

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 15 July 2014.

### PRESENT

Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Executive Members:	Cllrs	C Hegley B J Spurr Mrs P E Turner MBE	Cllrs	M A G Versallion J N Young
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Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	A D Brown I Dalgarno A L Dodwell D J Hopkin	Cllrs	A M Turner B Wells R D Wenham
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Apologies for Absence:	Executive Member	Cllrs J Jamieson R C Stay	Deputy Executive Member	Cllr Mrs S Clark
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Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	P N Aldis Mrs A Barker A R Bastable R D Berry M C Blair D Bowater Mrs G Clarke	Cllrs	Mrs R J Drinkwater C C Gomm Mrs S A Goodchild D Jones K C Matthews B Saunders A Shadbolt
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Officers in Attendance	Mr R Carr Ms D Clarke  Mrs M Clay  Mr M Coiffait Mr D Galvin Mrs S Hobbs Mr G Jones  Mrs J Ogley	Chief Executive Director of Improvement and Corporate Services Chief Legal and Democratic Services Officer Community Services Director Head of Financial Performance Committee Services Officer Assistant Director Children's Services Operations Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
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E/14/20. **Minutes**

### RESOLVED

**that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

E/14/21. **Members' Interests**

Councillors Young and Mrs Goodchild declared a pecuniary interest in item 15 'Capital Proceeds Arising from the Sale of the Former LuDun Industries Site' as they were Trustees of LuDun.

E/14/22. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Vice-Chairman announced that item 18 'Quarter 4 Performance Report' would be taken after item 15 'Capital proceeds arising from the sale of the former LuDun Industries Site'.

The Council's Financial Investigation Unit had been successful in securing a Confiscation Order in the sum of £567,000.

The Vice-Chairman acknowledged that the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) had been awarded a Local Growth Deal that would bring funding into Central Bedfordshire for local infrastructure.

E/14/23. **Petitions**

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

**1. Mr Winter**

Mr Winter presented a petition containing 454 signatures requesting that the Council make provision for social club premises in its redevelopment plans for the Co-op site, Houghton Regis. He explained that the existing social club was an integral part of the community.

The Executive Member for Regeneration explained that the Council was seeking to secure the comprehensive redevelopment of the town centre site and would consider all viable options that come forward. He would arrange for officers to meet with representatives from the Social Club.

E/14/24. **Public Participation**

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

E/14/25. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

**RESOLVED**

**That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015 be noted.**

E/14/26. **March 2014 - Revenue Budget Monitoring Provisional Outturn Report (Subject to Audit)**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the provisional financial outturn position for the General Fund (subject to audit) for 2013/14. The 2013/14 provisional revenue outturn was an underspend of £0.6m.

It was noted that recommendation 2 referred to the General Fund Reserve as set out in section 54.3, which should in fact refer to section 65.5.

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

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the outturn position which was an underspend of £0.6m be approved; this enabled a contribution to reserves to be made, thus strengthening the Council's long term financial position; and**
- 2. that the proposed transfers to the General Fund Reserve as set out in section 65.5 and Earmarked Reserves as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved.**

E/14/27. **March 2014 - Capital Budget Monitoring Provisional Outturn Report (Subject to Audit)**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that provided information on the provisional capital outturn position for 2013/14. The capital budget for 2013/14, excluding the Housing Revenue Account, was £94.6m (£45.0m net).

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

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the provisional outturn position which was to spend £72.3m compared to the budget of £94.6m be approved; a variance of £22.3m as a result of an overspend of £4.9m and proposed deferred spend to 2014/15 of £27.2m; and**
- 2. that the deferred spend of £27.2m (Gross) £16.4m (Net) for capital schemes in progress from 2013/14 to 2014/15 be approved.**

E/14/28. **March 2013/14 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring Provisional Outturn Revenue and Capital Report (Subject to Audit)**

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 (HRA) provisional outturn position for revenue and capital. The provisional outturn indicated a year end reserves position of £20.710m. HRA balances would remain at a contingency level of £2m, with the Extra Care Development Reserve increasing to £12.116m. The Strategic Reserve would increase to £6.394m and the Major Repairs Reserve was reduced to £0.200m.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing confirmed that there was no threat at the current time to the Council's planning assumptions as a result of Right to Buy Sales.

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

**RESOLVED**

1. **that the Revenue outturn be approved. This was a balanced budget with a contribution to Housing Revenue Account Reserves of £6.958m, thus strengthening the Council's ability to invest and improve its stock of Council Houses;**
2. **that the Capital outturn be approved, this was £0.103m lower than the revised position approved by Council in February. The deferred capital spend of £2.503m into 2014/15 be approved;**
3. **that the Right to Buy sales be noted. This had increased significantly as a result of changes to discounts, resulting in a year end balance of unapplied capital receipts of £2.346m; and**
4. **that the net increase of reserves was £5.336m be noted. At the year end, the Housing Revenue Account has £20.710m of reserves available, of which £2.0m is identified as a minimum level of HRA Balances.**

E/14/29. **Customer Strategy**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the Customer Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council. The Strategy would help the Council to become truly customer focussed and achieve its aspiration to make Central Bedfordshire a great place to live and work.

In response to questions, the Deputy Executive Member for Corporate Resources advised that the Council would be reviewing the use of voicemail and planned to install a voice recognition system. He would respond directly to the Member concerned about the interactive desk not working at Sandy library.

