

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 21 February 2013.

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs A Barker (Chairman)
Cllr Ms C Maudlin (Vice-Chairman)

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

Apologies for Absence

Cllrs	L Birt	Cllrs	N B Costin	N J Sheppard
	D Bowater		J G Jamieson	

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

C/12/49 Prayers

Prayers were taken by Reverend Dean Henley, Rector for Campton, Clophill and Haynes and Assistant Dean for Ampthill & Shefford Deanery.

C/12/50 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

C/12/51 **Members' Interests**

Councillor Dr Egan declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8 'Recommendations from the Executive' as she was a member of the management board of Dunstable Citizen Advice Bureau. She was present during the item.

C/12/52 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

Council stood in silent tribute to the memory of Louise Miller, a member of staff in the Human Resources Team who had died tragically in a road traffic accident.

The Chairman advised that she was hosting a fund raising event, 'Lets Face the Music' on 3 March 2013, the proceeds from which would go to the East Anglian Air Ambulance Service.

C/12/53 **Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications**

In the absence of the Leader, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources made no announcements or communications.

C/12/54 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

No members of the public had registered to speak.

C/12/55 **Recommendations from the Executive**

(a) Budget 2013/14 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2013 to 2017

The Council considered recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2013 seeking approval of the proposed Medium Term Financial Plan and Revenue Budget for 2013/14. It also considered the Council Tax Resolution in conjunction with this item.

In his introduction, the Deputy Leader drew attention to the external factors which had influenced the proposed budget and the financial challenges faced by local authorities. He referred to the significant social and economic drivers of change within Central Bedfordshire across the medium term and beyond. He commented that the proposed budget had to be sustainable, affordable and support the Council's priorities. He was pleased that the proposed budget entailed no increase in the Council's element of the Council Tax.

The Deputy Leader referred to the proposed Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2016/17 which included funding for significant capital works associated with the Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling (BEaR) Project and the Woodside Link. The financial position of the Housing Revenue Account was positive and would enable the Council to achieve the ambitions proposed in the emerging Housing Asset Management Strategy.

In accordance with the Constitution, the Leaders of the Liberal Democrat and Independent Groups spoke to the item. The Leader of the Independent Group moved an additional recommendation, which was duly seconded:-

“(i) that cut CSE 08 on page 90 of the Executive Committee agenda of 5 February be deleted, included as a growth item and the amounts mentioned be doubled. That the amount budgeted for 2013-2014 be increased by the same percentage.”

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the response to consultation with Overview and Scrutiny as set out in paragraph 38 and the response to consultation with the public stakeholders as set out in Appendix A to the Executive report, be noted;**
- 2. that the Revenue Budget for 2013/14 and the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2013/14 to 2016/17 be approved;**
- 3. that the adjustments to the draft Budget as described in paragraph 24 of the Executive report be noted;**
- 4. that the Council Tax Base as set out in Appendix G to the Executive report be noted;**
- 5. that the allocation of £0.8m to Parish Councils as set out in paragraph 24 in the Executive report be noted;**
- 6. that a Band D Council Tax of £1,308.33 for residents of Central Bedfordshire be approved;**
- 7. that the fees and charges set out in Appendix J to the Executive report be approved; and**

8. **that certain efficiency proposals identified in Appendix I to the Executive report would be subject to formal consultation and Equality Impact Assessment in the coming months and instructs the Corporate Management Team to propose alternative compensatory savings if it appears, following a review of the outcome of the consultation and Equality Impact Assessment, that any specific proposal cannot be delivered.**
9. **that the resolution set out in the separate report on the Council Tax be approved.**

(b) Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2016/17

The Council considered the recommendation from the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 21 February 2013 that proposed changes to the Council's Constitution to allow the Executive, subject to certain provisions, to add schemes from a reserve list to the Capital Programme.

RESOLVED

that the proposed changes to the Council's Constitution regarding the extension of the Executive's authority to add schemes to the Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved and adopted.

The Council then considered the recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2013 in respect of the proposed Capital Programme for 2013/14 to 2016/17.

RESOLVED

1. **that the 2013/14 to 2016/17 Capital Programme (as per Appendix A to the Executive report) be approved;**
2. **that the Capital Programme Reserve List 2013/14 to 2016/17 (as per Appendix B to the Executive report) be approved; and**
3. **that the revised capital, treasury and borrowing Prudential Indicators contained within Appendix C to the Executive report be approved.**

(c) Budget Report for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Service) Business Plan

The Council considered the recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February in respect of the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) during the first year of the self financing regime.

RESOLVED

1. that the HRA's debt portfolio and interest payments due in 2012/13 be noted;
2. that the proposal for no principal debt repayments in the current financial year or during the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan, namely 2012/13 - 2016/17 be approved;
3. that the creation of a new reserve, to be called the Strategic Reserve, be approved;
4. to fund 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 and Strategic Reserve;
5. that the HRA Revenue Budget for 2013/14 and the Landlord Service Business Plan summary at Appendix A to the Executive report be approved;
6. that the 2013/14 to 2016/17 HRA Capital Programme at Appendix B to the Executive report be approved;
7. that 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 be approved; and
8. that the proposed allocation of £0.2m to support financial advice, money management and debt problems for customers be approved.

C/12/56

Ward Presentation

The Council received a ward presentation from Councillor Zerny highlighting his concerns over the funding of small rural schools across Central Bedfordshire and the use of the Council's 'growth fund' to protect smaller schools. He requested that the Executive Member for Children's Services engage with Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum to consider relaxing the relevant funding criteria.

Councillor Gurney, in view of her position as another Potton ward member, commented on the presentation and indicated that she would discuss the position with Councillor Zerny and the Executive Member for Children's Services.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 7.45 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated