation to domestic abuse specifically on the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts, with outcomes of improved criminal justice processes resulting in improved victim safety, justice for alleged perpetrators and effective operation of the Court.

Communication

The CSP is committed to communicate its successes, outcomes and results to residents and communities of Central Bedfordshire. The CSP Communications Plan was refreshed in 2012 and highlights the work that will be undertaken by the partnership, a schedule of publications, national days / weeks of action and key links with communication leads within partner organisations.

There are several mechanisms that we utilise dependant on the topic, target audience or type of message we would like to communicate. With the growing use of social media the CSP regularly uses Twitter and Facebook, and in 2012 started to utilise the Central Bedfordshire Email Alert system. This facility provides targeted email advice and information to members of the community who have subscribed to it.

News Central is Central Bedfordshire Councils newsletter, and is delivered to all households in Central Bedfordshire. Our residents tell us that they prefer to hear from us via this medium. Two articles about the priorities of the CSP, results and our outcomes were communicated in 2012 – 2013 to raise awareness and inform our communities. This is a facility we will continue to utilise during 2013 – 2014.

Members of the local community are working together with the CSP to produce a specific Community Safety Magazine to be delivered to each household across the area. The booklet will bring together all themes of community safety, where to go if support is needed, advice, guidance and information. This initiative is free of charge to the CSP and should be distributed in the winter of 2012.

Where the CSP holds a local service event or Pride In, we distribute leaflets and put up posters in prominent positions in the area, to promote what we are doing and why. Post an event taking place we ensure that the 'You Said We Did' approach is taken, with feedback being given on the results of the event, long term objectives and where communities can get support and assistance. Partners assist in this feedback with articles going into local Town / Parish Council magazines and newsletters.

The CBT E-Zine is an internet based communication tool. On a quarterly basis the five thematic partnerships of CBT provide information, articles and updates to their work and future working. E-zine is used to engage with stakeholders to keep them informed and to enable increased understanding of partnership activities.

Conclusions

- Considerable legislative change has taken place over the past 12 months, and there has been funding and structure changes with various organisations. However the CSP has achieved a great deal and worked robustly towards improving services for our communities over the past year
- Over the past year there has been significant reductions in crime and ASB within Central Bedfordshire – meaning there have been less victims within our communities
- Over the past year there has been a decrease in the number of offenders on the IOM programme reoffending – so fewer crimes have been committed and there have been less victims
- There have been improvements in the way victims of ASB are risk assessed, ensuring they receive the correct level of care and support
- There have been improvements in the co-ordinated support that high risk victims of ASB and Sexual Abuse receive with the implementation of the ASBRAC and the SARAC
- From November 2012 the CSP will be working with the new PCC in Bedfordshire to help reduce crime, disorder and support those who are vulnerable within our communities
- Over the coming year we will be working to identify current gaps in service for victims which will provide the PCC with a local level knowledge
- Over the coming year we will research the issues surrounding hate crime in Central Bedfordshire and look to improve awareness, reporting and support for those who require it
- The new three CSP priorities for 2013 – 2014 have been identified using a robust mechanism and review what our local communities feel are their high risk areas

Appendix A. Risk Matrix from the Partnership Strategic Assessment

CSP Strategic Assessment Risk Matrix										
0 - N/A 1 - Low 3 - Medium 5 - High	Performance issue - deteriorating	National Priority	Local Priority	Community Priority	Harm to Property	Harm to People	Generator of Fear/Worry	Cost Impact	Likelihood	Total
ASB (Criminal)	3	5	5	5	3	4	5	4	5	39
ASB (Environmental)	3	5	5	5	2	3	5	3	5	36
Substance Misuse Offending	1	5	5	3	4	4	3	5	4	34
Adult Offending	1	5	5	2	4	5	2	5	3	32
Youth Offending (0-17)	3	5	1	3	4	5	3	5	2	31
Domestic Abuse	3	5	5	1	1	5	1	5	5	31
Most Serious Violence	3	5	5	3	1	5	3	5	1	31
NTE	2	5	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	31
Terrorism	1	5	5	1	4	5	2	5	3	31
Theft of metal	4	5	5	2	5	2	1	5	2	31
Personal robbery	4	5	4	2	3	3	2	3	2	28
Distraction burglary	1	5	3	3	5	4	3	2	1	27
Burglary Dwelling	1	5	3	2	5	2	3	2	3	26
Criminal Damage	1	1	2	5	5	2	4	1	4	25
Sexual Offences	3	5	0	1	1	4	1	4	4	23
TFMV & Interference	2	5	3	1	3	1	1	3	4	23
Hate Crime	2	5	4	1	2	4	2	2	1	23
Rape / attempted rape	3	5	0	1	1	4	1	4	3	22
Other Violence	2	1	4	1	1	3	3	3	4	22
TOMV/TWOC	2	5	3	1	5	2	1	2	1	22
Domestic extremism	1	5	1	1	3	4	2	3	1	21
Business robbery	2	1	3	2	3	3	2	3	1	20
Burglary Other	2	1	2	1	5	2	1	2	3	19
Theft from the Person	3	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	3	18
Prostitution	2	5	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	17
Fraud & Forgery	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	3	2	15
Theft of petrol	1	1	2	1	5	1	1	2	1	15
Other Theft	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	3	15
Shoplifting	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	4	15
Street drinking	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	13

To ensure that partnership data is managed in a consistent way, and that the right priorities are identified, a risk matrix is carried out before the strategic assessment is written. Using this assessment process ensures that partnership issues can be compared against each other in an intelligent and structured way. This process provides the CSP justification for why an issue is, or is not, included as a strategic priority.

Following the scoring process, only the highest risks will be assessed and form the basis of the strategic assessment. These will be proposed to the CSP Executive for agreement. This methodology provides transparent, justifiable and auditable evidence and indicates which issues are the highest risk to the CSP and should be considered as strategic priorities

Central Bedfordshire Together (CBT) (Formally Local Strategic Partnership)

- * Quarterly meeting
- * Provide vision and strategic leadership, to improve the quality of life for existing and future residents of Central Bedfordshire. Bringing together & encouraging greater partnership working at a local level & with the different parts of the public, private, community & voluntary sectors; allowing different initiatives & services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively. To ensure that Sustainable Community Strategy is delivered & that each partner makes an effective contribution to that delivery

Community Safety Executive Group

- * Quarterly meeting
- * Made up of senior officers from the statutory authorities identified in the Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- * Manages Performance, Agrees Funding, Authorises Strategic Assessment & Partnership Plans, Reviews Steering Group Update & Signs off any Recommendations, Ensures Compliance with National Standards, Manages the Business Plan for the CSP, Gives Direction for the CSP

CSP Steering Group

- * Monthly meeting
- * Monitors Performance, Scrutinises the Priority/Theme Groups, Reviews Action Plans from Priority Groups, Manages and Recommend Communications & Messages, Reviews Risks for the CSP & Recommends Actions to the Priority/Theme Groups/CSP Exec, Supports the CSP Exec by Monitoring the Business Plan

Priority Groups

Integrated Offender Management Delivery Group

- * Oversees the IOM initiative in Bedfordshire
- This group deals with tactical issues, resource decisions and feeds up to the Commissioning Group.

Domestic Abuse & Sexual Abuse Strategy Implementation Group (SIG)

- * To set out a co-ordinated approach to domestic and sexual abuse in Bedfordshire (ex Luton), that will be agreed & implemented by all partners & agencies
- * To identify key actions required to tackle domestic abuse and sexual abuse in Bedfordshire (ex Luton)

ASB Partnership Group

- * Reviews partnership working around ASB
- * Information gathering and retention
- * Works to the strategic action plan following the recommendations from the ASB review

Partnership Tasking Group

- * The practical arm of the CSP, dealing with live time issues that need to be addressed.
- * Reviews where resources need to be placed, & which areas are in need of additional support

Bedfordshire Drugs & Alcohol Action Board

- * Monthly meeting
- * This group is being reviewed in light of the changes in Substance Misuse Commissioning. April 2013 may see a change in structure, remit and role when Public Health take over the role of commissioning Substance Misuse and BDAT

Sexual Abuse Operational Group

- * Bedford & Central Bedfordshire group working on Sexual Abuse
- * Action Plan agreed by both CSP's
- * Strategy in place
- * Group linked to the Domestic Abuse SIG & the SARAC

Theme Groups

Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2013
Subject: Award of the Housing Kitchen & Bathroom Refurbishment Contracts 2013 -2016
Report of: Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing
Summary: The report proposes to award the Contract for Housing Kitchen & Bathroom Refurbishment Service 2013 -2016.

