

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



please ask for Sandra Hobbs
direct line 0300 300 5257
date 7 August 2014

NOTICE OF MEETING

EXECUTIVE

Date & Time

Tuesday, 19 August 2014 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 Regeneration
	B Spurr	– Executive Member for Community 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 15 July 2014.

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 September 2014 to 31 August 2015.

Decisions

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
8.	<p>Determination of Statutory Proposals to close Brewers Hill Community Middle School, Streetfield Community Middle School and Ashton Church of England (C of E) Voluntary Aided (VA) Middle School</p> <p>To provide information regarding the responses to the statutory notices published regarding the phased closure of the Community Schools of Brewers Hill Middle School and Streetfield Middle School and the C of E VA School of Ashton Middle School from September 2015, with full closure from August 2016. Please note that the Appendices have been circulated as a separate document.</p>	33 - 60
9.	<p>Commissioning of New School Places for Implementation from September 2015 and September 2016 in Central Bedfordshire</p> <p>To outline three projects within the Council's New School Places Programme where local pressures of demographic growth require new school places to be provided from September 2016 in Biggleswade and in Silsoe and a further project to provide new school places in Stotfold with a target implementation date of September 2015.</p>	61 - 162
10.	<p>Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan</p> <p>The report proposes the medium term financial planning framework for 2015-16 through to 2018-19.</p>	163 - 174
11.	<p>Superfast Broadband Extension Programme</p> <p>The report proposes that the Council funds an additional £350,000 capital, over the £1.5 million already approved (May 2014) to further extend superfast broadband coverage as part of the Council's participation within the Broadband Delivery UK Superfast Extension Programme.</p>	175 - 182
12.	<p>Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property</p> <p>To adopt a policy to discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a suitable property.</p>	183 - 246

13. **Future Residual Waste Disposal** To follow

To consider the future of the disposal of residual waste.

Monitoring Matters

- | Item | Subject | Page Nos. |
|-------------|---|------------------|
| 14. | June 2014 - Quarter 1 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report | 247 - 260 |

The report sets out the financial position for 2014/15 as at the end of June 2014. It sets out spend to date against the profiled budget and the forecast financial outturn.

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|-----|---|-----------|
| 15. | June 2014 - Quarter 1 Capital Budget Monitoring Report | 261 - 274 |
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The report provides information on the projected capital outturn for 2014/15 as at June 2014. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account which is subject to a separate report.

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| 16. | June 2014/15 (Q1) Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring Revenue and Capital Report | 275 - 286 |
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The report provides information on the 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account projected outturn revenue and capital position as at June 2014.

17. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To consider whether to pass a resolution under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that the consideration of the items is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Exempt Papers

- | Item | Subject | Exempt Para. | Page Nos. |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 18. | Future Residual Waste Disposal | 3 | To follow |

To receive the exempt Appendix.

Exempt Report

Item	Subject	Exempt Para.	Page Nos.
19.	Request for Executive Authorisation to Contract Out Homelessness Functions to Third Parties	2	To follow

The report proposes the Executive authorise that homelessness functions be delegated to the Director for Social Care, Health and Housing, including contracting out functions to third parties, limited to 1 April 2023, in accordance with legislation and the Constitution.

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

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

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

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

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**Central Bedfordshire Council
Forward Plan of Key Decisions
1 September 2014 to 31 August 2015**

- 1) During the period from **1 September 2014 to 31 August 2015**, 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 Regeneration
Cllr Brian Spurr	Executive Member for Community 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
18 March 2014	6 March 2014
22 April 2014	10 April 2014
27 May 2014	15 May 2014
15 July 2014	3 July 2014
19 August 2014	7 August 2014
14 October 2014	2 October 2014
9 December 2014	27 November 2014
13 January 2015	23 December 2014
10 February 2015	29 January 2015
31 March 2015	19 March 2015

Central Bedfordshire Council

Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 September 2014 to 31 August 2015

Key Decisions

Date of Publication: 3 July 2014

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.	Developing the Early Intervention Offer -	To consider the outcome of the public consultation on developing the Early Intervention Offer through Children's Centres.	14 October 2014	Public consultation from 27 May to 19 August 2014.	Summary report following consultation	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 13/09/14 to Contact Officer: Sue Tyler, Head of Child Poverty and Early Intervention Email: sue.tyler@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6553
2.	Highways Contract Renewal Project: Authorisation to Proceed -	To agree the approach to the project including the type of contract proposed and alliance working. To adopt relevant background papers and to give approval to proceed.	14 October 2014	Stakeholder reviews with members and senior officers, December 2013 – February 2014. Consultation meetings with neighbouring authorities to discuss joint working – ongoing.	Report Road Safety Strategy Network Maintenance Management Policies Highways Asset Management Strategy	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 13/09/14 to Contact Officer: Jade Taylor, Project Manager Email: jade.taylor@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5584

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.	Central Bedfordshire Council's Admissions Arrangements and Co-ordinated Scheme -	To approve commencement of consultation on the Council's Admissions Arrangements and co-ordinated scheme for the academic year 2016/17.	14 October 2014	<p>a) Governing bodies of Local Authority schools.</p> <p>b) All other admission authorities within the relevant area.</p> <p>c) Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen.</p> <p>d) Other persons in the relevant area who have an interest in the proposed admissions.</p> <p>e) Adjoining neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>f) The Church of England and Catholic Diocese.</p> <p>Method of consultation: website. In addition: email/letter to a, b, e and f. Information distributed to academies/schools, nurseries, pre-schools, children's centres, leisure and community centres, libraries and town and parish councils as well as advertising in the local media to consult with c and d.</p>	Report	<p>Executive Member for Children's Services</p> <p>Comments by 13/09/14 to Contact Officer:</p> <p>Karen Oellermann, Acting Assistant Director - Commissioning & Partnerships</p> <p>Email: karen.oellermann@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 0300 300 5265</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)
4.	West of A1 Stotfold -	Approval to dispose of land including selection of appropriate methodology.	14 October 2014		Public Report with Exempt Appendices.	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 13/09/14 to Contact Officer: Andrew Gordon, Head of Estate Management Email: andrew.gordon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5882

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.	New School Places in Stotfold -	Determination of proposal for commissioning new lower school places in Stotfold for implementation from September 2015.	9 December 2014	<p>The governing body of the school which is the subject proposal.</p> <p>Families of pupils, teachers and other staff at the school.</p> <p>The governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected.</p> <p>Families of any pupils at any other school who may be affected by the proposal including families of pupils at feeder schools.</p> <p>Trade unions that represent staff at the school and representatives of trade unions of any other staff at schools who may be affected by the proposals.</p> <p>Constituency MPs for the school that is the subject of the proposal.</p> <p>The local parish council where the school that is the subject of the proposal is situated.</p> <p>Consultation period between September and November 2014 including press releases, public meetings and statutory notices.</p>	Report and outcome of consultation	<p>Executive Member for Children's Services</p> <p>Comments by 08/11/14 to Contact Officer:</p> <p>Karen Oellermann, Acting Assistant Director - Commissioning & Partnerships</p> <p>Email: karen.oellermann@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 0300 300 5265</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)
6.	NNDR Discretionary Relief Policy -	To approve the NNDR Discretionary Relief Policy.	13 January 2015	Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 July 2014 and 23 September 2014.	Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 12/12/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
7.	Central Bedfordshire Council's Admission Arrangements and Co-ordinated Scheme -	To determine the Council's Admission Arrangements and co-ordinated scheme for the academic year 2016/17.	31 March 2015		Report	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 30/04/15 to Contact Officer: Karen Oellermann, Acting Assistant Director - Commissioning & Partnerships Email: karen.oellermann@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5265

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)
NON KEY DECISIONS						
8.	Quarter 1 Performance Report -	To consider the quarter 1 performance report.	14 October 2014		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 13/09/14 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5517
9.	Medium Term Financial Plan Fees and Charges -	To recommend to Council the Medium Term Financial Plan fees and charges price increases.	14 October 2014	Members Task and Finish Group on 4 July 2014. Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 September 2014.	Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 13/09/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk 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)
10.	Council Tax Support Scheme -	To recommend to Council the Council Tax Support Scheme for approval.	14 October 2014	Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 October 2014.	Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 13/09/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
11.	Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring -	To receive the quarter 2 budget monitoring reports for the Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account.	9 December 2014		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 08/11/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk 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)
12.	Quarter 2 Performance Report -	To consider the quarter 2 performance report.	13 January 2015		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 12/12/14 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5517
13.	Draft Budget 2015/16 -	To consider the draft Budget for 2015/16.	13 January 2015	The draft budget will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during their cycle of meetings in January 2015.	Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 12/12/14 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk 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)
14.	Budget 2015/16 -	To recommend to Council a proposed Budget for 2015/16 for approval.	10 February 2015	Consultation will take place with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during the January cycle of meetings.	Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 19/01/15 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
15.	Treasury Management Strategy -	To recommend to Council the approval of the Treasury Management Strategy.	10 February 2015		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/01/15 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk 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)
16.	Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring -	To receive the quarter 3 budget monitoring report for the Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account.	10 February 2015		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/01/15 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
17.	Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities for 2015-2016 -	To recommend to Council the approval of the Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities for 2015-16.	31 March 2015	The CSP Plan will be considered by the Community Safety Partnership and the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Report and Community Safety Partnership Plan 2015/16	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 27/02/15 to Contact Officer: Joy Craven, CSP Manager Email: joy.craven@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4649
18.	Quarter 3 Performance Report -	To consider the quarter 3 performance report.	31 March 2015		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 27/02/15 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5517

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.	Treasury Management Strategy -	To recommend to Council the approval of the Treasury Management Strategy.	10 February 2015		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/01/15 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
20.	Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring -	To receive the quarter 3 budget monitoring report for the Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account.	10 February 2015		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 09/01/15 to Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer Email: charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
21.	Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities for 2015-2016 -	To recommend to Council the approval of the Community Safety Partnership Plan and Priorities for 2015-16.	31 March 2015	The CSP Plan will be considered by the Community Safety Partnership and the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Report and Community Safety Partnership Plan 2015/16	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 27/02/15 to Contact Officer: Joy Craven, CSP Manager Email: joy.craven@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk 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)
22.	Quarter 3 Performance Report -	To consider the quarter 3 performance report.	31 March 2015		Report	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 27/02/15 to Contact Officer: Elaine Malarky, Head of Programmes & Performance Management Email: elaine.malarky@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk 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:

Date of Publication	Period of Plan
1 April 2014	1 May 2014 – 30 April 2015
16 April 2014	1 June 2014 – 31 May 2015
4 June 2014	1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015
3 July 2014	1 August 2014 – 31 July 2015
18 July 2014	1 September 2014 – 31 August 2015
3 September 2014	1 October 2014 – 30 September 2015
23 September 2014	1 November 2014 – 31 October 2015
29 October 2014	1 December 2014 – 30 November 2015
28 November 2014	1 January 2015 – 31 December 2016
23 December 2014	1 February 2015 – 31 January 2016
18 February 2015	1 March 2015 – 29 February 2016
5 March 2015	1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016

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Meeting: Executive

Date: 19 August 2014

Subject: **Determination of Statutory Proposals to close Brewers Hill Community Middle School, Streetfield Community Middle School and Ashton Church of England (C of E) Voluntary Aided (VA) Middle School**

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

Summary: The report provides information regarding the responses to the statutory notices published as a consequence of the decision taken by the Council’s Executive at its meeting on the 27 May 2014 regarding the phased closure of the Community Schools of Brewers Hill Middle School and Streetfield Middle School and the C of E VA School of Ashton Middle School from September 2015, with full closure from August 2016. The report also provides a response to each of the schools’ business cases for their alternative proposals submitted as part of their response to the statutory notices.

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

Contact Officer: Helen Redding, Assistant Director School Improvement

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Dunstable Central, Dunstable Icknield, Dunstable Manshead, Dunstable Northfields, Dunstable Watling, Caddington.

Function of: The Executive

Key Decision Yes

Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in A call-in would prevent the Council from reaching a decision on the recommendations set out in this report and delay the publication of the composite prospectus for parents and carers applying for a school place for September 2015, which needs to be published in time for the admission rounds opening on 1 Sept 2014. Any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council’s and the public’s interests.

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

Financial:

1. Schools budgets are funded through Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). There are financial implications for the schools identified within previous reports with regard to their budgets for 2014/2015 and beyond. Budgetary provisions for redundancy payments as a consequence of a school closure are the responsibility of the Council. Should a maintained school close with a deficit budget, the deficit falls to the de-delegated school DSG contingency budget. If there is not sufficient budget within the de-delegated DSG school contingency, a deficit on central expenditure can be applied to the next year to be funded by the schools budget. This deficit would fall on either DSG (which would impact on all maintained schools budgets) or the Council. The Schools Forum makes this decision, and the Department for Education (DfE) adjudicates where School Forum does not agree.
2. Following consultation with schools and others in September 2013, and the recommendations of the Schools Forum, the Council's Executive approved the distribution of DSG at its meeting on 14 January 2014. This included approval of the recommendation of using admissions applications data for calculating schools' budgets for a limited number of schools and Academies that are affected by their own change in age range or the impact of others locally. This is to ensure that as far as is possible the financial resources follow the pupils where age range changes are approved, based on January admissions applications data for the period September 2014 to March 2015, rather than the previous year's October Census data.
3. Each school's budget share has been calculated based on the October 2013 census for the period April to August, and on the admissions applications data in January for the period September to March. If the actual numbers differ by more than 10%, an adjustment will be applied the following September. If the impact of this is that a school finds itself in financial difficulty, maintained schools can apply to the Council for a licenced deficit, and the Council will evaluate the proposal and support the school to address the issues.
4. The Governing Body of each school is required to manage their budget in accordance with the Council's financial procedures for Maintained schools. Where a deficit budget is identified schools may need to reduce staffing as part of a recovery plan. In accordance with the 2002 Education Act and the Council's Redundancy Procedures for School Based Staff the default position is that redundancy costs must be charged to the Council's budget. The DSG budget has no provision for redundancy costs therefore all costs arising from school based redundancies must be met by the Council's corporate budget.
5. If the outcome of this consultation process results in a decision to close the schools all employees engaged in the schools at the point of closure will be at risk of redundancy. The Council would seek to mitigate declaring compulsory redundancies as outlined in paragraph 26 of this report, however where posts are required to be declared redundant due to a school closure all redundancy and premature retirements costs incurred at the point of school closure will be met by the Council. This may result in significant redundancy and premature retirement costs to the Council.

6. Streetfield Middle School and Brewers Hill Middle School are both Community Schools with land and buildings owned by the Council. This report does not include consideration of potential future use or disposal of either site. If the outcome of this consultation process results in a decision to close either or both of these schools, subsequent reports will be made to the Council's Executive on options for the land and buildings.
7. The land occupied by Ashton Middle School is owned by the Ashton Foundation and the school is a St Albans Diocese School. If the outcome of this consultation process results in a decision to close the school, the Ashton Foundation would need to consider future use of the land and buildings.

Legal:

8. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on Councils to secure sufficient and suitable school places to provide for 5 – 16 year old statutory aged children in its area. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Councils a strategic role as commissioners, but not providers, of school places to promote parental choice, diversity, high standards, the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and fair access to educational opportunity.
9. To help meet these duties and restructure local provision Council's also have the power to close all categories of maintained schools. Reasons for closing a maintained mainstream school may include:
 - where it is being replaced by a new school;
 - where it is to be amalgamated/merged with another school; or
 - where it is surplus to requirements (e.g. as a result of area wide school reorganisation and/or where there are sufficient places in neighbouring schools to accommodate displaced pupils).

In this instance, the process has been initiated as a consequence of the schools as middle schools being surplus to requirements.

10. The main legislation governing the discontinuance of Council maintained schools in force, when the report to the Council's Executive on the 4 February proposing to initiate the consultations was published, was contained in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended by The School Organisation and Governance (Amendments) (England) Regulations 2007 which came into force on 21 January 2008 and The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2009 which came into force on 1 September 2009).

