

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



**please ask for** Sandra Hobbs  
**direct line** 0300 300 5257  
**date** 24 October 2013

## NOTICE OF MEETING

### EXECUTIVE

Date & Time

**Tuesday, 5 November 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   |
|       | 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 – 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 24 September 2013.

3. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members any declarations of interest.

4. **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any matters of communication from the Chairman.

5. **Petitions**

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

6. **Public Participation**

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

7. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

To receive the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 December 2013 to 30 November 2014.

### Decisions

| Item | Subject   | Page Nos. |
|------|---|-----------|
| 8.   | <b>Central Bedfordshire Draft Equality and Diversity Strategy 2013 - 16</b> | 31 - 84   |

The report proposes that the Executive consider and approve the draft Equality and Diversity Strategy and recommends its adoption to full Council.

|     |   |           |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 9.  | <b>Framework Agreement for Care Homes in Central Bedfordshire</b>   | 85 - 106  |
|     | This report provides an overview of the approach to be undertaken to implement the framework agreement and quality monitoring system that were approved by the Executive on 6 November 2012.  |           |
| 10. | <b>Fees and Allowances for Foster Carers</b>  | 107 - 116 |
|     | The report outlines the outcome of a review of the foster care allowance scheme and recommends an increase in the remuneration for Central Bedfordshire Council foster carers and address the high use of independent foster agency placements.   |           |
| 11. | <b>Implementation of the Leisure Facilities Strategy, including findings of the Flitwick Leisure Centre Invest to Save Feasibility Study</b>  | 117 - 128 |
|     | A report on implementation of the Leisure Facilities Strategy, including the findings of the Flitwick Leisure Centre invest to save feasibility study. The report recommends redevelopment of Flitwick Leisure Centre.  |           |
| 12. | <b>Roker Park, Stotfold</b>   | 129 - 132 |
|     | The report proposes that Central Bedfordshire Council releases the covenant restricting use of Roker Park, Stotfold, to enable Stotfold Town Council to dispose of the land for residential development, thus enabling the football ground to be relocated and upgraded, as required by the Football Association as a prerequisite to the local club remaining in the league. |           |
| 13. | <b>Award of the Day to Day Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance Contract 2014-2017</b>  | 133 - 138 |
|     | The report proposes to award the Day to Day Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance Contract 2014 - 2017   |           |

**Consultation Matters**

| <b>Item</b> | <b>Subject</b>  | <b>Page Nos.</b> |
|-------------|---|------------------|
| 14.         | <b>Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2015/16</b><br>The report seeks Executive approval to commence consultation on Admission Arrangements for 2015/16, specifically the Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme and the Council's admission arrangements for | 139 - 176        |

Community and VC Schools.  
15. **Exclusion of 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.

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| <b>Exempt Decisions</b> |
|-------------------------|

| <b>Item</b> | <b>Subject</b>   | <b>Exempt Para.</b> | <b>Page Nos.</b> |
|-------------|--|---------------------|------------------|
| 16.         | <b>Flitwick Leisure Centre Invest to Save Feasibility Study</b><br><br>To consider the financial implications contained in the exempt report.                                      | 3                   | 177 - 192        |
| 17.         | <b>Roker Park, Stotfold</b><br><br>To consider the financial implications contained in the exempt report.  | 3                   | 193 - 196        |
| 18.         | <b>Award of the Day to Day Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance Contract 2014- 2017</b><br><br>To consider the financial information contained in the exempt appendix. | 3                   | 197 - 202        |

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

**CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 24 September 2013.

**PRESENT**

Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

|                                |       |   |       |   |
|--------------------------------|-------|---|-------|---|
| Executive Members:             | Cllrs | C Hegley<br>B J Spurr<br>R C Stay   | Cllrs | Mrs P E Turner MBE<br>M A G Versallion  |
| Deputy Executive Members:      | Cllrs | A D Brown<br>I Dalgarno<br>D J Hopkin   | Cllrs | A M Turner<br>B Wells<br>R D Wenham   |
| Apologies for<br>Absence from: |       | Executive Members   |       | Deputy Executive Members  |
|                                | Cllrs | J Jamieson<br>JN Young  | Cllrs | Mrs S Clark<br>A L Dodwell  |
| Members in Attendance:         | Cllrs | Mrs A Barker<br>R D Berry<br>Mrs G Clarke<br>C C Gomm   | Cllrs | K C Matthews<br>J Murray<br>B Saunders  |
| Officers in Attendance         |       | Mr R Carr<br>Ms D Clarke<br><br>Mr A Fleming<br>Mrs E Grant<br><br>Mrs S Hobbs<br>Mrs J Moakes<br><br>Mrs J Ogley<br><br>Mr M Scott<br>Mr C Warboys |       | Chief Executive<br>Director of Improvement and<br>Corporate Services<br>Service Director - Business Services<br>Deputy Chief Executive/Director of<br>Children's Services<br>Committee Services Officer<br>Assistant Director Environmental<br>Services<br>Director of Social Care, Health and<br>Housing<br>Chief Information Officer<br>Chief Finance Officer |

**The Vice-Chairman chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chairman.**

E/13/39

**Minutes**

**RESOLVED**

**that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

E/13/40 **Members' Interests**

Councillor Jones declared a personal interest in Agenda item 10 'Central Bedfordshire Next Generation Network' as his son worked in the telecommunication industry. Cllr Jones was present during the item but did not take part in any discussion or vote.

E/13/41 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Vice-Chairman advised Members that item 9 'Green Waste Disposal Contracts' had been withdrawn.

The Audit Committee had signed off the 2012/13 Statement of Accounts on 23 September 2013. The annual accounts would be published with the audit opinion and certificate before 30 September.

The essential road resurfacing works at Poynters Road, Dunstable had been completed successfully and the road reopened on 23 September 2013.

E/13/42 **Petitions**

No petitions were received.

E/13/43 **Public Participation**

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

**1. Mr Allen**

Mr Allen referred to the Traffic Management meeting that took place on 27 March 2012 to consider letters submitted to the Council relating to 11 highway related matters in the Station Road/New Road Sandy area. He was concerned that there should be a record of the increased number of letters submitted.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that he had been corresponding with Mr Allen regarding this issue and explained that there was not a requirement to produce minutes for the Traffic Management meeting, only a record of the decisions taken. He acknowledged that the report submitted to the Traffic Management meeting had stated that 62 identical letters had been received. At the meeting Officers then advised Members that the number of letters received had increased to 227.

E/13/44 **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

**RESOLVED**

**that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014 be noted.**

E/13/45 **Physical Activity Strategy**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services that set out the proposed Physical Activity Strategy which, if approved would become Chapter 4 of the Leisure Strategy. The Strategy sought to maximise the opportunities for residents to engage in regular physical activity partly for long term improvements in overall levels of health and wellbeing and reduce the demands on public services.

In the ensuing discussion, it was suggested that the Council should encourage and facilitate residents taking up gardening as part of the strategy. The Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services explained that some town and parish councils were already looking for additional land to facilitate this activity.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to have a strategic approach to the provision of and opportunities for physical activity.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the recommendation from the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, that the Council takes strong action to access money to support the delivery of the Strategy via Bedfordshire and Luton County Sports Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board, be supported; and**
- 2. that the Physical Activity Strategy be adopted.**

E/13/46 **Green Waste Disposal Contracts**

This item was withdrawn.

E/13/47 **Central Bedfordshire Next Generation Network**

The Executive considered a report from the Leader of the Council that proposed the use of the Essex Next Generation Network contract by the Council as the vehicle to procure a range of data network and telephony services, in order to achieve Medium Term Financial Plan savings and deliver other non-financial business benefits.

The proposed contract comprised of a range of service offerings including, but not limited to, communication services, broadband, conferencing, contact centre services, wireless, video, mobile voice and data services, local area network and gateway services. The Council did not have to sign-up for the full service list.

In response to questions, the Deputy Executive Member for Corporate Resources explained that the proposed contract was for a 10 year period, but there would be break points after year 4 (2016), year 6 (2018) and year 8 (2020). The proposed contract covered physical infrastructure and not software. The Council would have a place on the Strategic Management Board.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to enter into a long term and EU compliant contractual framework for the provision of data network and telephony services. This catalogue of services would contribute to the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan and provide access to enabling technology to support business change projects requiring access to these facilities.

**RESOLVED**

**that the award of the contract for the supply of Network and Telephony services to Central Bedfordshire Council through the Essex County Council NGN (Next Generation Network) contract be approved.**

E/13/48

**2013 Quarter 1 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided information on the projected outturn for 2013/14 as at the end of June 2013. The current 2013/14 forecast outturn was anticipated to be an estimated £2.1m overspend. However, the budget included £2.1m of contingency costs which could potentially fully offset the forecast overspend.

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

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the Revenue forecast position is noted as a projected overspend of £2.1M;**
- 2. that officers continue with their efforts to achieve a minimum balanced outturn or an underspend.**

E/13/49

**2013 Quarter 1 Capital Budget Monitoring Report**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided information on the projected capital outturn position as at June 2013. The capital budget for 2013/14 was £94.4m and the gross forecast was to spend £87.5m by the year end.



Reason for decision: To complete schemes currently underway and facilitate effective financial management and planning.

**RESOLVED**

1. **to note that the projected outturn position is a gross underspend of £1.5m;**
2. **to defer expenditure of £5.4m to 2014/15; and**
3. **to request officers to continue with their efforts to maximise the use of capital resources.**

E/13/50

**Quarter 1, June 2013/14 Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing and the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided information on the 2013/14 Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital position as at Quarter 1, June 2013. The report projected a year end surplus of £6.661m compared to a budgeted surplus of £4.805m, an improvement of £1.856m. It was predicted that £3.200m would be set aside for the Dukeminster Extra Care facility with the balance of £0.925m being rolled forward into 2014/15.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing confirmed that rent arrears were being monitored very carefully since the introduction of Welfare Reform. The Council had set aside £200,000 from the Housing Revenue Account to help with supporting debt management. If residents needed advice this could be sought from Housing Officers or the Citizens Advice Bureau.

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

**RESOLVED**

1. **the Revenue forecast position of a balanced budget with a contribution to Housing Revenue Account Reserves of £6.661m be noted, thus strengthening the Council's ability to invest and improve its stock of Council Houses;**
2. **the Capital forecast position indicating that expenditure would be £1.291m less than the budget, be noted. This was due to lower than anticipated expenditure on the Dukeminster project; and**
3. **that Right to Buy sales would be monitored for the possible impact on predicted surpluses in the medium to longer term.**

E/13/51 **Quarter 1 Performance Report**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the Quarter 1 2013/14 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council's Medium Term Plan indicator set.

Executive Members highlighted key areas within the performance data and in response to a question the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing explained the position with the Decent Homes target.

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

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the continuing overall strong performance in Quarter 1 for the indicators being used to help support monitoring of progress against the Medium Term Plan priorities be acknowledged; and**
- 2. to recommend officers to further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators as appropriate.**

E/13/52 **Central Bedfordshire Next Generation Network**

See minute no. E/13/47 for details.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 10.34 a.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated .....

**Central Bedfordshire Council  
Forward Plan of Key Decisions  
1 December 2013 to 30 November 2014**

- 1) During the period from **1 December 2013 to 30 November 2014**, Central Bedfordshire Council plans to make key decisions on the issues set out below. “Key decisions” relate to those decisions of the Executive which are likely:
- to result in the incurring of expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant (namely £200,000 or above per annum) having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
  - to be significant in terms of their effects on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the area of Central Bedfordshire.
- 2) The Forward Plan is a general guide to the key decisions to be determined by the Executive and will be updated on a monthly basis. Key decisions will be taken by the Executive as a whole. The Members of the Executive are:

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Cllr James Jamieson        | Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Executive  |
| Cllr Maurice Jones         | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources                                 |
| Cllr Mark Versallion       | Executive Member for Children’s Services   |
| Cllr Mrs Carole Hegley     | Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing                                       |
| Cllr Nigel Young           | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development |
| Cllr Brian Spurr           | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services                                    |
| Cllr Mrs Tricia Turner MBE | Executive Member for Partnerships  |
| Cllr Richard Stay          | Executive Member for External Affairs  |

- 3) Whilst the majority of the Executive’s business at the meetings listed in this Forward Plan will be open to the public and media organisations to attend, there will inevitably be some business to be considered that contains, for example, confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information.

This is a formal notice under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 that part of the Executive meeting listed in this Forward Plan will be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

- 4) Those items identified for decision more than one month in advance may change in forthcoming Plans. Each new Plan supersedes the previous Plan. Any person who wishes to make representations to the Executive about the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made should do so to the officer whose telephone number and e-mail address are shown in the Forward Plan. Any correspondence should be sent to the contact officer at the relevant address as shown below. General questions about the Plan such as specific dates, should be addressed to the Committee Services Manager, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ.
- 5) The agendas for meetings of the Executive will be published as follows:

| Meeting Date      | Publication of Agenda |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 14 May 2013       | 2 May 2013            |
| 25 June 2013      | 13 June 2013          |
| 13 August 2013    | 1 August 2013         |
| 24 September 2013 | 12 September 2013     |
| 5 November 2013   | 24 October 2013       |
| 10 December 2013  | 28 November 2013      |
| 14 January 2014   | 02 January 2014       |
| 4 February 2014   | 23 January 2014       |
| 18 March 2014     | 6 March 2014          |
| 22 April 2014     | 10 April 2014         |
| 27 May 2014       | 15 May 2014           |

# Central Bedfordshire Council

## Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 December 2013 to 30 November 2014

### Key Decisions

Date of Publication: 24 October 2013

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive | Intended Decision                               | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method                               | Documents which may be considered                    | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)  |
|---------|---|---|-------------------------|--|--|--|
| 1.      | BEaR Project -                          | To consider the next stage of the BEaR Project. | 10 December 2013        |  | Report - this report may contain exempt information. | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services<br>Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Ben Finlayson, BEaR Project Manager<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:ben.finlayson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">ben.finlayson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6277   |
| 2.      | Planning Enforcement Plan -             | To adopt the Planning Enforcement Plan.         | 10 December 2013        | Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. | Planning Enforcement Plan                            | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development<br>Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Sue Cawthra, Enforcement & Appeals Team Leader<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:sue.cawthra@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">sue.cawthra@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 4369 |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive            | Intended Decision                                       | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method   | Documents which may be considered      | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)   |
|---------|--|---|-------------------------|--|--|---|
| 3.      | Dukeminster Extra Care Housing Scheme, Dunstable - | To seek Executive approval to award the build contract. | 10 December 2013        | Consultation with stakeholder groups (such as the Older Peoples Reference Group and Sheltered Tenants Action Group) previously undertaken as part of initial scheme proposals presented to the Executive on 5 February 2013. Further consultation with these stakeholders, relevant technical officers and Heads of Service continuing as part of the detailed design phase. | Report - may contain exempt appendices | Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing<br>Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Bernard Carter, Client Manager, Extra Care Expansion Project<br>Email: <a href="mailto:bernard.carter@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">bernard.carter@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 4175 |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive   | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method   | Documents which may be considered  | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)   |
|---------|---|---|-------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|
| 4.      | Proposals for Commissioning of New School Places for Implementation in September 2015 and Proposals for Commissioning of New School Places for Implementation in September 2016 - | 1) Determination of proposals for commissioning of new school places for implementation in September 2015; and 2) to approve commencement of consultations for proposals for commissioning of new school places for implementation in September 2016. | 10 December 2013        | <p>For proposals for New School Places for implementation in September 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the governing body of the schools which are the subject of proposals;</li> <li>• families of pupils, teachers and other staff at the schools;</li> <li>• the governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected;</li> <li>• families of any pupils at any other school who may be affected by the proposals including families of pupils at feeder schools;</li> <li>• trade unions who represent staff at the schools and representatives of trade unions of any other staff at schools who may be affected by the proposals;</li> <li>• Constituency MPs for the schools that are the subject of the proposals;</li> <li>• the local parish council where the school that is the subject of the proposals is situated</li> </ul> <p>Consultation period between May and November 2013 including press releases, public meetings, statutory notices.</p> | Report and Outcome of Consultation | <p>Executive Member for Children's Services<br/> Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br/> Rob Parsons, Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning<br/> Email: <a href="mailto:rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br/> Tel: 0300 300 5572</p> |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive   | Intended Decision  | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method | Documents which may be considered | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)  |
|---------|---|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 5.      | Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Quarter 2 Budget Monitor Reports - | To consider the revenue, capital and HRA quarter 2 budget monitoring report. | 10 December 2013        |                            | Report                            | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147 |



| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive  | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method  | Documents which may be considered   | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)   |
|---------|--|---|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| 6.      | Determination of the Statutory Proposal of the Governing Body of Pulford CoE VA Lower School, Leighton Buzzard - | Determination of the statutory proposal of the Governing Body of Pulford Church of England Voluntary Aided Lower School, Pulford Road, Leighton Buzzard, to enlarge the permanent capacity of the school from 150 places to 225 places with effect from September 2014. | 10 December 2013        | <p>Statutory consultation between 13 May and 17 June 2013.<br/>Representation period to a statutory notice between 19 September and 17 October 2013.<br/>Method of Consultation:<br/>Consultation documents, school website, notices in local press, public meetings with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and other staff at the school</li> <li>• Unions</li> <li>• Families of children at the school</li> <li>• Local Schools in the area of Central Bedfordshire Council</li> <li>• The Pulford Trust</li> <li>• Church of England Diocese</li> <li>• Constituency MP</li> <li>• Leighton Buzzard Town Council.</li> </ul> | Report and the report of the Governing Body. Consultation documents produced, statutory notices served, representations received. | <p>Executive Member for Children's Services<br/>Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br/>Rob Parsons, Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning<br/>Email:<br/><a href="mailto:rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br/>Tel: 0300 300 5572</p> |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive                      | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method  | Documents which may be considered                                    | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)   |
|---------|--|---|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| 7.      | Additional European Social Funding (ESF) Programme Funding - | To agree to the extension of the current ESF contract and the agreement on the use of the additional funding against each of the proposed activities.   | 10 December 2013        | Consultation with stakeholders as part of the development of the 2013 Local Economic Assessment.<br>Consultation undertaken between March and July 2013.<br>Joint working with Bedford Borough as ESF programme delivery covers Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough administrative area. | Report   | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development<br>Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Kate McFarlane, Head of Community Regeneration & Adult Skills<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:kate.mcfarlane@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">kate.mcfarlane@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 5858 |
| 8.      | Outline Planning - Thorn Turn -                              | To mandate the Strategic Assets Team to take forward the Thorn Turn site separate to adjoining landowners and secure the outline planning consent and to approve the required expenditure in order to complete an outline planning application. | 10 December 2013        |   | Report - this item is likely to contain exempt financial information | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Harry Cole, Surveyor<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:harry.cole@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">harry.cole@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 5110  |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive                          | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method | Documents which may be considered | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)  |
|---------|--|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 9.      | Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget and Business Plan 2014/15 - | To consider the draft Housing Revenue Account Budget and Business Plan 2014/15.         | 14 January 2014         |                            | Report                            | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing<br>Comments by 13/12/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147 |
| 10.     | Draft Revenue Budget 2014/15 -                                   | To consider the draft revenue budget for 2014/15, including the draft fees and charges. | 14 January 2014         |                            | Report                            | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 13/12/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147   |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive        | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method | Documents which may be considered | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)  |
|---------|--|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 11.     | Draft Capital Programme - 2014/15 to 2017/18 - | To consider the draft Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2017/18.   | 14 January 2014         |                            | Report                            | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 13/12/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147 |
| 12.     | Consultation on School Funding 2013 -          | To formally discuss and approve the Council's proposed school funding formula following consultation in September 2013. This formula will determine the funding basis for schools and academies in Central Bedfordshire Council area for April 2014/15. | 14 January 2014         |                            | Report                            | Executive Member for Children's Services<br>Comments by 13/12/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Helen Redding, Assistant Director School Improvement<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:helen.redding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">helen.redding@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6057         |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method   | Documents which may be considered | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)   |
|---------|---|---|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| 13.     | Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) -   | To decide the level and range of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charges to be included in the Draft Charge Schedule. | 14 January 2014         | The CIL Preliminary Draft Charge Schedule was the subject of a full public consultation from 14 January to 25 February 2013 which included a developer workshop. Following member endorsement, the CIL Draft Charge Schedule will be the subject of a further 6 week consultation prior to submission to the Government.                                   | Report                            | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development<br>Comments by 13/12/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Jonathan Baldwin, Senior Planning Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:jonathan.baldwin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">jonathan.baldwin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 5510 |
| 14.     | Home to School Transport Policy -       | To agree to adopt the new Home to School Transport Policy for the academic year 2014/15.                                  | 4 February 2014         | Public consultation from 04/10/13 to 22/11/13. Details of the consultation sent directly to all schools.<br>Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee briefed prior to consultation (03/09/13).<br>Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be presented with consultation outcomes and final proposed policy on 13 December 2013. | Report and final policy document. | Executive Member for Children's Services<br>Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Ben Pearson, Head of Children's Services Commissioning<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:ben.pearson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">ben.pearson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 5679  |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive                             | Intended Decision  | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method  | Documents which may be considered  | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)  |
|---------|---|--|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| 15.     | Central Bedfordshire's Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Duties - | To approve a local flood risk strategy for Central Bedfordshire and to create a Sustainable Urban Drainage Approval Board. | 18 March 2014           | <p>CBC is required under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The draft strategy will be subject to public consultation. Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the draft strategy and the public consultation response to the strategy in August/September 2013.</p> <p>Following Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs confirmation of the mandatory sustainable drainage application processes, CBC will also be required to establish a SUDS Approval Board to evaluate, approve and adopt suitable SUDS measures for all new developments.</p> | Summary of Flood and Water Management Act Draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy | <p>Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services<br/>Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer:<br/>Iain Finnigan, Senior Engineer - Policy and Flood Risk Management<br/>Email:<br/><a href="mailto:iain.finnigan@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">iain.finnigan@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br/>Tel: 0300 300 4351</p> |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive  | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method   | Documents which may be considered   | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)   |
|---------|--|---|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| 16.     | Arlesey Masterplan (Land at Chase Farm and Land West and North-East of High Street, Arlesey) - | To adopt the Master Plan for Site Allocations Policy MA8 - land at Chase Farm and land west and north-east of High Street, Arlesey as technical guidance for development management purposes. | 18 March 2014           | Public Consultation taking place October/November 2013. Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. | Report and Masterplan Technical Document  | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development<br>Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Sue Frost, Interim Local Planning and Housing Team Leader<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:sue.frost@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">sue.frost@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 4952 |
| 17.     | Leisure Strategy -   | To adopt Leisure Strategy: Chapter 2 - Recreation & Open Space Strategy, Chapter 3 - Playing Pitch Strategy, Overarching Leisure Strategy.  | 18 March 2014           | Draft strategies to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 January 2014.                  | Chapter 2: Recreation & Open Space Strategy<br>Chapter 3: Playing Pitch Strategy<br>Overarching Leisure Strategy Document | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services<br>Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Jill Dickinson, Head of Leisure Services<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:jill.dickinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">jill.dickinson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 4258   |
| 18.     | Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Reports -       | To consider the revenue, capital and HRA quarter 3 budget monitoring report.  | 18 March 2014           |  | Report  | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 17/03/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147  |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive                  | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method  | Documents which may be considered          | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)   |
|---------|--|---|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| 19.     | Admission Arrangements and Co-ordinated Scheme 2014/15 - | Determination of the Council's Admissions Arrangements and co-ordinated scheme for the academic year 2014/15. | 18 March 2014           |   | Report                                     | Executive Member for Children's Services<br>Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Rob Parsons, Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:pete.dudley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">pete.dudley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 5572   |
| 20.     | Central Bedfordshire Design Guide -                      | To adopt a Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire.   | 18 March 2014           | 4 week public consultation taking place in October – November 2013. | Report and Design Guide Technical document | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development<br>Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Connie Frost-Bryant, Senior Planning Officer, Local Planning and Housing Team<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:connie.frostbryant@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">connie.frostbryant@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 4329 |



| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive             | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method   | Documents which may be considered | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)  |
|---------|---|---|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| 21.     | Planning Guidance for Solar Farms -                 | To approve the adoption of Planning Guidance for Solar Farms for Development Management Purposes. | 18 March 2014           | Consultation with residents and other key stakeholders during December 2013/January 2014. Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2014. | Planning Guidance for Solar Farms | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services<br>Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Stephen Mooring, Acting Team Leader for Environmental Policy Team<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:stephen.mooring@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">stephen.mooring@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6241 |
| 22.     | Procurement of Insurance Arrangements for 2014/15 - | To award the contract for the Council's insurance arrangements for 2014/15.                       | 18 March 2014           |  | Exempt Report                     | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 17/02/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147                         |

| Ref No.                  | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive | Intended Decision   | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method  | Documents which may be considered  | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)  |
|--------------------------|---|---|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>NON KEY DECISIONS</b> |   |   |                         |   |  |  |
| 23.                      | Minerals and Waste Core Strategy -      | To recommend to Council the adoption of the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy. | 10 December 2013        | A wide range of stakeholders were involved in consultations undertaken from 2006 to 2012, using methods which include an internet portal, deposit of hard copies at points of presence, and displaying the Core Strategy on the Council website. Consultees included the Parish Councils, statutory bodies, special interest groups, minerals industry, waste management industry, and individuals who had expressed an interest at previous consultations. | Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and the Inspector's report following the Examination in public. | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Strategic Planning and Economic Development<br>Comments by 04/10/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Roy Romans, Minerals and Waste Team Leader<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:roy.romans@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">roy.romans@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6039 |
| 24.                      | Council Tax Support Strategy -          | To recommend to Council the approval of the Council Tax Support Strategy.     | 10 December 2013        |   | Report   | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147                           |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive                                    | Intended Decision  | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method | Documents which may be considered | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)   |
|---------|--|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 25.     | Quarter 2 Performance Report -   | To consider the quarter 2 performance report.  | 10 December 2013        |                            | Report                            | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 09/11/13 to Contact Officer:<br>Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 5517 |
| 26.     | Capital Programme - 2014/15 to 2017/18 -                                   | To recommend to Council the proposed Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2017/18 for approval.                        | 4 February 2014         |                            | Report                            | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147                    |
| 27.     | Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2014-2018 - | To recommend to Council the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2014-2018 for approval. | 4 February 2014         |                            | Report                            | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147                    |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive                           | Intended Decision  | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method  | Documents which may be considered   | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)  |
|---------|---|--|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| 28.     | Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2014/15 - 2017/18 - | To recommend to Council the Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial, including the fees and charges, Plan 2014/15 - 2017/18 for approval. | 4 February 2014         |   | Report  | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147   |
| 29.     | Housing Revenue Account Budget and Business Plan 2014/15 -        | To recommend to Council the Housing Revenue Account Budget and Business Plan 2014/15 for approval.   | 4 February 2014         |   | Report  | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing<br>Comments by 03/01/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 6147 |
| 30.     | Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities -                | To recommend to Council to approve the Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities for 2014 - 2015.                                   | 18 March 2014           | Strategic Assessment & Partnership Plan will be considered by the Community Safety Partnership Executive, the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Local Strategic Partnership. | Strategic Assessment Priorities & Community Safety Partnership Plan 2014 - 2015 | Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services<br>Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Joy Craven, CSP Manager<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:joy.craven@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">joy.craven@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 4649   |

| Ref No. | Issue for Key Decision by the Executive | Intended Decision                             | Indicative Meeting Date | Consultees and Date/Method | Documents which may be considered | Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)   |
|---------|---|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 31.     | Quarter 3 Performance Report -          | To consider the quarter 3 performance report. | 18 March 2014           |                            | Report                            | Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources<br>Comments by 17/02/14 to Contact Officer:<br>Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a><br>Tel: 0300 300 5517 |

Postal address for Contact Officers: Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ

**Central Bedfordshire Council  
Forward Plan of Decisions on Key Issues**

For the Municipal Year 2012/13 the Forward Plan will be published on the thirtieth day of each month or, where the thirtieth day is not a working day, the working day immediately proceeding the thirtieth day, or in February 2013 when the plan will be published on the twenty-eighth day:

| <b>Date of Publication</b> | <b>Period of Plan</b>              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 02.04.13                   | 1 May 2013 – 30 April 2014         |
| 01.05.13                   | 1 June 2013 – 31 May 2014          |
| 31.05.13                   | 1 July 2013 – 30 June 2014         |
| 02.07.13                   | 1 August 2013 – 31 July 2014       |
| 01.08.13                   | 1 September 2013 – 31 August 2014  |
| 30.08.13                   | 1 October 2013 – 30 September 2014 |
| 02.10.13                   | 1 November 2013 – 31 October 2014  |
| 31.10.13                   | 1 December 2013 – 30 November 2014 |
| 28.11.13                   | 1 January 2014 – 31 December 2014  |
| 02.01.14                   | 1 February 2014 – 31 January 2015  |
| 30.01.14                   | 1 March 2014 – 28 February 2015    |
| 28.02.14                   | 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015       |

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**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 5 November 2013  
**Subject:** Central Bedfordshire Draft Equality and Diversity Strategy 2013 – 16  
**Report of:** Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources  
**Summary:** The report proposes that the Executive consider and approve the draft Equality and Diversity Strategy and recommends its adoption to full Council.

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**Advising Officer:** Deb Clarke, Director of Improvement and Corporate Services  
**Contact Officer:** Clare Harding, Corporate Policy Adviser (Equality and Diversity)  
**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:**

Tackling inequality cuts across every activity of the Council and relates directly to the achievement of the Council's six 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.

##### **Financial:**

1. The proposals contained within this report will be met within existing budgets.

2. The aim of equality legislation is to ensure that resources invested in public services actually benefit all those they are aimed at or who need them. When developing proposals and making policy decisions, including those about finance and service provision, public authorities must comply with their statutory equality duties by ensuring that decisions are made in such a way as to minimise unfairness, and that they do not have a disproportionately negative effect on different groups of people.

**Legal:**

3. The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 fit within a framework of European directives designed to promote equality of opportunity.

**Risk Management:**

4. Failure to comply with equality legislation can expose the Council to the risk of litigation and scrutiny by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission. Individual employees or voluntary organisations have also brought legal action against councils which have resulted in very costly court judgements or out of court settlements
5. The development of a comprehensive, legally compliant Equality and Diversity Strategy and Action Plan helps to ensure that the Council is meeting these requirements, addressing any risks and taking the appropriate mitigating actions.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

6. The Council has specific employment duties which are set out in equality legislation. A variety of learning opportunities must also be provided so that councillors and employees are knowledgeable about equality from both a service delivery and employment perspective.
7. Work is ongoing with Human Resources to ensure proper consideration is given to equality and diversity in the development of the Council's employment and training practices and procedures.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

8. Central Bedfordshire Council has 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 reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
9. The draft Equality and Diversity Strategy and Action Plan must demonstrate the Council's awareness of all strands of equality legislation, the nature of inequality and the action that will be taken across the Council to address these issues.



**Public Health:**

10. Good health is not only an asset in itself; it also enables people to further their careers, look after families, and pursue their other interests to the full. Evidence suggests, however, that there are some groups of people who are more likely than average to experience 'poor' health, and some who find it difficult to access care and support that meets their particular needs. The Council is therefore keen to ensure that the health needs of disadvantaged areas and vulnerable groups are addressed.

**Community Safety:**

11. There are a range of issues and barriers that different groups experience in relation to community safety and equality. This can include violence against women and hate crime. The statutory agencies that make up the Community Safety Partnership which includes the Council have a legal duty to investigate and address such crimes.

**Sustainability:**

12. Compliance with equality legislation has a direct impact on a Council's ability to deliver against the sustainability agenda. Issues such as economic development, sustainable communities, quality of life and community cohesion are all factors which can be influenced by an individual's experience of inequality and discrimination.

**Procurement:**

13. When conducting procurement activities, public bodies must ensure they continue to meet their legal obligations under equality legislation. The degree of relevance to equality varies depending on the individual procurement activity. The Council's procurement processes have therefore been designed to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to these requirements.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

14. The Draft Strategy was well received and supported by all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. In summary the following issues were highlighted:

- Ensure continued appointment of best candidate for the job.
- Raise awareness of staff, Councillors, and Town & Parish Councils.
- Include references to Gypsies and Travellers as an ethnic minority group.
- Reflect the need to promote equality via community engagement activities.

Section one (context) has been updated to provide more information about the ethnic minority communities living in Central Bedfordshire, including Gypsies and Travellers.

Section six (employment practices) has been updated to emphasise the importance of the Council conducting its employment process in line with equality and diversity requirements whilst always ensuring it recruits the best candidate for a post.

Section eight (appendix one, action plan, theme 4) has been updated to reflect the community engagement themes which focus on enabling citizens and local groups to make more decisions and deliver locally based services.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Executive is asked to:**

- 1. recommend to full Council the adoption of the Draft Equality and Diversity Strategy for Central Bedfordshire.**

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Reason for Recommendation:</i> | <i>To ensure that the Council complies with its statutory obligations.</i> |
|-----------------------------------|--|

**Executive Summary**

Public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In order to continue to adopt a good practice and a robust approach to equality issues across all Council activities, the Equality and Diversity Strategy has been refreshed and is proposed in line with the Council's Policy Framework.

The Draft Equality and Diversity Strategy sets out the requirements of the legislation, the progress that has been made to date across the Council and the ongoing actions that need to be maintained.

In developing the strategy the Council has consulted with a variety of stakeholders who have indicated support for the proposed approach.

The Council has identified four corporate, overarching objectives and activities which are essential to ensuring that consideration of equality remains embedded across all Council activities.

- I. Strong Leadership (championing equality, identifying and, monitoring equality objectives).
- II. Improved outcomes for vulnerable groups.
- III. The fair recruitment and management of a high performing workforce.
- IV. Improved engagement, civic participation and cohesion.

## **Introduction**

15. The Equality Act applies to public and private sector bodies and replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplified the legislation base and removed numerous inconsistencies. It also strengthened protection in important ways, to help tackle discrimination and inequality.
16. The aim of the legislation is to ensure service and employment opportunities are available to all sections of society, in relation to the following protected characteristics, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
18. The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Act) came into force on 5 April 2011. The duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies proactively consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs. It also includes requirements to identify equality objectives and publish information.
19. In order to continue to adopt a good practice and a robust approach to equality issues across all its activities, a refreshed Equality and Diversity Strategy is proposed as part of the Council's Policy Framework.
20. The Draft Equality and Diversity Strategy sets out the requirements of the legislation, the progress that has been made to date across the Council and the ongoing actions that need to be maintained.

## Central Bedfordshire Council's Approach

- 21 The draft Equality and Diversity Strategy has been developed in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The strategy sets out a practical approach to delivering achievable solutions which:
- have due regard to national best practice and guidance;
  - take account of local socio-economic factors; and
  - recognise the good work and actions undertaken to date and the work remaining from a robust audit of the current strategy.
- 22 The Council has undertaken an audit of its approach to equality during 2009 – 2013 (Appendix 3 of the strategy). This demonstrates that good progress has been made.
23. The Council has identified four corporate, overarching objectives and activities which are essential to ensuring that consideration of equality remains embedded across all Council activities.
- I. Strong Leadership (championing equality in our area and Identifying and monitoring equality objectives).
  - II. Improved outcomes for vulnerable groups.
  - III. The fair recruitment and management of a high performing workforce.
  - IV. Improved engagement, civic participation and cohesion.
24. In developing the draft strategy the Council has consulted with Members of the Council through each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Portfolio Holders, Management Teams, the Equality Forum, Central Bedfordshire Together, Town & Parish Councils, Trade Unions and Professional Associations. A public consultation has also been conducted.
- 25 Responses have been generally positive and supportive. There has been a broad agreement that a focus on vulnerable groups is key to narrowing equality gaps. The importance of raising awareness and understanding has also been highlighted.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

26. Central Bedfordshire Council is making good progress in ensuring that a robust approach is adopted to tackling inequality. Upon publication, the Council's Equality and Diversity Strategy will clearly articulate to partners, stakeholders, local communities and employees our commitments and direction of travel on this agenda.
27. All councillors and employees have an important role to play in ensuring that we deliver this agenda. Ultimately, the Council's performance on equality will be measured, not by what we say, but by what we achieve in relation to delivering better outcomes for vulnerable groups.

28. The actions identified in Appendix 1 of the strategy will help ensure the Council can continue to make progress in advancing equality of opportunity.

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Overview and Scrutiny comments

Appendix B - Draft Single Equality and Diversity Strategy 2013 -16

**Background Papers:** (open to public inspection)

None

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**Appendix A**

**Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Committee comments on the Equality and Diversity Strategy**

**Summary:** This note provides officers with the combined comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) during their consideration of the above report during June 2013.

**Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

1. In response to the quiz and the further clarification provided by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services Members of the Committee discussed the following:-
  - 1.1 The need for the objectives to reflect the importance of fair opportunities and treatment for all.
  - 1.2 That whilst the Council should aim to have a modern and diverse workforce we should ensure that the best possible candidates were employed.
  - 1.3 That the foreword should reflect the need to promote equality of opportunity for some residents in a vulnerable group rather than referring to all of those in a vulnerable group.
2. In addition a Member sought clarification on the consultation toolkit and current structures for consulting with user groups. The Corporate Policy Adviser (equality and diversity) clarified that the consultation toolkit was written by the Consultation Manager and that it provided guidance on methods and techniques for undertaking consultation to ensure that a mix of people were able to provide their views. The Council arranged meetings with hard to reach groups to understand their concerns during periods of consultation. The findings of these discussions were reported to the Executive in an Equality Impact Assessment that also highlighted risks of discrimination and necessary mitigating actions.

**RECOMMENDED**

**That the comments of the Committee be considered by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services and that the Strategy is supported and Members send any further comments on the content of the draft Strategy to officers.**

**Customer & Central Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

1. In response to the quiz and the further clarification provided by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services Members of the Committee discussed the following:-
  - 1.1 That the Strategy should reflect the need to promote equality and diversity on the Big Society and reference is included in the Strategy to capture this.
  - 1.2 That the Strategy be circulated to all town and parish councils and for Equality and Diversity training to be offered to raise awareness as previously carried out.

2. **RECOMMENDED**

**That reference to the Big Society be incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Strategy by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services.**

**That the Strategy is supported and the comments of the Committee be considered by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services.**

**Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 1 In response to the quiz and the further clarification provided by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services Members of the Committee discussed the following:-
  - 1.1 That the Strategy should reflect the need to promote equality and diversity on the Big Society and reference is included in the Strategy to capture this.
  - 1.2 The need for the Disability Guide for Councillors to be updated and reference made in the guide to Equality and Diversity. Members also commented on the high levels of abuse on disabled people highlighted in the presentation and the Corporate Policy Adviser (Equality and Diversity) confirmed the Community Safety Partnership Executive had picked up on these findings and an improved approach is being discussed.
  - 1.3 Whether complaints received by the public and staff had informed the strategy. The Corporate Policy Adviser explained that complaints although not referred to specifically in the Strategy had informed it and case studies are used in equality training.

2 **RECOMMENDED**

**That reference to the Big Society be incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Strategy.**

**That the strategy is supported and the comments of the Committee be considered by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services.**

**Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

1. In response to the quiz and the further clarification provided by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services Members of the Committee discussed the following:-
  - 1.1 The importance of Members taking a lead on equality and diversity.
  - 1.2 Whether Council funding was available to support schemes to improve disabled access to buildings. The Corporate Policy Adviser (equality and diversity) commented that whilst funds were not available work was undertaken with planning colleagues to ensure that designs and planning policy guidelines promoted disabled accessibility.
  - 1.3 Whether staff training was provided on cultural awareness. A Councillor referred to a specific incident where distress had been caused to a vulnerable resident as a result of cultural diversity. The



Director of Improvement and Corporate Services commented that training was provided to staff on customer care and the importance of treating all people with respect. The Corporate Policy Adviser (equality and diversity) also commented that specific training was provided to officers in housing due to the nature of their work. The specific case to which the Councillor referred could be used as a case-study in future training for officers.

- 1.4 Workforce information that was available annually relating to Council staff.
  - 1.5 The Council did not engage in positive discrimination as it was unlawful.
  - 1.6 The strategy should refer specifically to the Gypsy and Traveller community. The Committee agreed that specific references to this group should be included in the strategy to ensure that they were supported in a fair manner.
  - 1.7 The process through which complaints could be registered regarding the comments of local MPs on Gypsies and Travellers. The Director of Improvement and Corporate Services commented that the response depended on the nature of the comments of the MP but there was a due process through which any complaints would be taken.
2. In addition the Executive Member requested that his thanks be recorded to those staff engaged in drafting the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, who continued to work without prejudice when sites were proposed within the areas in which they resided.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

**That the strategy is supported and the comments of the Committee be considered by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services.**

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**Appendix B**

# **Central Bedfordshire Equality and Diversity Strategy**

2013-2016



## **Foreword**

Promoting equality of opportunity is all about making life better for all our residents, especially the most vulnerable people living in our communities, such as some older or disabled people, carers, people with low levels of literacy, people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage or people living in the most rural parts of Central Bedfordshire.

It's about ensuring that everything we do in local government is accessible to everyone, no matter what their life experience or situation is. It requires us to recognize that different people experience the same situation differently and that we must remove the barriers which can stop people accessing the services and employment opportunities they need.

Our draft Equality & Diversity Strategy demonstrates our commitment as community leaders, service providers and as an employer to ensure that equality and diversity is at the heart of all that we do, for local people, our employees, our partners, and the community at large. The Strategy sets out our overall approach, audits our progress over the last four years and includes our objectives and plan of action for the next three years (2013 - 16).

The Strategy demonstrates how we will ensure our services reflect fairness and equality. The action plan focuses on key themes which form the foundation of all our service areas. This plan has been driven by a comprehensive consultation with our key stakeholders, both internally and externally. The plan reflects our statutory duties, and also our corporate commitment to improving our services and work place practices.

We will monitor and review our performance annually, to ensure we achieve all the objectives set out in this scheme.

**Councillor Maurice Jones**

**Deputy Leader and Executive Member, Corporate Resources**

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## 1) Context - The Nature of Diversity in Central Bedfordshire

Central Bedfordshire is a unitary authority serving a growing population of around 255,000.

It is a largely rural area with over half the population living in the countryside and the rest in a number of market towns. The largest of these are Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Biggleswade, Flitwick, Sandy and Ampthill.

The area is generally prosperous, with above average levels of employment. This could mask the few areas where we do have pockets of deprivation and, greater need (some households in Dunstable and Houghton Regis for example).

The area has excellent transport links with the A1 and M1 running through it, three main rail lines and two international airports, Luton and Stansted, on the doorstep. It is in the centre of an academic 'golden triangle' between Oxford, Cambridge and London Universities and also benefits from its own academic institutions at Cranfield University, the University of Bedfordshire and other further education colleges.

It is a great place to live and work. It is a relatively safe, green and affluent area which attracts major investment. People living in Central Bedfordshire earn more than the national average; this is in part influenced by some residents commuting out of the area – primarily to London, Luton, Milton Keynes and Hertfordshire.

**Age:** In 2011, 49,800 people in Central Bedfordshire were aged between 0 and 15. A further 164,700 were aged 16-64, with 39,800 aged 65 and over, this figure includes 17,900 people aged 85 and over. The number of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase by about 50% between 2008 and 2021.

**Disability:** Using the widest definition there are more than 11 million disabled people in the UK, that's more than one in five of the adult population and one in 20 children. 80% of people experience a year of being disabled at some point in their lives and 66% of disabled people develop impairments during working age. The majority of disabled people have impairments that are not easily visible. In the 2011 census findings 15,465 (6.10%) residents in Central Bedfordshire indicated that day-to-day activities were limited a lot and 21,142 (8.30%) residents indicated that day-to-day activities were limited a little

**Carers:** Research undertaken by Carers UK indicates that over 2 million people become carers every year and 3 in 5 people will become a carer at some point in their lives. In the 2011 census findings 18,247 (7.2%) residents in Central Bedfordshire indicated that they provided between 1 to 19 hours a week of unpaid care. A further 2,702 (1.1%) of residents indicated that they provided 20 to 49 hours of unpaid care a week and 4,886 (1.9%) residents indicated that they provided 50 hours or more unpaid care a week.

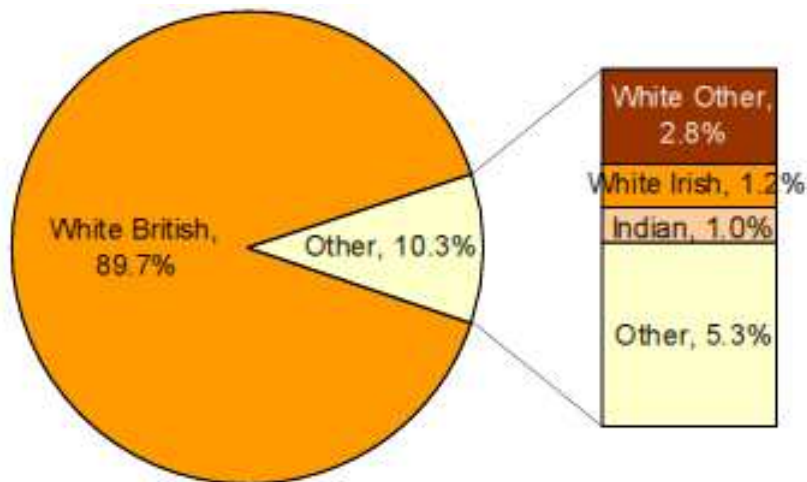
**Gender Reassignment:** The 2011 Census did not include a specific question in respect of gender reassignment. It is estimated from national research that 1 in 10,000 people experience the recognised medical condition known as gender dysphoria, generally referred to as being transgender or transsexual. In any school of 1,000 pupils there are likely to be 6 who will have transgender experience at some point in their lives.

**Marriage and Civil Partnership:** In 2011 52.5% of the Central Bedfordshire population were married and 0.1% had entered into a civil partnership. 29.2% of the population were single, 11.9% were separated / divorced and 6.3% were widowed.

**Pregnancy and Maternity:** The health and wellbeing of women before, during and after pregnancy is an important factor in giving children a healthy start in life and laying the groundwork for good health and wellbeing in later life. In Central Bedfordshire 90% of pregnant women accessed antenatal services before thirteen weeks of pregnancy. Although teenage pregnancies remain in line with the national average, they are higher than statistical neighbours. Children and young people who are already disadvantaged have an increased risk of teenage pregnancy.

**Race:** Central Bedfordshire is ethnically diverse with around 10.3% of people living in the area from black or ethnic minority communities.

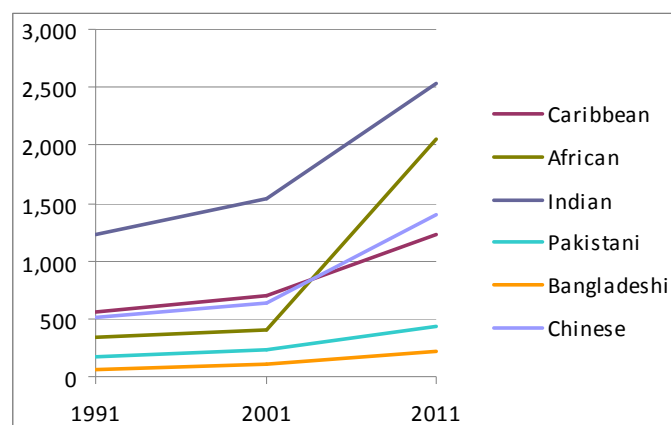
The biggest ethnic minority groups in Central Bedfordshire were White Other (not White British, White Irish or Gypsy or Irish Traveller), White Irish and Indian, as shown below.



(Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census)

Black African's account for 0.8% of the population and 0.6% of the population are Chinese. Gypsies and Travellers account for 0.2% of the population which is slightly above the England and Wales average of 0.1%.

Changes in Ethnic Groups other than White during 1991, 2001 and 2011

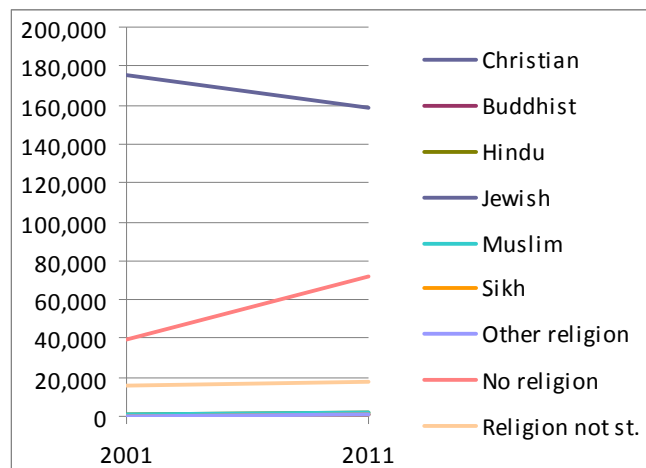


Source: ethnicity.ac.uk

People of mixed ethnicity make up around 1.9% of residents. The increasing amount of data on migrant workers, unaccompanied asylum seekers and other young people from non-UK backgrounds predicts that immigration in the region will increase.

**Religion and Belief:** Most of the population state their religion as Christian (62.2%), with (28.4%) having no religion and other religions constituting (2.6%) of the population. (Note: 6.8% did not state their religion)

Changes in Religion and Belief during 2001 – 2011



Source: ethnicity.ac.uk

**Sex:** The sex ratios of the Central Bedfordshire population vary according to age. In the younger age groups (ages 0-17) boys represent 51% of the population and girls 49%. In the working age adults groups (ages 18 -64) this ratio reverses with women representing 51% of the population and men 49%. At ages 65+ this trend increases with women representing 54% of the population and men 46%.

**Sexual Orientation:** The 2011 Census did not include a specific question in respect of sexual orientation. It is estimated that 'out' gay people living in the United Kingdom form between 6% -10% of the population. This means that in Central Bedfordshire approximately 20, 000 people are likely to openly be lesbian, gay or bisexual, with others feeling unable to disclose such information because they fear the reactions of people around them. The figure for civil partnerships in Central Bedfordshire was 300 in 2011.

**Skill Levels:** The proportion of working age people with at least NVQ1 or 2 qualifications (1 GCSE or similar) is higher in Central Bedfordshire (80.6%) than England (77.5%). The proportion with NVQ4 or above (degree or similar) level in Central Bedfordshire (27.3%) is comparable with the figures for England (27.4%). Just under a fifth (19.4%) of Central Bedfordshire's working age population had no formal qualifications. This is slightly less than the figure for England (22.5%).

**Employment:** The findings of the 2011 Census indicated that 139,500 working age people in Central Bedfordshire (74.7%) were economically active. This figure includes both employed and unemployed people. In this group 6,400 people were unemployed.

**Health:** In 2011, 125,000 (49%) of residents reported that they were in very good health, 90,400 (35.5%) reported that they were in good health, 29,200 (11.5%) reported fair health, 7,700 (3%) reported bad health and 2,100 (0.8%) reported very bad health. Overall health



is better than the UK norm whilst in terms of deprivation no part of Central Bedfordshire is within the worst 10% nationally. However, this overall picture of affluence masks some aspects of deprivation, and communities within Downside, Flitwick, Parkside, Sandy and Tithe Farm face particular challenges relative to the rest of the area. For example, there are parts of these communities which suffer from deprivation and appear in the top 10% nationally when specific indices of deprivation are considered such as Crime, Education, Skills and training and barriers to Housing and Services.

## 2) Legal Duties

### The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act applies to public and private sector bodies and replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplified the legislation base, removed inconsistencies and made it easier for people to understand and comply with the law. It also strengthened protection in important ways to help tackle discrimination and inequality. The aim of the legislation is to ensure services and employment opportunities are available to all sections of society, in relation to the following protected characteristics, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

### Types of Discrimination and Definitions

#### Direct discrimination:

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.

#### Associative discrimination:

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

#### Perceptive discrimination:

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic

#### Indirect Discrimination:

Indirect discrimination can occur when a condition, rule, policy or even a practice is applied to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if it can be shown that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. Being proportionate means being fair and reasonable, including showing that 'less discriminatory' alternatives have been considered as part of the decision making process

#### Harassment:

Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual"

#### Victimisation:

Victimisation occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so.

The Act also includes a new and additional protection relating to disability.

## **Discrimination Arising from Disability:**

Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the unfavourable treatment cannot be justified.

## **The Public Sector Equality Duty**

**The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Act) came into force on 5 April 2011. The Duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies proactively consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs**

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

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- 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

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

- How the Council acts as an employer
- How policies are developed, evaluated and reviewed
- How services are designed, delivered and evaluated
- How the Council commissions and procures services and products from other organisations

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 – e.g. providing computer training for older people to help them to access information and services.

The Equality Duty is also supported by specific duties, set out in regulations which came into force on 10 September 2011. The specific duties require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty; and to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives.

### **Specific Duty - Publish Information**

Publishing relevant equality information helps to make public bodies transparent about their decision-making processes, and accountable to their service users. It gives the public the information they need to hold public bodies to account for their performance on equality. The Council has published a variety of information on the website including this document.

### **Specific Duty – Identify Equality Objectives**

The Public Sector Equality Duty required public bodies to prepare and publish, by 6 April 2012, one or more specific and measurable equality objectives which will help them to further the three aims of the Equality Duty. Subsequent objectives must be published at least every four years.

It was left to each public body to decide what and how many equality objectives it should set. It was recognised that by identifying objectives which were stretching, and which focused on the biggest equality challenges facing the public body, that the greatest impact could be achieved in furthering the aims of the Equality Duty.

When deciding what equality objectives to set, public bodies are advised to take account of:

- evidence of equality issues across all its functions;
- issues affecting people sharing each of the protected characteristics; and
- the need to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations.

The number of objectives should also be proportionate to the public body's size; the extent to which its functions affect equality; and evidence that such objectives are needed.

### **3) Central Bedfordshire Council Priorities – The Medium Term Plan**

The Council is committed to a series of priorities, outlined in its Medium term Plan which collectively will help our communities to progress and prosper. They are:

- 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 corporate equality objectives outlined in this Equality Strategy indirectly support all six Council priorities. In addition the strategy also identifies the service specific objectives already captured within previously agreed strategies and policies which contribute directly to the achievement of Council priorities.

## 4) The Central Bedfordshire Equality & Diversity Strategy

The Equality Act 2010 does not require that statutory bodies must continue to develop a separate Equality Scheme. The Council is keen however to ensure that it continues to adopt a good practice and robust approach to equality issues across all its activities and this can best be achieved through the continued implementation, review and inclusion of an Equality & Diversity Strategy as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

This Equality & Diversity Strategy has been developed in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The strategy sets out a practical approach to delivering achievable solutions which:

- Address the key issues raised from our consultation with stakeholders regarding both service and employment practices.
- Have due regard to national best practice and guidance
- Takes account of local socio-economic factors and
- Recognise the good work and actions undertaken to date and the work remaining from a robust audit of the current strategy

As a result the Council has identified four corporate, overarching objectives and activities which are essential to ensuring that consideration of equality is embedded across all Council activities. The objectives reflect the importance of fair opportunities and treatment for all.

- **Strong Leadership (Championing Diversity in our Area, Identifying Objectives and Monitoring Outcomes)**
- **Improved Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups**
- **Good Recruitment and Management of a High Performing Workforce**
- **Improved Engagement, Civic Participation and Cohesion**

The Strategy's action plan addresses these four key objectives and forms the foundation of ongoing activity across all service areas. These are detailed at Appendix 1.

The objectives have been identified with close reference to the three levels of the Equality Framework for Local Government, Developing, Achieving and Excellent. The Council believes it has reached Stage 2 Achieving and will strive for excellence but due to the need to prioritise resources on front line services has not sought costly, formal accreditation.

The Triennial Review (How Fair is Britain) 2010 published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) assessed a wealth of evidence sources and identified in its Agenda for Fairness the most pressing and significant equality challenges facing society

- Reduce the effect of socio-economic background on health and life expectancy
- Ensure that every individual has the chance to learn and to realise their talents to the full
- Give every person the opportunity to play a part in strengthening Britain's economy
- Put an end to identity-based violence and harassment
- Give more people greater personal autonomy and civic power

Since its formation in 2009 the Council has consulted on and approved a variety of strategies and policies. Numerous Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken as part of this process and a variety of specific equality objectives have already been approved by the Council in relation to equality which closely correlate with the Agenda for Fairness. These are detailed at Appendix 2 and are grouped according to the above 5 aims.

## **5) Audit of the Council's Approach 2009 - 2013**

The Council approved its first Equality and Diversity Scheme in May 2010. The Action Plan set out a focus on delivering tangible outcomes on the following themes:

- 1) Developing and embedding Central Bedfordshire Council's approach and processes
- 2) Leadership / Partnership Working
- 3) Workforce and employment issues, awareness, training and development
- 4) Feedback, engagement and consultation
- 5) Intelligence, monitoring and review

Progress in achieving these outcomes is detailed at Appendix 3



## 6) Employment Practices and Policy Statement

The Council aims to have a modern and diverse workforce that attracts talent and is also representative of the community we serve. All staff should experience fairness and equity of treatment in the workplace and be treated with dignity and respect. The Council will actively work to remove discriminatory barriers that can prevent people from obtaining employment opportunities whilst ensuring that the best candidates are appointed.

The Council will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination including harassment, victimization and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping. The Council's approach and expectations of managers and employees is summarised in the Policy Statement detailed at Appendix 4

The Council will train and develop its workforce effectively, raising awareness of diverse community needs and ensuring that the work environment is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying. All employees will be expected to promote these values at all times. Employees found in breach of this policy may face disciplinary action.

The Council will consult with staff to identify and implement improvements that can be made to working practices.

The Council will undertake annual equality monitoring of employment practices relating to:

- Staff in post
- Applications for employment,
- Applications for training and recipients of training
- Applications for promotion
- Staff who benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures
- Staff involved in capability, grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Staff who cease employment

The Council also undertakes regular Staff Opinion Surveys. Key findings from the 2012 survey focusing on an equality perspective are summarised below:

- Satisfaction with Opportunities for Flexible Working 70%
- Achieve Correct Balance between Work and Home Life 56%
- Believe CBC does not Discriminate on any Grounds 72%
- Confident CBC would deal effectively with bullying / harassment if an issue was raised 57%
- Good Working Atmosphere in my Team, people get along and I enjoy being part of it 78%
- My Line Manager is Approachable 91%
- My Line Manager is Supportive 81%
- Accessed training in the last 12 months 62%
- PDR completed in the last 12 months 72%

## **7) Accessibility Strategy and Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils**

Local authorities are required to prepare an accessibility strategy in relation to schools for which they are the responsible body. Further strategies must be prepared at such times as may be prescribed.

The objectives of the accessibility strategy are to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in schools' curriculums;
- improve the physical environment of schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by schools;
- improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Local authorities in implementing an accessibility strategy must have regard to:

- the need to allocate adequate resources for implementing the strategy;
- pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

In addition, schools and education authorities have had a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils since 2002 (originally under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) and, from October 2010, under the Equality Act 2010). From 1 September 2012 the reasonable adjustments duty for schools and education authorities includes a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils.

The duty is 'to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage' to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of a school, or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service.

Details of the council's approach can be found in Appendix 5.

### Corporate Equality & Diversity Objectives and Action Plan 2013 - 2016

The Strategy's action plan focuses on four key objectives which form the foundation of activity across all service areas:

- 1) **Strong Leadership (Championing Diversity in our Area, Identifying Objectives and Monitoring Outcomes)**
- 2) **Improved Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups**
- 3) **Good Recruitment and Management of a High Performing Workforce**
- 4) **Improved Engagement, Civic Participation and Cohesion**

| 1) Strong Leadership (Championing Equality in our Area, Identifying Objectives and Monitoring Outcomes) |  |  |                      |
|---|--|--|----------------------|
| Action  | Description  | Lead                                     | Timescale            |
| Promote equality and diversity at leadership level of the Council                                       | There is a coherent vision of equality which is shared and owned by the authority, partners and the community. | Leader                                   | Ongoing              |
| Identify appropriate Equality Objectives and monitor progress   | Authority can demonstrate success in meeting objectives  | Executive Member for Corporate Resources | May 2013 and ongoing |
| Actively challenge the approach to equalities and diversity through overview and scrutiny               | Authority scrutinises and challenges its own and its partners' performance and service delivery                | Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny          | Ongoing              |
| Embed equality and diversity objectives within organisational and partnership plans                     | Equality objectives have been integrated into strategic, operational and service specific plans                | Council Management Team                  | Ongoing              |

## 2) Improved Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups

| Action   | Description   | Lead   | Timescale |
|--|---|--|-----------|
| Impact assess all relevant service and employment planning, design and delivery processes.   | All relevant equality and diversity and human rights issues relating to service delivery and employment are identified and addressed via the completion of robust Equality Impact Assessments | Assistant Directors and Heads of Service       | Ongoing   |
| Promote and quality assure Equality Impact Assessments in line with the Council's agreed protocol.   | All impact assessments reviewed and commented on by the Corporate Policy Adviser (Equality and Diversity)   | Corporate Policy Adviser (E&D)                 | Ongoing   |
| Gather evidence on the profile of communities and the extent of inequality and disadvantage  | Systems are developed corporately and across services which collect and analyse soft and hard data / intelligence about the community their needs and aspirations                             | Heads of Service                               | Ongoing   |
| Collect, share and use equality information with partners  | Consistent and effective use of information and data throughout the Council and between partners  | Heads of Service                               | Ongoing   |
| Embed equality analysis as a requirement in all data system development in order to identify the extent to which all sections of the community are able to access services and achieve positive outcomes | Increased take-up rates amongst vulnerable and marginalised groups.<br>Gaps identified and actions taken to and meet needs.   | Heads of Service                               | Ongoing   |
| Ensure consideration of equality is integral to customer care and complaints procedures  | Improved customer satisfaction across all groups.   | Director of Improvement and Corporate Services | Ongoing   |

### 3) Good Recruitment and Management of a High Performing Workforce

| Action  | Description  | Lead                            | Timescale |
|---|--|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Ensure human resource strategies and policies are in place to meet equality employment duties and secure a diverse and appropriately managed workforce. | Dignity at work and fair employment practices in place. Work/life balance promoted. Workforce that is representative of the community it serves at all levels. | Head of HR Policy & Development | Ongoing   |
| Assess employment policies and procedures to identify equality implications   | Adverse impacts identified and also opportunities to advance equality  | Head of HR Policy & Development | Ongoing   |
| Deliver a range of learning and development opportunities   | Fair and equal access to learning and development opportunities.<br>Workforce confident with equality issues   | Head of HR Policy & Development | Ongoing   |
| Monitor and analyse harassment and bullying incidents   | Appropriate action is taken to address issues that have been identified  | Head of HR Policy & Development | Ongoing   |
| Establish and maintain a range of inclusive structures and mechanisms to engage and involve staff   | Structure and processes in place to capture and address staff concerns   | Head of HR Policy & Development | Ongoing   |
| Monitor and analyse all employment practices on a regular basis   | Appropriate action is taken to address issues that have been identified  | Head of HR Policy & Development | Ongoing   |

#### 4) Improved Engagement, Civic Participation and Cohesion

| Action   | Description   | Lead  | Timescale |
|--|---|---|-----------|
| Develop inclusive community engagement structures throughout the authority and its partnerships  | Implement and embed the Community Engagement Strategy across the organisation   | Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement | Ongoing   |
| Ensure all service areas are consistent and inclusive in their approach to engagement and participation  | The authority involves and consults with all its communities in accordance with the Consultation toolkit  | Heads of Service                            | Ongoing   |
| Design internal, external and partnership communication strategies which promote good relations across all local communities.                                      | Ensure the Council's communications strategy takes account of equalities issues. The Council's branding guidelines and advice includes the need to reflect diversity in terms of images and content | Heads of Service                            | Ongoing   |
| Deliver greater added value to our citizens by enabling individuals and groups to make decisions and deliver some services themselves.                             | Encouraging voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, town and parish councils and Council employees to run a service or bid for the ownership and management of community assets         | Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement | Ongoing   |
| Establish and maintain structures within the authority and across partnerships to promote positive relations and deal effectively with harassment and hate crimes. | Increase in the reporting of cases of harassment and hate crime.<br>Increase in conviction rates  | Community Safety Partnership                | Ongoing   |
| Maintain an effective forum of local experts focussing on equality and diversity issues  | High priority Equality Impact Assessments are considered and assessed by the Equality Forum   | Corporate Policy Adviser (E&D)              | Ongoing   |
| Improve the participation of under represented groups in civic and public life in particular with regard to disabled people  | Demonstrable increase of under-represented groups in civic life<br>Continued implementation of Engagement Strategy  | Partnerships & Community Engagement         | Ongoing   |

**Service Specific Objectives which Tackle Equality & Diversity Priorities**

| Aim 1: To reduce the effect of socio-economic background on health and life expectancy |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Directorate  | Objective  | Council Plan & Date Approved   |
| <b>Children's Services</b>   | <p>Children and Young People's Plan has recently been refreshed for June 2013 – March 2015:</p> <p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved educational attainment</li> <li>- Protecting vulnerable children</li> <li>- Early help and improving life chances</li> <li>- Being healthy and positive</li> </ul> <p>Outcomes relating to this aim include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More families in work and fewer children living in poverty</li> <li>- Improved mental health for children and their parents</li> <li>- Better health outcomes for looked after children</li> <li>- Fewer young people engaging in risky behaviours</li> </ul> | <p><b>Children and Young People's Plan</b></p> <p>Approved by Children's Trust Board 23 May 13.</p> <p>Endorsed by Executive 25 June 13.</p> |
| <b>Social Care Health and Housing</b>  | <p><b>Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board</b></p> <p>The Government White paper Equity and Excellence passes responsibility for public health to local authorities. Objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote health and reduce inequalities</li> <li>• Support and care for an ageing population and those who are most vulnerable</li> </ul>   | <p>Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board by April 2012</p> <p>Full Power from April 2013</p>   |

|                      |  |   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| <b>Public Health</b> | <p><b>Inequalities in Central Bedfordshire – A report by the Director of Public Health</b></p> <p>The report summarises health inequalities in central Bedfordshire and recommends actions that can be taken to address these inequalities</p> | <p>Draft copy published November 2012</p> |
|----------------------|--|---|

**Aim 2: To ensure that every individual has the chance to learn and to realise their talents to the full**

| <b>Directorate</b>         | <b>Equality Objective</b>  | <b>Council Plan &amp; Date Approved</b>  |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Children's Services</b> | <p>Children and Young People's Plan has recently been refreshed for June 2013 – March 2015. Priorities are listed under Aim 1.</p> <p>Outcomes relating to this aim include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved achievement and progress</li> <li>- The right skills to be work ready</li> <li>- High aspirations for young people and their families</li> <li>- Children and young people with disabilities are supported to achieve their aspirations</li> <li>- Troubled families are supported</li> </ul> | <p><b>Children and Young People's Plan</b></p> <p>Approved by Children's Trust Board 23 May 13.</p> <p>Endorsed by Executive 25 June 13.</p><br><p><b>Child Poverty Strategy</b></p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 15/03/2011</p> |
| <b>Children's Services</b> | <b>Disability Review</b> – Transform services for disabled children.   | <p><b>Children and Young People's Plan</b></p> <p>Disability Review Approved by</p>  |



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|  | An independent review of services for Children with Disabilities is being undertaken for disabled children, young people their parents and carers living in Central Bedfordshire. The review will consider services delivered across social care, health, education and voluntary sector provision. The review will also consider how residential short breaks are delivered. The proposed model of service delivery will ensure the coordination of services across and between specialist, targeted and universal services | Executive Committee<br>10/01/2012 |
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**Aim 3: To give every person the opportunity to play a part in strengthening Britain's economy**

| Directorate                              | Objective   | Council Plan & Date Approved   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Children's Services</b>               | Children and Young People's Plan has recently been refreshed for June 2013 – March 2015. Priorities are listed under Aim 1.<br><br>Outcomes relating to this aim include:<br>- The right skills to be work ready<br>- More families in work and fewer children living in poverty  | Approved by Children's Trust Board 23 May 13.<br><br>Endorsed by Executive 25 June 13. |
| <b>Regeneration and Business Support</b> | <b>Economic Development Plan:</b><br><br><b>Priority 3: Getting our residents into work</b><br><b>Priority 4: Increasing the supply of our skilled people.</b><br><br><b>Work stream 7. Improving Access to work and learning</b><br><br>Ensuring residents are able to access employment, learning. The target groups identified within the Local Economic Assessment as requiring additional support to access the labour market and develop their skills are: 18-24 year olds and over 50s, disabled people and ethnic minorities. These groups are prioritised within the Into Work section of the plan and measures are proposed which will tailor welfare provision to the needs of these groups and tackle youth unemployment. | <b>Economic Development Plan</b><br><br>Approved by Executive Committee<br>11/11/2011  |

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|   | <p>It is proposed to monitor the EDP using the following core indicators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people in employment</li> <li>• Number of out of work benefit claimants</li> <li>• Economic activity rate</li> <li>• Number of people in apprenticeships.</li> </ul> <p><b>Into Work</b> - To monitor the performance of the Central Bedfordshire Labour Market and people's ability to access employment, the following indicators will be monitored annually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people who are unemployed or economically inactive accessing information advice and guidance on volunteering through volunteer centres</li> <li>• The levels of youth unemployment</li> </ul> <p><b>Skills for Growth</b> - To monitor the level of individuals' skills, take up of training and business skill needs the following indicators will be monitored annually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of working age people with level 2, 3, 4 qualifications</li> <li>• % of people who have received job related training in Private Sector in the last four weeks</li> </ul> |  |
| <p><b>Regeneration and Business Support</b></p> | <p><b>All Age Skills Strategy</b></p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Working together - Enhance partnership working and improve the availability and dissemination of local labour market intelligence</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Developing the Current and Future Workforce - Increasing the proportion of the workforce with recognised qualifications, and supporting access to academic and vocational opportunities</p>   | <p><b>All Age Skills Strategy</b></p> <p>Scheduled for Approval by Executive Committee</p> |

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|   | <b>Priority 3: Raising Individuals' Aspirations and Achievements</b> - Promote and raise awareness of the support and opportunities available at all ages for skills development and the importance of skills in achieving ambitions.   | 27/03/2012   |
| <b>Improvement and Corporate Services</b> | <p><b>Internal Workforce and Employment Issues, Awareness, Training and Development</b></p> <p><b>Objectives for 2012 – Identified Via Annual Employment Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the data that we hold relating to protected characteristics in employment</li> <li>Increase awareness of equality requirements through training</li> </ul> | <b>Annual Employment Monitoring Report 2010/11</b> |

#### Aim 4: To put an end to identity-based violence and harassment

| Directorate                | Objective  | Council Plan & Date Approved  |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Children's Services</b> | <p>Children and Young People's Plan has recently been refreshed for June 2013 – March 2015. Priorities are listed under Aim 1.</p> <p>Outcomes relating to this aim include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children are happier and safer as a result of help received</li> <li>Improved mental health for children and their parents</li> <li>Troubled families are supported</li> <li>Young people are diverted from offending and anti-social behaviour</li> </ul> | <p>Approved by Children's Trust Board 23 May 13.</p> <p>Endorsed by Executive 25 June 13.</p> |
| <b>Community Services</b>  | <p><b>Community Safety Partnership Plan</b></p> <p>Priorities for 2011-12:</p>   | <p><b>Community Safety Partnership Plan</b></p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee</p>        |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce Anti social Behaviour</li> <li>• Reduce Re-Offending</li> <li>• Reduce Domestic Abuse</li> </ul> <p>Includes Sexual Abuse Action Plan and actions related to Safeguarding Adults.</p> | <p>15/03/2011</p> <p>Annual Refresh Scheduled for Approval by Executive Committee 27/03/2012.</p> |
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**Aim 5: To give more people greater personal autonomy and civic power**

| Directorate                           | Objective   | Council Plan & Date Approved   |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Children's services</b>            | <p>Children and Young People's Plan has recently been refreshed for June 2013 – March 2015. Priorities are listed under Aim 1.</p> <p>'Put children at the centre of everything we do' cuts across each of the priorities – along with 'children and families' voices'</p> <p>Outcomes relating to this aim include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More families in work and fewer children living in poverty</li> <li>- Children and young people with disabilities are supported to achieve their aspirations</li> </ul> | <p>Approved by Children's Trust Board 23 May 13.</p> <p>Endorsed by Executive 25 June 13.</p>      |
| <b>Social Care Health and Housing</b> | <p><b>'Transforming People's Lives' –Transforming Care and Support Through Personalisation</b></p> <p><b>Putting People First consists of four main elements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Universal services</b> - such as suitable housing, access to transport, including bus</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Transforming People's Lives</b></p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee</p> <p>09/02/2010</p> |

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|                                   | <p>passes, leisure, including free swimming and libraries (to reduce social isolation, contribute to health and well being) and safe pavements (to reduce falls requiring hospital admissions which increases the need for longer term care), more accessible advice and information so people can make their own decisions about longer term support options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Early intervention and prevention</b> - there is increasing evidence that re-directing investment to Telecare / Assistive Technology, health checks and re-ablement services reduces dependency and longer term costs</li> <li>• <b>Social capital</b> - support to carers, volunteering, and village care schemes etc which increase the capacity of local communities to provide solutions and reduce the need for direct support from the state.</li> <li>• <b>Choice and control</b> People will have the right to Live free from abuse or neglect; Take risks, Meet personal aspirations, Live independently</li> </ul> <p><b>Council will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure high quality personally tailored support is available</li> <li>• Offer a Personal Budget based on self / supported assessment</li> <li>• Work with partners to enable people to live a life free from abuse or neglect &amp; enjoy the best quality of life</li> <li>• Make available with partners a range of universal &amp; preventative services</li> <li>• Improve advice &amp; information for individuals, carers &amp; community groups</li> <li>• Listen &amp; involve local people in the transformation of care &amp; support</li> <li>• Ensure the best possible use is made of funding channelled through the Council</li> <li>• Support the development of a skilled local workforce</li> </ul> |   |
| <p><b>Children's Services</b></p> | <p><b>Community Engagement Strategy</b></p> <p>Principle 1) Giving more people more opportunities to inform and influence decisions</p> <p>Principle 4) Building the capacity of local people to engage and to do more for themselves</p>  | <p><b>Community Engagement Strategy</b></p> <p>Approved by Executive<br/>23/08/2011</p> |

**Other Key Council Strategies Plans and Policies which Promote Equality of Opportunity**

| Directorate                                  | Objective   | Council Plan & Date Approved  |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>Social Care Health and Housing</b></p> | <p><b>“Let’s Rent” – Housing Option</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>innovative private sector housing option that allows households a choice to access a regulated private sector home, with all requisite support mechanisms for tenancy sustainment.</li> <li>potential to tackle inequality by focusing on ensuring that the diverse housing needs of customers can be met, whilst increasing customer choice and control, and promoting high quality sustainable homes.</li> <li>scheme will assist in preventing homelessness, to offer customers threatened with homelessness a viable and sustainable alternative to social housing or temporary accommodation and to promote customer choice and control</li> <li>Outcomes measured in terms of Homelessness Prevention, supporting vulnerable children and adults, health and educational outcomes, and providing sustainable homes for the community.</li> </ul> | <p><b>“Let’s Rent” – Housing Option</b></p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee<br/>09/02/2010</p>     |
| <p><b>Social Care Health and Housing</b></p> | <p><b>Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show a year-on-year increase in the proportion of vulnerable households living in decent homes and</li> <li>As a minimum to reach the target figure of 70% by 2010.</li> </ol>   | <p><b>Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy</b></p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 09/03/2010</p> |
| <p><b>Social Care Health and Housing</b></p> | <p><b>Homelessness Strategy</b></p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy has the potential to tackle inequality through actions which are designed to meet the diverse housing needs of customers across Central Bedfordshire, whilst increasing customer choice and control, and promoting high quality sustainable homes.</p> <p><b>Priorities:</b></p>   | <p><b>Homelessness Strategy</b></p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 06/04/2010</p>                 |

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|                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmonise housing options services across Central Bedfordshire.</li> <li>• Work with young people aged 16-24 to meet their needs more effectively.</li> <li>• Embed the Think Family approach within all homelessness prevention activity and broader interventions to sustain families in permanent settled accommodation.</li> <li>• Strengthen safeguarding practice for vulnerable adults and children across all aspects of housing options and homelessness prevention.</li> <li>• Investigate the particular problems and pathway journeys that are experienced by people with complex needs, including mental health and substance abuse.</li> <li>• Strengthen equalities practice across all aspects of the service.</li> <li>• Make best use of private sector accommodation in meeting all other homelessness priorities.</li> <li>• Sharing awareness and working in partnership with the community and between partner agencies.</li> <li>• Tenancy sustainment.</li> </ul> |  |
| <p><b>All</b></p> | <p><b>Sustainable Community Strategy</b></p> <p><b>Eight priorities, which are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximising employment opportunities and delivering housing growth to meet the needs of our communities</li> <li>• Ensuring our local people have the skills to prosper</li> <li>• Keeping our communities safe</li> <li>• Nurturing a sense of pride and belonging</li> <li>• Getting around and caring for a green and clean environment</li> <li>• Promoting health and reducing health inequalities</li> <li>• Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people</li> <li>• Supporting and caring for an ageing population and those who are most vulnerable</li> </ul> <p><b>Two key themes that underpin and support all the priorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creating the conditions for economic success and community prosperity, and</li> <li>• raising standards and tackling inequalities.</li> </ul>                        | <p><b>Sustainable Community Strategy</b></p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee 08/06/2010</p> |

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| <p><b>Regeneration and Business Support</b></p>  | <p><b>Local Transport Plan</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the ease of access to employment by sustainable modes.</li> <li>• Reduce the impact of commuting trips on local communities.</li> <li>• Increase the number of children travelling to school by sustainable modes of transport.</li> <li>• Improve access to healthcare provision by the core health service (hospitals and GPs).</li> <li>• Ensure access to food stores and other local services particularly in local and district centres.</li> <li>• Enable access to a range of leisure, cultural and tourism facilities for residents and visitors.</li> <li>• Enable the efficient and reliable transportation of freight.</li> <li>• Encourage the movement of freight by sustainable modes.</li> <li>• Minimise the negative impacts of freight trips on local communities.</li> <li>• Reduce the risk of people being killed or seriously injured.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Local Transport Plan</b></p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee</p> <p>15/02/2011</p> |
| <p><b>Improvement and Corporate Services</b></p> | <p><b>Customer First Programme</b></p> <p>Aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the customer experience whilst interacting with Central Bedfordshire Council. Moving services online will make self-service easy for those who are able to access and use the internet. Integration of front and back office processes will ensure that customer enquiries can be resolved at their first point of contact with us, through the lowest cost channel.</li> <li>• Unlock the financial benefits that can be gained through avoiding unnecessary contact with customers or, where appropriate, enabling customers to interact with CBC through our website.</li> </ul>   | <p>Business Case</p> <p>Approved by Executive Committee</p> <p>15/11/2011</p>               |



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|  | As part of the development of the Channel Shift Strategy consideration has been given to issues such as location of facilities, access to buildings and provision of translation services etc. There is also an undertaking that all staff will offer a consistently high level of customer service and have access to high quality sources of accurate information  |   |
| <b>Regeneration and Business Support</b> | <p><b>Central Bedfordshire Development Strategy</b></p> <p>To set out the vision, strategic objectives and spatial strategy for the area up to 2031 and the policies for achieving the strategic vision. This will entail an assessment of general development needs together with the consideration of any necessary Green Belt reviews. The identification of strategic-scale development sites will also be considered.</p> | <p><b>Central Bedfordshire Development Strategy</b></p> <p>To be approved by May 2013</p> |
| <b>Regeneration and Business Support</b> | <p><b>Gypsy and Traveller Plan</b></p> <p>To identify the Council's approach to the provision of additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches and sites, including the allocation of new sites if required</p>   | <p><b>Gypsy and Traveller Plan</b></p> <p>To be approved by September 2013</p>            |

**Audit of the Council’s Approach 2009 - 2013**

| Theme 1: Developing and Embedding Central Bedfordshire Council’s Approach and Processes  |  |
|--|--|
| Action   | Progress   |
| Prepare the Council for compliance with the Equality Framework for Local Government.   | Scheme reflected requirements of Equality Act and Framework.   |
| Corporate and service level structures are in place to ensure delivery and review of the equalities agenda   | Implementation led by Policy and Strategy Team. Corporate Policy Adviser (E&D) provides support to all teams.  |
| Political overview and scrutiny processes review equality impacts and objectives.  | Committee reporting format requires identification of equality implications.   |
| Embed equality and diversity objectives within organisational planning.  | E&D objectives identified during development of all Council Plans.   |
| Corporate strategies and policies are being impact assessed on an ongoing basis and published. A corporately prioritised programme of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) is in place  | Over 200 EqIAs undertaken since 2009 (average 60 per year) EqIAs identified via Forward Plan and in discussion with managers.  |
| Ensure that human rights considerations are identified when planning services  | Consideration built into EqIA process.   |
| Appropriate measures in place to ensure the service needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups are identified and that customers and citizens are treated with dignity and respect.   | EqIA and consultation processes give priority to consideration of these issues as services and policies are developed  |
| Procurement and commissioning frameworks take account of the differing needs of users and citizens. All commissioning and procurement processes take account of equality issues. Contracts include a requirement to deliver an effective and appropriate service fairly and equitably. | Procurement processes include assessment of equality practices. EqIAs inform development of Commissioning Strategies. Contract specifications increasingly developed in Social Care following consultation with service users and families |

| <b>Theme 2: Leadership / Partnership Working</b>  |   |
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| <b>Action</b>   | <b>Progress</b>   |
| Leader, chief executive and partners commit publically to improving equality outcomes and can tell the equality story for their community.  | Equality Objectives identified and published 6 April 2012   |
| Sustainable community and other partnership strategies and working arrangements (LSP, LAA, and MAA) have been reviewed with the voluntary and community sector and the community to deliver locally identified equality outcomes. | Sustainable Community Strategy includes commitment to tackle inequalities.<br>Community Engagement Strategy includes commitment to give more people, more opportunities to influence decisions. |
| Internal, external and partnership communication strategies are designed to promote good relations across all local communities   | Brand Guidelines consider accessibility & inclusive customer focus. Publications highlight extensive range of Council activities but not really focused on promoting good relations.            |
| Structures are in place within the authority and across partnerships to promote positive relations, enable different groups of people to get on well together and deal with harassment / hate crimes effectively.                 | Police subscribe to national reporting help line Stop Hate UK. Publicity drive planned. Community Safety Partnership considering research into local levels of hate crime and under reporting.  |

| <b>Theme 3: Workforce &amp; Employment Issues, Awareness, Training &amp; Development</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Action</b>   | <b>Progress</b>   |
| The workforce strategy identifies key equality issues. Authority understands its local labour market, the barriers equality groups face and the impact this has on achieving a diverse workforce. | People Strategy approved in March 2010. Equality was one of 5 key themes. Annual employment monitoring undertaken to review progress and identify issues  |
| Ensure that all employment procedures comply with equality legislation and employment codes of practice.  | Policies developed with reference to ACAS guidance and Equality Act Code of Practice  |
| Authority has a prioritised programme for carrying out EqlAs on major and new employment policies. These are made public.   | EIAs undertaken on Your Space, Recruitment, Managing Change, Terms / Conditions, Redeployment, Disciplinary Learning & Development and Capability policies  |
| The authority has made a commitment to equal pay and started work on its equal pay review.  | All the legacy authorities had completed single status. As a result of the TUPE transfer of employees into CBC at 01.04.09, there are men and women carrying out like work being paid at different rates because of |

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|   | TUPE. TUPE is a genuine material factor that can be used as a defence against any equal pay claims. Any previous equal pay claims that existed under BCC and transferred to CBC have been dealt with.                                      |
| Equality issues integrated into appraisal systems   | Highlighted on PDR template for 2011/12 but not currently  |
| The Council carries out a training needs assessment of the development required to deliver equality outcomes  | Equality Adviser and Learning and Development Advisers meet regularly to review provision.   |
| Raise awareness of equality issues in training courses and ensure officers have relevant and appropriate levels of skills required. Ensure that equality and diversity policies are communicated, understood and mainstreamed into CBC. | Draft Learning & Development Policy<br>Range of Ongoing Equality Courses informed by EIA processes.<br>Equality Clause in Training Agreements  |
| Structures are in place to identify, prevent and deal effectively with harassment and bullying in the workplace   | Council Value: Respect and Empowerment. Conditions of Service, Grievance, Disciplinary and Accident & Incident Reporting policies in place. Occupational Health and Well-Being Team provides Employee Support. Staff survey monitors views |
| A range of inclusive structures are in place to engage and involve staff before priorities are set.   | Team Talk, Annual satisfaction survey, roadshows and issue specific surveys (e.g. Your Space, Terms & Conditions)  |

#### Theme 4: Feedback, Engagement and Consultation.

| Action   | Progress   |
|--|--|
| <p>Inclusive community engagement structures developed throughout the authority and its partnerships which include communities of interest.</p> <p>The authority involves and consults with all its communities including disabled people, on an ongoing basis before priorities are agreed.</p> <p>The authority involves and consults with vulnerable and marginalized groups to ensure their views are taken account of.</p> <p>Services ensure that local communities are consulted and/or engaged with appropriately about service planning and</p> | <p>Community Engagement Strategy adopted by Council on 13/10/09.</p> <p>Social Care Users and Carers Engagement Strategy in place</p> <p>Statement of Community Involvement agreed</p> <p>CBC consultation toolkit designed to help employees plan and carry out effective and meaningful consultation and engagement activities. The toolkit provides information around each stage of the process, from planning a consultation, involving hard to hear groups and interpreting the results.</p> <p>Integral part of EIA processes.</p> <p>The E Communications and Consultation team provide guidance and support in conducting consultation.</p> |

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| delivery  |  |
| Customer feedback and complaints system.<br>Carry out an annual review of complaints, categorised by the equality strands, and develop actions for improvement. | Statutory Adult Social Care & Children's Services complaints are currently monitored and reported annually.<br>Housing to be incorporated in ASC with view to introduce tenant and member involvement.<br>June 2011 may implement complaints customer satisfaction survey. This records some equality data<br>CRM system will enable annual reporting of all Council complaints.<br>Some customer data will be recorded but not across all protected characteristics |
| Maintain an effective forum of local experts focussing on equality and diversity issues   | Forum established since June 09. Four meetings a year held to review EIAs and consider other equality issues   |
| EqlAs involve appropriate community and / or stakeholder groups and are made public.  | Forum and stakeholder involvement is Integral part of EIA processes.   |
| Plans in place to improve the participation of under represented groups in civic and public life particularly disabled people.                                  | Engagement Strategy approved 06/10   |

### Theme 5: Intelligence, Monitoring and Review.

| Action  | Progress   |
|---|--|
| The authority gathers evidence on the profile of communities, the extent of inequality and disadvantage within their communities and to identify priorities across the authority. Collect, share and use equality information with partners | Ward profiles available on website<br>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment available on website<br>Deprivation and inequalities data included                                  |
| Systems developed corporately and across services to collect and analyse soft and hard data / intelligence about the community their needs and aspirations.   | Customer and Community Insight Team, the E.Communications & Consultation Team and Corporate Policy Adviser promote the collection and use of such data across the Council. |
| Robust equalities monitoring in relation to Service Delivery,   | Variety of approaches across council. Some gaps in information for   |

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| Employment and Corporate overview  | certain protected characteristics.   |
| The authority is developing systems to collect, analyse and measure data on how all sections of the community are able to access services. | Customer Services Strategy helping to raise awareness of services, develop a variety of access options, increase levels of access and monitor outcomes / customer satisfaction levels amongst different groups. The strategy includes a commitment to implement a Customer Insight programme which uses Customer Segmentation data to identify customer groups. This illustrates the types of Council and partner services accessed by each group and preferred methods of service access. |
| Monitoring and reporting of the Single Equality Scheme and actions through agreed consultation method/s.                                   | Scheme adopted May 2010 Action Plan reviewed April / May 2011. Updated Action Plan presented to Equality Forum 23 June 2011  |

## Appendix 4

### Policy Statement - Summary of Key Actions

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to the elimination of discrimination in both service delivery and employment because it is essential that services are provided fairly to all sections of our community and because we value the contribution our employees make to achieve this.

#### Equality of opportunity is about:

- Treating people with dignity and respect and accepting people as individuals.
- Understanding and addressing the needs of individuals or groups relating to age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and other factors such as socio economic disadvantage.
- Engaging with service users, local communities, staff, stakeholders and contractors to identify and implement improvements.
- Tackling barriers which restrict access to services and employment opportunities
- Knowing who uses (or should use) different services.
- Making sure our recruitment, selection, training and promotion processes support us to appoint the best people for the job and to develop and maintain the highest standards of skills and expertise

#### The Council will act to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity
- ensure that all service users are treated with dignity and respect and that we recognise and value people's differences
- understand that some groups of people experience more disadvantage than others and target services to meet their particular needs
- encourage participation of under represented groups in public life
- continually improve services to make sure they are accessible and provided fairly to everyone in our community
- create and maintain a workplace where all employees are treated with dignity and respect
- develop and train our members and employees to help them recognise equality issues

#### Directors and Managers will

- Actively promote awareness of equality and compliance with legislation
- Undertake training on equality and diversity issues regularly (every three years)
- Ensure fairness and equity of treatment in service delivery and employment practices
- Identify equality implications of council functions, strategies, policies and decisions
- Ensure the service delivery and working environment is free of discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying

- Ensure that all people who help to deliver our services are aware of this policy statement
- Provide clear information about where, and to whom, customers should complain
- Listen to complaints and comments and act upon them
- Make clear to staff that discrimination is unacceptable and that it will be treated as a serious matter and a disciplinary offence
- Deal promptly and thoroughly with complaints of discrimination recording all incidents
- Support customers or staff who experience discrimination
- Take appropriate action against any customer or member of staff who harasses or acts in a discriminatory way towards other customers or members of staff

### **Employees will**

- Act in line with this policy statement
- Ensure that they treat other colleagues and customers fairly and with respect
- Undertake training on equality and diversity issues regularly (every three years)
- Not use discriminatory behaviour or practices in the workplace or when providing services
- Record any incident of harassment, bullying or victimisation
- Support customers or staff who experience discrimination
- Provide clear information about where, and to whom, customers should complain
- Listen to complaints and comments and act upon them



## Appendix 5

### **Accessibility Strategy and Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils**

Central Bedfordshire Council believes that every child/young person should be able to access the full curriculum and other opportunities that are provided through their local early years setting/school, and will work with these settings and schools to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to make this possible. Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to working with schools and settings, partner agencies such as the Health Services, children and young people and their parents/carers to remove barriers to the achievement of good outcomes for children with disabilities. We promote appropriate inclusive practices, both in our own services and in the schools and settings in our area. While we will comply with all legislation around Equality, Access and Disability, we will also seek, together with our schools and settings, to go beyond this to make positive inclusion a reality for children and young people.

For a number of years the Council has managed and administered funding for improved accessibility through the Schools Access Initiative (SAI). Numerous modifications and improvements have been made across all Central Bedfordshire schools to increase physical access. The Council has maintained an up to date Asset Management Plan for maintained schools and accessibility audits have been separately documented as part of suitability assessments to inform use of the SAI funding.

The current capital programme continues to allow for SAI funding for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, and this is reviewed as appropriate. Voluntary Aided schools are also able to access DfE funding through the Local Authority Coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme.

The Council also works closely with health partners to establish the needs of individual pupils and to identify appropriate support. All new buildings and facilities are designed to be fully accessible.

An increasing number of Central Bedfordshire schools are seeking academy status and as a result are taking on full responsibility for ensuring accessibility for disabled pupils. Non maintained schools will have to apply to the Education Funding Agency for capital adjustments and will need to fund the provisions of auxiliary aids and services from their own budgets.

Central Bedfordshire Council will continue to support and challenge settings/schools to ensure that they fulfil these responsibilities. In instances where responsibilities are shared this will be managed strategically.

The Council will continue to signpost schools to guidance and good practice in making reasonable adjustments and removing barriers to learning and achievement.







**A great place to live and work**

**Contact us...**

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Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

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**Meeting:** Executive

**Date:** 5 November 2013

**Subject:** Framework Agreement for Care Homes in Central Bedfordshire

**Report of:** Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing

**Summary:** This report provides an overview of the approach to be undertaken to implement the framework agreement and quality monitoring system that were approved by the Executive on 6 November 2012.

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**Advising Officer:** Julie Ogley, Director of Adult Social Care Health and Housing

**Contact Officer:** Elizabeth Saunders, Assistant Director Strategic Commissioning

**Public/Exempt:** Public

**Wards Affected:** All

**Function of:** Council

**Key Decision:** Yes

## CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

### Council Priorities:

1.
  - Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
  - Value for money – freezing council tax.
2. The framework agreement deals with the purchasing of accommodation within care homes across Central Bedfordshire for older people over 65 years of age.
3. It will apply at any one time to 350 of the most vulnerable older people within Central Bedfordshire and approximately 1,000 people will receive the service over the four years of the framework agreement. This number will increase over time as we move away from the BUPA block contract and transfer the services provided to care homes that are on the framework agreement.

### Financial:

4. The financial implications of the framework agreement have been extensively assessed by comparing the current costs of the service with the costs of a number of options for implementing the agreement.

5. The main conclusion of this analysis is that the financial impact of implementing the framework agreement is relatively minor in relation to the budget of £8.7m.
6. Depending on the effect that the framework agreement has on the behaviour of both customers in choosing to move into higher quality care homes and providers in increasing their quality performance rating there is likely to be either a small saving to or a small increase in the budget.

**Legal:**

7. The Conditions of Contract and other documents under which this framework agreement will be let are based on the Regional Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract for Adult Social Care and Housing Related Support Services in the East of England (version 3.2 produced in October 2012).
8. The Regional Standard is a common set of processes and documents that has been approved by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) – Eastern Branch and adapted by the Council for this framework agreement.
9. These Conditions of Contract and supporting documents are acceptable to the Council, include the clauses that it would wish to see within such an agreement and do not include anything that would be prejudicial to its interests.

**Risk Management:**

10. There is a full Risk Register to identify, assess and mitigate risks to the successful delivery of the quality monitoring system and the framework agreement. All risks have been identified and treated as necessary to reduce their impact.
11. These include any financial and legal implications of introducing the framework agreement and potential disruptions to the care home market resulting from these new arrangements. They will continue to be monitored throughout the implementation and operation of the framework agreement.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

12. Not applicable.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

13. The Council has 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 reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

14. The framework agreement will provide accommodation within care homes for a number of the groups with protected characteristics under the public sector equality duty. It is directed at people over the age of 65 who have a range of conditions including dementia, physical and sensory disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health needs, physical frailty, vulnerability and temporary illness.
15. This approach will advance equality of opportunity and have a positive impact on some of the most vulnerable people in Central Bedfordshire. It is focussed on improving the quality of care that the Council purchases within care homes so that they not only carry out the personal care tasks required such as washing, dressing and feeding but also deliver outcome-focussed care that maximises people's independence, health and wellbeing and supports their social, spiritual, emotional and healthcare needs.
16. The framework agreement also includes requirements relating to staff recruitment, staffing and staff deployment and supporting staff in the working environment.
17. The Equality Impact Assessment (which is available as a background document on request) has considered the impact of this policy and sets out how the introduction of the framework agreement addresses the Council's public sector equality duty. It concludes that the procurement of these services includes a thorough consideration of equality and diversity which will ensure the provision of high quality accommodation to a number of groups with protected characteristics.

**Public Health:**

18. The framework agreement will commission accommodation services in care homes to some of the most vulnerable people within our community who, because of their frailty or ill-health, are unable to remain living safely within their own homes.
19. It will be focussed on maximising each customer's independence and take a preventive approach to maximise their health and wellbeing and achieving the outcomes set out in their care and support plans.

**Community Safety:**

20. Not applicable.

**Sustainability:**

21. Not applicable.

**Procurement:**

22. The procurement approach set down in this report is the most effective method of procuring these services providing value for money contracts.

23. The corporate procurement team has been involved throughout the process of developing this policy to ensure that the steps followed are rigorous, legal, in accordance with the Council's procurement policies and procedures and designed to attract sufficient qualified and experienced providers that are able to supply the services.
24. This has included the production of the contract documentation and the invitation to tender as well as the design of the procurement process, including the evaluation criteria. This tender has been advertised both electronically and in selected local newspapers to ensure that this process is fair, transparent and open to all skilled and experienced providers in this area.
25. The procurement team is now managing the procurement and evaluation stage of the project and will continue in this role until the contract is let.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

26. This matter was discussed by the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 September 2013 and their recommendations are set out in Appendix A.
27. As recommended the six month period in which poor performing providers are able to rectify the causes of any serious concerns will be kept under review and amended if necessary.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Executive is asked to approve the proposed approach to procuring these accommodation services:-**

- 1. to establish a framework agreement as recommended in paragraphs 43 and 44 (The Options) the specific elements of which are contained in Appendices B (The Framework Agreement) and C (The Tender Process);**
- 2. to implement the quality monitoring system set out at Appendix E (Quality Monitoring System) at the same time as the framework agreement;**
- 3. to implement the framework agreement on the basis described at method 2 paragraph 49(b) (Implementing the Framework Agreement) and set down in detail in Appendix D (The Operation of the Framework Agreement); and**
- 4. to let the contract to those providers that have been successful within the tendering process (details of the successful providers will be provided at the meeting).**

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| Reason for Recommendations: | So that the Framework Agreement and Quality Monitoring System, as described within this report, can be let to those providers who have been successful within the tendering process. |
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## Executive Summary

28. The Executive on 6 November 2012 approved a report that established a strategic approach to commissioning services for older people within care homes in Central Bedfordshire. Specifically this included:
  - a) an accreditation scheme for dementia care so that a minimum of 60% of dementia care will be rated as 'good' or 'excellent';
  - b) a quality monitoring system which assesses the quality of each care home and allocates it to a quality performance band; and
  - c) a framework agreement for commissioning places in care homes that links the quality of care to an agreed and fixed contract price.
29. The dementia accreditation scheme is now in place.
30. The new quality monitoring system will evaluate the quality of care homes and allocate them to a performance band. This will become the basis for determining the fees that care homes will receive for local authority funded customers across Central Bedfordshire.
31. The framework agreement will establish new contracting arrangements which will link the contract price to the performance band of each care home so that providers are encouraged to improve their quality in return for an increased contract price.
32. The framework agreement will also encourage new providers to develop care homes in Central Bedfordshire to take advantage of the market opportunities available especially in the northern part of the Council area.
33. The recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 September 2013 are attached at Appendix A and addressed in paragraphs 26 and 27 above.

## NATIONAL RATING SYSTEM

34. The Nuffield Review which reported in February 2013 recommended that a national rating system for care homes with and without nursing is set up and managed by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). This was endorsed in general terms by the government in March 2013 and has since been included within the Care Bill 2013. To implement this, the CQC will have to design the rating system and establish the information collection processes needed to operate it. This will have to be approved by the government and probably piloted in a few areas before being introduced across the board.
35. Whilst the Council needs to be aware of the details of a national rating system and how it is to be implemented it is unlikely to be in place before April 2015. A robust quality monitoring system has been developed by the ADASS Eastern Region group and piloted within Central Bedfordshire over the last 12 months, the details of which are included at Appendix E. The roll out of this quality monitoring system will be continued as planned alongside the framework agreement.

36. On the commencement date of the framework agreement in January 2014 each care home of those providers accepted onto the framework agreement plus the 8 BUPA managed care homes will be allocated to one of four quality performance bands. This will enable the Council to link the quality of services within these care homes to an agreed contract price that it will pay for each publicly funded customer.
37. When a national system is in place at a later date the current processes will be reviewed and merged with the new system as necessary.

## **CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION**

38. The Council has undertaken a comprehensive engagement programme with providers from 2011 consisting of a series of workshops, a questionnaire and a separate focus group with invited providers. The intention behind this was to understand and collate evidence in relation to the current and future costs faced by providers and to identify additional areas of concern for Central Bedfordshire residents in relation to the provision of accommodation within care homes.
39. A further meeting with providers, setting out the broad principles behind the introduction of a framework agreement, was held in November 2012. Additional clarifications on the procurement process and the transition arrangements were provided at a later briefing meeting on 28 May 2013. New providers were also invited and advised that if they were interested in building in the area they should go through the procurement process as the framework agreement will be closed for its contract period.
40. There is a Communication and Engagement Plan to ensure that all stakeholders are able to engage in a meaningful way throughout the duration of the project. A letter has been sent to customers to inform them of the quality monitoring system and the framework agreement and to reassure them that they will continue to receive the care of their choice whilst these new arrangements are put in place.

## **RISK ANALYSIS**

41. There is a full Risk Register to identify, assess and mitigate any risks to the successful delivery of the quality monitoring system and the framework agreement. The key high risks for this project are:
  - (a) customers and their relatives may be concerned if they find out that the accommodation services within care homes are being retendered. This is being addressed through communication and engagement with customers, families, providers and staff to inform them of the changes and provide reassurance that customers will not be required to move if their existing provider is not included on the framework agreement;
  - (b) there may have been insufficient applicants for the framework agreement. This was addressed through communication and engagement with providers, widely marketing the tender and ensuring the procurement process was not too time consuming or complicated to complete.

As a result 17 of the 21 current providers have applied for the tender. This covers 20 of the 24 existing care homes and 90% of the available places. In addition 3 new providers have also responded to the invitation to tender.

- (c) The framework agreement will drive up quality which will raise costs which could make it unaffordable within the current budget. This risk has been mitigated through a thorough financial analysis of the options (see paragraphs 53 to 58 below).

## **OPTIONS**

- 42. A number of different contractual options were considered before the preferred option was recommended. These were:

### **Option 1: Tender for a Framework Agreement**

- 43. This is the preferred option approved by the Executive and outlined in the current report. It will deliver the following benefits for the Council, its customers and the providers:
  - (a) delivering high quality services to all customers through a quality monitoring system and contract pricing policy that rewards high quality and consistent performance;
  - (b) allowing existing customers to remain with their current providers, minimising disruption to customers and their families whilst providing transparent and market competitive rates which achieve value for money;
  - (c) providing more choice of personalised care and access to information to those self directing support;
  - (d) enabling the shaping and development of a robust market to achieve stability and resilience of supply across Central Bedfordshire and greater capacity within the market;
  - (e) identifying the best care home for each customer's requirements with the ability to award a contract without re-opening competition; and
  - (f) establishing a framework for greater collaborative relationships with providers which enhance opportunities for innovation and business development.
- 44. The following disadvantages have been identified, all of which are being mitigated through the risk management strategy:
  - (a) there may be insufficient applicants for the framework agreement (see paragraph 41(b) above);

- (b) new providers that enter the market within 3 years of the commencement of the framework agreement will be unable to get onto the framework agreement as it will be closed for the duration of the contract period (see Appendix B section titled 'Contract Period');
- (c) the Council needs to ensure that there are sufficient finances available as the framework agreement will drive up quality which will raise costs (see paragraphs 53 to 58 below); and
- (d) existing providers may not get onto the framework agreement and may not be willing to retain Council customers at the current rates. This could result in either the Council paying an inflated price for these customers or them having to move into a care home that is on the framework agreement (see paragraph 41(b) above and Appendix D section titled 'The Allocation of Contract Prices').

### **Option 2: Retain the Current System of Block and Spot Contracts**

- 45. The Council has a block contract in place with BUPA which pays for a set number of beds whether or not they are occupied. Alongside this there are a number of spot contracts with providers who provide services as and when required.
- 46. The disadvantages of the current system are:
  - (a) there is no link between the quality of the services and the contract price to give an incentive for providers to improve quality and deliver value for money;
  - (b) the current supply of accommodation is not sustainable to meet the longer term demand in Central Bedfordshire;
  - (c) a lack of transparency in the contractual arrangements as the providers have not gone through a tendering process or been assessed against standard requirements such as data protection, insurance and financial viability; and
  - (d) customers are not able easily to choose from the widest range of care homes to meet their requirements based on their quality and location.

### **Option 3: Establish a Preferred List of Providers**

- 47. A preferred list of providers is operated in the same way as a series of spot contracts except that these providers will have gone through a selection process to be accepted onto the preferred provider list.
- 48. The disadvantages of a preferred list of providers are:
  - (a) the arrangement does not encourage the providers to be as competitive as the Council would like, which may have a detrimental impact on quality and price;

- (b) the providers would be less stringently assessed in terms of the quality of their services and their financial stability; and
- (c) pricing and any other terms can be changed at any time as the conditions of each contract are negotiated and agreed when each specific service is established and not at the beginning of a contract period.

## **IMPLEMENTING THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT**

49. There are a number of ways in which the framework agreement can be implemented. The three methods that have been considered in detail are:

- (a) new fees are implemented for all customers from the beginning of the agreement irrespective of their current fee levels.

This method is most advantageous to the Council and relatively onerous on the providers as it reduces those fees paid for existing customers that are higher than the Council will pay to the contract price for the care home's performance rating;

- (b) new fees are implemented for all customers who are currently funded on existing Council rates or lower so that those on lower fees than their quality performance band go up and those on higher fees go down. Customers on higher non standard fees are protected and remain as they are.

This is fairer to providers as it implements new fees for all customers at the beginning of the framework agreement. It also protects providers from having to bear price reductions by honouring those fees that are higher than the standard Council fees; and

- (c) new fees are implemented only for new customers. Existing customers stay on their current rates.

This would result in a series of differential payments for customers with the same needs within the same care home. It would also discriminate against those care homes that have improved their quality rating as the additional payments that they will receive as a result of this will only be paid for new customers and not existing ones.

50. The preferred methodology for implementing the framework agreement is method 2 described at paragraph 49(b) above.

51. It is fairer to the providers as they will have sufficient time to adjust their business operations to accommodate or mitigate any long term reductions in income that might occur as a result of implementing the framework agreement.

52. This methodology also enables us to implement the new quality performance bands as soon as possible, paying providers from the beginning of the framework agreement on the basis of their current quality performance rating rather than implementing it over a longer period.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

53. The financial implications of implementing the framework agreement have been extensively assessed by comparing the current costs of the service with five sets of assumptions about the ability of providers to improve the quality of their care homes and thus attract higher contract prices which will increase the overall costs to the Council.
54. Option 1, which compares the current costs with what the Council would pay if all providers were paid on their assessed performance band rather than the old CQC star ratings, would result in a saving to the Council. This is because a number of providers are currently on lower performance bands than their CQC star rating and would thus be paid a lower contract price. Although the 6 month transition period would provide time for them to improve their performance.
55. At the lower end of the financial spectrum option 2 assumes that up to 5 of the 24 care homes increase their quality rating by moving up a performance band from their current position. This increases the number of customers living in care homes that are either 'excellent' or 'good' from 60% which is the current level to 65%. It also achieves a cost saving to the Council.
56. Option 3 in which 12 of the 25 care homes move up a performance band will result in a smaller saving to the Council. This is a relatively easily achievable outcome with customers and providers behaviour changing so that the number of customers living in care homes that are either 'excellent' or 'good' increases from 60% to 75%.
57. Further up the scale option 4 has all 24 care homes moving up a performance band. This will result in all customers being in an 'excellent' or 'good' home at a small increase to the budget. This is possible but unlikely to happen in the foreseeable future. Finally option 5 has all 24 care homes improving their performance rating to 'excellent'. This is the maximum possible exposure to implementing the framework agreement and would cost an additional £150,000, however it is very unlikely to happen.
58. The most likely outcome lies somewhere between options 3 and 4 in which around 80% of customers would be in either 'excellent' or 'good' homes. Depending on the effect that the framework agreement has on the behaviour of both customers in choosing to move into higher quality care homes and providers in increasing their quality performance rating there is likely to be either a small saving to or a small increase in the budget. Given this the financial implications of implementing the framework agreement are relatively minor in relation to the budget of £8.7m.

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – The Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Appendix B – The Framework Agreement

Appendix C – The Tender Process

Appendix D – The Operation of the Framework Agreement

Appendix E – The Quality Monitoring System

**Background papers and their location:**

1. “Commissioning for Outcomes: Approach to Standards and Quality of Dementia Care, Fee Levels for Care Homes and Planned Withdrawal from Existing Block Contract Arrangements.”  
  
Report to the Executive on 6 November 2012.
2. “Care Home Provision Central Bedfordshire – Strategic Business Case”  
  
Equality Impact Assessment, 16 November 2012. (Available on request)

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**APPENDIX A**

**THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF  
SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2013**

The Social Care, Health and Housing OSC received the report at their meeting on 9 September and were concerned that 6 months seemed a long time to give providers to improve their performance. The Committee agreed the recommendations as set out in the report but also recommended that officers be requested to keep under review the 6 month period given to providers to rectify the causes of serious concerns and improve the quality of services and report back to Committee at a later date.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT**

#### **The Framework Agreement**

The framework agreement is an umbrella agreement between the Council and a number of care home providers that enables individual contracts for specific customers (generally referred to as 'call-offs') to be awarded throughout the period of the framework agreement. It is often used, as in this case, when the total value of the contract is not known as the number of places that the Council needs to purchase will vary from month to month depending on the number of people assessed as needing accommodation in care homes.

This allows the Council the maximum flexibility to vary the number of places it purchases at any time in each care home depending on demand, the individual circumstances of each provider, their location and where people want to go. In this respect it is similar to operating a series of individual contracts through spot purchases but with more robust contractual arrangements in place in terms of the conditions of the framework agreement and the contract price which are established when the framework agreement is let rather than for every individual service that is provided.

#### **Scope of the Agreement**

The framework agreement will cover the following providers:

- 1) All care homes for older people with and without nursing in Central Bedfordshire that are registered with the CQC to provide care for people aged 65 years and over, except the 8 care homes that are currently managed by BUPA; and
- 2) Care homes with and without nursing to be opened by new providers who want to move into the area.

The framework agreement will include the following customers:

- 1) Publicly funded customers who are 65+ years old who have dementia or are physically frail or have a physical impairment or ill-health that is primarily age-related;
- 2) Publicly funded customers who have a learning disability, physical impairment or mental health need who are living within care homes in Central Bedfordshire registered to provide care to people aged 65 years and over; and
- 3) People in need of palliative and end of life care.

The Council will also purchase short-term care from within this framework agreement. This can be for a number of reasons such as to provide respite care that will enable a customer's carer to take a break from their caring responsibilities, in an emergency when a person's care arrangements have temporarily broken down or where a customer is unable to return home for a short period following hospital treatment or whilst adaptations are being made to their property. In all of these circumstances it is anticipated that the customer will return home to independent living and the provider will be expected to ensure that the period within the care home will be used to maintain or regain the skills needed to enable the customer to return home with no loss of independence.

## **The Impact on Existing Customers**

Existing customers will not be affected by the introduction of the framework agreement. They will be able to stay within their existing care home unless they specifically choose to move elsewhere.

## **Additional Services**

In addition to the standard services provided within the framework agreement there is the potential to provide a number of additional services depending upon the specified need for these which is currently being assessed:

- 1) **Rehabilitation & Re-ablement.** There are current discussions with the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group to consider how best to provide rehabilitation and re-ablement services some of which could be provided to people living in care homes with and without nursing.
- 2) **Respite Care Services.** Opportunities are being explored around the need to commission respite care services that are currently part of the contract with BUPA or which cannot be provided within the BUPA managed care homes.

These additional services have been referred to in the tender documents and when the Council is ready to proceed providers on the framework agreement will be approached to discuss how best to set up these services.

## **Continuing Healthcare Services (CHC).**

There are also current discussions with the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group to include the purchasing of CHC beds for older people within the framework agreement. Issues include which service specification should be used and the contract price to be charged. The purchase of CHC beds has been referred to in the tender documents and when the Council and the CCG are ready the providers on the framework agreement will be approached to discuss the future arrangements for commissioning CHC services.

This could also allow the Council to purchase CHC places for older people on behalf of the NHS. This will take longer to organise with issues around organisational arrangements, budgets and contractual agreements needing to be resolved.

## **Contract Period**

The maximum allowable length of a framework agreement under European Union law is four years. It is proposed that we enter into a 3 year contract with an option to extend it by one year to the 4 year maximum. This is to provide the Council with the maximum flexibility in the event that a new provider with whom we may want to do business enters the care home market during the lifetime of the framework agreement.

Given that it takes at least 3 years from the initiation of a capital project through the planning process to completion it is extremely unlikely that any development project that we are not aware of at the beginning of the agreement will be developed within the initial 3 year period.

The Council will also ensure that at the end of the framework agreement all customers continue to receive care from their existing provider whilst new contractual arrangements are put into place.

## APPENDIX C

### THE TENDER PROCESS

#### Timescales for the Tender Process

The proposed timetable for the tender process is:

| Activity   | Implementation Date(s)   |
|--|--|
| Advert published and ITT available on In-Tend  | Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> July 2013  |
| Questions and answers and clarification period   | Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> July to Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sept 2013 (5 weeks)                     |
| ITT response deadline date (fixed)   | Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2013  |
| Overview & Scrutiny Committee  | Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2013  |
| Issues raised by OSC meeting addressed and incorporated into contract and Executive report | Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> September to Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> October 2013 (3+ weeks)           |
| Model answers finalised for quality questions  | Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> Sept to Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> October 2013 (3+ weeks)                |
| Draft report to Executive  | Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> October 2013  |
| Tender analysis  | Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> October to Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2013 (2 weeks)               |
| Final report to Executive  | Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> October  |
| ITT evaluation meetings  | Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> October to Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> November (2 weeks)                   |
| 1st evaluation meeting   | Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2013  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> evaluation meeting   | Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> October 2013  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Evaluation meeting   | Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2013  |
| Final decision on providers accepted onto the framework agreement                          | By Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2013  |
| Executive meeting  | Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> November 2013  |
| Providers Informed of decision and their quality banding                                   | From Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2013 (1 week)            |
| Contracts signed and briefing meeting(s) for successful providers take place               | From Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> November to Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> December 2013 (5 weeks) |
| Operational processes are implemented  | From Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> November to Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> December 2013 (6 weeks)  |
| Framework agreement in place   | Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2014  |

## **Tender Evaluation**

The tender will bring providers onto the framework agreement by assessing whether they are a 'fit and proper' organisation from whom we wish to purchase accommodation within care homes.

The evaluation will be based on the completion of:

- a) A Provider Questionnaire (50% of evaluation) which covers financial stability and organisational procedures (e.g. data handling; equalities; health & safety; insurances; business continuity and safeguarding); and
- b) References from two existing commissioning authorities (50% of evaluation) covering (quality of care; caring for people with dementia; maximising independence; handling complaints; staff development; management competency; value for money; maintaining records & partnership working).

The tender will evaluate each provider to determine whether or not they are to be accepted onto the framework agreement. Thus a provider with more than one care home with or without nursing in the area will only apply and be evaluated once, not for each care home.

The tender evaluation team will comprise the Assistant Director Strategic Commissioning, Commissioning and Contracts Officers within the Social Care, Health and Housing Department and a Procurement Officer. It will also involve the Executive Member/Deputy Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing and the Chair of the Older People's Reference Group.

The evaluation will be completed by the end of October and a list of the successful providers will be tabled at the meeting. The Executive will be asked to approve these successful providers for acceptance onto the framework agreement so that it can begin operation in January 2014.

## APPENDIX D

### THE OPERATION OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

#### The Allocation of Contract Prices

**New Customers** within the framework agreement will be paid for at the new contract prices from the commencement date of the framework agreement, except that:

- (1) Where the quality performance rating of a care home with and without nursing goes down there will be a 6 month transition period in which it will retain its current price to allow time for it to improve its quality performance rating; and
- (2) When a new care home with or without nursing opens any placement to it will be paid at a price equivalent to that of an 'adequate' care home until it can be allocated to a quality performance band and a contract price established, at which time any difference will be backdated.

**New Customers** in care homes that are outside of the framework agreement and within Central Bedfordshire will be paid for at a price equivalent to that of an 'adequate' care home. If this is less than the fee charged by the care home there will have to be a third party contribution to enable the customer to move there.

**New Customers** in care homes that are outside Central Bedfordshire will be paid for at the host local authority's usual rate. If this is less than the fee charged by the care home there will have to be a third party contribution to enable the customer to move there.

**Self Funders** with diminishing resources who become eligible for public funding:

- 1) If living within a care home that is within the framework agreement, will be paid for at the agreed contract price irrespective of the fee they were originally paying;
- 2) If living within a care home that is outside the framework agreement and following a care and risk assessment that deems them to be able to move to alternative accommodation:
  - a. will be offered a choice of any of the 8 Council or BUPA owned care homes within their preferred location at the agreed contract price; then
  - b. if these do not meet their needs they will be offered a choice of the care homes on the framework agreement within their preferred location at the agreed contract price.

If they choose to stay in their current care home and the fees are higher than those for an 'adequate' care home or what the host authority would normally pay if outside of Central Bedfordshire there will need to be a third party contribution for them to stay there; or

- 3) If living within a care home that is outside the framework agreement and following a care and risk assessment that deems them unsuitable to move to alternative accommodation, will be publicly funded within that care home without there having to be a third party contribution.

## **The Placement of New Customers within Care Homes**

All new customers will be offered places within the care homes of providers that have been accepted onto the framework agreement plus the 8 care homes managed by BUPA. However given that for the foreseeable future the current block contract with BUPA will continue, albeit reducing over a 7 year period, priority will be given to the BUPA managed care homes.

The process for allocating publicly funded customers to places within care homes within Central Bedfordshire will be:

- 1) Customers will initially be offered a choice of any of the 8 Council or BUPA owned care homes within their preferred location; then
- 2) If these do not meet their needs they will be offered a choice of the care homes of the providers on the framework agreement that are within their preferred location.

The Council will not generally offer customers a place within a care home that:

- 1) Is not one of the 8 BUPA managed homes or is owned by any provider that is not on the framework agreement; or
- 2) Has been assessed through the Quality Monitoring System as having a quality performance rating of 'poor'.

However the Council reserves the right in exceptional circumstances to offer places outside of the framework agreement. This will only be used once all options within the framework agreement have been exhausted.

Customers will be given information about each care home, including its quality performance rating, to enable them to find a care home that meets their requirements into which they are happy to move.

If a customer want to go to a care home with or without nursing that is outside of the 8 BUPA managed homes or the framework agreement the Council will facilitate this to provide choice to customers providing that if the care home is:

- 1) Within Central Bedfordshire the rate that the Council will pay will be equivalent to that of an 'adequate' care home with or without nursing; or
- 2) Outside of Central Bedfordshire the rate that the Council will pay will be the same as that usually paid by the host authority.

If these are less than the fees charged by the care home there will have to be a third party contribution to allow the customer to move there.

The allocations process will be reviewed in the future so that priority is not given to any one provider, thereby increasing choice and enabling customers' decisions to be based on the quality of the care homes. The timing of this will be dependent on the negotiations with BUPA about the future block contract and the programme for closing the 7 Council owned care homes.



### **Third Party Contributions**

Third party contributions were introduced by the government to increase choice to people moving into care homes with and without nursing. They are governed by DH statutory guidance the details of which are contained in Local Authority Circular [LAC (2004) 20].

The framework agreement has no effect on and does not change the circumstances in which third party contributions can be set up or the ability of third parties to make contributions to the costs of care for publicly funded customers. Any existing third party contributions that have been established under the current regulations will continue and any that are able to be established in the future will be able to be set up within the framework agreement.

## APPENDIX E

### THE QUALITY MONITORING SYSTEM

The care homes with and without nursing that are owned by those providers accepted onto the framework agreement plus the 8 BUPA managed care homes with and without nursing on the block contract will be evaluated on an annual basis in accordance with the system that is currently being introduced as part of the process for monitoring the quality of care homes within Central Bedfordshire.

This quality monitoring system will rate each care home and allocate them to a quality performance band, similar to the Ofsted system of rating schools. Each care home will initially be given a score within the five domains of the quality monitoring system based on the monitoring visits that have been carried out in the 18 month period from April 2012 to October 2013.

These scores will then be aggregated to give a composite score that equates to one of the following four quality performance bands:

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Adequate
4. Poor

The allocation of a care home to the 'poor' quality performance band will only take place if the Council has serious concerns about the quality of care being provided, sufficient for it to initiate a process within its Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures asking the provider to take remedial action.

If this situation arises outside of the annual performance review of the care homes the Council will immediately downgrade the care home to 'poor' until the provider resolves the issues that the Council has identified and the care home moves out of serious concerns and is able to improve its quality performance band to 'adequate' or higher.

In these circumstances the Council will not immediately move customers to another care home but it would not place any new customers within a care home with or without nursing that has been assessed as 'poor'.

The Council will work with the provider of any care home with or without nursing identified as 'poor' for a period of 6 months to help it rectify the causes of the serious concerns and improve the quality of the services. If there has been no improvement after this period the Council will reduce its contract price and consider whether to offer customers places within other higher quality care homes with and without nursing.

During the contract period of the framework agreement a formal annual review of the quality of each care home will take place in which the previous 12 months monitoring information will be considered and the quality performance rating and contract price of the care homes adjusted as necessary. This will be implemented immediately following the review date.

**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 05 November 2013  
**Subject:** Fees and Allowances for Foster Carers  
**Report of:** Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services  
**Summary:** The report outlines the outcome of a review of the foster care allowance scheme and recommends an increase in the remuneration for Central Bedfordshire Council foster carers and address the high use of independent foster agency placements.

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

**Contact Officer:** Gerard Jones, Assistant Director Children's Services Operations

**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:**

1. Central Bedfordshire Council's Strategic Plan 2012-16 Priority 3 – Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.

The Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014 Priority 2 – Protecting children and keeping them safe.

Providing a sufficient number and range of foster placements is a key statutory responsibility to Looked After Children.

### **Financial:**

2. Spend in 2012/13 on in-house fostering placement allowances was £973,855.  
Spend in 2013/14 forecast as at September 2013 is projected to be £1,014,365.

Spend in 2012/13 on Independent fostering agency placements was £3,307,846.  
Spend in 2013/14 forecast as at September 2013 Looked After Children numbers is projected to be £4,192,308.

The proposals are costed below in the report.

**Legal:**

3. The Children Act 1989 identifies a statutory duty for Councils to provide sufficient accommodation in their local area and to provide maintenance for children who are looked after.
4. The Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011, associated Statutory Guidance and National Minimum Standards outlines the Council's responsibility to ensure that foster carers are given clear information about the allowances, fees and expenses available to them. The allowance must be sufficient to cover the cost of caring for a child placed with them and must be reviewed annually.

**Risk Management:**

5. Regulatory Risks: The provision of sufficient and suitable foster placements is a key activity monitored by Ofsted during inspection, forming part of their judgement about services for Looked After Children.
6. Child Protection Risks: Failure to recruit or retain sufficient foster carers would be a child protection risk.
7. Reputational Risk: Recruitment of foster carers is a competitive market activity and has a high media profile.
8. Financial Risk: Looked After Children placements is a demand led activity. Independent Foster Agency placements are high cost, and variations in the proportion of independent versus in-house placements can have significant and immediate impact on forecast spend.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

9. There are no staffing implications from these proposals.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

10. Fostering allowances must meet the cost of caring for a child. The allowance scheme must ensure that any additional costs incurred in caring for a disabled child or a child with other specific needs is met. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and shows the need to pay at least the basic recommended level of allowances meets the requirements of the assessment.

**Community Safety:**

11. There are no implications from these proposals.

**Sustainability:**

12. There are no implications from these proposals.

**Overview and Scrutiny Comments:**

13. Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be advised of this approach by letter requesting comments.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Executive is recommended to agree the proposals for changing the scheme for fostering allowances to implement fees and allowances as set out in this report and that these proposals are considered as part of the draft revenue budget due to be approved by Council on 28 February 2014.**

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Reason for Recommendation: | <i>To manage the sufficiency and affordability of placements for looked after children.</i> |
|----------------------------|---|

**Background**

14. The Council has a duty to provide a range of types of placements for looked after children which meet their needs. In most cases a child's needs should be met by living in a family setting, either with someone known to them (known as a friends and family or connected person foster placement) or with foster carers.
15. The Council recruits its own foster carers, known as 'in-house' foster carers and also has the legal responsibility for assessing and approving friends and family foster carers. In order to meet the demand for foster placements and, in some cases, to meet specific needs of children, foster placements are also bought from Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA). Central Bedfordshire Council, in conjunction with Luton Borough Council and Bedford Borough Council has a Framework Agreement with 19 such agencies to offer suitable and sufficient IFA placements within a tight cost and quality framework.
16. The unit cost models for in-house placements and IFA placements are different. In-house unit costs comprise of an age-related allowance paid to the foster carer to cover the cost of looking after the child, plus the overheads of running the service. There are economies of scale in relation to service overheads up to the point where further investment is needed to increase capacity. IFA placements are costed per child and this is a total inclusive amount paid to the agency for each placement.
17. In-house placements average at £397 per week, comprising £197 allowances to carers and £200 service overheads, (£20,644 per annum). The rate of allowances is set at 110% of the Fostering Network recommended rate. The in-house costs take account of the revised overhead costs when the current shared service disaggregates from Bedford Borough Council.
18. The current average cost of an IFA placement within the Framework Agreement is £724 per week. (£37,648 per annum).

## **Demand for Placements**

19. The number of looked after children in Central Bedfordshire Council has steadily risen at a rate of approximately 18% each year since 2009. The rate of increase appears to be accelerating, with 16% more children accommodated in 2013/14 in the first 6 months of this year. Indicators (such as numbers of children subject to Child Protection Plans, and statistical neighbour data) are that the number of looked after children will continue to rise in the foreseeable future.
20. The age profile of the Central Bedfordshire Council looked after population is changing, with a greater proportion of pre-school age children, and those under 10 years making up the cohort. This has implications for the fostering service in that carers are needed who can be available at home to meet the needs of this age group of children.
21. There are mechanisms for reviewing the thresholds for assessing which children should be in care and these have recently been reviewed by an independent senior practitioner and have been deemed to be correct.
22. Information from our annual data return to Ofsted shows that, at 74%, we have a similar proportion of looked after children placed in foster care to our statistical neighbours (75%). This demonstrates that we are making decisions about our use of fostering placements (as opposed to other placement options) in a consistent way and using similar criteria as other councils. The same data return showed that 20% more Central Bedfordshire looked after children are placed in private provision (50%) than our statistical neighbours (30%).
23. Whilst there are valid reasons why we would want to have a mixed economy of care provision, private provision is universally more expensive than in-house provision, and the Council has less control over maintaining consistent quality. It is sensible to increase the proportion of in-house fostering provision and reduce the use of IFA placements to at least in-line with statistical neighbours.

## **The Council's Position in the Local Market**

24. Recruitment of foster carers is a highly competitive market. It is estimated by the Fostering Network that there is a national shortage of 9,000 foster carers. The in-house service is competing against neighbouring Councils, particularly Luton, Milton Keynes and Hertfordshire, and a raft of Independent Fostering Agencies who are active in our geographical area, including the 19 agencies on the Framework Agreement.
25. The in-house service commissioned an independent review of recruitment and retention in November 2012 – January 2013. This focused on:
  - the recruitment and retention financial package the Council offers prospective foster carers compared to competitors;
  - whether the recruitment and marketing activity was successful in attracting enquiries about fostering; and
  - factors impacting on recruitment and retention, including a survey of those who had not taken their fostering enquiry with Central Bedfordshire Council forward.

26. The review found that Central Bedfordshire Council is delivering well on its recruitment strategy, with good quality advertisements, recruitment events, website and internet presence generating a high number of enquiries per year. The processes for recruiting carers were generally transparent and efficient and customer satisfaction was high. The support package to approved foster carers comprising a range of training opportunities, support groups, supervision from a dedicated and consistent social worker and an out of hours helpline was of good quality and better than some competitors. This was a view endorsed by Ofsted in the report of their inspection of the fostering service in December 2012 which said “There is a good focus on recruitment, both general and specifically targeted, with regular advertising campaigns and circulation of literature. Recruitment campaigns are not as successful as the fostering service would like, in terms of increasing numbers.”
27. The review did identify that the financial support package offered was falling behind that offered by competitors. Payments made to foster carers in Central Bedfordshire Council are related to the age of the child and range from £150.92 to £260.12 per week:

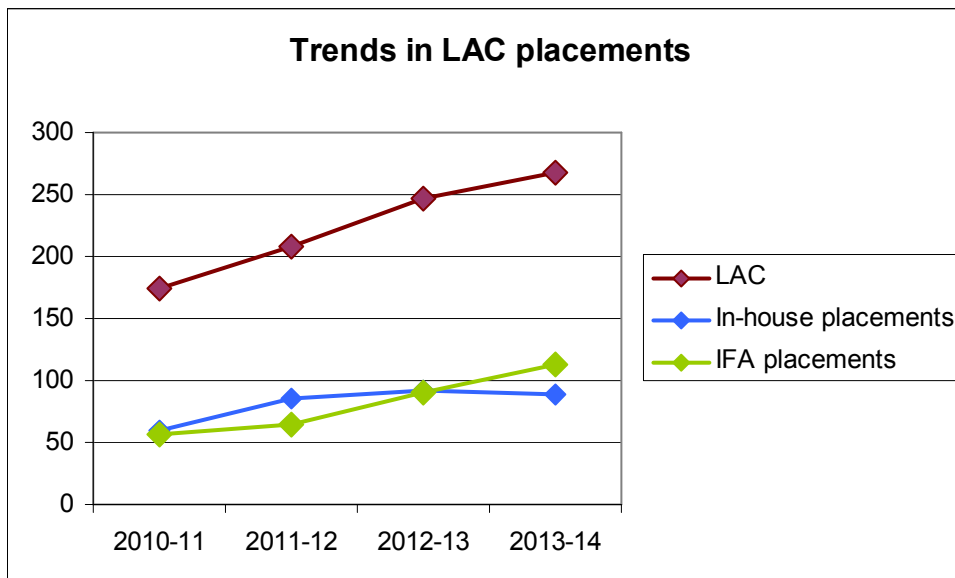
| <b>STANDARD FOSTERING ALLOWANCE</b> |              |               |               |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>AGE</b>                          | <b>Daily</b> | <b>1 WEEK</b> | <b>2 WEEK</b> |
| 0 - 4                               | £21.56       | £150.92       | £301.84       |
| 5 - 10                              | £24.55       | £171.85       | £343.70       |
| 11 - 15                             | £30.55       | £213.85       | £427.70       |
| 16+                                 | £37.16       | £260.12       | £520.24       |

***NB: an additional £100 per week is paid if a child is 13 years old or older at the time of placement (not applicable to Youth Carers)***

28. All the Council’s immediate local authority neighbours now pay a ‘fee’ or ‘skills’ payment to foster carers in addition to the fostering allowance covering the expenditure on the child. This fee is a reward for the carer, a contribution to household finances and in many cases is linked to the carer’s level of experience. Examples are Milton Keynes who implemented a more generous fee payment scheme in 2011, paying a total package of between £278 to £378 per week and Hertfordshire who pay between £237 and £413 per week. Luton Borough Council is implementing a fee scheme in August 2013 and it is likely that this may attract carers who may otherwise have applied to Central Bedfordshire Council.
29. Independent Fostering Agencies tend to have a more simple payments scheme and make one payment to carers, from which they are expected to spend between two-thirds and three-quarters on costs for the child. Fees paid locally by IFAs range from £366 to £550 per week.

## The Case for Change

30. There is a significant risk from doing nothing. Despite year on year increases in new carers and good levels of retention, availability of in-house placements seems to have reached a plateau and placements for newly looked after children increasingly have to be sought from IFA provision.



Spend in 2012/13 on Independent Fostering Agency placements was £3,307 846. Spend in 2013/14 is projected to be £4,192,308 (against a budget of £3,130,000), assuming that numbers of placements stays the same. This is an unsafe assumption, given that numbers of looked after children are likely to increase for the remainder of this year by at least another 25 and some, if not most, of these children will be placed in IFA .

31. A performance focus on validating trend data is constantly on going. One issue is that due to recent high profile safeguarding concerns nationally, statistical neighbours, alongside ourselves, are showing unprecedented numbers of referrals so historical trend data may not be as relevant as previously.
32. If the Council makes changes to the fee and allowance structure it will be in a better position to:
- a. Be more competitive with neighbours and attract more carers.
  - b. Prevent children going to IFA placements and bring those in IFAs back to in-house placements in a planned way.
  - c. Incentivise foster carers to complete mandatory training and enable them to feel the councils is treating them as paid professional carers.
  - d. Prevent loss of existing carers either to competitors or because they can no longer afford to foster.
  - e. Encourage foster carers who would otherwise need to work to be more available for fostering at no financial detriment to their household.
  - f. Have carers more available to meet the needs of younger children, and potentially make savings on extra costs such as transport to school.



33. Foster carers were consulted in 2011 about their allowances. At that time, the majority (64%) wanted the payment scheme to remain the same. However, over the last year existing foster carers have begun to tell the service that it needs to do something differently. At support groups and the most recent Foster Carers Forum and disaggregation focus group, foster carers said that the Council needed to demonstrate the value placed in foster carers and acknowledge their financial pressures. They said that they needed practical incentives by way of financial support to continue fostering.

### **Training and Skills**

34. At the same time as the Allowances are implemented an approach of skill development will be undertaken.

### **Proposals including costs**

35. It is proposed that the Council increases the financial offer made to in-house foster carers by replacing the current fostering allowance scheme with an allowance plus skills fee scheme.
36. The aims of the proposal would be:
- a. to offer a more market-competitive allowance/fee package to prospective new carers in order to increase recruitment;
  - b. to offer a financial support package to existing carers that enables them to remain fostering and incentivises their completion of training;
  - c. to increase the provision of in-house placements and reduce the use of IFA placements by 25 over two years; and
  - d. by providing a greater household income to enable carers to be more available for fostering tasks such as school transport, placements for younger children.
37. It is proposed that a tiered fee of £75 per week on top of the fostering allowance for the child would be paid to newly approved foster carers for their first year of caring, or until they achieve the Training Support and Development mandatory workforce development standards which is a national scheme validated for use in such circumstances. When they reach this standard, the fee would increase to £150 per week.
38. Fostering allowances are currently paid at 110% of the Fostering Network recommended rate. This would continue to cover the costs for the child, and would be the payment made to friends and family carers who would not receive the household skills rate.

39. The average cost of implementing this scheme for the existing placements are detailed below:

|                                   | Current scheme<br>90 placements | New Scheme<br>90 placements |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Allowance Rate                    | 110%                            | 110%                        |
| Average Allowance amount per week | 197                             | 197                         |
| Fee (average)*                    | -                               | 94                          |
| Service Overheads                 | 200                             | 200                         |
| <b>Average unit cost per week</b> | <b>397</b>                      | <b>491</b>                  |
| <b>Total cost per week</b>        | <b>35,730</b>                   | <b>44,190</b>               |
| <b>TOTAL PER YEAR</b>             | <b>1,857,960</b>                | <b>2,297,880</b>            |

\* Assumes 22 carers receive no fee (friends and family), 23 carers receive £75 and 45 carers receive £150.

The new scheme costing an additional £440k to apply to the existing placements.

40. Each new in- house placements will cost an approximate £291 per week (£15,132 per annum), assuming the service costs are fixed and will not increase incrementally. In summary, each new in-house placement made instead of an IFA placement will save approximately £433 per week, including the investment in the in-house scheme.

If 15 additional carers can be recruited as a result of the new scheme this would provide a saving of £564,720 on the Independent Fostering Agency budget.

### Benefits and Risks

42. The benefits of implementing this scheme are that:
- a. the Council will be more competitive and will stand the best chance of recruiting new carers;
  - b. the Council will demonstrate it is listening to existing foster carers and will stand the best chance of retaining existing carers;
  - c. something different to maintaining the status quo will have been implemented to ensure the service does not fail to recruit enough carers to maintain a stand-still position;
  - d. there is potential to significantly reduce spend on IFA provision and to have a number and proportion of independent placements more in line with statistical neighbours;
  - e. in-house placements will still remain substantially cheaper than IFA placements; and
  - f. the reputation of the Council as the fostering agency of choice in the competitive market is likely to be enhanced.
43. The risks of implementing the scheme are:
- a. there are no guarantees that implementing the scheme will result in the increase of in-house carers that the Council needs and will bring a financial pressure; and
  - b. the initial financial investment needed is significant, although this can be recouped within one financial year;

**Conclusion and Next Steps**

44. The Executive is recommended to agree the proposals for changing the scheme for fostering allowances to implement fees and allowances as set out in this report and that these proposals are considered as part of the draft revenue budget due to be approved by Council on 28 February 2014.

**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:** None

**Location of papers:** Not Applicable

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**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 5 November 2013  
**Subject:** Implementation of the Leisure Facilities Strategy, including findings of the Flitwick Leisure Centre Invest to Save Feasibility Study  
**Report of:** Cllr Spurr, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services  
**Summary:** A report on implementation of the Leisure Facilities Strategy, including the findings of the Flitwick Leisure Centre invest to save feasibility study. The report recommends redevelopment of Flitwick Leisure Centre.

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**Advising Officer:** Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services  
**Contact Officer:** Jill Dickinson, Head of Leisure  
**Public/Exempt:** Public (A further report setting out the financial details can be found in the exempt section of the Agenda)  
**Wards Affected:** Implementation of the Leisure Strategy affects all wards. Implementation of the findings of Flitwick Leisure Centre invest to save feasibility study affects Flitwick, Ampthill, Aspley & Woburn, Cranfield & Marston Moretaine, Houghton Conquest & Haynes, Westoning, Flitton & Greenfield  
**Function of:** Executive  
**Key Decision** Yes  
**Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate)** N/a

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

The development of a Leisure Strategy, including the Leisure Facilities Strategy is a high level target in 'Delivering Your Priorities' the Council's Medium Term Plan.

Implementation of the Leisure Facilities Strategy supports the following Council priorities;

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

**Financial:**

1. The Leisure Facilities Strategy guides investment priorities including Central Bedfordshire Council's capital investment. The Council's capital programme 2013/14 – 2015/16 approved at Council on 21 February 2013 includes funds for leisure facilities totalling over £8m.
2. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to secure Section106 and Community Infrastructure Levy funds.
3. All six of the Council's leisure centres have been identified as requiring investment with funds approved in the Council's capital programme between 2013/14 and 2016/17 including:
  - 3.1 Tiddenfoot leisure centre: £1.4m refurbishment and expansion for fitness, a reception and café, and building work is underway.
  - 3.2 Saxon pool and leisure centre: £1.6m extension for sports hall and spa provision, currently at tender stage.
  - 3.3 Houghton Regis leisure centre: £150k to reopen the swimming pool. The procurement of a new leisure management contract for this centre is underway and will market test the cost of reopening the pool. Should reopening the pool be considered to be affordable then the capital works will be undertaken in 2014.
  - 3.4 Sandy sport and community centre: £150k to refurbish the athletics track, planned to start in March 2013.
  - 3.5 Flitwick leisure centre Phase 1, football facilities: £1.2m for playing pitches and changing pavilion. A suitable site for a new leisure centre is on land adjacent to the existing leisure centre which is currently used as playing pitches. Planning conditions require for the playing pitches and associated facilities to be re provided before building work on a new leisure centre can begin. Executive on 18 March 2013 approved £300k of these funds to commence Phase 1. It is on track, with preparation of new playing pitches underway.
  - 3.6 This football project will be undertaken in stages with an award of contract for the changing pavilion made once Executive has considered any recommendation to include Flitwick leisure centre in the main capital programme for 2014/15 and it is approved by Council. By delivering this first phase in 2 key stages it enables budget expenditure to be controlled and tied to key Executive decisions relating to stages of development of the overall priority to provide a new leisure centre.
  - 3.7 Dunstable leisure centre: £2.3m refurbishment programme. A brief for an initial options appraisal is being developed.

- 3.8 At all centres, annual condition surveys identify priorities for stock condition works. In 2013/14 there is a budget of £310k. Dunstable leisure centre has recently benefitted from new boilers; Saxon pool from energy efficient lights in the pool hall.

**Legal:**

4. In 2005 the Council commissioned consultants to undertake an options appraisal to identify preferred sites for a new Flitwick Leisure Centre. A review of the preferred sites in 2012 concluded to continue with the site identified in 2005; for the leisure centre to be built on an adjacent site of the existing centre currently providing playing pitches.
5. In order to facilitate the provision of a new leisure centre a land exchange between Central Bedfordshire Council and Flitwick Town Council is necessary. Head of Terms agreed by both parties is supported by an exchange of contracts. Three parcels of land are involved;
6. Plot A The current Leisure centre and surrounding land of approximately 4.55 acres situated at Steppingly Road, Flitwick, owned by Flitwick Town Council and leased to Central Bedfordshire Council.
7. Plot B Plot B: Approximately 59.3 acres owned by CBC situated at the junction of Maulden Road and the A507 to be transferred to Flitwick Town Council to be used for the purposes of a Country Park.
8. Plot C The land adjacent to the existing Leisure Centre currently used as football pitches comprising approximately 7.8 acres owned by Flitwick Town Council.
9. The agreement is to exchange Plot A and C for Plot B, for Central Bedfordshire Council to build a new leisure centre on Plot C and to sell Plot A for residential development. The estimated capital receipt arising from the sale of Plot A has been identified to reduce the overall prudential borrowing requirement within the business case for the proposed Flitwick Leisure Centre redevelopment.
10. In the report to Executive on 18 March 2013 regarding approval to commence Flitwick leisure centre Phase 1, football facilities for playing pitches and changing pavilion it was highlighted that the project is supported by the Football Association as a strategically significant site for the development of local community football in the area, to be managed in partnership with a local football club, Flitwick Eagles with the aim of delivering a scheme at nil revenue cost for the authority. The report explained that a grant application to the Football Foundation would be submitted and that the grant conditions will stipulate that a long term lease be given to the local football club so that it has security of tenure to operate the facility.

**Risk Management:**

11. The following risks have been identified, which are considered in more detail below:
  - Failure to deliver the Council's priorities: Implementation of the Council's leisure capital programme which improves and extends the Council's leisure infrastructure directly helps deliver Great Universal Services and Promotes Health and Wellbeing.
  - Reputational risks: Delivery of the approved Leisure Facilities Strategy, supports the Council's Medium Term Plan.
  - Risk to customer satisfaction: Investment in the Council's leisure facilities significantly improves customer satisfaction at those facilities where investment is undertaken. The recent investment at Houghton Regis leisure centre where there has been a significant increase in membership demonstrates this well.
12. The Sport England methodology used in the Leisure Facilities Strategy assessed the quality, quantity and accessibility of a range of specific sports facilities and resulted in clear strategic priorities for investment to add capacity and renew aging stock, including at Flitwick leisure centre where additional water and fitness space is specifically required to address existing and future population requirements. Implementation of the capital programme addresses these key priorities and the recommended facility mix for a new leisure centre at Flitwick directly addresses the shortfalls in these areas by more than doubling the water and fitness space.
13. 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 with our key partners for capital investment.
14. For Flitwick leisure centre, the appointment of external professional leisure consultants to undertake a feasibility study has ensured that the Council has independently tested the optimum facility mix, cost, affordability, programme delivery, procurement strategy, design development and risk management. The appointed consultant's team has a successful track record of undertaking feasibility assessments and delivering capital schemes on time and to budget.
15. The feasibility study methodology undertaken to assess the viability of the facility mix at Flitwick has been robust and comprehensive and used prudent and conservative assumptions about the level of demand, predicted income, capital costs and capital receipt. It assessed the market demand and supply and income projections of a range of facilities within the catchment area, using industry benchmarks, and took account of the revenue performance of the existing facility over the last three years. In order to test the recommended facility mix further, soft market testing with the operators bidding for the new leisure management contract confirms that the facility mix recommended is appropriate.
16. The feasibility study included a risk assessment which identified a number of areas which could limit the deliverability of this scheme, and/or delay it. These include legal, financial, planning and programme issues which are all being actively managed and reviewed.



17. There is a risk that any new development of commercial health and fitness clubs and budget gyms would create competition for some services being offered at a new Flitwick leisure centre. However, commercial health and fitness clubs offer a more focussed facility mix than is being proposed by the Council. They do not tend to offer access to schools, clubs and other community groups and they are inaccessible to members of the public who cannot afford the membership fees. They tend to be located in densely populated catchments and many will work on the need for a catchment population of say 100,000 – 150,000 plus within a 15-minute drive time, targeting higher socio economic segments of the population. Given the relatively small catchment population at Flitwick and the rural surroundings, the risk that Flitwick would be targeted by such an operator is low.
18. There has been growth in budget gym operators in recent years. As with other health and fitness operators these tend to be located within larger catchment populations where there are a relatively high proportion of younger workers who are looking for good value. The offer is very limited, and customer service and staffing is minimal. Flitwick is unlikely to be targeted by such an operator, as the catchment population is relatively small and the consumer profiles are such that customers are likely to be looking for a better leisure experience.
19. The procurement of a new leisure management contract for four leisure centres, including Flitwick Leisure Centre is currently underway with a new contract start date on 1 April 2014. The winning operator will have been assessed on the current facility mix and will be involved in the development of the new centre. The operator will manage and operate the facility on a full repairing lease. In the event of the Council not being able to reach agreement with the operator on the management fee to operate the new centre, then the Council will have the right to terminate the contract for Flitwick Leisure Centre at no additional cost, and retender the contract for that centre.
20. The financial affordability assessment concludes that the recommended option offers a degree of contingency against risk of interest rate rises or any capital cost pressures that cannot be contained within project contingency allowances. However, a risk remains that the centre will not perform as well as predicted and therefore not deliver sufficient income to cover the capital borrowing costs.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

21. Not applicable.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

22. 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.
23. 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.

24. The design of a new leisure centre will meet and exceed the minimum requirements set out by the disability Discrimination Act 1996, BS:8300 and Sport England's guidance note Access for Disabled People. Consideration must also be given for the safe and unassisted evacuation of users with disabilities.

**Public Health:**

25. Leisure facilities are a key community health resource. The evidence for increasing physical activity is compelling and there is a wealth of information and research that supports this. The Leisure Facilities Strategy ensures 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:**

26. 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 within 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 criminal or anti-social.

**Sustainability:**

27. Extending and improving opportunities that increase the number of people accessing and participating in sport and physical activity through a network of good quality, accessible and readily available public sport and recreation facilities reduces the need for customers to travel to other local authority areas to participate in these activities.
28. 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) through refurbishment and redevelopment is a key objective.

**Procurement:**

29. In order to implement the capital programme, appropriate consultants have been procured to undertake project management, detailed design, engineering and quantity surveying services. The procurement of these services is carried out in consultation with the Council's procurement team via existing local authority purchasing framework agreements approved by CBC.
30. For Flitwick leisure centre, the feasibility study recommends an approach to procurement of a building contractor which strikes the best balance between cost, risk transfer and programme delivery. A single stage develop and construct procurement route with the design being progressed to RIBA Stage 3+ (previously D+) is recommended. This combines some of the benefits associated with design and build and traditional procurement routes. The contractor would be procured via OJEU Restricted Procedures. Whilst there are available contractor frameworks the Council could access, these are not suited to a single stage procurement route and will cost more than the OJEU route. Any award of contract would be made in accordance with the Code of Procurement Governance.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

31. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the Leisure Facilities Strategy and the Flitwick Leisure Centre Feasibility Study on 10 October 2013. In light of their discussion the Committee agreed the following comments:-
1. that the Committee felt the focus of the Council should be on developing new leisure facilities in the growth areas; and
  2. that the Committee were unable to reach a conclusion on whether they felt the increase in membership numbers and the associated improvement in annual revenue performance was such that it would support the capital cost of prudential borrowing outlined.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Executive is asked to:**

1. **support the redevelopment of Flitwick Leisure Centre as outlined in the report;**
2. **in accordance with the Council's Code of Procurement Governance approve the procurement of a building contractor to redevelop Flitwick Leisure Centre; and**
3. **approve a land exchange between Central Bedfordshire Council and Flitwick Town Council as set out in paragraphs 5-9 to facilitate the redevelopment of Flitwick Leisure Centre.**

*Reason for Recommendations: So that the redevelopment of Flitwick Leisure Centre, a priority in the Leisure Facilities Strategy, can be delivered.*

**Executive Summary**

32. Leisure services are key universal services which help make Central Bedfordshire a great place to live and work. The report sets out the significant progress to date in developing the Leisure Strategy, and delivering the associated investment required to modernise the existing leisure facilities and ensure it is fit for the future.
33. Delivery of a new leisure centre in Flitwick is a priority in the Leisure Facilities Strategy adopted by Executive on 8 January 2013. The Executive considered the rationale for redevelopment and approved the approach to assessing the feasibility of redeveloping the leisure centre on 14 May 2013. Prior to that the Executive on 18 March 2013 also considered and approved commencement of the re provision of playing pitches which make the proposed new leisure centre site available to build on.

34. The independent feasibility study on the redevelopment of Flitwick Leisure centre has been concluded, with a recommendation for a facility mix which is affordable whilst meeting public expectations of new and modern public sector leisure provision.

### **Background**

35. The Leisure Facilities Strategy is the first chapter of the Leisure Strategy, itself part of the Medium Term Plan which will provide;
- A comprehensive picture of leisure facilities and opportunities within Central Bedfordshire up to 2031.
  - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) strategies in compliance with Local Development Framework (LDF) requirements for securing new and improved leisure facilities in association with new development, and for securing and spending Section106 and Community Infrastructure Levy funds.
  - Strategic direction for the delivery of leisure facilities and opportunities for all potential stakeholders across the area.
  - Direction for CBC capital investment proposals to meet customers needs.
36. The Leisure Strategy is broad in scope and the timetable for its development is phased as set out below:
- Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities, considered by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 December 2012, adopted by the Executive on 8 January 2013.
  - Chapter 2: Recreation and Open Space (a defined range of green spaces, providing formal and informal recreational activity facilities and opportunities). To be considered by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 January 2014 and the Executive on 18 March 2014.
  - Chapter 3: Playing Pitches (outdoor formal, grass and artificially-surfaced sports playing pitches). To be considered by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 January 2014 and the Executive on 18 March 2014.
  - Chapter 4: Physical Activity (a defined range of physical activity classes, sports, exercises etc. undertaken indoors and outdoor). Considered by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 July 2013 and adopted by the Executive on 24 September 2013.

## Progress to date

37. The development of a comprehensive Leisure Strategy is well underway and is set out above. Implementation of the Leisure Facilities Strategy is progressing well and our customers can see evidence of our investment plans coming to fruition.
38. Described in the financial section of this report is how the Council's capital programme supports investment at all 6 of the Council leisure centres addressing the key Leisure Facilities Strategy issues of capacity and aging stock. It ensures our customers from across Central Bedfordshire benefit from refurbished and extended facilities.
39. The investment also helps us secure the long term prospects of our sport and physical activity infrastructure, as the investment modernises and improves the efficiency of our facilities thereby meeting the needs of our current and future communities.
40. The procurement of a new leisure management contractor for our leisure centres will deliver broad public health outcomes and provide services for more of our residents. The tendering process is well underway and on track for a new contract to start on 1 April 2014.

## Flitwick Leisure Centre Redevelopment Invest to Save Feasibility Study - Key Findings

41. The feasibility study has considered the business case for a new centre and what facilities should be included. A range of critical areas have been assessed, including;
  - supply and demand analysis of a range of facilities;
  - improvement in revenue performance - how much income the facility will generate compared to the current facility;
  - outline cost estimates of the facilities;
  - initial design proposals;
  - project delivery strategy, including governance, procurement strategy, design development, consultation, cost management, risk management and delivery programme; and
  - account of the requirement to realise a capital receipt from the sale of the existing leisure centre site for a residential development to reduce the overall prudential borrowing requirement associated with the redevelopment of the new leisure centre.
42. The supply and demand analysis tested the potential impact of adding optional facilities to a core facility mix. From this a core, medium and maximum facility mix was identified and an affordability assessment was carried out for these options. Overall, the aim was to test a number of combinations of options to determine which, if any, option(s) would provide the best balance for the Council in terms of meeting identified needs and being viable and affordable.

43. The study concludes by recommending the medium option. This supports the requirements set out in the Leisure Facilities Strategy in providing the additional capacity in the pool and fitness space, and includes a number of other additional facilities. Those recommended facilities in the medium option include core and additional facilities set out in paragraphs 44 and 45 below.
44. Core facilities
- 8 lane 25 m pool
  - Learner pool 15m x 7m
  - 4 court sports hall
  - 2 squash courts
  - 3 dance studios
  - 120 station gym
  - Wet and dry changing facilities including disabled provision
  - Car parking
  - Crèche
  - Health consulting room
  - Café and reception area
  - Storage, plant, office and circulation space.
45. Additional facilities
- Variable height base in the learner pool (0.6m – 2m depth)
  - Confidence water (pre school age splash area)
  - Soft play area
  - Internal Climbing wall
  - Meeting room/party room/expanding gym space for 30 stations
  - 2x external five aside football pitches
  - Meeting room space.
46. Other facilities that were considered using the same methodology and not recommended include;
- Spectator seating in the pool hall for 100 or 250 people
  - A third squash court
  - Movable wall in the squash court
  - Tenpin bowling – 8 lanes of tenpin bowling
  - 2 floodlit tennis courts
  - External high ropes course
  - Spa.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

47. The report provides an overview of progress to date on the developing leisure strategy, implementation of the first chapter of the leisure strategy, and the recommendations from the feasibility study for the redevelopment of Flitwick leisure centre.

48. For Flitwick Leisure Centre, the conclusion of the feasibility study marks the completion of the first stage in the project implementation. Should budget approval be given then the following stages will be implemented;
49. Stage 2: Design development of the preferred option to achieve detailed scheme design including drainage, civils, structural and services. Full detailed planning application submitted for the leisure centre and outline planning application for residential development of the existing leisure centre site.
50. Stage 3: Preparation of tender documentation for procurement of a building contractor. Detailed design of performance specification. Tender, evaluation and recommendation for award of contract.
51. Stage 4: Mobilisation of the contractor in the summer of 2014 and construction to completion by winter 2015.

**Appendix – None**

**Background Papers - None**

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**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 5 November 2013  
**Subject:** Roker Park, Stotfold  
**Report of:** Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources

**Summary:** The report proposes that Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) releases the covenant restricting use of Roker Park, Stotfold, to enable Stotfold Town Council to dispose of the land for residential development, thus enabling the football ground to be relocated and upgraded, as required by the Football Association as a prerequisite to the local club remaining in the league.

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**Advising Officer:** Deb Clarke, Director of Improvement and Corporate Services  
**Contact Officer:** Andrew Gordon, Head of Estate Management  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** Stotfold  
**Function of:** Executive  
**Key Decision** Yes  
**Reason for urgency/  
exemption from call-in  
(if appropriate)** Not applicable

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council 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.
- Taking the action outlined in this report would facilitate the delivery of elements of the Council's Leisure Strategy.

### **Financial:**

1. See report on Exempt Agenda for full financial details.
2. Essentially this arrangement meets the needs of Stotfold Town Council (STC), the football club and Central Bedfordshire Council.

**Legal:**

3. The agreement to release the covenant will be conditional on STC repaying the outstanding loans to CBC from the proceeds of the sale immediately after sharing the proceeds (in accordance with the Funding Proposal) and before STC spend any money on the new football ground / stadium.
4. A new 99 year lease at a peppercorn rent will be granted by CBC to STC for 24 acres of land off Arlesey Road, Stotfold for the provision of a new football ground and playing fields. Heads of Terms have been agreed.

**Risk Management:**

5. The CBC loans have been secured as a charge against the freehold of Roker Park Stotfold (owned by STC) to safeguard the repayment.
6. Although there is uncertainty over the amount of capital receipt from the sale of Roker Park and also the total construction costs for development of the new football facility in Arlesey Road, there is no financial risk to the Council arising from this scheme, as the Council will only contribute to the scheme when the land has sold and its contribution from its share of the net sale proceeds will be capped.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

7. Not applicable.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

8. Central Bedfordshire Council has 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 reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
9. The proposal is not likely to have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, due to the provision of a new football ground and playing fields.

**Public Health:**

10. The new Football ground and associated grass playing fields / pitches will promote sport and leisure activities within the community which will contribute to public health and wellbeing in the area.

**Community Safety:**

11. Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act we have a duty to do all that is reasonable to reduce crime and disorder in our area. The provision of grass playing fields / pitches at Arlesey Road and the sale of Roker Park for residential development will make a positive contribution.

**Sustainability:**

12. Not applicable

**Procurement:**

13. Not applicable.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

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

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Executive is asked to recommend to Council the:**

- 1. release of the Restrictive Use Covenant in favour of the Council on land known as Roker Park Stotfold to enable Stotfold Town Council to dispose of the land for residential development; and**
- 2. approval of the application of up to £500,000 of the capital receipt, arising from the release of the restrictive covenant referred to at 1 above, to finance the capital grant at 2 above (see item on Exempt Agenda for further financial details).**

Reason for Recommendation(s): *To provide a mechanism whereby CBC will receive a share of the capital receipt (proceeds from STC's sale of the land) for the release of the restrictive covenant together with repayment of two outstanding loans of £537,000 and STC will be able to generate funds to build a new football ground / stadium (with a capped financial contribution from CBC).*

**Background**

15. In 2007 Stotfold Town Council (STC) made a proposal to the former Mid Bedfordshire District Council to construct a leisure centre in Stotfold, funded in part by grants and proceeds from the sale of land known as the Roker Park football ground. Discussion on the development took place during the time of the local government review (LGR) that resulted in the closure of Mid Bedfordshire Council and the creation of Central Bedfordshire Council.
16. In 2008 STC had commenced the design work for the project and due to lack of resources requested a loan of £500,000 from Mid Bedfordshire Council in order to continue the work. This loan has not been repaid.
17. The LGR resulted in many developments such as the Stotfold leisure centre development being put on hold until the new Central Bedfordshire Council was established. In addition, the recession starting in 2009 saw a collapse of property prices with the result that the leisure centre envisioned by STC was not viable and the project has not progressed.
18. Part of the Leisure project was to relocate the football ground to land off the Arlesey Road in Stotfold. This move would have resulted in the football ground's facilities being upgrading as required by the Football Association (FA). The FA have granted the football club 18 months in order to make the necessary changes and this time will come to an end in 2014.

19. In 2012 CBC entered into an agreement with STC for the council to pay interest on the first loan. A second loan was made in 2013 to allow an archaeological survey to be carried out on the new site.
20. STC have two outstanding loans (totalling £537,000) that are owed to CBC. These loans have been secured as a charge against the freehold title of Roker Park and will be released upon full repayment.
21. STC own the Roker Park football ground however, the land is subject to a Restrictive Use Covenant in favour of CBC restricting its use to playing fields or agriculture.

**Appendices:**  
**None**

**Background Papers:** (open to public inspection) None

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**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 5 November 2013  
**Subject:** Award of the Day to Day Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance Contract 2014- 2017  
**Report of:** Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing  
**Summary:** The report proposes to award the Day to Day Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance Contract 2014 – 2017.

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**Advising Officer:** Julie Ogle, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing  
**Contact Officer:** Basil Quinn & Ian Johnson – Housing Asset Managers  
**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 the local community.
- Promoting health and wellbeing and protect the vulnerable.
- Value for money.

##### **Financial:**

1. The budget for Electrical response maintenance, periodic testing and programmed works (rewires, communal lighting upgrades etc) is £655,000 per annum for the duration of the 3 year contract. These sums are included in the Landlord Service Business Plan, which reflects the average spend on this service in recent years. The contract evaluation is based upon a 70% price and 30% quality assessment to help ensure value for money from the contract.

**Legal:**

2. Standard contract documentation (Foremaster Version 6) has been used with schedule of rates codes for responsive repairs and composite rates for completion of a full rewire, upgraded consumer unit, or communal lighting replacement scheme.

**Risk Management:**

3. If the contract is not awarded we will not have a responsive maintenance contractor for this service and the rewire/communal lighting installation programme for 2014 and onwards will not be delivered. Homes will not have upgraded electrical systems that meet their current needs and will not be in accordance with the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

4. There is no impact on Council staff. This service is subject to a TUPE transfer of the existing staff from the current contractor providing the service to any new contractor.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

5. 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.
6. 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.

**The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) highlighted the following:**

7. The contract provides for flexibility in the layout of sockets and switches, which is particularly important to facilitate accessibility for older people and those with disabilities. In planning works, items such as the height and ease of use of the consumer unit, location of sockets and switches etc are taken into account.
8. For the tendering of this contract the timescales for completion of works have been set at 5 working days for a full rewire and 10 working days for a communal lighting scheme. Tenants agree when the work is to be carried out. The contractor, by careful planning, is encouraged to minimise the use of chasing in cables (use existing ducting) to reduce disruption. 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 the electrical supply is to be available at the end of a working day or, in the unlikely event this is not possible, that alternative facilities are provided.

9. 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 rewire works relate to the age, condition and life expectancy of the existing system, 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.
10. Contractual duties place an emphasis on equality and diversity, including specific requirements to ensure contractors takes steps to achieve equality in their employment and service practice.

**Public Health:**

11. The installation of a new electrical system is designed to improve the housing stock and contribute towards improving and maintaining health and wellbeing for Council housing tenants.

**Community Safety:**

12. Not applicable

**Sustainability:**

13. Recycling targets will be agreed at contract award with the contractor. In line with the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy, contractors will be expected to demonstrate the same level of commitment to environmental sustainability as the Council. Contractors will be expected to ensure any waste from programmes is minimised. Targets will be agreed at contract commencement.

**Procurement:**

14. The contract has been tendered in accordance with the Council's Corporate Procurement Rules.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

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

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Executive is asked to:**

1. **award of the Day to Day Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance Contract 2014- 2017 to Contractor A Option A Schedule Of Rate Contract.**

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Reason for Recommendation:</i> | <i>So that the Council's Housing Services Electrical Responsive Service, Rewire and Communal Lighting programme is maintained and delivered in 2014 -2017.</i> |
|-----------------------------------|--|

### **Executive Summary**

16. This report outlines the outcome of the tendering of the Housing Day to Day Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance Contract. This contract was procured using standard contract documentation (Foremaster Version 6).
17. The contract will provide improved value for money (approximately 3% saving on the programmed works element of the current budget, equivalent to an additional 6 full rewires that can be completed this year) and also deliver good quality customer care for our residents.
18. The new contract allows for direct call handling from our customers for responsive electrical repairs, routine periodic testing of existing electrical systems (500 to 1000 per year), upgrades of existing electrical system by replacement of the consumer unit or full rewire and the upgrade of communal lighting.

### **Background**

19. The existing contract arrangements for Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance ends in January 2014 and the Council is required to enter into new contract arrangements that will commence from January 2014.
20. This contract supports the priorities of the Housing Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) to ensure the housing stock is kept in good repair and meets tenants' current and future expectations.

### **21. The Contract**

- i) This is a three year contract, with an option to extend on a year by year basis for a further 3 years and subject to performance and annual review.
- ii) An established Tender Documentation, called M3NHMF Schedule of rates 6.0 (Measured Term Contract), with pre priced schedule of rates, including bespoke composite codes, forms the basis of the Contract (Option A).
- iii) The contract also has an option for an all inclusive annual lump sum price per property (Option B) for the responsive part of the service.
- iv) Using this type of contract, the contractor is paid for a responsive maintenance repair either by using the pre priced schedule of rates, or if the lump sum option is taken up, the all inclusive annual rate per year per property.
- v) For any programmed works e.g. full rewires, this will be based on size of property, i.e. 1 bed, 2 bed etc. For communal lighting schemes this will be based on m<sup>2</sup> area/number of lights to be replaced.



- vi) The contractor is responsible for all response maintenance calls from customers, making appointments during normal working hours and all programmed works design. The contract also includes an out of hours service.
- vii) 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.

22. Although the National Housing Federation (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.

### **Tender Evaluation**

- 23. A contract notice was issued on 19 February 2013 in the Official Journal of the European Union and on the CBC website.
- 24. 21 pre qualification questionnaires were received on 2 April 2013 and 9 contractors were shortlisted.
- 25. 2 contractors declined to tender, 7 tenders were received by the closing date and therefore evaluated.
- 26. The Standard Award Criteria Evaluation Model is a points system based upon 70% of the points being awarded for financial submissions and 30% 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.
- 27. A joint evaluation panel made up of officers and tenants was established to evaluate all tender bids. The information provided in the quality method statements was reviewed and scored and 3 contractors were invited to the final presentation stage. This was to ensure that information provided in Method Statements was substantiated. The outcome of this was a contractor who meets all the quality and financial criteria and demonstrates the most economically advantageous tender.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Exempt - Award of the Day to Day Responsive and Programmed Electrical Maintenance Contract 2014- 2017.

**Background Papers:** (open to public inspection) none

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**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 5 November 2013  
**Subject:** Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2015/16  
**Report of:** Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services  
**Summary:** The report seeks Executive approval to commence consultation on Admission Arrangements for 2015/16, specifically the Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme and the Council's admission arrangements for Community and VC Schools.

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**Advising Officer:** Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Children's Services  
**Contact Officer:** Karen Oellermann, Assistant Director - Commissioning & Partnerships  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Executive  
**Key Decision** Yes

#### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Council Priorities:**

The Council's admission arrangements and co-ordinated admissions scheme supports the Medium Term Plan priority to improve educational attainment.

##### **Financial:**

1. Not applicable.

##### **Legal:**

2. Regulations contained within the School Admissions Code set out the requirement for the Council to have a co-ordinated admissions scheme for the area. Admission Authorities must also determine their admissions arrangements by the 15 April each year, for implementation in September of the following year. If an Admissions Authority proposes to make amendments to their arrangements they must consult between the 1 November and the 1 March for a minimum of 8 weeks of the year before the arrangements apply.
3. For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools the admissions authority is the Council. Academies, Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided schools are their own admission authority and are therefore responsible for their admission arrangements.

4. The Council will fulfil its statutory responsibilities by consulting within the timescales set out above and conducting a consultation with the relevant parties on changes to admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, inviting thoughts and comments from all consultees which will be reported to Executive in March when the admissions arrangements for September 2015 will be determined.

**Risk Management:**

5. This report sets out the statutory requirement for the Council to have a co-ordinated admissions scheme in place for the area. The risk of not having a co-ordinated scheme in place for Central Bedfordshire would entail the following key risks:
- Failure to discharge statutory duty.
  - Failure to provide an admissions process which allows parents to state preferences and apply by the national closing dates.
  - Failure to allocate school places for the normal year of entry by the national offer dates.

All of the above would incur a negative perception of the Council which would be a reputational risk.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

6. Not applicable.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

7. The School Admissions Code sets out the duty on Local Authorities and Admission Authorities to produce admission arrangements which are fair, clear and objective, which can be easily understood by parents. Admission arrangements must comply with regulations and legislation including the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.
8. 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. As part of the development of the Admissions Arrangements the Council will carry out an equality impact assessment to check that the proposed changes do not have a disproportionate or negative impact on vulnerable groups.

**Public Health:**

9. Not applicable.

**Community Safety:**

10. Not applicable.

**Sustainability:**

11. Not applicable.

**Procurement:**

12. Not applicable.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

13. The Admission Arrangements will be considered by the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny on 13 December 2013.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Executive is asked to:**

1. **approve the commencement of consultation for Central Bedfordshire's co-ordinated admissions scheme;**
2. **support the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for the academic year 2015/16; and**
3. **approve the commencement of the consultation for Central Bedfordshire's admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the academic year 2015/16.**

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

**Executive Summary**

14. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that admissions are co-ordinated for all admission authorities in their area for all children being admitted into the normal year of entry and only one offer of a school place is made. The Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for the academic year 2015/16 fulfils this requirement, setting out the timeframes for processing admission applications, but must be the subject of consultation before approval by Executive in March 2014.
15. In addition, as the Council is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary-Controlled schools, it must also undertake consultation on its own admission arrangements where changes are proposed. The admission policy for these schools sets out the criteria in which applications will be considered if the school is oversubscribed. This report explains the rationale for a number of proposed changes to existing admissions criteria for some Community and Voluntary Controlled schools.
16. In this report, a rationale is proposed for the following to be consulted upon:
  - Amending the existing catchment areas for Hawthorn Park Primary, Houghton Regis Primary, Tithe Farm Primary and Thornhill Primary following the implementation of a two tier structure from a three tier structure in the Houghton Regis area.

- Giving priority to children attending the Nursery school at Hawthorn Park Primary and Tithe Farm Primary and inserting this as criterion five between other siblings and those to be prioritised on straight line distance.
- The implementation of a catchment area for Greenleas Lower School – Sandhills site from September 2015 and a change to the admissions criteria for the school to prioritise applicants within the catchment area from the current criteria of straight line distance.
- A change to the admission arrangements for St. Andrew's Lower School, in Biggleswade due to the proposed expansion of the school over two sites, with the new site due to open in September 2015. The school would have two catchment areas for each of the sites.
- Decreasing the published admission number at Watling Lower School from 45 to 30 from September 2015.

### **Central Bedfordshire Council's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme Academic Year 2015-16**

17. Legislation contained within the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires Local Authorities to have a co-ordinated admissions scheme for their area where parents can apply on a common application form for a place in the normal year of entry at a school or an academy. The Council is required to co-ordinate the admissions for children in their area so that only one offer of a school place is made per prospective pupil. The co-ordinated admissions scheme must be formulated by 1 January in the relevant determination year and must be consulted on with the relevant bodies.
18. Central Bedfordshire's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for the academic year 2015/16 sets out the scheme and timetable in which applications will be processed. The scheme details the processes and procedures that the Council and other admissions authorities need to work to in order to process the applications by the offer date for the normal year of entry at a school or academy.
19. The Council acting as the local authority must have a co-ordinated admissions scheme in place for all maintained schools and academies in the area.
20. Admissions for the normal year of entry for Upper and Secondary schools are subject to a national closing date of 31 October for receipt of applications and a national offer date of 1 March.
21. Admissions for the normal year of entry for Lower, Primary and Middle are subject to a national closing date of 15 January and a national offer date of 16 April.
22. The co-ordinated scheme is attached for Lower, Primary and Middle at Appendix 1 and the co-ordinated scheme is attached for Secondary, Upper and the University Technical College at Appendix 2.

### **Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools Academic Year 2015/16**

23. Regulations require Admission Authorities to consult on their admission arrangements annually if changes are proposed and they must do so for a period of 8 weeks, commencing no earlier than 1 November, with consultation concluding by 1 March. Arrangements then must be determined by 15 April.
24. Admission arrangements are the methods and procedures that determine how children will be admitted to any given school and include the 'admission criteria' which will be applied if more applications are received than there are places available.

Appendix 3 details the Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in the Central Bedfordshire Council area and the proposed admissions criteria and published admissions number and policy proposed for September 2015.

### **Amendment of Catchment Areas for Community Primary Schools in Houghton Regis and Insertion of Nursery Criterion for Hawthorn Park and Tithe Farm Primary Schools**

25. The Houghton Regis area has seen a shift from a three tier model of education, (with the exception of St. Vincent's Primary which converted from a Lower to Primary a few years ago), to an exclusively two tier system of education with effect from September 2013.
26. The transformation of this area began in 2012 when Hawthorn Park, Tithe Farm and Thornhill Lower Schools, along with Thomas Whitehead Lower School had their change of age range applications approved in April 2012 to convert to Primary schools with affect from September 2013. All Saints Academy was then approved by the EFA to convert to a Secondary school in the Summer of 2012. Houghton Regis Lower was approved in December 2013 to convert to a Primary with affect from September 2013 and Houghton Regis Academy has recently had their change of age agreed to convert from a Middle school to a Secondary with effect from September 2013.
27. With this shift, the catchment areas currently in existence for a lower, middle and upper school for each road in Houghton Regis have become obsolete now that the area is made up of six primary and two secondary schools. The removal of catchment areas in the Houghton Regis area was considered by the Council in 2013. However with housing developments planned for north Houghton Regis, it is crucial to retain these catchments in order to ensure that local children can access their local school.
28. Therefore the current lower catchment areas in Houghton Regis for Hawthorn Park, Houghton Regis, Tithe Farm and Thornhill will be converted to Primary school catchment areas.

29. In addition to this, Hawthorn Park Primary School and Tithe Farm Primary School will have the addition of a criterion to give priority to children in the nursery placed above the final criterion of straight line distance. This proposal provides parity for these two schools as the other Primary schools in Houghton Regis give priority to nursery children above the final criterion. The admissions criteria for these schools are detailed in Appendix 3, which lists the proposed admissions criteria for every Community and VC school in Central Bedfordshire.

### **Implementation of a Catchment Area for Greenleas School – Kestrel Way from September 2015.**

30. From September 2013, Greenleas School in Leighton Buzzard is a two site school, with the main site on Derwent Road and the second site on Kestrel Way. The main site on Derwent Road operates an admissions policy based on a catchment area for the school. The second site on Kestrel Way opened in September 2013 and its admission policy is based on straight line distance.
31. The Kestrel Way site is currently placed within the Stanbridge Lower School catchment area. Therefore children local to the school who are living on the development that the new school serves are within the catchment area to a school over 2 miles away. This disparity is not, therefore, currently providing for the local community that it was built to serve.
32. Following discussions with Greenleas School and Stanbridge Lower School, it is proposed that a catchment area is implemented for Greenleas School, Kestrel Way which removes a portion of the catchment area from Stanbridge Lower School and provides a catchment area for Greenleas School, Kestrel Way, which serves the children in this area. A map of the proposed catchment area is attached at Appendix 4.
33. As it is proposed for Greenleas School, Kestrel Way to have a catchment area, the admissions criteria for the school will also need to reflect this. Currently the Kestrel Way site operates a policy which prioritises siblings and then offers places based on straight line distance. The proposed admission arrangements are now therefore for the school to prioritise applicants within the catchment area and these are detailed in Appendix 3.

### **Admission Arrangements for the Expansion of St. Andrew's Lower School in Biggleswade**

34. St. Andrew's Lower School is one of three lower schools in the town of Biggleswade and is a Voluntary Controlled school. The school has recently been subject to statutory consultation to expand the school from a 90 to a 150 place Lower school spread over two sites from September 2015. As part of the statutory consultation, two public meetings were held on the 19 June and 1 July 2013, where the proposed admission arrangements were detailed.



35. The arrangements proposed are for the admissions criteria to mirror those of the existing site and as such, a catchment area is defined for the second site which encompasses the new development for which the proposed expansion will provide. The creation of this catchment will necessitate a change to the current catchment areas of Lawnside and Southlands Lower Schools, both of which have supported this amendment in the initial consultation process. The precise catchment area proposed is detailed in Appendix 5. The proposed admission arrangements are subject to the outcome of the Executive meeting on 10 December 2013 which will consider and decide whether or not to expand St. Andrew's Lower School.

### **Published Admission Numbers**

36. In line with the regulations contained within the School Admissions Code, any proposal to decrease a published admissions number is required to be consulted upon during the admissions consultation timeframe, before being determined on the 15 April for admissions in the academic year before they apply.
37. Watling Lower School in Dunstable currently operates one and a half forms of entry per year group and has a published admission number (PAN) of 45. The school would like to decrease the published admissions number to become a one form entry lower school with a PAN of 30 from September 2015. This will enable the school to organise classes more effectively without the inconsistency that is currently experienced as a result of fluctuations in the school's intake numbers. This decrease will not cause a negative impact on places in the area because there is no overall shortage of lower/primary school places.
38. Although an admission authority is not required to consult on any proposed increases to a school's PAN, the following are to be noted as changes to admissions arrangements from September 2015:
- Dunton VC Lower School – increase to PAN from 12 to 15.
  - Russell Lower School – increase to PAN from 54 to 90\*
  - St. Andrew's Lower School – increase to PAN from 90 to 150 (over two school sites)\*

\*Subject to Executive approval for the schools to expand.

### **Method of Consultation**

39. Admission authorities are required to consult on their admission arrangements if changes are proposed and to conduct this for a period of 8 weeks commencing no earlier than 1 November, with the consultation concluding by 1 March. It is proposed that the consultation period will commence from 11 November and conclude on 20 January, permitting over 8 weeks to allow for the Christmas school holiday break. This will provide time for analysis of the responses before Executive approve the admission arrangements on 18 March for the admission arrangements to be determined by 15 April.