Advising Officer: Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
Contact Officer: Basil Quinn – Housing Asset Manager & Jonathan Rogers – Building Surveyor
Public/Exempt: Public but with an exempt appendix under category number 3 “information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)”.
Wards Affected: All wards in the south of Central Bedfordshire
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The actions support the Council priorities:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs
- Value for money

Financial:

1. The value of the contract per annum is £1.1m for kitchen & bathroom refurbishments. These sums are included in the Landlord Services Business Plan. The contract evaluation is based upon an equal 50% price and 50% quality assessment to help ensure value for money from the contract.

Legal:

2. Standard contract documentation (Foremaster Version 6) as amended to suit our requirements, with composite rates for a completion of either a full kitchen or full bathroom refurbishment.

Risk Management:

3. The contract allows for up to three contractors to be appointed, with the budget to be split equally. This has reduced the risk of one contractor winning all the works and provides us with opportunity to reallocate work to other contractors in the event that a contractor is not performing.
4. If the contract is not awarded there are risks that the kitchen & bathroom programme for 2013 and onwards will not be delivered.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

5. This service is subject to a TUPE transfer of the existing staff from the current contractor providing the service to any new contractors.

Equalities/Human Rights:

6. Equality and diversity are key issues for all directorates within Central Bedfordshire Council. As part of the tender evaluation contractors demonstrated their compliance with the Corporate Equalities Policy and incorporate this commitment within their method statements. As part of ongoing contract monitoring arrangements the Council will check that statutory service delivery and employment requirements relating to equality are being met.
7. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and 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.
8. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) highlighted the following conclusions:
 - i) The contract provides for flexibility in the layout of kitchens and bathrooms, which is particularly important to facilitate accessibility for older people and those with disabilities. In planning works, items such as the height of work surfaces and wall units are taken into account, as is the requirement for other appropriate fixtures and fittings, such as lever taps, and lower heights for wall units in all older people's dwellings.
 - ii) In conjunction with the Kitchen and Bathroom contract, there are services available for people that are vulnerable because of their age or disability, including the aids and adaptations service and internal decoration service. The requirement for facilities such as level access showers and whether tenants are entitled to Disabled Facilities Grants are also taken into consideration, with Occupational Therapy advice, where appropriate.

9. For the tendering of this contract and following a recommendation from the HQN Inspection in 2010, timescales for completion of works have been improved to 10 days for kitchen refurbishment and 7 days for bathroom refurbishment, to reduce disruption. The previous contract required a 15 day turnaround for kitchen or bathroom replacement. Close contract monitoring will be required to ensure that these targets are being met and that work to achieve such targets is not impacting adversely on vulnerable tenants. The contract includes a requirement that essential bathroom and kitchen services are working at the end of a working day or in the unlikely event this is not possible, that alternative facilities are provided.
10. The EIA also highlighted that although the service continually collects tenant diversity information and customer satisfaction data, there appears to be a lack of data and analysis as to the impact of planned maintenance work on specific groups. The service does not collect diversity data for those customers receiving planned maintenance work and the criteria for programming kitchen/bathroom works relate to the age, condition and life expectancy of the kitchen or bathroom, not the vulnerability of the tenant. However, when work to a property is being planned and carried out, the needs of the tenant are taken into consideration.
11. Contractual duties place an emphasis on equality and diversity, including specific requirements to ensure contractors have taken steps to achieve equality in their employment and service practice.

Public Health:

12. There are no public health implications from this report. The kitchen & bathroom refurbishment contract is designed to improve the housing stock not remedy a health issue which would be addressed more urgently.

Community Safety:

13. Not applicable.

Sustainability:

14. Recycling targets will be agreed at contract award, which each contractor.

Procurement:

15. The contract has been tendered in accordance with the Council's Corporate Procurement Rules.

Overview and Scrutiny:

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

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. award the Contract for Housing Kitchen & Bathroom refurbishment contract to three contractors; C, E, F.**

<i>Reason for Recommendation:</i>	<i>So that the Housing Kitchen & Bathroom refurbishment programme is maintained and delivered in 2013 -2016.</i>
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Executive Summary

17. This report outlines the outcome of the tendering of the Housing Kitchen & Bathroom Refurbishment Contract. This contract was procured using standard contract documentation (Foremaster Version 6) as amended to suit our requirements, with composite rates for a completion of either a full kitchen or full bathroom refurbishment.
18. The contract allows for a minimum of two or maximum of three contractors to be appointed, with the budget to be split equally. This has reduced the risk of one contractor winning all the works and provides the opportunity to reallocate work to other contractors in the event that a contractor is not performing.
19. The contracts will provide improved value for money (approximately 5 - 6% saving on the current budget) and also deliver good quality customer care for our residents.
The new contract provides a better service than provided by the existing contractor, with a kitchen being installed in 10 working days, previously 15 working days and a bathroom installed in 7 working days, previously 10 days.

Background

20. The existing 3 contractors withdrew from their contracts in 2010-11 instead of the planned 2013 end date. An interim contract arrangement has been put in place until March 2013 to deliver the planned existing kitchen & bathroom refurbishment programme. The new contract arrangements will commence from April 2013.
21. The Housing Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) is currently consulting on the council's future approach to Decent Homes and refurbishment, until this is concluded this contract meets current policies and commitments.

22. The Contract

- i) This is a one year contract with the option to extend for a further two years subject to performance and annual review.
- ii) An established Tender Documentation, called M3NHMF Schedule of rates 6.0 (Measured Term Contract), with bespoke composite codes forms the basis of the Contract.
- iii) Using this type of contract, the contractor is paid for a full kitchen or bathroom refurbishment according to the floor size. Agreed variation orders are then raised for any adjustment to the original works using pre-priced rates, before the contractor is paid any additional or reduced sums.

23. Other facts relating to the documents are as follows:

- i) The contract was tendered in a way so the council had the option to award to, a minimum of two and maximum of three contractors with the budget being equally split.
- ii) Although the NHF Schedule of Rates doesn't specifically cater for continuous improvement and efficiency gains, provision has been made in the document, making it a contractual requirement for the parties to review these aspects on an ongoing basis and will form the criteria for the option to extend the contract.
- iii) As we can appoint up to three contractors this gives us flexibility and contingency arrangements (in the event of a failure of either contract). This will encourage competition to promote the delivery of a high quality service at all times.

Tender Evaluation

- 24. A contract advert was placed on the 24 January 2012 in an appropriate trade magazine and on the CBC website.
- 25. Thirty four pre qualification questionnaires were received on the 24 February 2012, and twelve contractors were shortlisted.
- 26. Six contractors declined to tender, six tenders were received by the closing date and therefore evaluated.
- 27. The Standard Award Criteria Evaluation Model is a points system based upon 50% of the points being awarded for financial submissions and 50% of the points being awarded for quality method statement submissions/presentation. The criteria for assessment of quality covered the following specific areas; Environment; Equalities; Health & Safety; Insurances & Data Handling; Method of Delivery of the service; Resources to be allocated, Business Continuity; Quality control and Performance Management (KPI's), Customer Care and Social Values.

28. A joint evaluation panel made up of officers and tenants was established to evaluate all tender bids.
 - i) The information provided in the quality method statements was reviewed and scored and five contractors were invited to the final presentation stage. This was to ensure that information provided in Method Statements was substantiated.
29. At the presentation stage all contractors confirmed that the budget would be split three ways if three contractors were selected and this was allowed for in their tendered rates.
30. There was one clear winning contractor and the next two contractors had very similar scores.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Exempt report Award of the Housing Kitchen & Bathroom Refurbishment Contracts 2013 -2016

Background Papers: (open to public inspection) None

Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 January 2012
Subject: Technical Call Off Contract
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones , Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources

Summary: This report seeks approval to appoint by way of tender an organisation that can provide all this Council's requirements for technical consultancy under the terms of a publicly procured tender process.