11. As a result of Department for Education (DfE) proposals published in 2013, these regulations have now been revoked and replaced by The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 which came into force on 28 January 2014. The DfE has also published revised guidance to provide additional information on the procedures established by the new regulations to outline the detailed requirements and process for proposals to close Council maintained schools that include full public consultation, the publication of statutory proposals and the decision making process. This new guidance was published in final form on 21 February 2014. Under Section 16(3) of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 the Council, as proposer of the school closures covered in this report, must have regard to the guidance issued by the DfE.
12. The revised statutory process to close a Council maintained school continues to have 5 stages:
 1. Full public consultation - Minimum of 6 weeks recommended in DfE guidance.
 2. Publication of Statutory notice – following consideration of outcome of initial consultation.
 3. Representation period – Final period of 4 weeks to enable people and organisations to express their views about the proposals and ensure that they will be taken into account by the Decision Maker.
 4. Decision – The Council Executive determination of the proposal, within 2 months of the end of the representation period, otherwise it will fall to the Schools Adjudicator.
 5. Implementation – Putting into effect of the proposed closure.
13. The Council is able to propose the discontinuance of the maintained schools as set out in this report and is also decision maker for these proposals. On the 4 February 2014 the Council's Executive approved commencement of consultation, represented by Stage 1 of the process set out above. On 27 May 2014 the Council's Executive approved progression to Stage 2, the service of statutory notices. Publication of Statutory Notices automatically includes the commencement of the Stage 3 Representation period. This report reflects Stage 4 of the process, which is determination by the Council's Executive.
14. The DfE guidance for decision makers contains a number of key factors to be considered when a final decision is made on school organisation proposals, represented by Stage 4 in the process as set out above. Decision makers determining school closure proposals must consider these factors and all of the views submitted throughout the consultation process, including all objections to and comments on the proposals. The guidance is clear that these factors should not be taken to be exhaustive and all proposals should be considered on their individual merits.

15. The factors outlined in statutory guidance for school organisation proposals include:
 - Consideration of consultation and representation period
 - Education standards and diversity of provision
 - Demand
 - School size
 - Proposed admission arrangements
 - National curriculum
 - Equal opportunity issues
 - Community cohesion
 - Travel and accessibility
 - Capital
 - School premises and playing fields.
16. In addition, the guidance sets out additional factors relevant to the closure proposals set out in this report which include:
 - Arrangements and capacity elsewhere for displaced pupils;
 - Popularity of those schools with surplus places and evidence of parents aspirations;
 - Schools to be replaced by provision in a more successful/popular school;
 - Schools causing concern;
 - Balance of denominational provision;
 - Community Services.
17. Proposals that make changes to special educational needs (SEN) provision must also be carefully considered and evaluated by the decision maker. This factor is relevant to the proposal to close Streetfield Middle School which currently includes a Specialist Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Provision, which would need to be re-commissioned if the school were to close.
18. The reports to the Council's Executive of 4 February 2014 and 27 May 2014 have reflected upon each of the factors set out in paragraphs 15, 16 and 17. Other factors that have arisen throughout the consultation phases are also included. This will provide the information required for the Council's Executive to make a final decision on 19 August 2014.
19. If the proposals to close the schools in this report are approved, the local Church of England (CofE) Diocese of St Albans, the Bishop of the local Roman Catholic Diocese of Northampton and the governing body and trustees of Ashton CofE Voluntary Aided Middle school have a right of appeal to the schools adjudicator if they disagree with the Council's final decision at Stage 4 in the process as set out previously in this report. The Governing Bodies of the Community Schools of Streetfield Middle and Brewers Hill Middle have no right of appeal to the schools adjudicator.

Risk Management:

20. The proposals to close the 3 Council maintained schools which have been the subject of a 6 weeks consultation followed by a 4 week Statutory Notice period as set out in this report supports the need to manage the supply of school places in the Dunstable area by reducing the significant surplus in places in Years 5 to 8, and addressing the impact that reducing rolls will have on the financial viability of these 3 schools and the education of children accommodated within them.
21. Key risks associated with taking no action include:
- Failure to discharge the Council's legal and statutory duties/guidance.
 - Failure to deliver the Council's strategic priorities.
 - Reputational risks associated with the ineffective management of school places.
 - Inefficient use of dedicated schools grant and corresponding reduction in funding for all other schools and Academies in Central Bedfordshire.
 - Financial and educational unviability as pupil numbers fall further.
 - Unplanned and un-coordinated loss of teaching and support staff.
22. If these proposals are approved once due process has been followed, each will be project managed to delivery which will include risk assessment and management processes overseen by a Project Team from the Council and involving key school staff. External support for each school will be commissioned as appropriate by the Council. The financial risks are identified in paragraphs 1, 4 and 5, with some mitigations identified in paragraph 26.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

23. Staff and Trade Unions/Professional Associations have been consulted on proposals to close Council maintained schools as part of the informal and statutory process required by regulations and DfE guidance.
24. Alongside the proposals set out in this report, all 3 schools have been advised to seek advice from their Human Resources (HR) Provider regarding any restructuring of staffing as a consequence of the reducing numbers of pupils at the schools from September 2014.
25. The Council's HR Team has monitored all proposed restructures to ensure redundancy charges to the Council are minimised and justified, and the Team will be represented in the Project Team created to deliver each school's closure, if this is the decision that is made.

26. Opportunities would be sought to ensure that good staff are retained in the area where possible and staff wish it. Schools will be supported to consider incentives for retention of key staff throughout a phased closure process, if this is the decision that is made. If agreed and can be afforded by the school, this process would need to be in accordance with conditions of service, be transparent and be discussed and agreed with Trade Unions/Professional Associations. Employment in other schools in the area that will have opportunities due to their changing age ranges can also be encouraged and facilitated through the use of the schools redeployment policy. The Council do not have any powers to redeploy staff to other schools as the Governing Body of each school is responsible for the appointment of staff.

Equalities/Human Rights:

27. The consultation and decision making process set out in regulation for proposals to close Council maintained schools requires an evaluation of any equalities and human rights issues that might arise.
28. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to foster good relations in respect of the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
29. This statutory duty includes requirements to:
- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
Encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
30. The proposals would impact on provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities placed in the specialist provision for children with ASD at Streetfield School. If the decision was taken to close the school this would be re-commissioned locally and the SEN Improvement Test will be applied.

Public Health:

31. The range of Extended Services provided by schools may include:

- Parenting and family support officers
- Transition support for pupils, schools and families
- Combined clubs and after school activities
- Holiday activities
- Support for vulnerable pupils and families.

These services can have an important impact on public health and be of benefit to the communities in which the schools are based although they will become increasingly unviable as any hosting school suffers a significant fall in pupil numbers. If a decision is taken to close the schools, alternative local services will be identified to ensure that any extended service currently being provided from these school sites will be re-provided.

Community Safety:

32. Whilst it is acknowledged that schools have an important role under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work alongside a range of other agencies to ensure safety in their local communities, the closure of any school site also has the potential to increase community safety issues around the school's location as disused buildings can attract anti social behaviour and have a significant impact on residents living in the school vicinity, placing additional demand upon the services responsible for dealing with them. To meet its statutory duty in relation to crime and disorder the Council as landlord for both Brewers Hill Middle School and Streetfield Middle, and the Ashton Foundation as Trustees of Ashton Middle School will need to work to ensure that community safety issues are considered and appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate any risks.

Sustainability:

33. Not applicable.

Procurement:

34. Not applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny

35. A report was considered by the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 July 2014. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's views are set out below in relation to each of the schools:

36. **Brewers Hill Middle School**

1. That the school's proposal represents significant risk that had not been addressed in the business case with regards to finances.
2. Concern that future curriculum delivery from reception to year 11, especially for years 9-11, was questionable in such a small school.
3. That predicted future pupil numbers could not be guaranteed.
4. For the Executive to consider the scale of additional secondary places that is acknowledged will be required from September 2016.

37. **Streetfield Middle School**

5. That the school's proposal represents significant risk that had not been addressed in the business case with regards to finances.
6. That predicted future pupil numbers could not be guaranteed.
7. That the Executive recognise the innovative alternative model submitted by the school, but take into consideration the financial risk.
8. Concerns on the impact for other schools in the area on pupil numbers if the alternative model submitted was implemented.

38. Ashton Middle School

9. That the proposed Ashton Model was of interest, but the Committee were concerned regarding the financial risks of implementation that had not been addressed in the business case.
10. That predicted future pupil numbers could not be guaranteed, however, the school could gain pupils out of catchment area from Luton.
11. For the Executive to consider the scale of additional secondary places that is acknowledged will be required from September 2016.
12. Consider the risk attached to financial deficit in the interim if the proposal was approved and the school remained open.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. consider the responses to the statutory notice for the closure of Brewer's Hill Community Middle School, including the school's business case for an alternative proposal;**
- 2. a) approve the statutory proposal to close Brewer's Hill Community Middle School with a modified implementation date of phased closure from September 2016 with final closure in August 2017, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 69 – 95;**
b) note that Executive approval will be sought to modify the implementation date should Beecroft Academy be able to accommodate Year 5 children in September 2015.
- 3. consider the responses to the statutory notice for the closure of Streetfield Community Middle School, including the school's business case for an alternative proposal;**
- 4. approve the statutory proposal to close Streetfield Community Middle School implemented with a phased closure from September 2015 with final closure in August 2016 for the reasons set out in paragraphs 99 – 120;**
- 5. consider the responses to the statutory notice for the closure of Ashton C of E VA Middle School, including the school's business case for an alternative proposal; and**
- 6. approve the statutory proposal to close Ashton C of E VA Middle School implemented with a phased closure from September 2015 with final closure in August 2016 for the reasons set out in paragraphs 124 – 142.**

<i>Reason for Recommendations:</i>	<i>To ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations to provide sufficient school places and also to meet the legal requirements placed on the Council by The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools)(England) Regulations 2013 regarding proposals to close the three maintained schools as set out in this report. Determination of each of the 3 statutory proposals is now required by the Council's Executive, informed by the outcome of the Statutory Notice period. The Council's Executive is required to make its decision within 2 months of the end of the consultation period, which finished on 7 July 2014.</i>
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Summary

39. The purpose of this report is to provide the Council's Executive with information on the responses to the Statutory Notices published on 9 June 2014 to close Brewers Hill Community Middle School, Streetfield Community Middle School and Ashton Church of England Voluntary Aided Middle School.
40. The report sets out a summary of the responses to the consultation for each school, and provides an evaluation of each of the schools' business cases giving alternative options to closure that have been submitted by the schools in response to the Statutory Notices.

Background

41. The Council's Executive considered a report at its meeting on the 4 February 2014 which set out the rationale for commencement of consultation on proposals to close Streetfield Community Middle School, Brewers Hill Community Middle School and Ashton C of E VA Middle School from August 2016.
42. The future viability of the three schools in this report has been evaluated and reported to the Council's Executive on the 4 February 2014 on the basis of reduced applications for admission to Year 5 in each school in September 2014 and increased numbers of children applying to transfer from each school at the end of Year 6 to take a place in Year 7 at one of the secondary schools in the area from September 2014.
43. The report to the Council's Executive on 4 February 2014 also illustrated the forecast reduction in the total number of children attending each of the 3 schools based on Admission applications, and the consequential impact on the reduction in revenue funding that the schools will receive from September 2014. The report highlighted the challenges both the reduction in pupil numbers and therefore budget would have on the ability of the schools to continue to deliver both the Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 curriculum in their schools.

44. On the basis of this information, the Council's Executive approved the recommendations to initiate a 6 week period of consultation, required by regulation, for each proposal on the 24 February 2014 concluding on the 7 April 2014. The details of these consultations are set out in the report to the Council's Executive on 27 May 2014.
45. The report to the Council's Executive on 27 May 2014 set out the background to the proposals, which relate to the changed pattern of provision and therefore admission and transfer points in the local area which has significantly altered the supply of places with particular impact on the 3 identified middle schools. That report set out in detail the availability of places within the local area, and clearly set out the high percentage of surplus places in particular year groups. If no action was taken there would be between 63% and 65% surplus places across the year groups served by middle schools. The report also included information on the number and percentage of places available should all 3 proposals be implemented, which showed that there would still be between 14% and 15% more places available within the local area than currently needed for school place planning.
46. Secondary schools across Dunstable and Houghton Regis are currently able to accommodate a total minimum capacity of 802 places in each Year group 7 to 11. These schools are All Saints Academy, Houghton Regis Academy, Manshead School, Priory Academy and Queensbury Academy. This excludes additional capacity currently available at Year 7 and 8 in Caddington Village School (75 places per year), Barnfield Vale Academy (100 places per year) and in Year 10 and 11 in the University Technical College (75 places per year).
47. The following table indicates the total number of pupils accommodated in year groups across all lower and primary schools in Dunstable and Houghton Regis that could seek transfer to a Year 7 place in a local secondary school over the next five years.

Year	Sept 2015	Sept 2016	Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Sept 2019
Pupils	731	767	783	848	913

48. Current school census data indicates that the 913 pupils who will be in Year 2 from September 2014 (Year 7 in September 2019) is a high point in the size of current cohorts with numbers reducing to 882 currently in Year 1, 875 in Year R, 847 3-4 year olds and 803 2-3 year olds.
49. As set out in the report of the Council's Executive of 27 May 2014 the proposed North Houghton Regis development is intended to provide new educational infrastructure for the new community early in the construction phase. In addition, over the next five years the Dunstable and Houghton Regis area is forecast to see housing growth of approximately 850 new dwellings which will produce additional pupil yield of approximately 45 children per year group.

50. The main developments are in the Dukeminster/Central Bedfordshire College/White Lion Retail Park area, the French's Avenue area and at Chaul End in Caddington. Each of these developments is likely to produce a pupil yield of 15 children per year group.
51. The following table indicates the total number of pupils accommodated in year groups across all lower and primary schools in Dunstable and Houghton Regis, plus the forecast pupil yield calculated from the anticipated build rate of the new housing developments. This gives a forecast of the total pupil numbers that could seek transfer to a Year 7 place in a local secondary school over the next five years. These figures reinforce the statement in previous reports to the Council's Executive that the Council may be required to commission a small number of additional secondary places from September 2016.

Year	Sept 2015	Sept 2016	Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Sept 2019
Pupils	746	796	824	891	956

52. As reported to Executive in February 2014 and May 2014, the forecast growth as a result of increased birth rates and the impact of housing development can be accommodated within the primary year groups within existing surpluses. The proposals set out by Brewers Hill and Streetfield in their business cases would not therefore be required to meet demographic demand.
53. By September 2017 the Council may need to have an additional 60 new secondary places available at Year 7 to accommodate the forecast growth in demographic. It is likely that this growth in capacity will be spread across a number of year groups, and not all required in Year 7. Options for the commissioning of these new places will be guided by the Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools. It is likely that this additional required capacity will be accommodated by the expansion of secondary school places required to serve the North Houghton Regis development.
54. The growth will be implemented through a phased increase in pupil numbers. As a result of the uncertainty of timing and target year group, it is very likely that the new places will be commissioned through the expansion of existing secondary provision. The forecasts do not indicate a justification for a new secondary school to accommodate these places, as proposed by Brewers Hill Middle School and Ashton Middle School.
55. On 27 May 2014 the Council's Executive considered a report on the outcome of the initial phase of the Council's consultation on each of its proposals to close the Middle Schools in this report, concluding with a recommendation to progress to the publication of statutory notices. At the same meeting the Council's Executive considered a separate report on Ashton Middle School's statutory proposal to become a secondary school.

56. The Council's Executive determined that the statutory proposal published by the Governing Body of Ashton C of E VA Middle School on 17 March 2014, to change the age range of Ashton C of E VA Middle School, the linked Prescribed Alterations and the current business case be rejected. The reason for this rejection was that the evaluation of the proposal against the factors set out in guidance for decision makers indicated serious weaknesses within the proposal itself and the information provided to support it. The school's Trustees, despite retaining a position of neither agreeing or disagreeing with the proposal, were also clearly concerned that a number of key areas of development and planning had not been addressed sufficiently to provide a level of confidence that the proposal was viable.
57. As part of its deliberation of the outcome of the initial phase of consultation on its closure proposals the Council's Executive on 27 May 2014 also considered business cases submitted by Brewers Hill Middle School and Streetfield Middle School and determined that they were not robust or representative of financially viable alternatives to closure. Each of the schools' proposals was based on meeting what they believed to be unmet parental demand, rather than demographic demand for their proposed alternative age range.
58. On 27 May 2014 the Council's Executive approved the publication of statutory notices and final representation period to close Brewers Hill Community Middle School, Streetfield Community Middle School and Ashton C of E VA Middle School, all in Dunstable, phased from September 2015, with final implementation in August 2016.
59. Statutory Closure Notices were published as required by Regulation for each school on 9 June 2014, with a closing date of 7 July 2014.
60. The Council's Executive also agreed with the Overview and Scrutiny recommendation that there be further opportunity for schools either individually or in conjunction with another or other schools to bring forward a viable business plan with any appropriate assistance being provided by Council officers.
61. As a result each of the schools was provided with a more detailed template to prompt further thought on the challenges of making significant changes to schools, to better articulate their proposals against the Council's policy principles for school places and DfE factors for decision makers of such proposals, and to support them in drawing up their business cases.
62. A meeting was held with each of the 3 schools, and each of the schools identified different types of support they felt they required. These requests included external support regarding looking at the financial modelling, external advice and support regarding the business case documentation, support for the carrying out of surveys, and supply cover to support staff to be released to do the work required. All requests for support were agreed and actioned.
63. A key factor in determining viability is for each of the schools' alternative models is the extent to which sustained parental demand, in an area with significant surplus places, can be evidenced.

64. This test is similar to that applied by the DfE to Free School applications which must demonstrate committed interest from parents of pupils eligible to go to the proposed school in the appropriate years of entry up to or exceeding the school's intended capacity for the first 2 years of opening.
65. The DfE also require such applications to show that there is no significant surplus of places in the relevant phase in the area and/or that the number of places in weak existing schools (Ofsted 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate') in the vicinity of the proposed school comprises a total number of pupil places greater than the proposed school's capacity at steady state.

Responses to Statutory Notice for Brewers Hill Middle School

66. 37 responses were received with regard to the Statutory Notice for Brewers Hill Middle School. A copy of the Statutory Notice and accompanying documents are attached at Appendix A. The highest numbers of responses came from current parents and pupils, with 12 responses from parents and 12 from pupils. Details are provided in Appendix B.
67. 4 of the respondents supported the proposal for closure of the school, 32 objected, and 1 respondent only commented.
68. The points made in the responses replicate those made during the previous consultation process, for example:

The current Ofsted rating of the school;
The school's role at the heart of the community;
Housing development in the area;
Size of the school
Facilities at the school;
Increased travel;
Supportive ethos of the school;

These points were answered within the report of the Executive on 27 May 2014. It is important to recognise that this proposal relates to future viability and not to the quality of education provided by the school which is recognised.

Evaluation of alternative proposal put forward by Brewers Hill Middle School as a response to the Statutory Notice.

69. The table below provides an update on the figures provided in the 4 February 2014 and 27 May 2014 reports to the Council's Executive, which demonstrate that the school is not viable as a middle school and includes:
- current numbers of pupils on roll at the school as of 11 July 2014;
 - the projected numbers in September 2014 based on Year 5 offers now made (including late applications that will be allocated to the school);
 - Year 7 transfer offers now made and late applications yet to be offered.

The projected figures in the table are based on a number of assumption originally set out in the 4 February report to the Council's Executive:

- Beecroft Academy and Lancot Primary School retain their Year 4 pupils into Year 5.
- All of the Year 5 pupils transfer into Year 6 in 2015.
- Approximately half of the parents with Year 6 children in 2014/2015 make a secondary application to a local secondary school for September 2015.
- All pupils in Year 7 in 2014/2015 stay on into Year 8 in September 2015, although parents could make an in year application into Year 8 in any of the local secondary schools.

NB The original data reported to the Executive on 4 February 2014 is indicated in brackets.

70. Brewers Hill Middle School has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 120.

Year Group	Current	Projected September 2014	Projected September 2015
5	59 (64)	39 (36)	0 (0)
6	56 (56)	59 (64)	39 (36)
7	27 (33)	23 (28)	31 (32)
8	27 (28)	27 (33)	23 (28)
Total	169 (181)	148 (161)	93 (96)
Capacity	480	480	480

71. Alongside the school's ambition to convert to academy status, the school's alternative proposal to closure is for the school to change age range to eventually become a school serving the 4-19 year age range. Their business case is attached with supporting documentation at Appendix C.
72. The school's business case challenges the Council's demographic forecasts, although it makes reference to generic population forecast data provided on the Council's website. This data is based on information published by the Office for National Statistics for Central Bedfordshire as a whole based on 2011 data. It does not reflect specific school age population data for the Dunstable and Houghton Regis area which has been presented through the Council's consultation process and which includes reference to the anticipated pupil yield from housing development.
73. As set out in the report to the Council's Executive on 27 May 2014 and within paragraphs 51 – 54, the proposal by Brewers Hill Middle School is not required to meet demographic demand.
74. The school carried out a two-stage but dual purpose consultation from February to May 2014 on its proposal to convert as an Academy, and then change its age range. To date the school has not had an Academy order approved by the Department for Education (DfE).

75. The proposals that the school consulted on originally are not the age range of 4-16 and eventually 19 proposed in the school's second phase of consultation. The school amended the proposed age range in the light of responses received to the first phase of consultation. The results published from the first phase of consultation indicate that 57 of the 91 respondents were parents and 86% of all respondents indicated that they would consider sending their child to the school.
76. In the school's second phase of consultation the 4-16 and eventually 19 age range was supported by 45 of the 58 respondents who indicated that they would consider sending their child to the school.
77. The business case makes reference to a survey of parents with pre school children, although it is difficult to interpret the results given the outcome of the earlier consultation exercise to be able to prove sustained or significant parental demand for the proposal that the school would need to successfully deliver such an ambitious change in age range.
78. The business case does not provide any further data on the level of parental demand for the proposal.
79. The proposal introduces Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1 curriculum and would require support for such a significant change, in addition to upper Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. The business case indicates that it is considering partnership with a local secondary school, although there is no detail and it would appear discussions are at an early stage.

Finance

80. The budget figures currently provided by the school over a 5 year period up to 2018/2019 reflect a deficit position in 2014/15 of £29k, rising to £371k by 2016/17 and only moving into a surplus position in 2018/19 by £117k. However, this will move into a deficit position once the calculation of funding is corrected, and expenditure has been amended in the light of the points made below.
81. The revised business case provided has included the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) for the entire five year period. Although MFG has been agreed as continuing into 2015/16 at negative 1.5% it is not known if this arrangement will continue or at what level into the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). The business case has assumed MFG for the years 2016/17 to 2018/19 of £782k.
82. The school has not reflected in the business case the disapplication of the use of October pupil numbers for the calculation of the basic per pupil entitlement. If these estimated numbers were achieved (although this demand has not been evidenced by the school) it would have the impact of increasing the basic entitlement by £635k.

83. Teaching costs are not reflective of the school's predicted increase in pupil numbers, although this demand has not been evidenced by the school. Pupil numbers in the school's proposal increase by 100 between 2016/2017 and 2017/2018, but the budget provision in 2017/2018 only increases by £12k, which is not sufficient to fund even 1 teacher with on-costs.
84. The Scheme for Financing Schools does not allow Direct Revenue Funding (DRF) contribution to capital costs as the school is proposing if it places a school in deficit. The school's business case provides information on the costs of remodelling existing accommodation to provide for the proposed Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children. It does not identify the potential cost or funding source for the required increase in the school's overall capacity, as proposed.
85. It is estimated that even if the unrealistic demand is achieved the school would remain in a deficit position at the end of the 5 year period of approximately £230k, although MFG is expected to remain in some reduced form for the next CSR to alleviate this position. The Council would not normally allow a school to remain in deficit beyond 2 to 3 years.
86. On the basis of the information provided in paragraphs 69 – 85, there is insufficient evidence to support the school's proposal as a viable alternative.

Updated information regarding Beecroft Academy

87. Beecroft Academy has now contacted the Council and indicated that following their commissioning of a feasibility study in relation to their ambition to become a primary school from September 2015, they have identified that they currently hold insufficient funds to implement this proposal at that time. This impacts on the assumptions originally set out in paragraph 69.
88. Beecroft Academy is intending to apply for capital grant through the academies capital maintenance fund which closes in late Jan 2015 with successful applicants advised by May 2015.
89. This will mean that for parents of Year 4 children who will require a year 5 place in September 2015, there is no certainty that Beecroft Academy will be able to accommodate children into Year 5 until after the close of the School Admissions middle transfer round on 15 January 2015.
90. This has the impact of potentially displacing 53 children who are currently in Year 3 at Beecroft Academy who would need to make an in year transfer application to Year 5 in a Primary School in the area for September 2015 or make a Year 5 transfer application to another school, such as Priory Academy, Barnfield Vale or Caddington Village School if the Council's proposal to phase the closure of Brewers Hill from that date is approved, as proposed.
91. Priory Academy's Year 5 admission number is sufficient to accommodate the total pupil numbers from its three partner lower schools: Dunstable Icknield Lower School, Watling Lower School, and Studham Lower School. Caddington Village School has a Year 5 admission number of 15 to accommodate children from Slip End Lower. Barnfield Vale has indicated its intention to remove its current Year 5 admission point from September 2015.

92. Parents could make an in year transfer application to Year 5 in a primary school for September 2015, but the availability of places in primary schools in the immediate area of Beecroft Academy would mean that most of these children would not be able to be accommodated in their catchment, or next nearest primary schools.
93. Historically, the majority of children from Beecroft Academy have transferred to Brewers Hill Middle School in Year 5.
94. The table below is a revised version of the table in paragraph 60, showing all of the 53 Beecroft pupils accessing a place at Brewers Hill Middle School in September 2015. It is recognised that some of these parents may choose to apply for an in year admission into a primary school in the local area, and not apply for a place in Year 5 at Brewers Hill Middle School.

Year Group	Current	Projected September 2014	Projected September 2015
5	59 (64)	39 (36)	53 (0)
6	56 (56)	59 (64)	39 (36)
7	27 (33)	23 (28)	31 (32)
8	27 (28)	27 (33)	23 (28)
Total	169 (181)	148 (161)	146 (96)
Capacity	480	480	480

95. If the Council's Executive approves the statutory proposal to close Brewers Hill Middle School, the implementation date can be modified in line with DfE guidance. The recommended solution is to delay the commencement of the phased closure until September 2016, with final closure in August 2017, allowing time for Beecroft Academy to implement its proposal to convert to a primary school.

Streetfield Middle School

96. 60 responses were received with regard to the Statutory Notice for Streetfield Middle School. A copy of the Statutory Notice and accompanying documents are attached at Appendix D. The highest numbers of responses came from current parents of pupils at the school, employees at the school, and local residents, with 19 responses from parents, 14 from staff and 14 from local residents. Details are provided in Appendix E.
97. 5 of the respondents supported the proposal for the closure of the school, 41 objected, and 14 respondents only commented.

98. The points made in the responses replicate those made during the previous consultation process, for example:

The school's ethos, good staff and facilities;
The provision for vulnerable pupil and those with SEN;
The size of the school.

These points were answered within the report of the Executive on 27 May 2014.

Several respondents indicated support for the school's proposals to become a primary school.

Evaluation of alternative proposal put forward by Streetfield Middle School as a response to the Statutory Notice.

99. The table below provides an update on the figures provided in the 4 February 2014 and 27 May 2014 reports to the Council's Executive, which demonstrate that the school is not viable as a middle school and includes:

- current numbers of pupils on roll at the school as of 11 July 2014;
- the projected numbers in September 2014 based on Year 5 offers now made (including late applications that will be allocated to the school);
- Year 7 transfer offers now made and late applications yet to be offered.

The projected figures in the table are based on a number of assumptions:

- All primary schools retain all of their Year 4 pupils into Year 5.
- All of the Year 5 pupils transfer into Year 6 in 2015.
- A similar percentage of the parents with Year 6 children in 2014/2015 make a secondary application to a local secondary school for September 2015.
- All pupils in Year 7 in 2014/2015 stay on into Year 8 in September 2015, although parents could make an in year application into Year 8 in any of the local secondary schools.

NB The original data reported to the Executive on 4 February 2014 is indicated in brackets.

100. Streetfield Middle School has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 130.

Year Group	Current	Projected September 2014	Projected September 2015
5	74 (78)	26 (22)	0 (0)
6	85 (86)	76 (78)	26 (22)
7	81 (85)	24 (29)	24 (26)
8	110 (114)	81 (85)	24 (29)
Total	350 (363)	205 (206)	74 (77)
Capacity	520	520	520

101. Two consultations have now been conducted by the school on its proposal to become a 2 form entry primary school with pre school provision. These consultations were undertaken in March and in June 2014 and the results (although interim for the June consultation) are set out in the school's business case (Appendix F). The school has included a separate brochure which is attached at Appendix G.
102. The results of the initial survey in March 2014 indicated support from parents who would send their child to Streetfield in pre school and Years R through to 6 if the proposal were to be implemented in September 2015. The results were unable to evidence sustained demand for the proposal.
103. The second survey conducted in June 2014 focussed on measuring demand of parents of children in early years' settings in Dunstable for Streetfield as a Primary School with Early Years provision as part of a single site 0-19 early years, primary and secondary school provision with wrap around care, and before and after school provision for children and parents.
104. Comments made in response to the school's June consultation suggest that there may have been a lack of clarity for some respondents as to the commissioner or origin of this survey. The leaflet distributed by the school asking people to complete the survey was not clear that it was intended to reflect the proposal of Streetfield's Governing Body, which would have provided the context of specific location and a school changing its age range to achieve the model being proposed.
105. The consultation exercise indicates a level of support in principle for the 0-19 model described within the consultation materials, but it is difficult to determine whether this would result in uptake of places due to the nature of the content of the survey.
106. It is difficult to predict the geographical pattern of parental preferences for out of catchment places in the next five year period. In the commissioning of school places, where new or expanded provision is required, the Council will continue to seek to provide these places locally to the areas of demographic growth, in line with its policy principles.
107. The vision in the school's business case alludes to 0 – 19 provision as an aspiration, but this is not referenced to best practice in the early years or Foundation Stage. The Finnish approach to early years is mentioned, but without any clear indication of how this would be delivered within the model proposed in partnership with other schools. It is recognised that the school had a short amount of time to add more detail to its business case following the meeting of the Council's Executive on 27 May 2014.

108. The proposal includes provision for the early years, including early help, citing 'family and parent support particularly in the early years/nursery provision'. The proposal does not make reference to the already well developed local provision of early help carried out directly by the local Children's Centre and by the central Parenting Team working through the centre. Many of these services are already being accessed by children and young people who would be in the school's proposed cohort. The school does indicate that they could contribute to the consultation on the Early Help Offer, but do not detail how they could work with the existing centre to provide appropriate services.
109. The business case does not reflect a clear understanding of the existing early years offer, for example the two year old offer which is well underway, or the offer for 3 and 4 year olds. The school alludes to delivering the early years offer, although this is not clearly stated. There is no cost analysis undertaken, and no evidence of an understanding of the levels of finance for very young children, which are different to those for school age children.
110. Conversations have not been held with any of the Council's Early Years Team around what the need for additional provision in the area might be, or the implications of making early years or child care provision.
111. The school has set out its pupil forecasts on page 45 of its business case and provides what it refers to as an 'optimistic' and a separate 'realistic' scenario assuming an implementation date of September 2016. The 'realistic' model indicates a build-up of numbers assuming significant in year growth in the size of year groups and therefore pupil numbers from 2016 to 2019. This assumption is based on the school's confidence that demand will grow as the model develops. The willingness of parents to remove their child from their current provision/school to justify the in year growth forecasts appears untested.
112. The school's business case refers to the level of surplus places that already exists across Dunstable and Houghton Regis in the primary phase. These have been previously reported to the Council's Executive and are the basis of the Council's proposals to close the three middle schools in this report which contribute significantly to the over supply of places in Years 5 to 8.
113. The business case does not reflect the Council's information on anticipated pupil yield from housing development. The forecast growth within the primary phase can be accommodated within existing surpluses, although the Council may be required to commission additional secondary places from September 2016 as set out in paragraphs 51 – 54 of this report. As set out in the report to the Council's Executive on 27 May 2014 the proposal by the school to change age range and provide a further 60 places for Year groups R to 6 would further add to the over supply of places, and is not required to meet demographic need.

Finance

114. Page 29 of the business case refers to 255 pupils in 2017/2018, but on page 45 it refers to 225 pupils. It is not clear in the business case which of these numbers the funding figures have been based on. There is not a guarantee of this level of demand.

115. The business case refers to the school closing in 2016 as a middle school, and then reopening as a primary school. If the school remains open and becomes a primary school any deficit incurred up to this time is kept by the school and must be managed.
116. The business case includes a budget up to 2020/2021, and it is only in 2021 that the school states that they would move into a surplus position of £100k. The Council would not normally allow a school to remain in deficit beyond 2 to 3 years. These figures are based on anticipated demand rather than proven demand. The funding relating to pupil numbers has been overestimated. The business case assumes only 78 pupils in 2015/2016, but the assumed funding is not reflective of this, showing an expectation of £1.1M of funding. The estimated funding for this year would be £835k a reduction to the business case of £265k.
117. The school has not reflected in its business case the disapplication of the use of October pupil numbers for calculation of the basic per pupil entitlement, although the numbers of pupils are not evidenced by demand. It is not possible to confirm the predicted surplus in 2020/21 without pupil numbers being provided. However, if this methodology was applied it is estimated that the school would receive approx. £504k additional funding.
118. Pupil Premium has also been overestimated and does not reflect a realistic methodology of calculation that relates to pupil numbers. Pupil Premium has been over-estimated by approximately £190k.
119. It is estimated that if the unrealistic demand is achieved the school could achieve a balanced position at the end of the 7 year period of approximately £150k. This demand has not been proven, and there would be significant risk in approving this model on this basis.
120. On the basis of the information provided in paragraphs 99 – 119, there is insufficient evidence to support the school's proposal as a viable alternative.

Ashton Middle School

121. 59 responses were received with regard to the Statutory Notice for Ashton Middle School. A copy of the Statutory Notice and accompanying documents are attached at Appendix H. The highest numbers of responses came from current parents of pupils at the school, and parents of pupils at other schools, with 14 responses from parents of pupils at the school, and 35 from parents of pupils at another school in the area. Details are provided in Appendix I.
122. 6 of the respondents supported the proposal for closure of the school, 52 objected, and 1 respondent only commented.

123. The points made in the responses replicate those made during the previous consultation process, for example:

The school's ethos, good staff and facilities;
The provision for vulnerable pupil and those with SEN;
The size of the school.

These points were answered within the report of the Executive on 27 May 2014.

Several respondents indicated support for the school's proposals to become a secondary school.

Evaluation of alternative proposal put forward by Ashton Middle School as a response to the Statutory Notice.

124. The table below provides an update on the figures provided in the 4 February 2014 and 27 May 2014 reports to the Council's Executive, which demonstrate that the school is not viable as a middle school and includes:

- current numbers of pupils on roll at the school as of 11 July 2014;
- the projected numbers in September 2014 based on Year 5 offers now made (including late applications that will be allocated to the school); and
- Year 7 transfer offers now made and late applications yet to be offered.

The projected figures in the table are based on a number of assumptions:

- All primary schools retain all of their Year 4 pupils into Year 5.
- All of the Year 5 pupils transfer into Year 6 in 2015.
- A similar percentage of the parents with Year 6 children in 2014/2015 make a secondary application to a local secondary school for September 2015.
- All pupils in Year 7 in 2014/2015 stay on into Year 8 in September 2015, although parents could make an in year application into Year 8 in any of the local secondary schools.

NB The original data reported to the Executive on 4 February 2014 is indicated in brackets.

125. Ashton Middle School which has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 155.

Year Group	Current	Projected September 2014	Projected September 2015
5	109 (106)	38 (35)	0
6	114 (118)	110 (106)	38 (35)
7	110 (104)	25 (37)	37 (33)
8	140 (140)	111 (104)	25 (37)
Total	473 (468)	284 (282)	100 (105)
Capacity	620	620	620

126. The school has conducted further consultation on its proposal to become a secondary school since the last report to the Council's Executive on 27 May 2014. The school has received a total of 122 responses to their consultation, and the results are provided within the business case (Appendix J). These responses indicate support from parents of pre secondary school aged children currently in Years R through to Year 6 for the model proposed.
127. The school has undertaken research into the viability elsewhere of successful small secondary schools. They have focussed on a particular school in a case study, and have also compared workforce and curriculum across 8 examples of other small secondary schools. The business case refers to a similar level of financial expenditure for their proposed secondary model as their case study school. This is comparing both schools in a steady state, and does not reference the potential deficit budget position of Ashton Middle School at point of transition. More detail is provided in the financial section of this report (paragraphs 134 – 141). The comparison provided in the business case with the other small secondary schools does not make reference to those schools' local school funding formula.
128. The Trustees have not provided any update on their position which was referenced in the report of the Council's Executive on 27 May 2014 in terms of support of otherwise for the school's proposal.
129. The sample size of survey respondents is small but results have been analysed by the school and set out by age of child of those who have responded. The school has calculated the number of those indicating support, as a percentage of the number of all respondents in each age group and its business case refers to the schools confidence that if these were to be extrapolated against the total size of cohort in each year group in schools in the area, that Ashton Secondary School would be vastly oversubscribed. Confidence in this assumption must be doubted, given the small sample size of the survey and the school's model that would require admissions of 90 children in each year group.
130. As set out in the report to the Council's Executive on 27 May 2014 and within paragraphs 51 – 54, the proposal by Aston Middle School to become a secondary school is not required to meet demographic demand.
131. There is a lack of clarity with regard to responses to one question. In one section the respondents are recorded as indicating they would consider the model, whereas in the business case the school has drawn a conclusion from this that respondents are indicating that they would choose the school as destination for their child.

132. The business case refers to a demand for faith based secondary school places and also to an intended implementation date of September 2015. Both of these points were addressed in the 27 May 2014 report to the Council's Executive. Church of England Voluntary Aided provision in the secondary age range is available in the Dunstable area through Manshead School. Manshead School only received 14 first preference applications for Year 9 places and 7 for Year 7 places for September 2014 on religious criteria. Evidence of demand has still not been proven through the school's consultation exercise and evaluation of the responses, or through the figures illustrated in relation to Manshead School.
133. The proposed admission arrangements of the school would require a variation, with approval of the school's adjudicator, to remove a Year 5 transfer point from September 2015 as the admission arrangements for 2015/16 have already been determined.

Finance

134. The budget figures currently provided by the school over a 5 year period up to 2018/2019 reflect a deficit position in 2014/15 of £421k, and only moving into a surplus position in 2017/18 by £142k, increasing to £612k surplus in 2018/19. However, this will move into a deficit position once the calculation of funding is corrected, and expenditure has been amended in the light of the points made below.
135. The pupils numbers provided in the school's business case are unrealistic. The school has based all 3 of their scenarios on a September 2014 intake of 85 pupils. Currently there are only 38 applications/places offered for September 2014, so there is an overestimation of 47 pupils
136. The 'best case' scenario assumes 90 pupils in Years 6,7,8 and 9 from 2015/2016, moving to 90 in Years 7-11 in 2018/2019. The 'most likely' scenario mirrors the 'best case' scenario' in all but Year 8 in 2015/2016. The funding model has not been adjusted to reflect this. There is therefore an over-estimation of pupils in 2015/2016 of at least 30 pupils.
137. The 'most likely' scenario refers to additional income to account for an under-payment in 2014/2015, but there has been no under-payment. The budget will only be adjusted if pupil numbers in September 2014 are higher than 10% of those funded, therefore the admissions would need to increase by more than 21 pupils for the school to be funded an approximate £2k for each pupil above that level. The business case is not clear regarding any financial assumptions the school has made with regards the value of the underpayment included.
138. The school has not reflected in the business case the disapplication of the use of October pupil numbers for the calculation of the Basic per pupil entitlement, although these pupil numbers are not evidenced by demand.

139. Pupil Premium has been over-estimated and does not reflect a realistic methodology of calculation that reflects pupil numbers. The school is proposing to move to become a secondary school, where pupils currently attract £935 for Pupil Premium, and not as per the primary rate of £1,300. It is calculated that the school has overestimated Pupil Premium by approximately £262k.
140. The business case refers to projected teaching staff increasing by 7 over the period, but this is not evident from the teaching staff budget costs provided.
141. It is estimated that even if the unrealistic demand is achieved the school would remain in a deficit position at the end of the 5 year period increasing to an approximately £600k. The deficit will increase further if the assumption of an underpayment in 2014/15 being funded is removed. The Council would not normally allow a school to remain in deficit beyond 2 to 3 years.
142. On the basis of the information provided in paragraphs 124 – 141, there is insufficient evidence to support the school's proposal as a viable alternative to closure.

Conclusion

143. Previous reports to the Council's Executive have demonstrated that the alternative options presented are not required on demographic need.
144. The information provided in the business cases that all 3 schools have submitted as a response to the Statutory Notices for closure have been scrutinised. None of the schools have been able to present a case that demonstrates confidence in sufficient parental demand for their proposed alternatives to secure future viability of the schools.
145. No new information has arisen through the responses to the Statutory Notices that indicate that the Council's proposals should not proceed to determination for all 3 schools, although with a proposed modified implementation date for Brewers Hill Middle School.

Appendices: Please note that the Appendices have been circulated as a separate document to the Agenda.

Appendix A: Brewers Hill Middle School Statutory Notice and Full Proposal
Appendix B: Brewers Hill Middle School Responses to Statutory Notice
Appendix C: Brewers Hill Middle School Business Case
Appendix D: Streetfield Middle School Statutory Notice and Full Proposal
Appendix E: Streetfield Middle School Responses to Statutory Notice
Appendix F: Streetfield Middle School Business Case (1)
Appendix G: Streetfield Middle Schools Business Case – Lyceum Brochure (2)
Appendix H: Ashton Middle School Statutory Notice and Full Proposal
Appendix I: Ashton Middle School Responses to Statutory Notice
Appendix J: Ashton Middle School Business Case

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

The Executive Report of 4 February 2014 seeking approval to initiate the first stage of consultations.

The Executive Report of 27 May 2014 seeking approval to commence publication of Statutory Notices

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Meeting: Executive

Date: 19 August 2014

Subject: Commissioning of New School Places for Implementation from September 2015 and September 2016 in Central Bedfordshire

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

Summary: This report outlines three projects within the Council's New School Places Programme where local pressures of demographic growth require new school places to be provided from September 2016 in Biggleswade and in Silsoe and a further project to provide new school places in Stotfold with a target implementation date of September 2015. The report seeks approval to commence the first three projects which have been subject of a previous report to Executive in December 2013. For the remaining project to provide new school places in Stotfold the report seeks approval to commence consultation on the permanent expansion of the school, the outcome of which will be reported to the Council's Executive in December 2014, and to commence capital expenditure to relocate pre school provision within the school's existing site as a result of the need to accommodate existing pressures on the school's capacity.

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

Contact Officer: Karen Oellermann, Assistant Director, Commissioning and Partnerships

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Biggleswade North, Biggleswade South, Stotfold and Langford, Silsoe and Shillington.

Function of: Executive

Key Decision Yes

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS
Council Priorities: The report supports Central Bedfordshire's Medium Term Plan: <i>Delivering your priorities – Our Plan for Central Bedfordshire 2012- 2016</i> and the specific priority of Improved Educational Attainment.

Financial:

1. The proposals outlined in this report are contained within the Council's New School Places Programme 2014/15 – 2019/20. All of the projects for which approval to commence is now sought are capital funded through the Basic Need Grant and S106 contributions as outlined in Appendix D to this report. The current programme represents a total investment of £106M in New School Places since its commencement in 2011/12. The four projects recommended for commencement in this report account for £16.8M of S106 and grant expenditure. In December 2013 the Department for Education (DfE) announced the allocation of Basic Need Grant to the Council for 2014/15 to 2016/17 representing a significant increase on previous years and was reflected in the detailed capital business case for the programme which has been approved as required by the Council's constitution for the New School Places Programme. The proposed relocation of Pippin Pre School on the Roecroft Lower School site in Stotfold is a change to the approved business case for the programme although expenditure remains aligned with the Council's approved capital programme and Medium Term Financial Plan. If the recommendations within this report are approved a revised business case will be submitted for approval as required by the Council's constitution.
2. The day to day running costs of school provision is met through revenue funding which is made available to each school as part of the Dedicated Schools Grant and is based primarily on the numbers of pupils attending and will increase accordingly in an expanded school.
3. Where necessary and where Schools and Academies are undertaking significant expansion on commission from the Council additional revenue support for relevant costs can be accessed on application through the Growth Fund established by the Schools Forum.
4. Capital expenditure within the New School Places Programme is subject to the Council's Code of Financial Governance. Expenditure to commission feasibility studies and design work required for projects within this rolling programme has been approved by the Executive Member for Children's Services, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services as required by the Council's constitution.

Legal:

5. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on Councils to secure sufficient and suitable school places to provide for 5 – 16 year old statutory aged children in its area. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Councils a strategic role as commissioners, but not providers, of school places to promote parental choice, diversity, high standards, the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and fair access to educational opportunity.
6. The main legislation governing school organisation is found in sections 7-32 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Mainstream Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

7. DfE regulations and guidance outline the requirements and process for proposals to expand Council maintained schools and these include full public consultation, the publication of statutory proposals and the decision making process. The Council is able to propose the expansion of maintained schools and is also decision maker for those proposals, two of which have been subject of previous consultations as set out in this report with recommendations to now approve the proposed expansions of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School and Silsoe CofE VC Lower School.
8. In considering the proposals the decision maker may decide to reject, approve or to approve with modifications or conditions (e.g. the implementation date). In either case, the reasons for the final decisions must be carefully recorded indicating the main factors considered and the reasons for the decision. A copy of the final decisions must be forwarded to a range of bodies specified in the guidance.
9. If the Council were to fail to decide these proposals within 2 months of the end of the representation period it must forward proposals, and any received representations, to the schools adjudicator for decision.
10. As reported to the Council's Executive on 10 December 2013 the proposed expansion of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School also requires the school's relocation to a new site within the village. The transfer to the new site, although represented clearly within the consultation documents, did not in itself require a separate statutory proposal by the Governing Body of the Voluntary School as the distance between the existing and new school sites is less than two miles, the qualifying distance set out in regulation.
11. If the school's relocation and expansion is approved as recommended within this report it will be the Council's legal obligation to transfer the footprint of any permanent structures on the new site, as a Voluntary School, to the Diocese of St Albans. The existing school site will be surplus to requirements and the Executive approval will trigger the commencement of processes to seek Secretary of State consent to dispose of the existing site and playing fields.
12. The Secretary of State will consider the suitability of the land for use by a potential Academy (including a potential free school promoter) as part of the process. Approval to dispose of the Children's Centre constructed on the existing site will also be subject to separate approvals by the DfE as a result of clawback provisions within the original grants used to establish the provision. The asset value of these buildings must be reinvested in similar provision elsewhere in the area.
13. The Secretary of State's approval of an application to dispose of the land cannot be guaranteed however the Church of England Diocese of St Albans has indicated its support of the proposal to seek to dispose of the existing site and playing field and to utilise the resulting capital receipt to offset a proportion of the Basic Need Grant which is to be allocated to the project through the Council's New School Places programme.

14. The DfE guidance for decision makers of school organisation proposals contains a number of key factors to be considered along with the views submitted throughout the consultation process, including all objections to and comments on the proposals. The guidance is clear that these factors should not be taken to be exhaustive and all proposals should be considered on their individual merits.
15. The factors outlined in statutory guidance for school organisation proposals include:
- Consideration of consultation and representation period
 - Education standards and diversity of provision
 - Demand
 - School size
 - Proposed admission arrangements
 - National curriculum
 - Equal opportunity issues
 - Community cohesion
 - Travel and accessibility
 - Capital
 - School premises and playing fields.
16. The DfE has also produced guidance for Academies wishing to make significant changes including proposals to enlarge premises. The process, which is overseen by the Education Funding Agency on behalf of the DfE requires an Academy to undertake consultation and to obtain consent of the Secretary of State before implementation. As an Academy Stratton Upper School was invited to expand by the Council's Executive in March 2013 to provide required additional school places across the upper school age range in Biggleswade. As a result the Academy has followed the process set out by the DfE and its approval will be sought subject to approval by the Council's Executive of the recommendation set out in this report.

Risk Management:

17. All proposals to commission new school places and to allocate related capital investment outlined in this report implement the identified need to manage demographic growth in the previously published school organisation plan and mitigate the risk on the Council of failing in its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

18. Key risks include:

- Failure to discharge legal and statutory duties/guidance.
- Failure to deliver the Council's strategic priorities.
- Reputational risks associated with the non delivery of required school places.
- Financial risks, including:

Non realisation of anticipated Section 106 monies, of anticipated levels of government grant and of capital receipts.

Potential for overspend on any project within the programme

- Inability of schools to recruit suitable additional staff.

19. Without the formal process of strategic planning and implementation of required projects in place there is a risk that the DfE will not approve future allocations of Basic Need Funding to the Council. There is also a risk that Section 106 monies will not be able to be properly utilised or achieve the expenditure of funds in an appropriate and timely manner.