Reason for decision: The Customer Strategy was primarily an internal document, setting out the Council's plans for enhancing the customer experience.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the Customer Strategy, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved; and**
- 2. to request officers to make arrangements to implement the Customer Strategy.**

#### **E/14/30. Discretionary Housing Payment Policy**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that summarised the Council's Discretionary Housing Payment Policy and the results of the public consultation on the Policy.

The Council received grant funding from the Department for Work and Pensions for the purposes of awarding Discretionary Housing Payments to residents in need of additional assistance with meeting their housing costs.

In response to a question, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member agreed to respond to the relevant Member to clarify the feedback received from Aragon Housing Association in relation to young people leaving care.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council had a clear policy framework in place for the award of Discretionary Housing Payments and to ensure awards were determined in a fair and transparent manner.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy be approved; and**
- 2. to authorise the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to make minor amendments to the Policy where considered necessary.**

#### **E/14/31. A Review of the Impact on Children Living with Domestic Abuse: Report of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee February 2014**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that reviewed the actions taken in Children's Services following the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 February 2014 on domestic abuse. The Council was carrying out a corporate review of domestic abuse activity across the organisation which was due to be completed by October 2014.

In response to a question, the Deputy Executive Member for Children's Services and Community Safety agreed for a news item to be included in Governor Essentials and that a follow up report would be submitted to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the corporate review.

Reason for decision: To enable the recommendations from the Children Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be considered as part of the wider corporate review.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the work of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be welcomed; and**
- 2. that the recommendations made by the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be considered as part of the wider corporate review.**

#### **E/14/32. Agreement to Homes and Communities Agency Grant Funding Conditions**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that set out the funding conditions for the receipt of capital grant in respect of the development of Priory View, Dunstable and the Empty Homes Leasing Scheme from the Homes and Communities Agency. The Council had been awarded a grant of £1.703m towards the cost of the development of Priory View and £0.2m towards an empty homes leasing scheme.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Homes and Communities Agency funding conditions to ensure the Council receives the grants towards the two schemes.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the acceptance of the Homes and Communities Agency's conditions in respect of grant towards the costs of the development of Priory View, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved; and**
- 2. that the acceptance of the Homes and Communities Agency's conditions in respect of grant towards the Empty Homes Leasing scheme, as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved.**

#### **E/14/33. Capital Proceeds Arising from the Sale of the Former LuDun Industries Site**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that proposed investing the Council's share of the

proceeds arising from the sale of the former LuDun site to create an on-going legacy through a Trust Fund for people with disabilities in Central Bedfordshire.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing agreed to clarify the Council's final share of the capital raised.

Reason for decision: To enable there to be a legacy from LuDun Industries that would benefit not just the ex-employees of LuDun but all people with disabilities in the future. The Trust fund would help people with disabilities with education, training and access to employment thus fulfilling the original aims of LuDun in a sustainable way.

## **RESOLVED**

**that the Council foregoes its share of the capital realised from the sale of the former LuDun site, in order to invest in a Trust Fund for people with disabilities across Central Bedfordshire.**

[Note – following the meeting it has been confirmed that the Council's share of the capital raised from the sale was £82,263.]

### **E/14/34. Quarter 4 Performance Report**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources on the Quarter 4 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council's Medium Term Plan indicator set for 2013/14. The report showed that overall the Council's performance had continued to strengthen over 2013/14.

In response to a question, the Deputy Executive Member for Community Services explained that the percentage of recycling had dropped locally and nationally due to the increased use of the internet and manufacturers changing their packaging.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources confirmed that future reports would contain a key to explain the symbols contained within the report.

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

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the continuing good performance in Quarter 4 and overall improvement across the Medium Term Plan indicators in 2013/14 be acknowledged; and**
- 2. to recommend that officers further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators as appropriate.**

E/14/35. **Waste Collection and Street Cleansing Contract (North)**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that proposed the extension to the contract for Waste and Recycling Collection and Street Cleansing for the north of Central Bedfordshire, for a period of two and a half years from 4 October 2016 to 31 March 2019.

Reason for decision: To enable the contract to align with the south Waste and Recycling Collection and Street Cleansing contract. As a result, a single, harmonised contract could be procured from 1 April 2019 to serve the whole of Central Bedfordshire.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. to authorise Officers to issue a Voluntary Transparency Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union indicating the Council's intention to agree an extension to the existing Waste Collection and Street Cleansing Contract (North); and**
- 2. subject to recommendation 1, to extend the contract for Waste and Recycling Collection and Street Cleansing for the north of Central Bedfordshire, for a period of two and a half years from 4 October 2016 to 31 March 2019 and for this purpose, to suspend the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.**

E/14/36. **New Residential Children's Homes Contract - Delivering Outcomes for Vulnerable Children**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that proposed an award of a new contract for the management of residential children's homes from November 2014. Bedford Borough Council had agreed to commit to the Service Level Agreement that would support the award of the contract which Central Bedfordshire would manage on behalf of both Councils.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations to secure sufficient accommodation for looked after children and to enable the Council to provide suitable high quality residential places within the available resources.

**RESOLVED**

**that the award of the contract as outlined in the report and Appendix A be approved.**

E/14/37. **Waste Collection and Street Cleansing Contract (North)**

See minute E/14/34 for further details.



E/14/38. **Children's Homes Contract**

See minute E/14/35 for further details.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.00 a.m.)

Chairman .....

Dated .....