The appointment of one organisation that has been pre qualified in terms of both hourly rates and quality of consultancy provision will assist the early delivery of Council projects.

It is estimated that the total contract value for the contract will be in excess of £500,000.

Advising Officer: Alan Fleming, Service Director Business Services
Contact Officer: Peter Burt, Head of Strategic Assets
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) To permit the entering into of the contract as early as possible in 2013.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The action supports all the Council Priorities by providing the technical support to many of the Councils projects.

Financial:

1. The pre-qualifying of a consultancy organisation in a competitive tender bid will evidence the best value currently available in the market.
2. All projects utilising the Call Off Contract provider will be obtaining the best value technical consultancy services with the tender process being based upon 40% as to cost and 60% to quality.

3. There will not be any additional cost to the Council, above existing budgets, but this contract will help secure best value in delivering existing commitments.

Legal:

4. The legal implications of this proposal concern the procurement process. These are dealt with in paragraph 13 below. It is also important that in entering into this contract the Council complies with the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006.

Risk Management:

5. The following key risks have been identified:
- a. Failure to discharge statutory responsibilities
 - b. Failure to comply with relevant legislation
 - c. Risk of fraud
 - d. Reputational risk
 - e. Poor value for money
 - f. Inefficiency in procedures
 - g. Procedures not operated in a manner that demonstrates transparency, probity and accountability
 - h. Contract deliverables do not meet perceived needs.
 - i. Failure to secure urgent services at short notice
 - j. Failure to continually improve.
6. The call off contract will be developed against a background of recognising these risks.
7. Effective management of the contract will be critical to mitigating these risks.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

8. Not Applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

9. Public authorities have a statutory duty to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and 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.
10. As part of the procurement process checks will need to be made to ensure that potential providers have good awareness of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty and it's applicability across a wide range of service delivery and employment practices.

Community Safety:

11. Not Applicable.

Sustainability:

12. Not Applicable.

Procurement:

13. The Council's Code of Procurement Governance provides that the Executive must approve expenditure before commencing any procurement over £500,000 per annum. The annual cost of this contract is likely to exceed that threshold. The procurement team will actively support the tender process and the Council's Procurement Procedures will be followed.

Overview and Scrutiny:

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

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **approve the procurement of the Technical Call Off Framework Contract in accordance with the Council's Code of Procurement Governance.**

Reason for Recommendation: To provide a Framework for the early delivery of technical consultancy services for all Council projects requiring this service.

Executive Summary

15. This report seeks approval for tendering the Technical Call Off Framework Contract to provide a qualified organisation capable of delivering these services at agreed hourly rates and avoid the need to go out to tender on every occasion that the need arises.
16. The estimated total contract value is in excess of £500,000 p.a. and will help to deliver the Regeneration, Service Hubs, Infrastructure, Schools, Health, Housing and Development projects for the Council.
17. To date the Council has tendered individual areas of work for all the above projects and much time is taken through these processes.
18. To achieve the best results from quantity Assets have joined with Housing to deliver a larger scope of work to be tendered and a joint tender will be undertaken. Twelve consultancy firms have agreed to accept the tender documents which are being prepared by the Procurement Team. Examples of the type of work that will be capable of being drawn down include but not limited to:
- a. Programme management
 - b. Project and development management
 - c. Development appraisal and viability assessments
 - d. Feasibility study advice
 - e. Strategic advice and option appraisal
 - f. Mapping, visual and other presentational support work
 - g. Quantity surveying advice
 - h. Architectural advice, including landscaping

- i. Listed buildings advice
- j. Party wall and rights of light advice
- k. Engineering advice
- l. Transportation and highways advice
- m. Space utilisation
- n. Business case preparation
- o. Dilapidations advice
- p. Support to CBC legal in the development of project/ development briefs and technical specifications for the procurement of contractors/ development partners/ additional professional services
- q. Stakeholder engagement

Conclusion and Next Steps

19. Executive is asked to approve the tendering of the Technical Call Off Contract to provide the Council with pre qualified technical expertise that it can call upon to support the Council's numerous projects.

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