20. The commissioning of projects in the New School Places Programme will include risk assessment and management criteria to ensure these and the proposed procurement route are clear to decision makers. Contract and construction risks will be overseen through the project management of the agreed projects which may be led by Schools or Academies, with appropriate safeguards in place as set out in the Procurement section below.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

21. Staff and Trades Unions are consulted on all proposals to expand schools and Academies as part of the informal and statutory process required by regulations and DfE guidance.

22. Schools and Academies will have the support of their commissioned HR Providers where any proposals require changes in school staff structures or to terms and conditions of employment. The Council's Schools Statutory HR Team will monitor restructures to ensure redundancy charges to the Council are minimised and justified.

23. Each expanding school will need to increase the numbers of teaching and non-teaching staff to support the increase in pupil numbers. This will be funded through the school's Dedicated School Grant budget and the increased share which the school will receive.

Equalities/Human Rights:

24. The consultation and decision making process set out in regulation for proposals to expand Academies and Council maintained schools requires an evaluation on a project by project basis of any equalities and human rights issues that might arise.

25. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to foster good relations in respect of the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
26. This statutory duty includes requirements to:
- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
 - Encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
27. As decision maker for the proposals relating to Edward Peake CofE Middle School, Silsoe CofE VC Lower School and for the commissioning of upper school places at Stratton Upper School the Council has considered that there are no race or disability discrimination issues that arise from the changes being proposed.

Public Health:

28. Extended Services around School and Early Years settings will be further developed as a result of growing school populations.
29. The range of extended services that may be provided in schools includes:
- Parenting and family support officers
 - Transition support for pupils, schools and families.
 - Combined clubs and after school activities.
 - Holiday activities.
 - Support for vulnerable pupils and families

Community Safety:

30. Whilst it is acknowledged that schools have an important role under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work alongside a range of other agencies to ensure safety in their local communities, the expansion of any school does have the potential to increase community safety issues around the school's location. These could include inconsiderate parking, low level anti social behaviour, noise, litter etc. These are issues that can, in some instances, have a significant impact on residents living in the school vicinity and place additional demand upon the services responsible for dealing with them. To meet its statutory duty in relation to crime and disorder the Council will need to work with these schools to ensure that community safety issues are considered and appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate any risks. The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships is one of the principles by which options for new school places are evaluated.

Sustainability:

31. Whilst there may be additional costs in order to meet sustainability objectives for new build and/or expansion of existing schools, these will be contained within the costs identified for each individual project within the programme. These measures would contribute to reduced running costs through better energy and resource efficiency, alongside creating a better learning environment for the pupils.

Procurement:

32. The tendering and approval process for awarding construction contracts will be in accordance with the Council's Code of Procurement Guidance and the thresholds indicated in the Council's constitution. Where Schools or Academies are able to provide significant reassurance of their ability and capacity to procure and project manage the delivery of the required construction works to time and on budget, the Council will support this arrangement with appropriate oversight and governance in place.
33. Each proposal in the New School Places Programme is required by the Council's Policy Principles on Pupil Place Planning in Schools to be supported by a business case that establishes a guarantee of the quality of the new places being added to the system. Each business case is subject of evaluation against these Principles and the results are considered as part of the final Executive approval of any proposal and before approval to commence expenditure is given.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1.
 - i. **confirm that the procedures established by The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013, have been complied with in bringing forward the proposals to expand Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School, Biggleswade and Silsoe CofE VC Lower School as outlined in this report;**
 - ii. **confirm receipt of a representation in respect of the proposal to expand Silsoe CofE VC Lower School and the statutory notice as set out in Appendix A, issued on the 2 June 2014 under Section 19(1), of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. No representations were received in respect of the proposal to expand Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School and the statutory notice as set out in Appendix B, issued on the 2 June 2014 under Section 19(1), of the Education and Inspections Act 2006;**
 - iii. **approve the statutory proposal to expand Edward Peake Cof E VC Middle School, Biggleswade from its current capacity of 480 places to provide a total of 600 places with an implementation date of September 2016 thereby approving the commencement of the project and related expenditure, subject to the grant of planning permission under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 by 1 September 2015;**

<p>iv.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>6.</p>	<p>approve the statutory proposal to expand Silsoe CofE VC Lower, Silsoe from its current capacity of 135 places to provide a total of 225 places, a 8 place SEN provision for children with Behaviour Emotional and Social Difficulties and a 45 place pre school with an implementation date of 1 September 2016 thereby approving the commencement of the project and related expenditure, subject to the grant of planning permission under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 by 1 September 2015.</p> <p>approve the proposal to expand the Academy of Stratton Upper School in Biggleswade from its current capacity of 1250 places to provide 1650 places with a phased implementation date of 1 September 2016, thereby approving the commencement of the project and related expenditure, subject to the approval of the Education Funding Agency and the grant of planning permission under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 by 1 September 2015;</p> <p>approve the commencement of consultation and the publication of statutory notices for the proposal to permanently expand Roecroft Lower School, Stotfold from its current capacity of 300 places to provide a total of 450 places with an implementation date of September 2015. The school will also be invited to prepare a business case which will be subject to approval by the Council's Executive in its final determination of the proposal in December 2014;</p> <p>approve the capital expenditure from the Council's New School Places Programme, as indicated in Appendix D to relocate Pippin Pre School within the boundary of Roecroft Lower School, Stotfold to enable existing and future pressures on Roecroft Lower School's accommodation to be managed.</p>
<p><i>Reason for Recommendations:</i></p>	<p><i>To ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations to provide sufficient school places and also to meet the legal requirements placed on the Council by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 regarding proposals to expand maintained schools. Commitment to expenditure and final approval of the proposal set out in recommendation 4 will be determined by the Council's Executive in December 2014, informed by the outcome of the consultation exercises and business case which is to be prepared by the School.</i></p>

<p>Executive Summary</p>	
<p>34.</p>	<p>This report outlines three proposals within the Council's New School Places Programme where local pressures of demographic growth within each school's existing catchment area require additional school places to be provided by September 2016. These relate to Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School and Stratton Upper School in Biggleswade and Silsoe CofE VC Lower School in Silsoe.</p>

35. Each of the three proposals for implementation in September 2016 has been developed with support of the Governing Bodies or Board of the relevant school or Academy and each is aligned as set out in the report with the Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools as approved by the Council's Executive in February 2013.
36. These proposals were originally reported to the Council's Executive on the 10 December 2013 and each was invited to undertake consultation as required by regulation, and to prepare a business case the outcome of which is set out in the relevant appendices to the report. These three expansions are now recommended for approval, to commence each project and related capital expenditure.
37. This report also recommends commencement of statutory consultation to permanently expand Roecroft Lower School in Stotfold as a result of continued and forecast demographic growth in that area and the admission to the school of a third reception class from September 2014, an increase which is forecast to be sustained in future years.
38. The report also sets out the rationale for relocating existing pre school provision currently accommodated within the main school building, to an alternative location on the school site.
39. In December 2013 the Council's Executive also invited Houghton Regis Academy to prepare a business case to expand from its current capacity of 480 places to provide 900 places for pupils aged 11 to 16 years of age, plus Sixth Form with a phased implementation date from September 2016 as a result of the anticipated commencement of the proposed North Houghton Regis development.
40. Likewise, subject to timing and rate of housing developments in Arlesey and Houghton Regis, the Council's Executive also approved commencement of the processes as set out in that report to invite Academy/Free School proposals for the establishment of new Primary and Lower school provision in those areas.
41. As a result of delayed housing development it is now forecast that these new places will not be required within the original proposed timeframe and it is likely that these projects will not be reported to Executive before March 2015 at the earliest.

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School and Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

42. In accordance with the Education and Inspections Act (EIA) 2006 DfE regulations outline the requirements and process for proposals to significantly enlarge Council maintained schools and these include full public consultation, the publication of statutory proposals and the decision making process. The Council is decision maker for proposals to enlarge maintained schools.
43. On the 10 December 2013 the Council's Executive approved the commencement of consultation and the publication of statutory notices for the proposals to expand Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School and Silsoe CofE VC Lower School in Silsoe.

44. The initial consultation period for both proposals commenced on 3 March 2014 to 31 March 2014. The Council worked in partnership with each school to undertake the consultation which included public and staff meetings, to ensure that the process followed that set out in Department for Education guidance and regulation.
45. The consultation materials, minutes of the public and staff meetings and copies of all responses, is attached at Appendices A and B to this report. The initial consultation for the proposal to expand Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School received 58 responses in total of which 84% indicated support. The initial consultation for the proposal to expand Silsoe CofE VC Lower School received 24 responses in total of which 87% indicated support.
46. As a result of the responses received to the initial period of statutory consultation statutory notices (under Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) were published in line with Department for Education guidance on 2 June 2014 along with evidence of the initial consultation and other information prescribed by regulation inviting further comment or objection to the proposals by the end of the representation period on 30 June 2014.
47. Copies of the Statutory Notice and the prescribed information for each proposal are also attached at Appendices A and B.
48. No representations were received to the proposal to expand Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School. A letter of support from the St Albans Diocese was the only representation received to the proposal to expand Silsoe CofE VC Lower School. The representation is attached to this report as part of Appendix A.
49. Each School has submitted a business case which has been evaluated by Council officers. The proposals comply with the Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools and each school's ambition is aligned with the Council's Education Vision. Each school's business case is attached at Appendices E and F.
50. Having followed the procedure required by regulation and in consideration of the key issues and factors for decision makers set out in guidance it is recommended that the proposals to expand Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School and Silsoe CofE VC Lower School, as set out in this report and published by Statutory Notice issued on 2 June 2014, be approved with an implementation date of 1 September 2016.

Stratton Upper School

51. The DfE has also produced guidance for Academies wishing to make significant changes including proposals to enlarge premises. In response to the invitation from the Council's Executive in December 2013, the Academy consulted on its proposed expansion between 14 May 2014 to 20 June 2014. The Academy's Governing Body met on the 30 June 2014 and determined to proceed with the proposal and submit an application to the DfE. The Academy has also produced a business case which is attached to this report at Appendix C.

52. The business case has been evaluated by Council officers and the proposal complies with the Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools and the school's ambition is aligned with the Council's Education Vision. It is recommended to approve the proposed expansion of the Academy to enable commencement of the project and related expenditure.
53. The Academy must still seek the approval of the Education Funding Agency so the Council's approval will be subject to the Secretary of State's consent.

Roecroft Lower School and Pippin Pre School

54. In April 2009 Central Bedfordshire inherited the legal obligation to implement the former County Council's statutory proposal to relocate Roecroft Lower School and enlarge it by a full form of entry to provide a total of 300 lower school places (2 form entry) on its new site by September 2010 to accommodate demographic growth as a result of the major housing development on land south of Stotfold.
55. In November 2009 the Council's Executive approved the capital funding to relocate and enlarge Roecroft Lower School but with an amended implementation date of September 2011 and the final design for the new school was approved by the Council and included flexibility for potential further expansion. The new school site also accommodated Pippin Pre School, a 60 place, Ofsted Outstanding committee managed non-profit making registered charity, within the main school building, but as a separate and independent provision.
56. Pupil numbers in the enlarged school have grown since it was completed and it has accommodated total numbers on roll of 158 in 2011, 194 in 2012, 242 in 2013 and 269 in 2014 (January school census) with limited spare capacity now remaining as its planned year groups of 60 feed through the school.
57. In December 2013 the Council approved the expansion of St Marys Academy in Stotfold to also provide a total of 300 lower school places (2 form entry) by September 2015. The rate of continued housing development, the local impact of the increased birth rate which is evident also at national level and the inability of neighbouring authorities to accommodate the preference of some Stotfold parents applying for a school place outside of the area all contributed to the additional pressure on local places.
58. Pupil forecasting undertaken in March 2014 with January school census, area health authority and housing trajectory data was compared to school capacities in the area and enhanced with information on admissions applications made in the Starting School round for September 2014 which closed in January 2014. This indicated the further need to provide additional Year R places for September 2014 ahead of those that would be added to local capacity through the expansion of St Marys Academy in 2015, at a level that would be sustained.
59. The resulting admissions allocation process for the national offer day of 16 April 2014 illustrated the impact for catchment applicants who were unsuccessful in achieving their preference of a Stotfold school place with next nearest allocations displacing children beyond their local community.

60. As a result and with the School's consent, the Council commissioned an additional reception class to be admitted at Roecroft Lower School in September 2014, utilising a single surplus classroom. A further allocation of these places took place on 24 April 2014 providing a local place to all on time catchment applicants.
61. Area health authority data indicates total pre school numbers of children already living within the area who may seek a reception year place in a mainstream school in Stotfold of 112 in 2015, 126 in 2016 and 126 in 2017. In addition, through to 2018 further housing development on existing housing sites, on land with approved planning applications and site allocations could eventually provide 328 dwellings and associated pupil yield of just below 15 additional pupils per year group. For all previously unforeseen proposals of housing development brought forward in the Stotfold area the Council's School Organisation, Admissions and Capital Planning Service is seeking capital and land from developers to accommodate additional growth.
62. This data illustrates the sustained demographic demand in the Stotfold catchment area for five forms of entry (150 places per year group) of Lower School provision, an increase of one form of entry (30 places per year group) over existing accommodation provided by St Marys Academy and Roecroft Lower School.
63. As a result of the third reception class admitted in September 2014, Roecroft Lower School will require additional capacity to accommodate a further potential intake of 90 children to Year R in September 2015. The permanent enlargement of the school is recommended as a result of the evidence of sustained demographic demand.
64. In terms of the Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in schools this proposal will provide local places for local children promoting sustainable modes of travel and will create a lower school of the maximum size of 450 places. It will mean expansion of a popular and Ofsted rated Outstanding school. A feasibility study has already been commissioned to inform the design process and ensure that capital investment in the expansion of the school also seeks opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.
65. In addition, the outcome of an initial evaluation of site options for the additional accommodation required by the school in September 2015 and, if approved also for the permanent enlargement of the school, has indicated the need to relocate Pippin pre school by re-providing its accommodation in an alternative location on the school site.
66. Design work is now underway on this proposal in liaison with the pre school and planning consent is intended to be sought in September 2014 to enable the new accommodation to be constructed in time for handover in February 2015. The capital cost of this work, indicated in Appendix D, will be met from the Council's New School Places Programme, funded by DfE grant.

Conclusion

67. The proposed expansions of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School and Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School have followed required statutory processes and are now recommended for Executive approval.
68. The proposal to expand the permanent capacity of the academy of Stratton Upper School has been subject of DfE required consultation and is now recommended for Executive approval, subject to DfE approval.
69. The proposal to expand Roecroft Lower School, in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006, constitutes a significant expansion of the existing school which requires both informal consultation and the publication of a Statutory Notice before the Council can finally determine the proposal.
70. Therefore, it is recommended that Executive approve the commencement of informal and statutory consultation on the proposals to expand the community school of Roecroft Lower School to provide additional places as outlined within this report, the outcome of which will be reported to the Council's Executive for determination in December 2014.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Silsoe CofE Lower School, consultation materials, responses, Statutory Notice, representation received.

Appendix B – Edward Peake CofE Middle School, consultation materials, responses, Statutory Notice

Appendix C –Stratton Upper School Business Case

Appendix D –New School Places Programme 2013/14 – 2017/18 – Projects for September 2016 implementation

Appendix E - Silsoe CofE VC Lower School Business Case

Appendix F - Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School Business Case

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Proposal to relocate and expand Silsoe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School to provide new lower school places for children in Silsoe, Bedfordshire

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Central Bedfordshire Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Silsoe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School, High Street, Silsoe, Bedfordshire MK45 4ES from 1 September 2016.

The intended prescribed alteration is -

to relocate Silsoe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School to a site within the former Cranfield University Campus in Silsoe

to expand the school from a 135 place lower school for pupils aged 4+ to 9 to a 225 place lower school for pupils aged 4+ to 9

to relocate the Special Education Needs provision, for Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty (BESD), to the new school site and to expand the provision from 6 to 8 places.

The current capacity of the school is 135. Following implementation the proposed capacity will be 225. The current number of pupils registered at the school is 138.

The admission number for the current school is 27 for each year group and the proposed admission number will be 45 for each year group.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: The Information Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council, Room DC2, Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 1LF. It can also be viewed on the Council's website at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/publicstatutorynotices and on the school's website at <http://www.silsoelower.ic.org/>

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may support, object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to the Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford, Beds, SG17 5TQ.

Signed: Edwina Grant

Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Children's Services

Publication Date: 2 June 2014

Explanatory notes:

New lower school places are required in Silsoe as a result of significant housing development within the former Cranfield University Campus. Up to 344 dwellings are forecast to be built within this development by 2018.