40. Central Bedfordshire Council is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and therefore must conduct its consultation in line with regulations, with the following parties:
- a) Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen
  - b) Other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admissions authority have an interest in the proposed admissions
  - c) All other admission authorities within the relevant area
  - d) The Governing Bodies of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools
  - e) Adjoining neighbouring local authorities
  - f) The body or person representing religious denomination schools.
41. The Council will publish the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme and the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools on the Central Bedfordshire Council website and advertise the consultation as widely as possible to gather the views of the relevant parties. The Council will contact the Governing Bodies of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, all other admission authorities in the area, neighbouring local authorities and the Church of England and Catholic diocese with details of the consultation and how they can contribute their opinion.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

42. It is a necessary requirement for the Council to consult on its admission arrangements and to formulate a co-ordinated scheme for admission by 1 January in the determination year. The co-ordinated admissions scheme has been drawn up with regard to the national closing dates and the national offer dates for the academic year of 2015/16, taking into account the necessary timescales to process and allocate mass applications working with the schools and academies in Central Bedfordshire to meet the deadlines.
43. Many of the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Central Bedfordshire remain unchanged from the previous year and changes are proposed for the following schools:
- Hawthorn Park and Tithe Farm Lower Schools in Houghton Regis
  - Greenleas Lower School, Kestrel Way, Leighton Buzzard
  - St. Andrew's Lower School, Biggleswade
  - Watling Lower School, Dunstable
44. The next steps are for the Council to undertake the consultation within the statutory timeframes engaging with all the relevant parties to ascertain views on the proposed admission arrangements in particular the arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Lower, Primary and Middle 2015/16 co-ordinated admissions scheme

Appendix 2 – Secondary and Upper 2015/16 co-ordinated admissions scheme

Appendix 3 – Community and Voluntary Controlled schools proposed admissions policy 2015/16.

Appendix 4 – Greenleas School, Kestrel Way – proposed catchment area

Appendix 5 – St. Andrew's Lower School, second site – proposed catchment area

### **Background Papers:**

1. Equality Impact Assessment

**CO-ORDINATED SCHEME FOR ADMISSIONS TO:  
LOWER, PRIMARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES**

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/2016**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002 and supported by The School Admission (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008, requires Local Authorities to formulate a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements for all maintained schools in their area. Academies are required to participate in the co-ordinated scheme.
- 1.2 A school is defined as any maintained community, voluntary controlled, foundation, trust school or voluntary aided school or academy in the Central Bedfordshire Council area.
- 1.3 Central Bedfordshire Council, acting as the Local Authority is the admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools. The admission authority for foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools and academies is the governing body.
- 1.4 This scheme will apply to all lower, primary and middle schools and academies for admissions in the Central Bedfordshire Council area from September 2015.
- 1.5. Any reference to Central Bedfordshire is a reference to the administrative area of the unitary authority.
- 1.6 Central Bedfordshire Council uses the equal preference system to process admission applications, as outlined below:
  - 1.6.1 Stage 1

All first, second and third preference applications are considered equally against the admissions criteria. At this stage the Council does not distinguish between first, second and third preference applications. For example, if the school has 120 places and there are 150 first, second and third preference applications all are considered equally against the admissions criteria.

### 1.6.2 Stage 2

If a pupil qualifies for a place at more than one school the parent's highest ranked preference (i.e. first or second preference on the parent's application form) will be offered, and any lower ranking offers will be disregarded. For example a parent's first and third preferences might both qualify for a place, in which case the parent would be offered their first preference, leaving the place at the third preference school available for another pupil.

## 2. The Scheme

- 2.1. This scheme is for admissions in the normal year of entry for:
  - a) Lower Schools and Academies
  - b) Primary Schools and Academies
  - c) Middle Schools and Academies
- 2.2. There will be a standard form known as the Common Application Form (CAF). Parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire will also be able to apply online for a school or academy place.
- 2.3. The CAF or online application will be used for the purposes of admitting children into the first year of a:
  - Lower or Primary school/academy (Year R), or
  - Middle school/academy (Year 5).
- 2.4. The CAF or online application form will enable parents/carers to:
  - express a preference for up to 3 schools / academies
  - rank their preferences
  - give reasons for their preferences
- 2.5. Information will be provided on the admissions process in the form of the admissions booklet and will contain information on:
  - a) the schools and academies in Central Bedfordshire
  - b) dates of open evenings (where applicable)
  - c) Schools and academies admission numbers and admissions criteria
  - d) how to complete an application
  - e) how places are allocated
  - f) timetable for the application and allocation process
  - g) school transport
  - h) who to contact for advice
- 2.6. **Admissions for the normal year of entry into a Lower or Primary School (Year R):**
  - 2.6.1 Parents of all children born between **01/09/10 and 31/08/11** and living in Central Bedfordshire will be able to apply for a school or academy place online or by using the CAF. The CAF will be available from any local lower

or primary school or academy, from the School Admissions Team or it can be downloaded from the Local Authority website.

- 2.6.2 Parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire who wish to apply for a primary or lower school or academy place in another Local Authority must apply online or use the CAF.
- 2.6.3 Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire but who wish to apply for a place at a Central Bedfordshire school or academy must make their application to their home Local Authority.
- 2.6.4 Deferred Entry: Parents of children offered a place for admission in September may defer the admission until January or April, provided the child is not of statutory school age. Parents cannot defer admission beyond statutory school age nor beyond the academic year for which the place was offered.

## **2.7. Admission into the normal year of entry into a Middle School (Year 5)**

- 2.7.1. Parents of all children living in Central Bedfordshire and attending a lower school or academy in the Local Authority area will receive the details about the transfer process and how to apply.
- 2.7.2. Parents of children attending a lower school or academy, in Central Bedfordshire who do not live in the Local Authority area must make their application to their home Local Authority.
- 2.7.3. Parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire but not attending a lower school or academy, in the Local Authority area and who wish to apply for a middle school or academy place may make their application online or obtain the CAF and School Admissions booklet from the School Admissions Team. The CAF and booklet are also available to download from the Local Authority website.

## **3. Timetable for admissions into Lower, Primary and Middle schools**

### **Lower/Primary:**

- 3.1. In **September 2014**, the Local Authority admissions booklet and the CAF will be available to parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire must apply to their home Local Authority.
- 3.2. Completed online applications and CAFs are to be submitted to the School Admissions Team by **15 January 2015**. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire must have applied to their home Local Authority by this date.

### **Middle transfer:**

- 3.3. In **September 2014** information is sent to parents of all children attending a lower school or academy in the Local Authority area. Parents of children

who do not live in Central Bedfordshire will be advised to contact their home Local Authority in order to make their application.

- 3.4. Completed online applications are to be submitted and CAFs are to be returned to the School Admissions Team by **15 January 2015**. If the child is attending a lower school in Central Bedfordshire a CAF can be returned via the lower school or academy who will forward it to the School Admissions Team. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire must have applied to their home Local Authority by this date.

### **Lower, Primary and Middle admissions**

- 3.5. By **13 February 2015** All preferences will be logged on the database and the School Admissions Team will notify the admission authority for each foundation, trust school or voluntary aided school and academy of every nomination that has been made for that school or academy. Applications for places in other Local Authority schools / academies are sent to those authorities.
- 3.6. By **11 March 2015** the admission authority for each foundation, trust or voluntary aided school and academy will consider all applications for their school or academy, apply their oversubscription criteria and provide the School Admissions Team with a list of those applicants ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. All preferences will be ranked equally against the admissions criteria.
- 3.7. The School Admissions Team will process the ranked lists against the ranked lists of other schools or academies nominated and:
- where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools or academies, that school or academy will be allocated to the child
- where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools or academies, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference
- 3.8. Between **18 March 2015 and 25 March 2015** information will be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers (i.e. a Central Bedfordshire child applying for a place in another Local Authority area or a child from another Local Authority applying for a place at a Central Bedfordshire school or academy) to determine the allocation of a place at the highest ranked preference.
- 3.9. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools or academies, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school or academy with a vacancy, but only if the child is resident in Central Bedfordshire. If the child does not reside in Central Bedfordshire, parents will be invited to request a place at any of the schools or academies that still have vacancies, after the allocation process. Priority will always be given to those parents who have expressed a preference for

a particular school or academy over those who have not.

- 3.10 On **14 April 2015** all middle schools and academies will have access to details of the pupils to be offered places via the web based School Admissions Module.
- 3.11. On **16 April 2015** the School Admissions Team will post letters to parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire notifying them of the outcome of their applications, including those who have applied for a place in another Local Authority school or academy. Parents who have applied online will be able to access the decision online. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire will be notified by their home Local Authority on the date determined by that Local Authority.
- 3.12 By **30 April 2015** parents are to notify School Admissions Team of their rejection of the place offered if this is no longer required. If parents do not respond by this date it will be assumed that they have accepted the place.
- 3.13 By **30 April 2015** parents who have applied on time and want to change their preference from their original offer need to have submitted a change of preference by this date.

#### **4. Late Applications**

- 4.1 The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **15 January 2015**. Applications received after this date will be considered late and will be processed after the initial allocation of places.
- 4.2. Late applications received from 16 January until 16 April will be processed as part of the initial late allocation round and will be logged onto the database by **8 May 2015**.
- 4.3. The School Admissions Team will notify the admission authority for each foundation, trust school and voluntary aided school and academy of every nomination that has been made for that school or academy by **8 May 2015**.
- 4.4. Applications for places in other Local Authority schools / academies will be sent to those authorities by **8 May 2015**.
- 4.5. By **22 May 2015** the admission authority for each foundation, trust and voluntary aided school and academy will consider all their initial late applications for their school or academy, apply their oversubscription criteria and provide the School Admissions Team with a list of those applicants ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. All preferences will be ranked equally against the admissions criteria.
- 4.6. The School Admissions Team will process the ranked lists against the ranked lists of other schools or academies nominated and:

where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools or academies, that school or academy will be allocated to the child

where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools or academies, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference

- 4.7. Information will be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers (i.e. a Central Bedfordshire child applying for a place in another Local Authority area or a child from another Local Authority applying for a place at a Central Bedfordshire school or academy) to determine the allocation of a place at the highest ranked preference.
- 4.8. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools or academies, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school or academy with a vacancy, but only if the child is resident in Central Bedfordshire. If the child does not reside in Central Bedfordshire, parents will be invited to request a place at any of the schools or academies that still have vacancies, after the allocation process. Priority will always be given to those parents who have expressed a preference for a particular school or academy over those who have not.
- 4.9. On **8 June 2015** the School Admissions Team will post letters to parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire notifying them of the outcome of their applications, if part of the initial late allocation round, including those who have applied for a place in another Local Authority school or academy where the result of this decision has been received by the timescales outlined above.
- 4.10. Late applications received on or after the 17 April will be processed from **9 June 2015**.

## **5. Waiting Lists**

- 5.1. Pupils not offered a place at their highest preference school or academy or at any of their preferred schools or academies are kept on a waiting list to be re-allocated if places become available. Waiting lists will be maintained until **the end of the academic year for 2015/16** for Community and Voluntary controlled schools. Waiting lists for schools who are their own admission authority (foundation, trust and VA) and academies may operate different waiting list arrangements.

## **6. In-year Admissions (applications received on or after 1 September)**

- 6.1. An in-year admission is an application made for a child to be admitted outside of the co-ordinated admissions scheme for the normal year of entry or for another year group within an academy/school.



Appendix 1

- 6.2. The local authority will co-ordinate in-year applications for community and voluntary controlled schools as the admission authority for those schools.
- 6.3. The local authority will co-ordinate in-year applications made for academies and own admission authority schools who opt-in to the local authority's scheme for in-year admissions.
- 6.4. The Local Authority will make an application form available to enable parents to apply for an in-year place at any academy or school within the Local Authority area, which will enable parents to express a preference for up to 3 schools or academies and to rank their preferences. The form will be available on the Local Authority website as an e-form or can be downloaded.
- 6.5. The application will be dealt with by the local authority for those schools which are community or voluntary controlled schools or those academies and own admission authority who have opted in to the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme.
- 6.6. Any application received by the School Admissions Team for an academy or own admission authority school whom has opted out of the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme will be forwarded to them to process.
- 6.7. All Academies and own admission authority schools who deal with their own in-year admissions (i.e. opted out of the in-year co-ordination scheme) will be required to determine the child's application and notify the parent and local authority of the outcome.
- 6.8. Pupils not offered a place at a community or voluntary controlled school or at an academy or own admission authority school who has opted in to the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme will be kept on a waiting list which will be maintained for the academic year of admission. Academies and own admission authority schools who have opted out will have their own waiting list arrangements. In all cases where a place cannot be offered parents will have the right of appeal.
- 6.9. If all of the preferred academies and schools are full and the pupil lives in Central Bedfordshire, a place will generally be offered at the nearest academy or school with places available, unless the child is already attending a local school or academy.
- 6.10. Any place offered is usually expected to be taken up by the child within 4-6 weeks or by the start of the next school term.
- 6.11. Details of the community and voluntary controlled schools and those academies and own admission authority schools who have opted-in to the in-year co-ordination scheme and those who have opted out can be obtained from the School Admissions Team at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions).

**Timetable for Co-ordinated Admissions to:  
Lower, Primary and Middle Schools and Academies for academic year 2015/16**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>September 2014</b>                    | Information about the transfer process issued   |
| <b>15 January 2015</b>                   | Closing date for receipt of applications  |
| <b>13 February 2015</b>                  | By this date details of applications to be sent to foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools and academies. Applications for places in other Local Authority middle schools and academies sent to those authorities   |
| <b>11 March 2015</b>                     | By this date foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools and academies provide the School Admissions Team with ranked lists of applicants   |
| <b>18 March 2015 –<br/>25 March 2015</b> | Between these dates information to be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers  |
| <b>14 April 2015</b>                     | Information on pupils to be offered places will be available to schools and academies via the web based School Admissions Module  |
| <b>16 April 2015</b>                     | Notification to be posted to parents living in Central Bedfordshire and available online  |
| <b>30 April 2015</b>                     | Date by which parents reject the offer of a place if not required.  |
| <b>8 May 2015</b>                        | Late applications received between 16 January and 16 April 2014 will be logged onto the database by this date.  |
| <b>8 May 2015</b>                        | The School Admissions Team will notify the admission authority for each foundation, trust and voluntary aided school and academy of every nomination that has been made for that school or academy and applications for places in other Local Authority schools / academies will be sent to those authorities |
| <b>22 May 2015</b>                       | By this date foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools and academies provide School Admissions Team with ranked lists of applicants in the initial late allocation round.   |
| <b>8 June 2015</b>                       | Notification to be posted to parents living in Central Bedfordshire who have submitted a late application that qualifies for consideration in the initial late allocation round.  |
| <b>9 June 2015</b>                       | Late applications received on or after 17 April will be processed from this date.   |

**CO-ORDINATED SCHEME FOR ADMISSIONS TO:  
SECONDARY AND UPPER SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES AND THE  
UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/2016**

**Section 1**

**Introduction**

- 1.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002 and supported by The School Admission (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008, requires Local Authorities to formulate a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements for all maintained schools in their area. Academies are required to participate in the co-ordinated scheme.
- 1.2 A school is defined as any maintained community, voluntary controlled, foundation, trust school or voluntary-aided school or academy in the Central Bedfordshire Council area.
- 1.3 Central Bedfordshire Council, acting as the Local Authority is the admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools. The admission authority for foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools and academies is the governing body.
- 1.4 This scheme will apply to all secondary and upper schools and academies and the University Technical College in the Central Bedfordshire Council area from September 2015.
- 1.5 Any reference to Central Bedfordshire is a reference to the administrative area of the unitary authority.
- 1.6 Central Bedfordshire Council uses the equal preference system to process admission applications, as outlined below:
  - 1.6.1 Stage 1

All first, second and third preference applications are considered equally against the admissions criteria. At this stage the Council does not distinguish between first, second and third preference applications. For example, if the school has 120 places and there are 150 first, second and third preference applications all are considered equally against the admissions criteria.

### 1.6.2 Stage 2

If a pupil qualifies for a place at more than one school or academy the parent's highest ranked preference (i.e. first or second preference on the parent's application form) will be offered, and any lower ranking offers will be disregarded. For example a parent's first and third preferences might both qualify for a place, in which case the parent would be offered their first preference, leaving the place at the third preference school or academy available for another pupil.

## Section 2

### The Scheme

- 2.1. This scheme is for admissions in the normal year of entry for:
  - a) Secondary Schools and Academies
  - b) Upper Schools and Academies
  - c) University Technical College (UTC)
- 2.2. There will be a standard form known as the Common Application Form (CAF). Parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire will also be able to apply online for a school or academy place.
- 2.3. The CAF or online application will be used for the purposes of admitting children into the first year of a:
  - Secondary school/academy (Year 7), or
  - Upper school/academy (Year 9), or
  - University Technical College (Year 10)
- 2.4. The CAF or online application form will enable parents/carers to:
  - express a preference for up to 3 schools / academies
  - rank their preferences
  - give reasons for their preferences
- 2.5. Information will be provided on the admissions process in the form of the admissions booklet and will contain information on:
  - a) the schools and academies in Central Bedfordshire
  - b) dates of open evenings (where applicable)
  - c) Schools and academies admission numbers and admissions criteria
  - d) how to complete an application
  - e) how places are allocated
  - f) timetable for the application and allocation process
  - g) school transport
  - h) who to contact for advice

**2.6. Admission into the normal year of entry into a Secondary School/ Academy (Year 7)**

- 2.6.1 Parents of all children living in Central Bedfordshire and attending a primary school or academy, in the Local Authority area will receive the details about the transfer process and how to apply.
- 2.6.2 Parents of children attending a primary school or academy, in Central Bedfordshire who do not live in the Local Authority area must make their application to their home Local Authority.
- 2.6.3 Parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire but not attending a primary school or academy, in the Local Authority area and who wish to apply for a secondary school or academy place may make their application online or obtain the CAF and School Admissions booklet from the School Admissions Team. The CAF and booklet are also available to download from the Local Authority website.

**2.7. Admission into the normal year of entry into an Upper School (Year 9)**

- 2.7.1 Parents of all children living in Central Bedfordshire and attending a middle school or academy, in the Local Authority area will receive the details about the transfer process and how to apply.
- 2.7.2 Parents of children attending a middle school or academy, in Central Bedfordshire who do not live in the Local Authority area must make their application to their home Local Authority.
- 2.7.3 Parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire but not attending a middle school or academy, in the Local Authority area and who wish to apply for an upper school or academy place may make their application online or obtain the CAF and School Admissions booklet from the School Admissions Team. The CAF and booklet are also available to download from the Local Authority website.

**2.8. Admission into the normal year of entry into a University Technical College (Year 10)**

- 2.8.1 Parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire and who wish to apply for a place at a University Technical College may make their application online or obtain the CAF and School Admissions booklet from the School Admissions Team. The CAF and booklet are also available to download from the Local Authority website.

### **3. Timetable for admissions into Secondary and Upper schools and academies and the University Technical College**

#### **Secondary:**

- 3.1. In **September 2014**, information is sent to parents of all children attending a primary school or academy in the Local Authority area. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire will be advised to contact their home Local Authority in order to make their application.
- 3.2. Completed online applications and CAFs are to be submitted to the School Admissions Team by **31 October 2014**. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire must have applied to their home Local Authority by this date.

#### **Upper:**

- 3.3. In **September 2014** information is sent to parents of all children attending a middle school or academy in the Local Authority area. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire will be advised to contact their home Local Authority in order to make their application.
- 3.4. Completed online applications are to be submitted and CAFs are to be returned to the School Admissions Team by **31 October 2014**. If the child is attending a lower school or academy in Central Bedfordshire a CAF can be returned via the lower school or academy who will forward it to the School Admissions Team. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire must have applied to their home Local Authority by this date.

#### **University Technical College:**

- 3.5. Completed online applications and CAFs are to be submitted to the School Admissions Team by **31 October 2014**. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire must have applied to their home Local Authority by this date.

#### **Secondary, Upper and University Technical College transfer admissions**

- 3.6. By **5 December 2014** all preferences will be logged on the database and the School Admissions Team will notify the admission authority for each foundation, trust school or voluntary aided school and academy of every nomination that has been made for that school or academy. Applications for places in other Local Authority schools / academies are sent to those authorities.
- 3.7. By **9 January 2015** the admission authority for each foundation, trust or voluntary aided school and academy will consider all applications for their school or academy, apply their oversubscription criteria and provide the School Admissions Team with a list of those applicants ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. All preferences will be ranked equally

against the admissions criteria.

- 3.8. The School Admissions Team will match the ranked lists against the ranked lists of other schools or academies nominated.

where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools or academies, that school or academy will be allocated to the child

where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools or academies, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference

- 3.9. Between **28 January 2015 and 11 February 2015** information will be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers (i.e. a Central Bedfordshire child applying for a place in another Local Authority area or a child from another Local Authority applying for a place at a Central Bedfordshire school or academy) to determine the allocation of a place at the highest ranked preference.
- 3.10. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools or academies, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school or academy with a vacancy, but only if the child is resident in Central Bedfordshire. If the child does not reside in Central Bedfordshire, parents will be invited to request a place at any of the schools or academies that still have vacancies. Priority will always be given to those parents who have expressed a preference for a particular school or academy over those who have not.
- 3.11. On **26 February 2015** all Secondary and Upper schools and academies and the University Technical College will have access to details of the pupils to be offered places via the web based School Admissions Module.
- 3.12. On **2 March 2015** the School Admissions Team will post letters to parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire notifying them of the outcome of their applications, including those who have applied for a secondary or upper school or academy place or a place at the University Technical College in another Local Authority. Parents who have applied online will be able to access the decision online. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire will be notified by their home Local Authority.
- 3.13. By **16 March 2015** parents are to notify the School Admissions Team of their rejection of the place offered if this is no longer required. If parents do not respond by this date it will be assumed that they have accepted the place.
- 3.14. By **16 March 2015** parents who have applied on time and want to change their preference from their original offer need to have submitted a change of preference by this date.

#### 4. Late Applications

- 4.1 The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **31 October 2014**. Applications received after this date will be considered late and will be processed after the initial allocation of places.
- 4.2. Late applications received from 31 October until 3 March will be processed as part of the initial late allocation round and will be logged onto the database by **18 March 2015**.
- 4.3. The School Admissions Team will notify the admission authority for each foundation, voluntary aided, trust school and academy of every nomination that has been made for that school or academy by **18 March 2015**.
- 4.4. Applications for places in other Local Authority schools / academies will also be sent to those authorities by **18 March 2015**.
- 4.5. By **27 March 2015** the admission authority for each foundation, voluntary aided, trust school and academy will consider all their initial late applications for their school or academy, apply their oversubscription criteria and provide the School Admissions Team with a list of those applicants ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. All preferences will be ranked equally against the admissions criteria.
- 4.6. The School Admissions Team will process the ranked lists against the ranked lists of other schools or academies nominated and:
  - where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools or academies, that school or academy will be allocated to the child
  - where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools or academies, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference
- 4.7. Information will be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers (i.e. a Central Bedfordshire child applying for a place in another Local Authority area or a child from another Local Authority applying for a place at a Central Bedfordshire school or academy) to determine the allocation of a place at the highest ranked preference.
- 4.8. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools or academies, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school or academy with a vacancy, but only if the child is resident in Central Bedfordshire. If the child does not reside in Central Bedfordshire, parents will be invited to request a place at any of the schools or academies that still have vacancies, after the allocation process. Priority will always be given to those parents who have expressed a preference for a particular school or academy over those who have not.



- 4.9. On **24 April 2015** the School Admissions Team will post letters to parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire notifying them of the outcome of their applications, if part of the initial late allocation round, including those who have applied for a place in another Local Authority school or academy where the result of this decision has been received by the timescales outlined above.
- 4.10. Late applications received on or after the 2 March will be processed from **27 April 2015**.

## **5. Waiting Lists**

- 5.1. Pupils not offered a place at their highest preference school or academy or at any of their preferred schools or academies are kept on a waiting list to be re-allocated if places become available. Waiting lists will be maintained until **the end of the academic year for 2015/16** for Community and Voluntary controlled schools. Waiting lists for foundation, trust and VA schools and academies may operate different waiting list arrangements.

## **6. In-year Admissions (applications received on or after 1 September)**

- 6.1. An in-year admission is an application made for a child to be admitted outside of the co-ordinated admissions scheme for the normal year of entry or for another year group within an academy/school.
- 6.2. The local authority will co-ordinate in-year applications for community and voluntary controlled schools as the admission authority for those schools.
- 6.3. The local authority will co-ordinate in-year applications made for academies and own admission authority schools who opt-in to the local authority's scheme for in-year admissions.
- 6.4. The Local Authority will make an application form available to enable parents to apply for an in-year place at any academy or school within the Local Authority area, which will enable parents to express a preference for up to 3 schools or academies and to rank their preferences. The form will be available on the Local Authority website as an e-form or can be downloaded.
- 6.5. The application will be dealt with by the local authority for those schools which are community or voluntary controlled schools or those academies and own admission authority who have opted in to the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme.
- 6.6. Any application received by the School Admissions Team for an academy or own admission authority school whom has opted out of the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme will be forwarded to them to process.

- 6.7. All Academies and own admission authority schools who deal with their own in-year admissions (i.e. opted out of the in-year co-ordination scheme) will be required to determine the child's application and notify the parent and local authority of the outcome.
- 6.8. Pupils not offered a place at a community or voluntary controlled school or at an academy or own admission authority school who has opted in to the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme will be kept on a waiting list which will be maintained for the academic year of admission. Academies and own admission authority schools who have opted out will have their own waiting list arrangements. In all cases where a place cannot be offered parents will have the right of appeal.
- 6.9. If all of the preferred academies and schools are full and the pupil lives in Central Bedfordshire, a place will generally be offered at the nearest academy or school with places available, unless the child is already attending a local school or academy.
- 6.10. Any place offered is usually expected to be taken up by the child within 4-6 weeks or by the start of the next school term.
- 6.11. Details of the community and voluntary controlled schools and those academies and own admission authority schools who have opted-in to the in-year co-ordination scheme and those who have opted out can be obtained from the School Admissions Team at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions).