PROPOSAL FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS

Dated - Monday 2 June 2014



Central Bedfordshire

1 - Name of Proposer

(Local Education Authority or Governing Body)

Central Bedfordshire Council

2 - School Name

Silsoe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School

3 - School Address

High Street,
Silsoe
Bedfordshire
MK45 4ES

4 - Description of proposed prescribed alteration

To **relocate** Silsoe CofE VC Lower School from its current address at High Street, Silsoe to a new site within the former Cranfield University Campus, off Barton Road, Silsoe

and to **expand** Silsoe CofE VC Lower School from its current capacity of 135 places to 225 places, with a published admission number of 45.

The existing Special Education Needs provision, for Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty, at Silsoe Cof E VC Lower school will relocate onto the new site. The provision will be increased from 6 to 8 places and the school will continue to provide support for vulnerable learners by integrating appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within the mainstream school.

The school's new site will also provide pre school provision for children from 2 years by expanding and relocating the existing provision alongside the school.

5 – Evidence of demand

Up to 2018, 344 dwellings are forecast to be built within the former Cranfield University Campus development in Silsoe. The development is expected to produce approximately 15 children per year group. To manage this it is proposed that Silsoe CofE VC Lower School relocates to a new site within the development, providing a new building to allow the school to increase its

intake from September 2016.

The existing school is located on a limited site in Silsoe and for this reason, expansion of the existing school on its current site is not recommended.

The school is an Ofsted 'Outstanding' school. It has a capacity for 135 and is now coming under increasing pressure for places from the new development. It is proposed that the new school should cater for up to 225 pupils in the future and to also accommodate the SEN unit attached to the school.

It will mean expansion of a popular and Ofsted rated Outstanding school and will promote further partnership working with the outreach work currently provided through the Children's Centre.

A consultation was carried out regarding the proposal from 3 March to 31 March 2014. The consultation document is attached at appendix.

Copies of the consultation document were provided to –

- The Governing Body of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School
- The staff of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School
- The parents and carers of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

And copies of the consultation document were made available to –

- The Member of Parliament for Silsoe
- Silsoe Parish Council
- Neighbouring local authorities to Central Bedfordshire Council
- Local dioceses
- The Members of Central Bedfordshire Council
- All schools and academies within Central Bedfordshire

A press release was issued advising of the consultation.

The consultation document was also available on the Central Bedfordshire Council website with an on-line response facility.

Two meetings were held at Silsoe Lower School on 17 March 2014; the first at 4.00 pm for school staff and governors, followed by the second meeting at 7.00 for parents, carers and the general public .

The presentation that was given at both meetings is attached at appendix Notes of both meetings which include the concerns and questions that were raised, are attached at appendix

During the 4 week consultation, 24 responses were received, 88% of which were in favour of the proposal. The results of the consultation are available at appendix

6 – Objectives

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School is the only lower school within the village of Silsoe and is an Ofsted 'Outstanding' school. The current school has a capacity for 135 and is now coming under increasing pressure for places from the new housing development.

Central Bedfordshire Council's Policy Principles on Pupil Place Planning in Schools require the proposal to be supported by a business case that establishes a guarantee of the quality of the new places being added to the system. The business case that has been submitted by Silsoe CofE VC Lower School has provided confirmation of this.

A feasibility study is to be commissioned to inform the design process and to ensure that the capital investment in the expansion of the school also seeks opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use

7 – The effect of the proposed alteration on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School is the only lower school within the village of Silsoe and therefore the only lower school which serves the Silsoe catchment area.

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School is a feeder school for Arnold Academy which has sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional children.

8 – Project costs

The proposed new school is contained within Central Bedfordshire Council's NewSchool Places Programme 2013/14 – 2018/19. The capital cost of the project is to be funded through the Council's New School Places programme.

9 – Implementation

It is proposed that the new school will be ready for the start of the new Autumn term in September 2016

10 – Procedure for responses; support, objections and comments

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal (i.e. by Monday 30 June 2014), any person may support, object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to the Deputy Chief Executive / Director Of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford, Beds, SG17 5TQ



Central Bedfordshire Council
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Appendix A

Consultation on the proposed relocation and expansion of Silsoe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School

to provide new lower school places for
children in Silsoe

**Monday 3 March 2014 –
Monday 31 March 2014**

1. Introduction

Councils have a duty to ensure there are enough suitable school places for children aged 5-16 (as per Section 14 of the Education Act 1996). The Council's role is to promote parental choice, diversity, high standards and fair access to education (Education and Inspections Act 2006).

This document explains the reasons for proposing to relocate and expand Silsoe Church of England Voluntary Controlled (CofE VC) Lower School and how you can have your say.

2. Background

The Council has been working with schools in the area to review places and plan for the impact of demographic changes across the area over the next five years and beyond. The pressure on existing provision and the need for more places in Silsoe is clear.

New lower school places are required in Silsoe as a result of significant housing development within the former Cranfield University Campus. Up to 344 dwellings are forecast to be built within this development by 2018; the majority have been constructed already but are not fully occupied.

The existing lower school is located on a size limited site on High Street, Silsoe, and for this reason expansion of the existing school on the High Street site is not feasible.

The S106 agreement (by which the Council has obtained funds from the developer for education provision and community facilities) for the site of the former Cranfield University Campus included a requirement for a new school site to be located in conjunction with a proposed new community sports building and sports pitches, with a view that some of the facilities could be shared thereby making best use of the available resources.

3. Our proposal

The Council is proposing to provide the additional school places required by relocating and expanding Silsoe CofE VC Lower School.

The current school has a capacity for 135 and is coming under increasing pressure for places from the new development. It is proposed that the new school will cater for up to 240 pupils, although the design capacity of the new school is likely to reflect the ability to accommodate up to 300 pupils. The new school will also accommodate the Special Education Needs (SEN) unit which is currently attached to the school.

It is intended that the use of new community sports building and the new sports pitches will be shared between the school and the wider community. Silsoe Parish Council is working with Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the development and management of these facilities.

This proposal has been developed in consultation with the school's governing body and the St Alban's Diocese and both are supportive of this proposal.

The new school is scheduled to open in September 2016.

4. Why are the Governing Body of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School and Central Bedfordshire Council consulting with you?

This proposal constitutes the relocation and significant expansion of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School which requires both informal consultation and the publication of Statutory Proposals, in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Informal consultation enables all interested parties to express their views on the proposal and thereby influence the decisions and actions to be taken by the Council regarding the additional provision of school places.

Starting on page four of this document you will find a list of Frequently Asked Questions which may help to address some immediate concerns that you may have.

5. The consultation process

You can **have your say via the online form** which is available on the Council's website at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations or you can complete pages six and seven of this document and return them to the FREEPOST address provided at the end of the form. Completed forms should be returned by **5.00pm Monday 31 March 2014**.

Separate meetings will be held with the staff, union representatives and governors of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School.

There will also be a **public meeting** which will be open to all interested parties. This meeting will be held at **Silsoe CofE VC Lower School** on **Monday 17 March** at **7.00pm**.

The timeline for the process will be –

Action	Timescale/Deadline
Four week consultation period begins	Monday 3 March 2014
Staff and Governors meeting	Monday 17 March 2014 at 4.00pm
Public meeting	Monday 17 March 2014 at 7.00pm
End of consultation period	Monday 31 March 2014
If decision is made to proceed with the proposal, Statutory Notices will be published on	Monday 2 June 2014
Four week period for the submission of comments and/or objections in response to the Statutory Notices	From Monday 2 June until Monday 30 June 2014
End of Statutory Notice period	Monday 30 June 2014
Final decision regarding the proposal to be made by the Council's Executive Committee on	Tuesday 19 August 2014

If a decision is made to relocate and permanently expand Silsoe CofE VC Lower School, formal implementation of the expansion will commence in September 2016, for the 2016/17 academic year, with the provision of permanent accommodation on the new site.

6. Frequently asked questions

Q – Does the Council have the land and the funds to provide this new school site?

A – The land will be transferred to the Council shortly. The costs are estimated at approximately £4.5m, although this could change as discussions regarding the design of the new school progress. The council is currently holding approximately £1.4m, which have been secured via developer contributions for education purposes under S106 agreements to cover this, with the balance due from Central Government grant funding.

Q – When will the new school site open?

A - Subject to obtaining all the necessary consents it is proposed that the new school site will be operational from September 2016.

Q – Are there any interim proposals in advance of the new accommodation being ready?

A - We are already working with the existing school to ensure that, as far as possible, parental requests can be met ahead of the new accommodation being available. For example, Silsoe CofE VC Lower School has agreed to increase its admissions for in-area pupils on its existing site in advance of the new accommodation being available and the Council has agreed to provide additional temporary accommodation for this, if needed, in September 2015.

Q –What new facilities will be provided at the new school site to accommodate the increased number of children?

A – A feasibility study will be commissioned to inform the design process and ensure that the new school provides opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school. The relocation of the existing Special Education Needs provision on site will also continue to provide support for vulnerable learners by integrating appropriate provision within the mainstream school.

Q – How will the school share the new community sports building with the village?

A – A new community sports building together with two sports pitches and a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) will be built adjacent to the proposed new school. It is planned that the school will have access to these facilities. The anticipated needs of the children have been accommodated into the design specification for the community sports building e.g. secure access. Exact details of the schools requirements are yet to be determined, as are the management arrangements for the new community sports building and sports pitches. These discussions will begin shortly.

Separate public meetings are being planned by Silsoe Parish Council to engage residents in the development of the community sports building and to coincide with this consultation for the new school.

Q - Can the school be assured that their need for sports facilities and worship facilities will not be compromised by sharing the community facilities?

A – Access and management arrangements for the shared community facilities have yet to be determined but the design of the school's facilities will be informed by Government design guidance to ensure that the school's use of and access to the facilities are not compromised.

Q – Will there be sufficient parking space available for parents who will have to transport their children from the far end of the village.

A – The proposed relocation and expansion of the school is to provide for the local community of Silsoe. A requirement of the planning process for the design and layout of the new school will be the production of a travel plan. This travel plan is required to articulate how the school will continue to promote sustainable modes of transport. This may include the provision of a walking bus.

Q - Will Silsoe CofE VC Lower School be able to provide a full and varied curriculum on the new site?

A – The curriculum of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School is well designed and matched to the needs, abilities, interests and aspirations of all children. Staff regularly review the curriculum currently and will plan the curriculum for the new school site to meet the requirements of the national curriculum and the needs of the community.

Q – What provision will be made for early years and ‘wrap around’ care?

A- Silsoe Pre School is situated in the grounds of the current lower school site and caters for children aged 2½ to 4. ‘Wrap around care’ is provided by Silsoe CofE VC Lower School both before and after school and is available for lower school children and for children attending their feeder middle schools. These facilities will transfer to the new site.

Q - Will the catchment area and admissions procedure for Silsoe CofE VC Lower School stay the same?

A – Yes, the catchment area and admissions procedure will remain the same.

Q – Has the Council considered any alternative solutions other than the relocation and expansion of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School?

A – Yes, other solutions have been considered. This proposal will provide local places for local children promoting sustainable modes of travel and will create a more financially and educationally viable lower school, close to the suggested optimum size of 300 places, and will also mean the expansion of a popular and Ofsted rated ‘Outstanding’ school.

Q - Are 240 places sufficient for the village? If the village continues to expand will there be capacity to extend the school to the optimum 300 place size?

A – Current pupil forecasts support the proposed expansion to 240 places, although the physical design capacity of the school building will provide for flexibility.

Q –What will happen to the current school site? Will it be retained as a facility for the village’s young people?

A – No consideration has yet been given to the future of the current school site. The Council and the Church of England Diocese will consider the matter in due course and any proposals will be subject to further consultation processes.

There may be other questions you wish to raise and we will be happy to respond to these at the public consultation meeting on 17 March.

For more information about this proposal please contact Sue Barrow by telephone on 0300 300 5700 or email sue.barrow@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

**Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Children’s Services
Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford
SG17 5TQ**



Appendix B

Consultation on the proposed expansion of Silsoe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School

Monday 3 March – Monday 31 March 2014

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

Introductions:

Susan Purdue– Head teacher, Silsoe Cof E VC Lower School

Reverend Holroyd – Chair of Governors, Silsoe Cof E VC Lower School

Rob Parsons – Head of School Organisation, Admissions and Capital Planning

Lydia Braisher – Admissions Manager

Sarah Hughes – Community Engagement Manager

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

Statutory Responsibilities:

Education Act 1996 – to ensure that there are sufficient and suitable places for those who want them

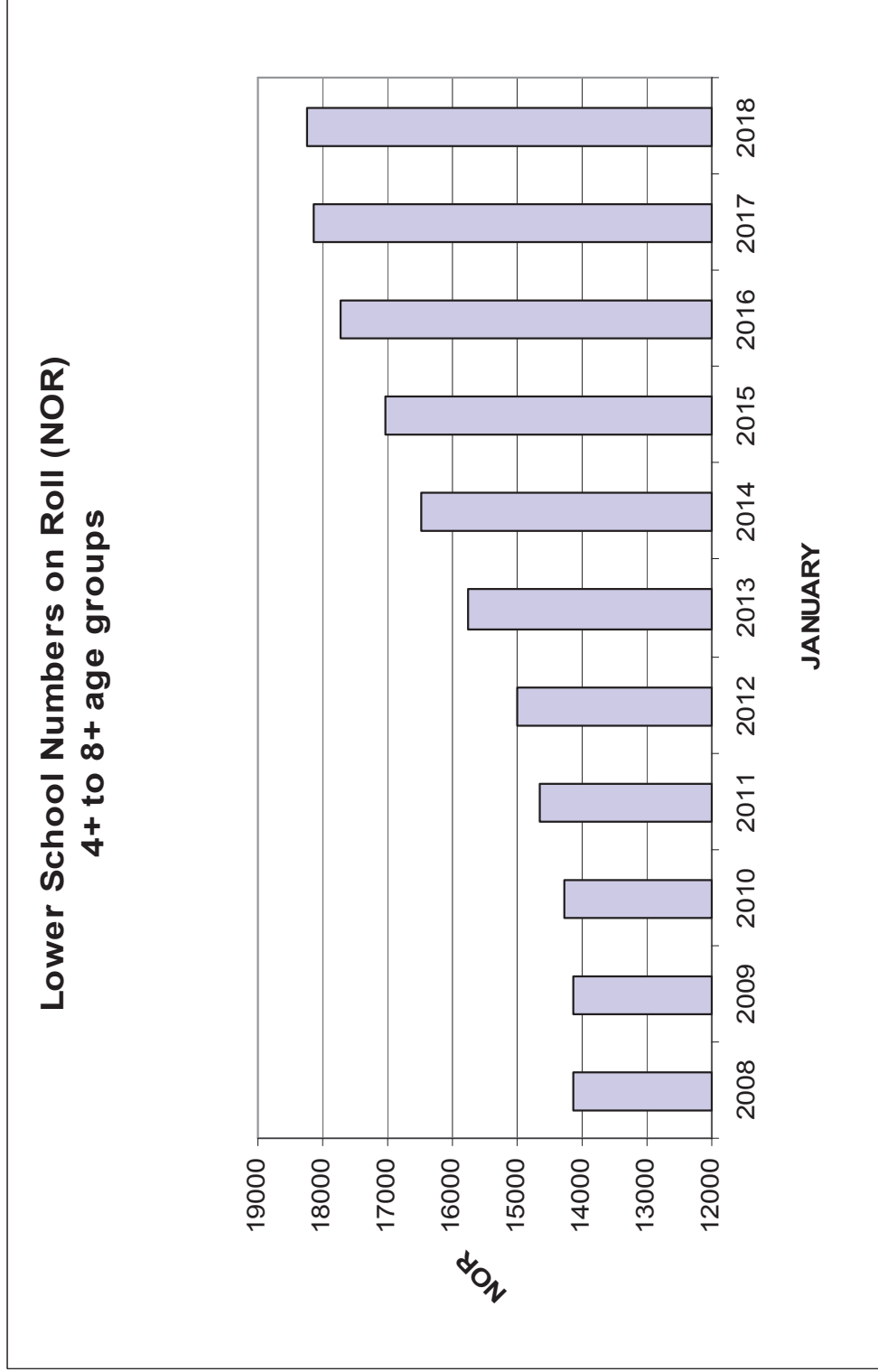
Strategic Role:

- Commissioners of places, not necessarily providers
- Promoters of parental choice, diversity, high standards
- Fair Access

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

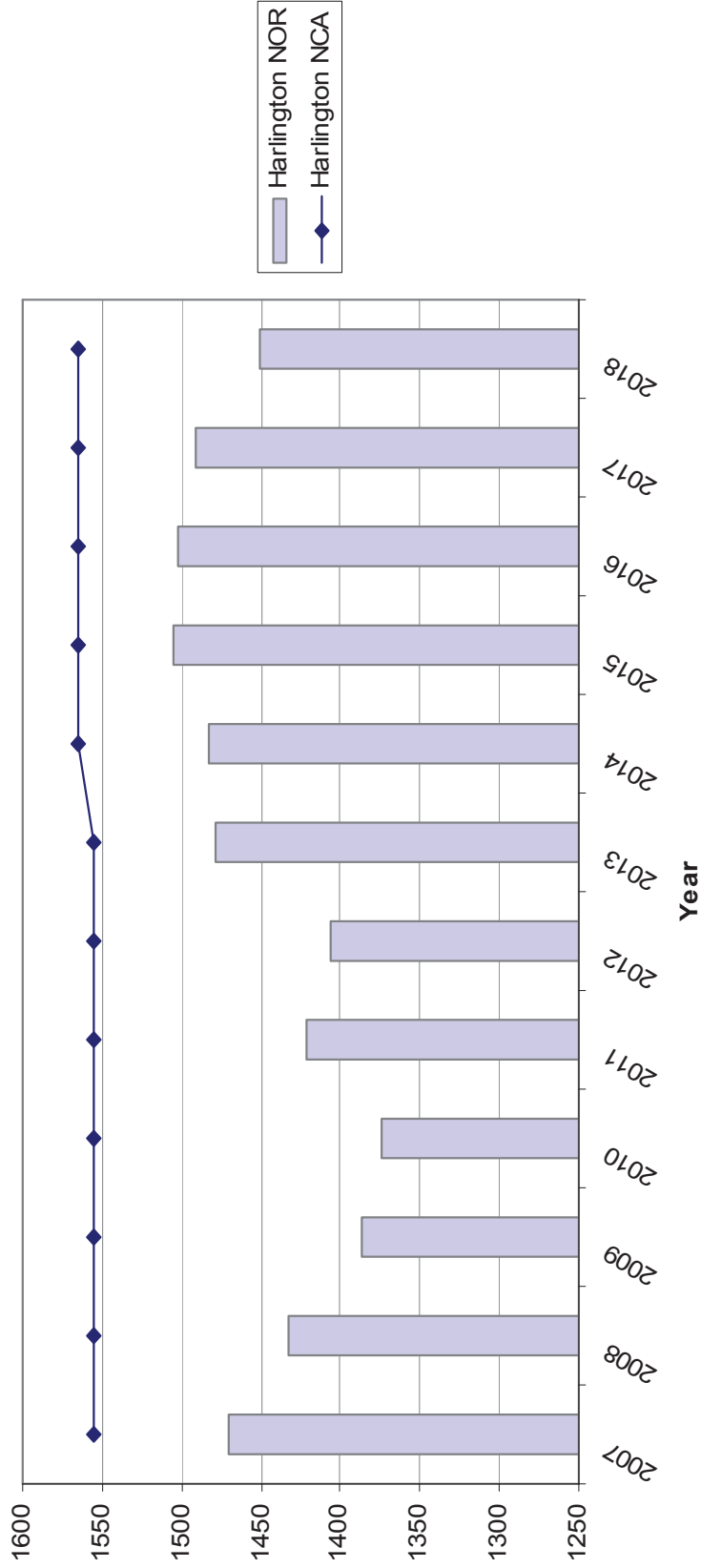
Central Bedfordshire Council
School Organisation Plan
2013-2018 – Published September 2013
New School Places Programme
(both subject to annual review and rolled on a further year)
New schools
Expansions of existing schools and academies
Enlargement and relocation of existing schools
£108m current gross value of programme

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School



Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

Harlington Lower School's:
Actual/Forecast Numbers on Roll (NOR) v NCA



Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

HOUSING:

New lower school places are required in Silsoe as a result of significant housing development within the former Cranfield University Campus.

Up to 344 dwellings are forecast to be built within this development by 2018; the majority have been constructed already but are not fully occupied.

The existing lower school is located on a size limited site on High Street, Silsoe and for this reason, expansion of the existing school on the High Street site is not feasible.

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

School's current PAN is 27, proposed to be 45 from 2016

Current number on roll is 134

Proposed new capacity will be 225 excl. pre school and SEN unit

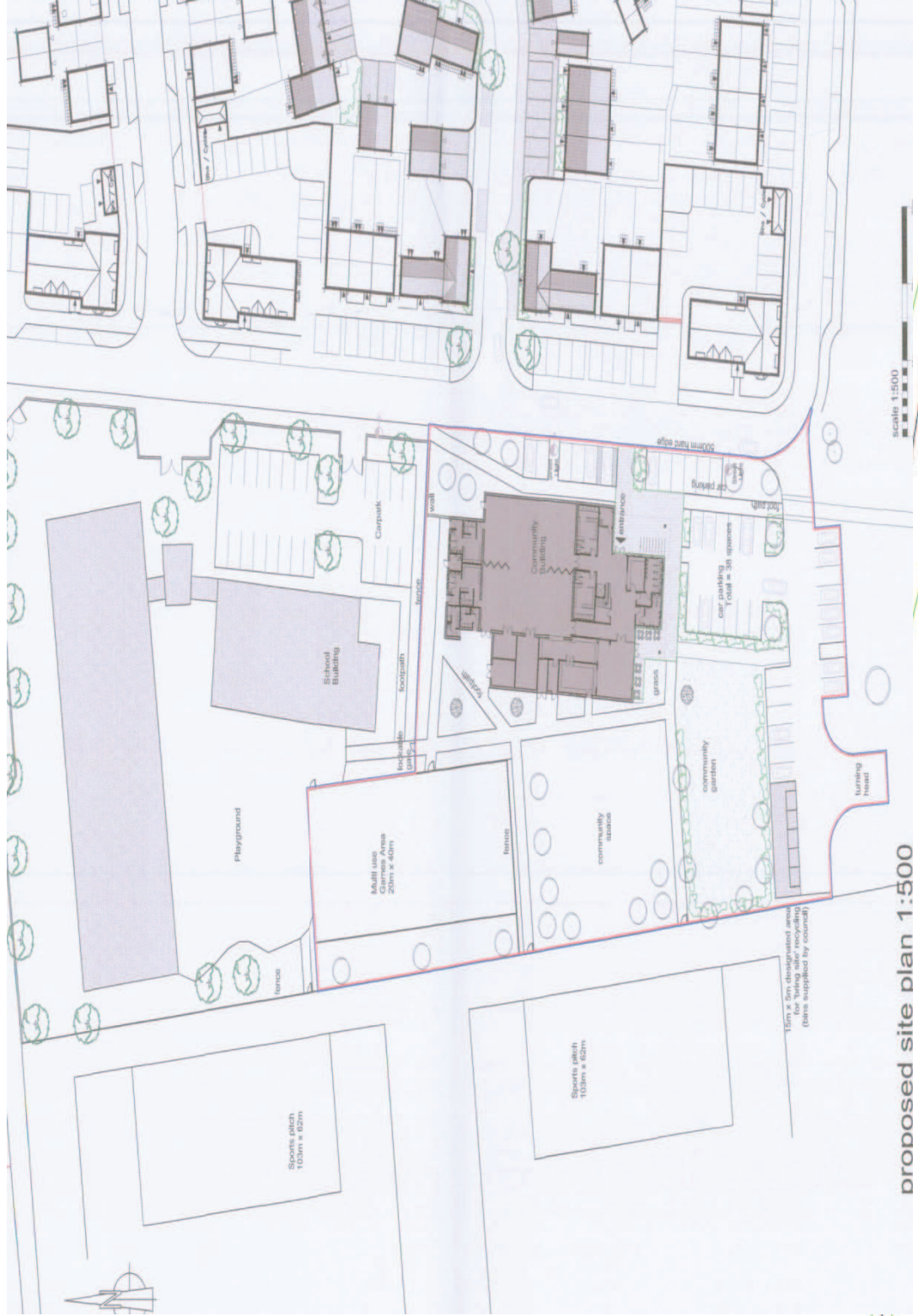
Starting School applications for September 2014 = 27 first preferences (20 from catchment)

Interim measures possible – additional classroom for September 2015

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School



Silsoe CofE VC Lower School



Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

Progress on built form:

- Meetings with School and other stakeholders in the area
- Review of existing design code for school
- Work with Parish Council on use of Community Sports Hall and playing fields
- Use of DfE area guidelines (BB99)
- Accommodation schedule to be drafted
- Development of brief for outline design proposals (feasibility study)

Silsoe Community Sports Building

Legacy from Cranfield University to the village of Silsoe

A community building with sports facilities

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2 x badminton court size | Sports Pitches – Football/Cricket |
| Gym (upstairs) | Community Green Space |
| Dance studio (downstairs) | Integrated Public Art |
| MUGA (illuminated) | |
| •Building | |
| •Sports pitches | |

Building Status

- Negotiations building - completed December 2013.
- Building work due to start April 2014.

Community Consultation days

- 12th April 2014 Silsoe Village Hall 12-4
- 16th April 2014 SPS Annual Parish Meeting

Your ideas on use, activities, clubs email silsoepcfeedback@silsoe.org.uk

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

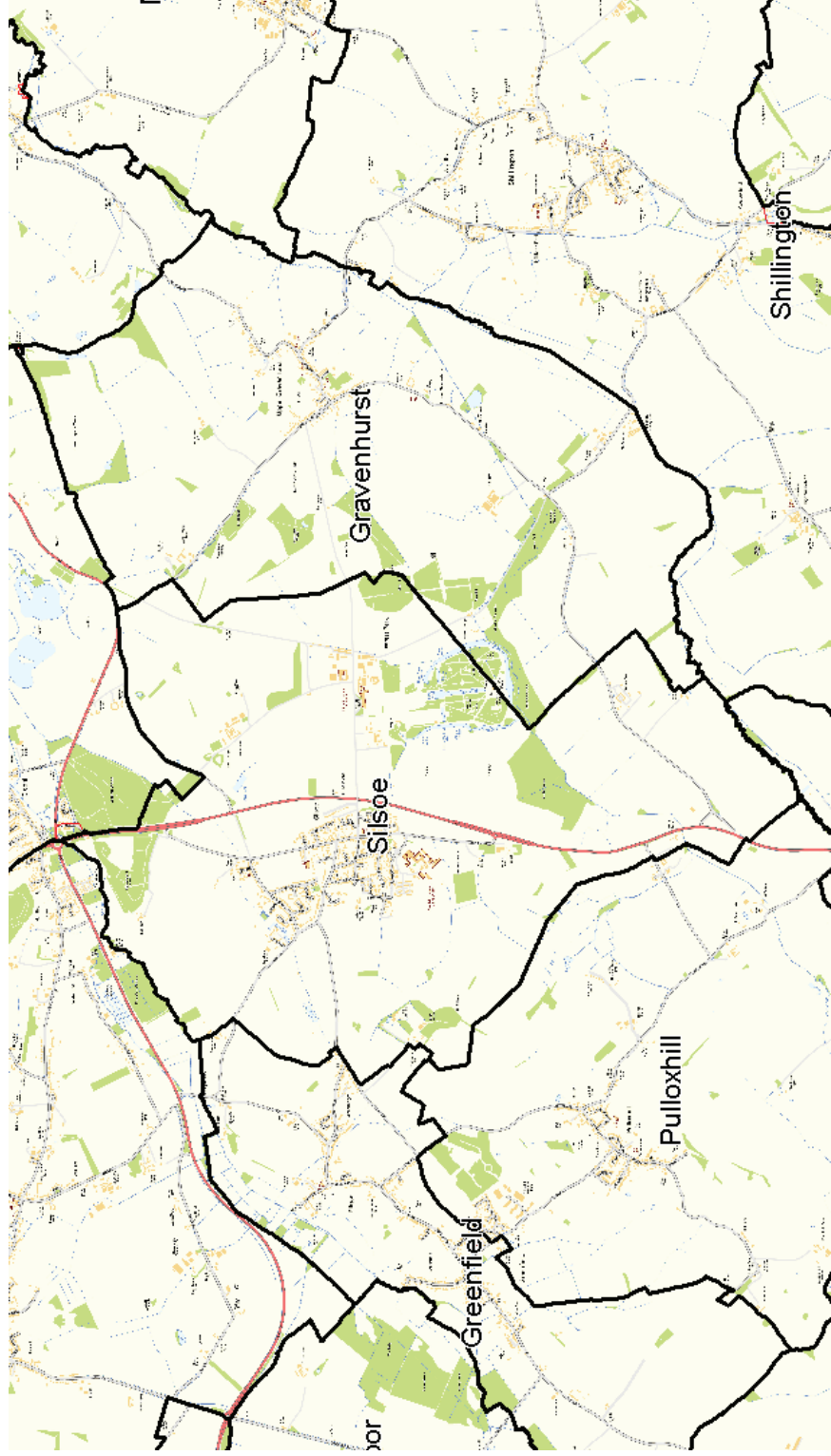
Proposed Admissions Criteria – September 2016

Published admissions number will be 45 places

- 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

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

The catchment area will remain unchanged



Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

Process so far:

- December 2013 - Executive approved request to consult on the proposed relocation and expansion of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School
- Consultation launched on Monday 3 March 2014
- Meetings held at school on Monday 17 March 2014
- Consultation ends on Monday 31 March 2014

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

Next Steps:

Report outcome of consultation

Statutory Public Notices – June 2014

School preparation of business case

Council's Executive Decision Making - August 2014

Outline and detailed design - August 2014 to January 2015

Planning approval - January 2015

Start on site - June 2015

Completion of building works - June/July 2016

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

Consultation Document:

Available from School, Council offices, Council website.

Responses either on-line (preferably) or via post

Closing date – Monday 31 March 2014

Frequently asked questions

Your questions

**Consultation on the proposed expansion of
Silsoe CofE VC Lower School**

Queries / comments raised at meeting with staff and
governors – held at Silsoe CofE VC Lower School
on Monday 17 March 2014 at 4.00 pm



Meeting led by –

Rob Parsons – Head of School Organisation, Admissions & Capital Planning
Lydia Braisher – Admissions Manager
Sarah Hughes – Community Engagement Manager
Susan Purdue – Head teacher, Silsoe CofE VC Lower School
Reverend Holroyd – Chair of Governors, Silsoe Cof E VC Lower School

Note taker - Sue Barrow – Information Manager

Susan Purdue welcomed all to the meeting and introduced CBC staff to the group.

Rob Parsons gave a presentation regarding the proposal; which included the background of local housing growth, the legal process for commissioning new school places, the responsibility of the Council and the stages and length of the process involved.

Lydia Braisher advised on the admissions aspect of the proposed expansion.
Sarah Hughes advised on the Community Sports Building and of the public meeting that is to be held at the village hall on 12 April regarding this new facility

Query / comment	Answer / response
How will the extra 15 children be accommodated?	We will not admit more than 45 and we will organise the school as the numbers increase. We could mix classes. We have extra flexibility currently in years 3 and 4 and can go over 30.
How will the school grow?	It will grow from the bottom up, which is the normal way to grow a school.
Will the school be able to fund the new teachers as the numbers grow?	The school can apply to the Council's Revenue Growth Fund. This has been established to help fund such situations. The school will not be required to fund the growth from its current resources.
If the school did not take 'out of catchment' children would the current school site be big	No

enough?	
Looking to the long term – has any consideration been given to a possible change for the school from a lower of a primary?	The Council has no policy to change from 3 tier to 2 tier and is not promoting this. The proposal is to build a new lower school, not a primary. However, the Council is not the decision maker for academy proposals and, in addition, maintained schools can now propose and implement changes to their age range, by up to 2 years, without the Council's permission.
Are there sufficient places within the middle and upper school that our children feed into?	Yes, Arnold currently attracts children from Luton, and Harlington Upper has taken children from Luton and Dunstable in recent years.
Will the SEN provision be increased?	We will increase from 6 to 8, which would mean an extra member of staff.
Where will the wrap-around care be provided?	This will be identified following conversations between the school and the Council
Is the school self sufficient in all but sports facilities, for which we will need to use the Community Sports Building?	The school will be sufficient for all its needs, and it will be an 'added extra' for the school to use the Community Sports Building.
Will the school have use of the playing fields?	The playing fields are for use by both the school and the local community. The school will have a defined time for its use. This has yet to be agreed. There will need to be a safeguarding policy to take account of this. It is not unusual, within Central Beds, for a school to share such facilities with the public.
How will the Community Sports Building and playing fields be managed?	The Parish Council will be responsible for the management of both and will need to enter into an agreement with the school re their use. The Parish Council have assured CBC that they will agree usage with the school before looking at other community use. These are the conversations that will need to be had.
Will the preschool be accommodated on the new site?	Yes. The preschool will be invited to contribute on the design of the building.
What has been the school's involvement so far regarding the proposal?	The Council has met with the Head teacher, Chair of Governors and the Diocese previously to discuss the proposal. The HT has discussed the proposal with a few parents to date and has also attended a few meetings. Revenue funding from the Council's Growth Fund will help to cover future leadership team costs and any back-filling that is required to deliver the project.
How much of the school's current 'stuff' will need to be transferred to the new site?	The Council will be providing the school with a budget to fully 'kit-out' the new school with furniture and fittings. How much is taken to the new site from the old school will be up to the school.