**Timetable for Co-ordinated Admissions to:  
Secondary and Upper Schools and Academies and the University Technical College for  
academic year 2015/16**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>September 2014</b>                         | Information about the admission process issued   |
| <b>31 October 2014</b>                        | Closing date for receipt of applications   |
| <b>5 December 2014</b>                        | By this date details of applications to be sent to foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools and academies. Applications for places in other Local Authority schools and academies sent to those authorities.  |
| <b>9 January 2015</b>                         | By this date foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools and academies provide the School Admissions Team with ranked lists of applicants  |
| <b>28 January 2015 –<br/>11 February 2015</b> | Between these dates information to be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers   |
| <b>26 February 2015</b>                       | Information on pupils to be offered places will be available to academies and schools via the web based School Admissions Module.  |
| <b>2 March 2015</b>                           | Notification to be posted to parents living in Central Bedfordshire and available online   |
| <b>16 March 2015</b>                          | Date by which parents reject the offer of a place if not required.   |
| <b>18 March 2015</b>                          | Late applications received between 31 October 2013 and 2 March 2014 will be logged onto the database by this date.   |
| <b>18 March 2015</b>                          | The School Admissions Team will notify the admission authority for each academy, foundation, trust and voluntary aided school of every nomination that has been made for that school or academy. Applications for places in other Local Authority schools / academies will be sent to those authorities. |
| <b>27 March 2015</b>                          | By this date foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools and academies provide School Admissions Team with ranked lists of applicants in the initial late allocation round.  |
| <b>24 April 2015</b>                          | Notification to be posted to parents living in Central Bedfordshire who have submitted a late application that qualifies for consideration in the initial late allocation round.   |
| <b>27 April 2015</b>                          | Late applications received on or after 2 March will be processed from this date.   |

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## Community and Voluntary Controlled schools Proposed Admission Arrangements for Academic Year 2015/16

### Central Bedfordshire Council - Standard Admissions Policy

- 1) All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'
- 2) Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school
- 3) Children living in the catchment area
- 4) Other children with siblings at the school
- 5) Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address

The Community and Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools listed below operate the above standard admissions policy:

| School            | Phase | Published Admissions Number (PAN) |
|-------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| Beauesert         | Lower | 55                                |
| Beecroft          | Lower | 60                                |
| Caldecote VC      | Lower | 24                                |
| Campton           | Lower | 22                                |
| Chalton           | Lower | 15                                |
| Clipstone Brook   | Lower | 45                                |
| Fairfield Park    | Lower | 60                                |
| Flitwick          | Lower | 60                                |
| Haynes            | Lower | 24                                |
| Heathwood         | Lower | 30                                |
| Houghton Conquest | Lower | 20                                |
| Husborne Crawley  | Lower | 12                                |
| Kensworth VC      | Lower | 15                                |
| Kingsmoor         | Lower | 45                                |
| Lawnside          | Lower | 60                                |
| Leedon            | Lower | 60                                |
| Mary Bassett      | Lower | 60                                |
| Maulden           | Lower | 30                                |
| Ridgmont          | Lower | 15                                |
| Roecroft          | Lower | 60                                |
| Russell           | Lower | 90                                |
| Shefford          | Lower | 90                                |
| Shillington       | Lower | 30                                |
| Slip End          | Lower | 24                                |

|                    |          |                          |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Southcott          | Lower    | 60                       |
| Southill           | Lower    | 15                       |
| St. Georges        | Lower    | 30                       |
| St. Swithuns VC    | Lower    | 30                       |
| Stanbridge         | Lower    | 24                       |
| Stondon            | Lower    | 30                       |
| Swallowfield       | Lower    | 58                       |
| Templefield        | Lower    | 60                       |
| Totternhoe         | Lower    | 29                       |
| Watling            | Lower    | 30                       |
| Woburn             | Lower    | 12                       |
| Brewers Hill       | Middle   | 120                      |
| Burgoyne           | Middle   | 90                       |
| Streetfield        | Middle   | 130                      |
| Caddington Village | Combined | Year R = 60, Year 5 = 15 |

The following Community and Voluntary Controlled schools operate a variation to the standard admissions policy above and the variation is detailed below for each of these schools:

|                                  |   |                |
|----------------------------------|---|----------------|
| <b>Aspley Guise Lower School</b> |   | <b>PAN: 27</b> |
| 1.                               | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'  |                |
| 2.                               | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school   |                |
| 3.                               | Children living in the catchment area   |                |
| 4.                               | Other children with siblings at the school  |                |
| 5.                               | Children attending the Aspley Guise Pre-School  |                |
| 6.                               | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address |                |

|                                  |   |                |
|----------------------------------|---|----------------|
| <b>Doverly Down Lower School</b> |   | <b>PAN: 30</b> |
| 1.                               | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'  |                |
| 2.                               | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school   |                |
| 3.                               | Children living in the catchment area   |                |
| 4.                               | Other children with siblings at the school  |                |
| 5.                               | Children attending The Acorn Pre-School   |                |
| 6.                               | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address |                |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Dunstable Icknield Lower School</b>   | <b>PAN: 60</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children who have attended the Nursery at Dunstable Icknield Lower School</li> <li>6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Dunton VC Lower School</b>  | <b>PAN: 15</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children attending Dunton Pre-School</li> <li>6. Children, one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England or another Christian church by attending a service at least once a month for the year prior to an application being made*.</li> <li>7. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Everton Lower School</b>   | <b>PAN: 10</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children attending the Evertots Pre-School</li> <li>6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Greenleas School (Derwent Road)</b>  | <b>PAN: 60</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children attending Greenleas Nursery Unit</li> <li>6. Children attending Willows Pre-School on the Greenleas School site</li> <li>7. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Greenleas School (Kestrel Way)</b>  | <b>PAN: 60</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children attending the Nursery at Greenleas School, Kestrel Way</li> <li>6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Hawthorn Park Primary School</b>  | <b>PAN: 60</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children attending the nursery at Hawthorn Park Primary School.</li> <li>6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Hockliffe Lower School</b>   | <b>PAN: 15</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Nursery aged children attending Hockliffe Lower School</li> <li>6. Children attending Little Bluebells Playgroup at Hockliffe Lower School</li> <li>7. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Houghton Regis Primary School</b>   | <b>PAN: 45</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children attending the nursery at Houghton Regis Primary School</li> <li>6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |



|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Lancot Lower School</b>  | <b>PAN: 60</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children currently attending Lancot Nursery Unit</li> <li>6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Linslade Lower School</b>   | <b>PAN: 45</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children currently attending Linslade Lower School Nursery</li> <li>6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address.</li> </ol> |                |

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Ramsey Manor Lower School</b>  | <b>PAN: 58</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children in long term (12 months or more) registered child minding situations, being cared for in the school catchment area.</li> <li>6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Silsoe Lower School</b>   | <b>PAN: 27</b> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'</li> <li>2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school</li> <li>3. Children living in the catchment area</li> <li>4. Other children with siblings at the school</li> <li>5. Children who attend Silsoe Pre-School</li> <li>6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address</li> </ol> |                |

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>St. Andrews Lower School</b> | <b>PAN: 150</b><br>(Brunt's Lane = 90, Second site = 60)   |
| 1.                              | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'   |
| 2.                              | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school  |
| 3.                              | Children living in the catchment area  |
| 4.                              | Other children with siblings at the school   |
| 5.                              | Children, one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England or another Christian church by attending a service at least once a month for the year prior to an application being made*. |
| 6.                              | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address  |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Studham Lower School</b> | <b>PAN: 15</b>  |
| 1.                          | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'  |
| 2.                          | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school   |
| 3.                          | Children living in the catchment area   |
| 4.                          | Other children with siblings at the school  |
| 5.                          | Children who attend Studham Pre-School  |
| 6.                          | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address |

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Thomas Johnson Lower School</b> | <b>PAN: 18</b>  |
| 1.                                 | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'  |
| 2.                                 | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school   |
| 3.                                 | Children living in the catchment area   |
| 4.                                 | Other children with siblings at the school  |
| 5.                                 | Children currently attending the nursery unit   |
| 6.                                 | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address |

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Thornhill Primary School</b> | <b>PAN: 30</b>  |
| 1.                              | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'  |
| 2.                              | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school   |
| 3.                              | Children living in the catchment area   |
| 4.                              | Other children with siblings at the school  |
| 5.                              | Children attending the nursery at Thornhill Primary School  |
| 6.                              | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address |

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Tithe Farm Primary School</b> | <b>PAN: 60</b>  |
| 1.                               | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'  |
| 2.                               | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school   |
| 3.                               | Children living in the catchment area   |
| 4.                               | Other children with siblings at the school  |
| 5.                               | Children attending the nursery at Tithe Farm Primary School   |
| 6.                               | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Wrestlingworth VC Lower School</b> | <b>PAN: 13</b>   |
| 1.                                    | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'   |
| 2.                                    | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school  |
| 3.                                    | Children living in the catchment area  |
| 4.                                    | Other children with siblings at the school   |
| 5.                                    | Children attending Wrestlingworth Pre-School   |
| 6.                                    | Children, one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England or another Christian church by attending a service at least once a month for the year prior to an application being made*. |
| 7.                                    | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address  |

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Edward Peake Middle School</b> | <b>PAN: 120</b>  |
| 1.                                | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'   |
| 2.                                | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school  |
| 3.                                | Children living in the catchment area  |
| 4.                                | Other children with siblings at the school   |
| 5.                                | Children, one or more of whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England or another Christian church by attending a service at least once a month for the year prior to an application being made*. |
| 6.                                | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address  |

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Leighton Middle School</b> | <b>PAN: 120</b>  |
| 1.                            | All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'   |
| 2.                            | Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school  |
| 3.                            | Children living in the catchment area  |
| 4.                            | Other children with siblings at the school   |
| 5.                            | Children who have spent a significant time (3 years or more) in a Leighton Buzzard/Linslade/Hockliffe school, i.e. Beaudesert, Clipstone Brook, Dovery Down, Greenleas, Heathwood, Leedon, Linslade, Mary Bassett, Pulfords, Southcott, St. Georges, St. Leonards, Stanbridge and Hockliffe Lower Schools. |
| 6.                            | Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address  |

\*A Christian Church is defined as one which is a member, or is eligible for membership, of Churches Together in England or the Evangelical Alliance. Applications in this category will

need to ask their priest or minister to complete the relevant section of the local authority common application form.

**Notes:**

Pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the statement, even if the school is full.

Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

The admissions criteria will be applied separately and sequentially until all places are filled. Priority is not given within each criterion to children who meet other criteria. The distance criterion will be used as a tiebreaker in each criterion where required to determine the allocation of places. In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address point (e.g. children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the school, the ultimate tie-breaker will be random selection, using the Tribal Admissions database to allocate the place.

**Definitions:****'Looked after' children**

A 'looked after' child is a child in the care of a local authority as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. In relation to school admissions legislation a 'looked after child' is a child in public care at the time of application to a school.

**Previously 'looked after' children**

A previously 'looked after' child is a child who was 'looked after', but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or a special guardianship order.

**Catchment area**

A geographical area from which children are given priority for admission to the particular school. Please see [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) for more information on school catchment areas.

**Sibling**

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent / carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

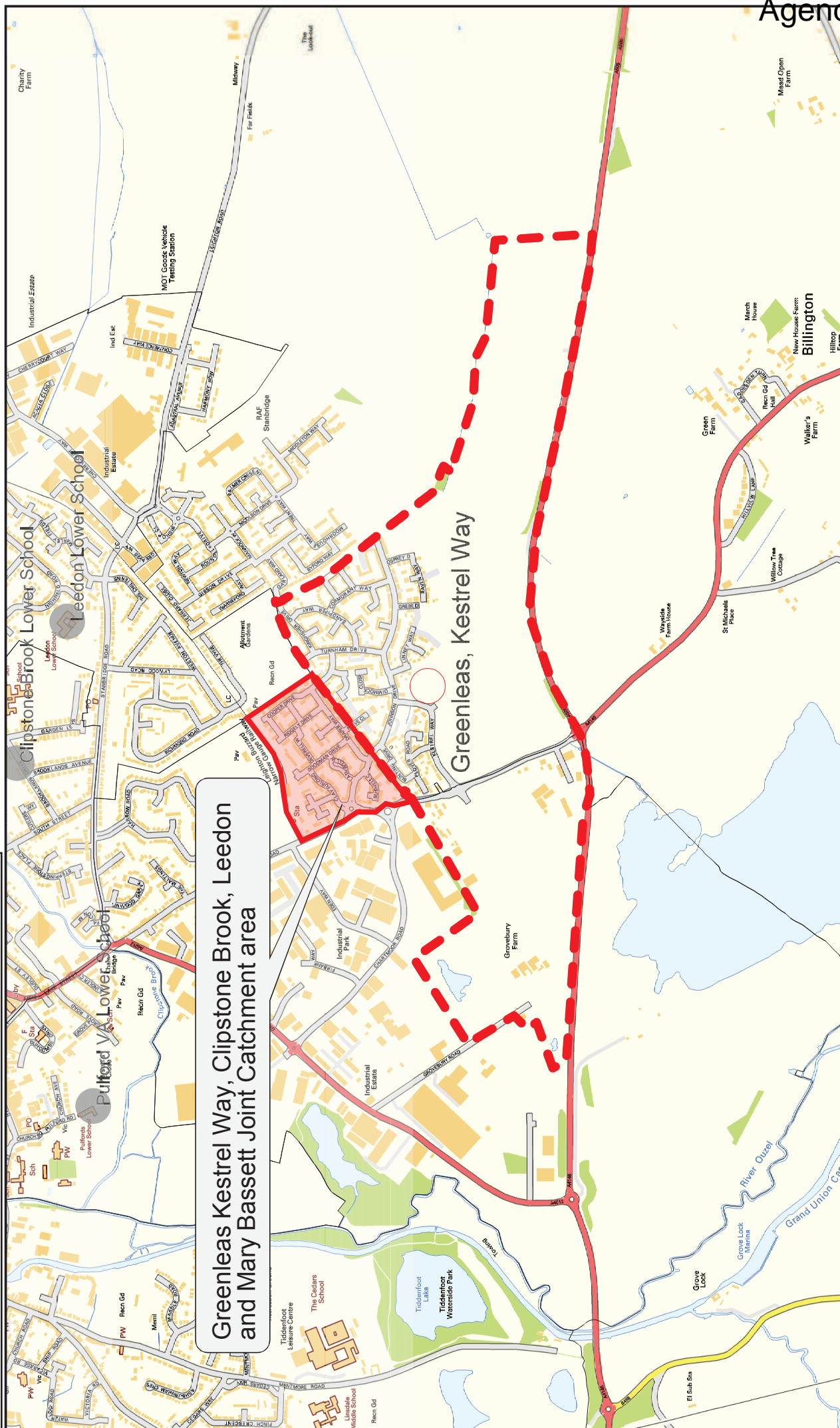
**Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the pupil's home address**

The distance the pupil lives from the school which is measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The Local Authority will measure the distance from the address point of the pupil's home to a point on the school site agreed with the governing body of the school.



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Central Bedfordshire Council.  
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The GeoInformation Group, 2010

Appendix 4 - Greenleas Lower School, Kestrel Way - proposed catchment area

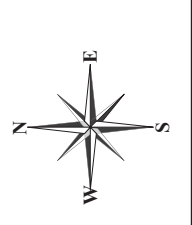


**Greenleas Kestrel Way, Clipstone Brook, Leedon and Mary Bassett Joint Catchment area**

**Greenleas Kestrel Way proposed catchment area including proposed joint catchment area**

**Date: 25 October 2013**

**Scale 1:14212**



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St Andrew's - 2nd site

St Andrew's Lower School  
Lawnside Lower School

Southlands Academy

BIGGLESWADE

|  |                              |  |
|--|------------------------------|--|
|  | <p>Date: 21 October 2013</p> | <p>© Crown Copyright and database right. 2013<br/>Ordnance Survey 100049029.<br/>Central Bedfordshire Council.<br/>Cities Revealed aerial photography copyright<br/>The GeoInformation Group, 2010</p>  |
|  | <p>Scale 1:20439</p>         |  |

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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.



## Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

**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**

|                                 |   |   |                          |
|---------------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Title of the Assessment:</b> | <b>Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2015/16</b> | <b>Date of Assessment:</b>                | 28 August 2012           |
| <b>Responsible Officer</b>      | <b>Name:</b>  | Lydia Braisher                            | <b>Extension Number:</b> |
|                                 | <b>Title:</b>   | Admissions Manager                        |                          |
|                                 | <b>Email:</b>   | lydia.braisher@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk |                          |

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

| Stage 1 – Aims and Objectives  |
|--|
| <p><b>1.1 What are the objectives of the proposal under consideration?</b></p> <p>Central Bedfordshire Council’s consultation on admission arrangements for the academic year 2015/16, include the Council’s co-ordinated admissions scheme and the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools where the Council is the admissions authority.</p> <p>The co-ordinated admissions scheme is the timetable which the Council in conjunction with academies and schools in the area will adhere to, in order to process applications received for the normal year of entry for those institutions. The Council is the co-ordinating authority for all academies and school and the scheme ensures that every child in Central Bedfordshire has a school place.</p> <p>Many of the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools will remain unchanged, however the Council is proposing the following changes to some of its schools, as detailed below:</p> |

**GUIDANCE**

## Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

- 1) Amending the existing catchment areas for Hawthorn Park Primary, Houghton Regis Primary, Tithe Farm Primary and Thornhill Primary following the implementation of a two tier structure from a three tier structure in the Houghton Regis area.
- 2) The implementation of a catchment area for Greenleas Lower School – Sandhills site from September 2015 and a change to the admissions criteria for the school to prioritise applicants within the catchment area from the current criteria of straight line distance.
- 3) A change to the admission arrangements for St. Andrew’s Lower School, in Biggleswade due to the proposed expansion of the school over two sites, with the new site due to open in September 2015. The school would have two catchment areas for each of the sites.
- 4) Decreasing the published admission number at Watling Lower School from 45 to 30 from September 2015.

The School Admissions Code sets out the requirement for the Local Authority to have a co-ordinated admissions scheme for the area. This has to be formulated by 1 January in the year the admission arrangements are to be determined for the relevant academic year and has to be consulted on.

Central Bedfordshire Council is the admissions authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and therefore is required to consult on any changes it proposed to the admissions arrangements.

Consultation on admission arrangements has to take place between the 1 November and the 1 March for a minimum of 8 weeks. The Council will consult between the 11 November and 20 January to fulfil this requirement.

### **1.2 Why is this being done?**

The co-ordinated scheme is a necessary requirement for the Council to have in place to ensure

## Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

that parental preference can be exercised when applying for a place in an intake year and that a child secures an offer of a school place at only one academy or school and offers can be co-ordinated with other local authorities where required. The co-ordinated scheme sets out the deadlines and timescales which are essential to meet this statutory obligation.

The proposed changes in admission arrangements for Hawthorn Park Primary, Houghton Regis Primary, Tithe Farm Primary and Thornhill Primary are in response to the change of age range across the Houghton Regis area which is now exclusively two tier.

The implementation of a catchment area for Greenleas Lower School – Kestrel Way in Leighton Buzzard has been proposed to harmonize the admission process for this new site which is an extension of Greenleas Lower School, Derwent Road and to complement the other admission arrangements in the Leighton Buzzard area which mainly prioritise pupils by catchment.

St. Andrew's Lower School, in Biggleswade is due to expand over two sites, with the new site due to open in September 2015. The proposed change is to provide the school with two catchment areas for each of the sites.

Watling Lower School in Dunstable currently operates one and a half forms of entry per year group and has a published admission number (PAN) of 45. The school would like to decrease the published admissions number to become a one form entry lower school with a PAN of 30 from September 2015, which will enable the school to organise classes more effectively without the inconsistency that is currently experienced as a result of fluctuations in the school's intake numbers.

### **1.3 What will be the impact on staff or customers?**

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that admissions are co-ordinated in their area for all children being admitted into the normal year of entry and only one offer of a school place is made. The Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for the academic year 2015/16 fulfils this requirement, setting out the timeframes for processing admission applications.

The Local Authority is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary-Controlled schools. The proposed admissions criteria for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the

## Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

Academic Year 2015/16 remain largely unchanged apart from:

- 1) Amending the catchment area from Lower to Primary for the following schools:  
Hawthorn Park Primary, Houghton Regis Primary, Tithe Farm Primary, Thornhill Primary
- 2) Changes to the admissions criteria for:
  - Greenleas Lower School, Kestrel Way – Leighton Buzzard
  - St. Andrews Lower School, Biggleswade
- 3) A decrease to the published admissions number is proposed for:
  - Watling Lower School

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

The Council's admission arrangements and co-ordinated admissions scheme supports the Medium Term Plan priority to improve educational standards at key stage 4.



**Central Bedfordshire 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

Legislation contained within the School Admissions Code sets out the requirement for the Local Authority to have a co-ordinated admissions scheme for the area and for admission authorities to consult on their admission arrangements between the 1 November and the 1 March for a minimum of 8 weeks.

The Council will fulfil its statutory responsibilities by consulting within the timescales set out above and conducting a consultation with the relevant parties on changes to admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, inviting thoughts and comments from all consultees.

The consultation sets out the requirement for the Local Authority to have a co-ordinated scheme for Central Bedfordshire to co-ordinate admissions in the normal year of entry for schools and academies so only one offer of a place is made to a child for a school or academy. This applies to admissions for Starting School and the transfer rounds for Middle, Secondary, Upper and the University Technical College.

Part of the consultation includes the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools as detailed above.

*E.g. does it consider the needs of people who are at greater risk of lower quality of life outcomes, close achievement gaps, reduce racial tensions, increase participation in decision making and service delivery processes or increase a sense of belonging amongst different communities or groups?)*

**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?**



**Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>The Local Authority is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and therefore must conduct its consultation in line with legislation with the following parties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen</li> <li>b) Other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admissions authority have an interest in the proposed admissions</li> <li>c) All other admission authorities within the relevant area.</li> <li>d) The Governing Bodies of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools</li> <li>e) Adjoining neighbouring local authorities</li> <li>f) The body or person representing religious denomination schools.</li> </ul> <p>The 8 week consultation period will give all relevant parties the opportunity to respond.</p> |  |
|--|--|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Stage 2 - Consideration of national and local research, data and consultation findings in order to understand the potential impacts of the proposal.</b></p> | <p><b><i>This is the most critical part of the assessment</i></b></p> |
|--|---|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Stage 2 - Consideration of Relevant Data and Consultation</b></p>   |  |
| <p><b>In completing this section it will be helpful to consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Publicity</b> – Do people know that the service exists?</li> <li>• <b>Access</b> – Who is using the service? / Who should be using the service? Why aren't they?</li> <li>• <b>Appropriateness</b> – Does the service meet people's needs and improve outcomes?</li> <li>• <b>Service support needs</b> – Is further training and development required for employees?</li> <li>• <b>Partnership working</b> – Are partners aware of and implementing equality requirements?</li> <li>• <b>Contracts &amp; monitoring</b> – Is equality built into the contract and are outcomes monitored?</li> </ul> <p><b>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.</b></p> | <p><i>And 2.3 Refer to Equality Checklist (Pages 4-7 of guidance)</i></p> <p>Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment Screening for your Service / Business Plan for examples of relevant evidence or contact: Clare</p> |
| <p><b>Internal desktop research</b></p>   |  |



**Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment**

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
|   | Place survey / Customer satisfaction data  |   | Demographic Profiles – Census & ONS  |
|   | Local Needs Analysis   | X | Service Monitoring / Performance Information   |
|   | Other local research   |   |  |
| <b>Third party guidance and examples</b>  |  |   |  |
|   | National / Regional Research   |   | Analysis of service outcomes for different groups  |
| X   | Best Practice / Guidance   | X | Benchmarking with other organisations<br><a href="#">Tower Hamlets, Haringey and Wandsworth EIAs</a> |
|   | Inspection Reports   |   |  |
| <b>Public consultation related activities</b>   |  |   |  |
| x   | Consultation with Service Users  | x | Consultation with Community / Voluntary Sector   |
|   | Consultation with Staff  |   | Customer Feedback / Complaints   |
|   | Data about the physical environment e.g. housing market, employment, education and training provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces |   |  |
| <b>Consulting Members, stakeholders and specialists</b>   |  |   |  |
| x   | Elected Members  |   | Expert views of stakeholders representing diverse groups   |
| X   | Specialist staff / service expertise   |   |  |
| <p><i>Please bear in mind that whilst sections of the community will have common interests and concerns, views and issues vary within groups. E.g. women have differing needs and concerns depending on age, ethnic origin, disability etc</i></p> <p><b>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.</b></p> |  |   |  |
| <b>2.2. Summary of Existing Data and Consultation Findings: - Service Delivery</b>  |  |   |  |

Harding,  
Corporate Policy  
Advisor (Equality  
& Diversity) for  
further details

For details of  
existing  
consultation  
findings please  
contact Karen  
Aspinall  
Consultation  
Manager, Office  
of the Chief  
Executive  
[Karen.Aspinal@c  
entralbedfordshire  
.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.Aspinal@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)  
Telephone 0300  
300 6286 (x  
42967)

*Please set out in  
an Appendix to*



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Considering the impact on Customers/Residents

**- 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+

The admission arrangements apply to all children who are of statutory school age or where the majority will become statutory school age during the academic year in which they start.

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

All maintained schools are required to admit a child with a statement of special educational needs that names the school. The place is normally allocated before all other places in the admissions process and if the statement is finalised after this, the child is normally admitted over and above the admission number of the school. Admission to a Special School is dealt with by the Assessment and Monitoring Team, which is covered by different legislation.

Children with special educational needs, disabilities or medical needs who do not have a statement are covered by Fair Access Protocol which the Local Authority is required by the School Admissions Code to operate and all admission authorities must participate in. The Fair Access Protocol operates outside the admission arrangements and ensures that a child eligible under the protocol is secured a school place where this has been unattainable.

**- 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

Children who are carers are covered by the Fair Access Protocol and ensures that a child eligible under the protocol is secured a school place where this has been unattainable.

**- Gender Reassignment:** People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have

*this assessment the details of data and consultation findings relating to diversity areas shown below. In this section please summarise findings and the conclusions you have drawn from those findings in relation to the areas*

## Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

*undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex*

All Community and Voluntary Controlled schools are co-educational and provide for both male and female children and young people and must not discriminate against pupils who have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

Gender reassignment is a personal process (rather than a medical process) which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with. This personal process may include undergoing medical procedures or, as is more likely for school pupils, it may simply include choosing to dress in a different way as part of the personal process of change.

**- 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)*

Admission arrangements apply to all children and young people and a pregnant mother or mother who has given birth and breastfeeding and is of statutory school age has the right of access to education.

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

All Local Authorities and Admission Authorities have a duty to ensure that admission arrangements are fair and do not discriminate against race. Applications for school places do not ask for a child's nationality or ethnic origin as this is not a factor when allocating school places.

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

Community Schools

Religious Education in community schools follows the agreed Religious Education Syllabus for

## Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

the Authority.

Voluntary Controlled.

Religious worship usually follows the teaching of the Church of England, under the direction of the school Governors. Religious education follows the agreed Religious Education Syllabus for the Authority.

Voluntary Controlled schools can include faith as part of their admissions criteria and the following VC schools prioritise children whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England or another Christian church by attending a service at least once a month for the year prior to an application being made above any other children.

- Dunton
- St. Andrews
- Wrestlingworth
- Edward Peake

Applications made on faith grounds are ratified by the admissions team and the school, with details provided to the School Admissions Team to allocate places accordingly as part of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

Voluntary Aided schools are faith schools and can include faith criterion as part of their admissions criteria in line with the provisions of the School Admissions Code. Applications made on faith grounds are ratified by the school, with details provided to the School Admissions Team to allocate places accordingly as part of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

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

All Community and Voluntary Controlled schools are co-educational and provide for both male and female children and young people.

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

## Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

Any child or young person has the right of access to education and all schools are required to admit pupils regardless of sexual orientation.

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

Admission arrangements have to comply with the School Admissions Code and other legislation which affects the admission of children and young people to school, such as the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998.

The admission arrangements prioritise all 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after', this is in line with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code which prescribe that all 'looked after' children and those who were previously 'looked after' must be given the highest priority in oversubscription criteria.

The proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for 2015/16 are detailed in the attached appendix 3.

### 2.3. Summary of Existing Data and Consultation Findings – Employment Considering the impact on Employees **Not Applicable for this policy**

- **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**

**Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>- <b>Gender Reassignment:</b> <i>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</i> <b>N/A</b></p>    |  |
| <p>- <b>Pregnancy and Maternity:</b> <i>e.g. Pregnancy / Compulsory maternity leave / Ordinary maternity leave / Additional maternity leave</i> <b>N/A</b></p>  |  |
| <p>- <b>Race:</b> <i>e.g. Asian or Asian British / Black or Black British / Chinese / Gypsies and Travellers / Mixed Heritage / White British / White Irish / White Other</i> <b>N/A</b></p>  |  |
| <p>- <b>Religion or Belief:</b> <i>e.g. Buddhist / Christian / Hindu / Jewish / Muslim / Sikh / No religion / Other</i> <b>N/A</b></p>  |  |
| <p>- <b>Sex:</b> <i>Women / Men</i> <b>N/A</b></p>  |  |
| <p>- <b>Sexual Orientation:</b> <i>e.g. Lesbians / Gay men / Bisexuals / Heterosexuals</i> <b>N/A</b></p>   |  |
| <p>- <b>Other:</b> <i>e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion, Marriage and Civil Partnership</i> <b>N/A</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>2.4. To what extent are vulnerable groups more affected by this proposal compared to the population or workforce as a whole?</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>2.5. To what extent do current procedures and working practices address the above issues and help to promote equality of opportunity?</b></p>   |  |
| <p><b>1) Consultation Process</b><br/>         It is proposed that the consultation period will commence from 11 November 2013 and conclude on 20 January 2014. The Local Authority will publish the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme and</p> |  |



**Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment**

the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools on the website and advertise the consultation as widely as possible to gather the views of Parent/Carer(s), Governing Bodies of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, all other admission authorities in the area, neighbouring local authorities and the Church of England and Catholic diocese

2) Content of Policy  
 The admission arrangements prioritise all 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'.

Children who live in the catchment area with siblings at the school are prioritised above children living in the catchment area in order to keep families together. Other siblings are then prioritised before nursery or faith criteria. Children who do not meet any of the criteria for a Community and VC school are then prioritised according to their straight line distance from the school.

Young offenders are covered by the Fair Access Protocol and ensures that a child eligible under the protocol is secured a school place where this has been unattainable.

**2.6. Are there any gaps in data or consultation findings**

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

**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 |                                |
| <b>3.1 Age</b>                                  |         |        |                 |    |                                |

*Impact should be shown as Yes or No*



### Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

|             |   |  |  |  |  |
|-------------|---|--|--|--|--|
|             |   |  |  |  |  |
| <b>3.2</b>  | <b>Disability</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| <b>3.3</b>  | <b>Carers</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| <b>3.4</b>  | <b>Gender Reassignment</b>  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>3.5</b>  | <b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>3.6</b>  | <b>Race</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| <b>3.7</b>  | <b>Religion / Belief</b>  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>3.8</b>  | <b>Sex</b>  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>3.9</b>  | <b>Sexual Orientation</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| <b>3.10</b> | <b>Other e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> |  |  |  |  |





**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?                          |              |      |          |
| 4.2 What changes will be made to address or mitigate any adverse impacts that have been identified? |              |      |          |
| 4.3 Are there any budgetary implications?   |              |      |          |
| 4.4 Actions to be taken to mitigate against any adverse impacts:                                    |              |      |          |
| Action  | Lead Officer | Date | Priority |
|   |              |      |          |
|   |              |      |          |
|   |              |      |          |
|   |              |      |          |

*Priority should be either High, Medium or Low. You can add rows using the Table>Insert Rows*

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

| Stage 5 – Quality Assurance & Scrutiny:<br>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                     |





Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

|   |   |
|---|---|
| assessment?   |   |
| Step 1:   |   |
| Has the Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity) reviewed this assessment and provided feedback? <i>Yes/No</i> |   |
| Summary of CPA's comments:  |   |
|   |   |
| Step 2:   |   |
| 5.2 Feedback from Central Bedfordshire Equality Forum   | <i>The Corporate Policy Adviser will advise whether this step is necessary.</i> |



**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? |

*Please give details and make clear whether this is already planned, or just a possibility. Clear ownership in terms of team etc must be given.*

**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<br><br>Name: _____ Date: _____ |
| 7.2                                    | Has the Corporate Policy Adviser Equality & Diversity provided confirmation that the Assessment is complete?                  |

*Finalised Assessments can be used to inform the Equality Section of Committee Reports and should be saved with the strategy, policy, project, contract, or decision file for audit purposes and Freedom of Information Act*



## Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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