<p>Will the new school be able to accommodate all of the children, when at full capacity, in one place?</p>	<p>Yes, we are confident that a 1.5 FE school will be sufficient to accommodate catchment demand in the future</p>
<p>What will happen to the current school site? If more houses are built on the current site this will add to the number of children in the village seeking places.</p>	<p>There have been no discussions so far re the future use. The current site is in mixed ownership between the Council and the Diocese. If we move to dispose of the site there are processes that have to be followed as directed by the Secretary of State.</p>
<p>Have you considered having a sub group, from the Governing Body, that could be more involved with the project?</p>	<p>We can have a discussion regarding a pre-project group, which could then be split into smaller groups.</p>
<p>When can we bring together the Parish Council with the school to discuss the proposal?</p>	<p>Rob Parson will do this, but needs to meet with each of the stakeholders separately at first i.e. the Governing Body, the Parish Council, and the Preschool. Rob has commissioned a report which will be the basis for the first stage for these conversations.</p>
<p>With the school to be sited at the far end of the village, this will lead to increased vehicle movements to the school.</p>	<p>The school's travel plan will be refreshed but it is intended that many children will walk. This is a local school for local children. The Council and the Governing Body are under a legal duty to promote sustainable travel. But the school will be no longer on a main road.</p>
<p>The speed limit as you approach the village at that end is still currently 60 mph. The speed restriction sign is on the wrong side of Obelisk Way.</p>	<p>The Council's planners will consider this and will look at the surrounding roads.</p>

Sarah Hughes reminded staff and governors of the meeting that is to be held at the village hall on 12 April. All are invited to attend in order to help shape the usage for the new Community Sports building.

Rob Parsons encouraged all staff and governors to respond to the consultation, both as groups and also as individuals.

The meeting closed at 5.30 pm

**Consultation on the proposed expansion of
Silsoe CofE VC Lower School**

Queries / comments raised at the public meeting
held at Silsoe CofE VC Lower School
on Monday 17 March 2014 at 7.00 pm



Meeting led by –

Rob Parsons – Head of School Organisation, Admissions & Capital Planning
Lydia Braisher – Admissions Manager
Sarah Hughes – Community Engagement Manager
Susan Purdue – Head teacher, Silsoe CofE VC Lower School
Reverend Holroyd – Chair of Governors, Silsoe Cof E VC Lower School

Note taker - Sue Barrow – Information Manager

Susan Purdue welcomed all to the meeting and introduced CBC staff to the attendees.

Rob Parsons gave a presentation regarding the proposal; which included the background of local housing growth, the legal process for commissioning new school places, the responsibility of the Council and the stages and length of the process involved.

Lydia Braisher advised on the admissions aspect of the proposed expansion. Sarah Hughes advised on the Community Sports Building and of the public meeting that is to be held at the village hall on 12 April regarding this new facility

Query / comment	Answer / response
How will you accommodate the extra children?	It will be a decision for the school's Governing Body as to how classes are organised. Over the past few years the school has strived to have single year group classes. We are restricted to 30 for infant classes. We will be able to make these decisions once we are aware of numbers but we will strive for the best organisation of classes.
Will the school be able to maintain the high quality of education with such large classes?	It is the aspiration of the Governing Body to ensure that the good education we offer here will be carried forward to the brand new school and its fantastic facilities. The size and layout of the current school site creates challenges that we will not have to deal

	with at the new school. It will be designed to accommodate the increased number of pupils The school will have a much larger budget and will benefit from the flexibility that the increased economy of scale will bring
Which year group would use the additional classroom that may be needed for September 2015?	If we need to bring in a temporary unit for one year from September 2015 to enable us to accommodate all of our catchment children, the school will decide which children will be required to use it.
How many children will the new school be able to accommodate?	The proposal is to build a 300 place school but this will also provide space to enable the pre-school children to be accommodated. The size will give the school flexibility and will accommodate the expanded SEN BESD unit.
Will the new school have a hall that can accommodate all of the children in one space?	The Governing Body will push for this, so that it can be used for collective worship.
Has the requirement to serve additional free school meals been taken into consideration? Will the new school have a separate dining room?	We are very aware of this requirement and we will need to consider this when deciding upon the design of the school. The requirements for education do not remain the same for very long.
Will the school continue to be a Church of England school?	Yes. There will be no change. The Diocese has been involved in and is supportive of the project. The school has moved twice already since its creation.
Is the school to pursue conversion to academy status?	No. The benefits that come with academy status have diminished and the Governing Body have much the same level of responsibility of academy directors. Because of this, the number of schools seeking to convert to academy status has reduced considerably.
Will the SEN provision at the school be increased?	We will increase from 6 to 8, which would mean an extra member of staff. We will also have the opportunity to ensure that the new provision is designed specifically for the children.
Will the preschool be accommodated on the new site?	Yes. The preschool will also be invited to contribute to the design of the building. It is hoped that facilities can be shared between the school and the pre-school.
As advised in the presentation, attendance at the pre-school will no longer be a guarantee of subsequent access to the school	This is correct. The Schools Adjudicator has directed that this be removed from a school's admission criteria. This must be removed with effect from September 2016.
By increasing the size of the school, and relocating it to the far end of the village, this	This will be addressed during the Planning process and the school's travel plan will be refreshed

<p>will lead to increased vehicle movements to the school. When will this be addressed?</p>	<p>The Council and the Governing Body are under a legal duty to promote sustainable travel. We are creating extra places for local children so it is hoped that many will walk to school.</p>
<p>Many parents have no option but to drive. Many of those that will walk will have to cross very busy roads. The village is used as a rat-run to avoid the Clophill roundabout. Many parents do not walk because of the dangers.</p>	<p>These concerns will be considered by our Planning colleagues but we have to accept that the school will be busy at certain times of the day. Most of Central Bedfordshire is rural and we cannot provide car parking for all but the school will fill from its catchment area. The school is aware of these concerns but one of the great advantages of the new site is that the school will be no longer on a main road. The Parish Council is also aware of these issues, in addition to the 108,000 visitors that Wrest Park can expect this year, who will all have to come through the village.</p>
<p>Will the Council be helping the HT with the project?</p>	<p>Yes, the Council will work with the school to ensure that the process is as easy as possible and that disruption is kept to a minimum. Revenue funding is available to the school to help fund any back-filling that is required while the school's leadership team work on the project.</p>

Sarah Hughes reminded staff and governors of the meeting that is to be held at the village hall on 12 April. All are invited to attend in order to help shape the usage for the new Community Sports Building.

This message was repeated by Ian Kelly, on behalf of Silsoe Parish Council. The Parish Council need to engage with the people who are going to use the building and work to handle each group's expectation

Rob encouraged all present to respond to the consultation.

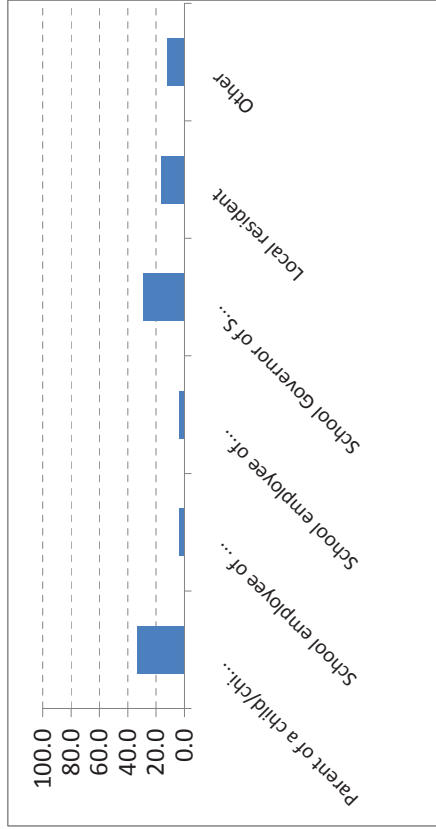
The meeting closed at 8.20 pm

Appendix E

**Silsoe Lower School Results
Based on 24 responses**

Q1 - Are you a:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
Parent of a child/children at Silsoe CofE VC Lower School	8	33.3	33.3
School employee of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School	1	4.2	4.2
School employee of another school in the area	1	4.2	4.2
School Governor of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School	7	29.2	29.2
Local resident	4	16.7	16.7
Other	3	12.5	12.5
Total	24	100.0	100.0

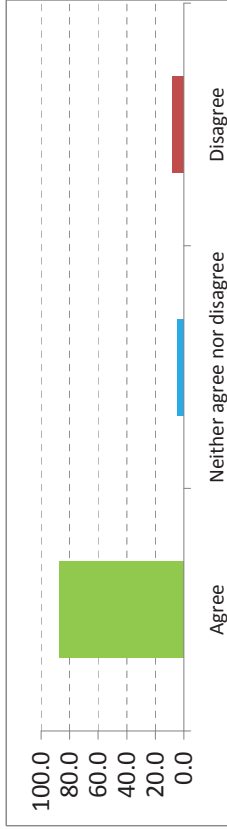


Q1.a - If other, please specify:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
Diocesan authority	1	4.2	33.3
Grandparent	1	4.2	33.3
Local Authority Officer	1	4.2	33.3
Total	3	12.5	100.0
Missing	21	87.5	
Total	24	100.0	

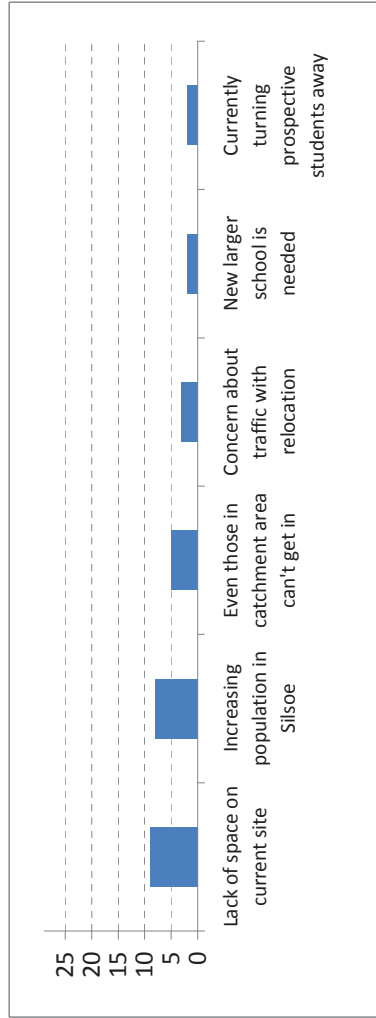
Q3 - Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to relocate and expand Silsoe CofE VC Lower School?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Agree	21	87.5	87.5
Neither agree nor disagree	1	4.2	4.2
Disagree	2	8.3	8.3
Total	24	100.0	100.0



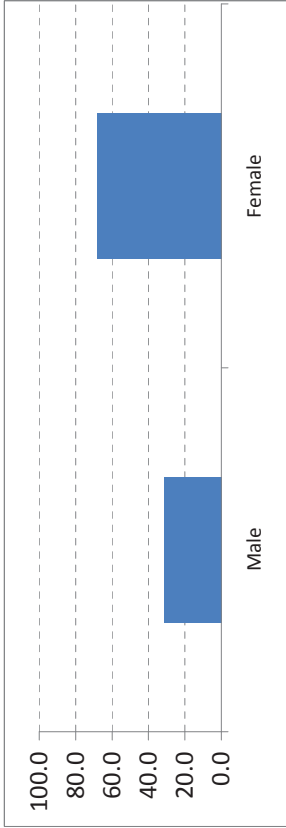
Q4 - Please give us your reasons why you agree or disagree with the proposed relocation and expansion of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

Topic	Frequency
Lack of space on current site	9
Increasing population in Silsoe Even those in catchment area can't get in	8
Concern about traffic with relocation	5
New larger school is needed	3
Currently turning prospective students away	2
	2



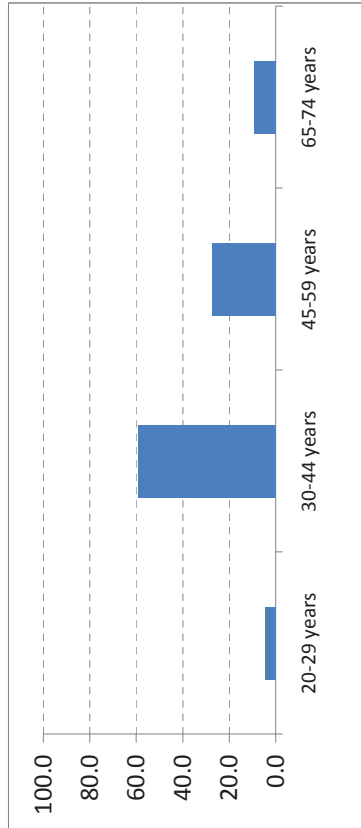
Q5 - Are you:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Male	6	25.0	31.6
Female	13	54.2	68.4
Total	19	79.2	100.0
Missing	5	20.8	
Total	24	100.0	



Q6 - What is your age?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid 20-29 years	1	4.2	4.5
30-44 years	13	54.2	59.1
45-59 years	6	25.0	27.3
65-74 years	2	8.3	9.1
Total	22	91.7	100.0
Missing	2	8.3	
Total	24	100.0	



Q7 - Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid No	20	83.3	100.0
Missing	4	16.7	
Total	24	100.0	

Q8 - To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid White British	21	87.5	100.0
Missing	3	12.5	
Total	24	100.0	

Q9 - What is your postcode?

	Frequency
Valid	
MK430TS	1
MK45 1EE	2
MK45 2US	1
MK45 4DR	1
MK45 4EA	2
Mk45 4EB	1
MK45 4EL	1
MK45 4EQ	1
MK45 4ER	1
MK45 4FD	1
MK45 4FY	1
Mk45 4lp	1
MK45 4QX	1
MK45 4RU	1
MK45 4SR	2
MK45 5BQ	1
MK454FZ	1
mk455du	1
SG17 5TQ	1
Total	22
Missing	2
Total	24

From: Eileen Bigg
Sent: 06 June 2014 11:06
To: Edwina Grant
Cc: Jon Reynolds; David Morton
Subject: Silsoe CE VC Lower School - Statutory Notice re relocation and expansion of the school

The Diocese of St Albans fully supports the relocation and expansion of Silsoe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School. This is necessary for the children of the village. The headteacher is very capable of handling this important change in the life of the school.

Kind regards,

Jon Reynolds

Director of Education, Diocese of St Albans (01727 818171)

Holywell Lodge, 41 Holywell Hill, St Albans AL1 1HE

Visit www.stalbans.anglican.org/schools for resources for teachers, governors and clergy

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Proposal to expand Edward Peake Church of England Voluntary Controlled Middle School to provide new middle school places for children in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Central Bedfordshire Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Edward Peake Church of England Voluntary Controlled Middle School, Potton Road, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire SG18 0EJ from 1 September 2016.

The proposal is to expand Edward Peake Church of England Voluntary Controlled Middle School from a four form of entry (480 place) middle school for pupils aged 9 to 13 to a five form of entry (600 place) middle school for pupils aged 9 to 13.

The current capacity of the school is 480. Following implementation the proposed capacity will be 600. The current number of pupils registered at the school is 355.

The admission number for the current school is 120 for each year group and the proposed admission number will be 150 for each year group.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: The Information Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council, Room DC2, Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 1LF. It can also be viewed on the Council's website at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/publicstatutorynotices and on the school's website at www.edwardpeake.beds.sch.uk

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may support, object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to the Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford, Beds, SG17 5TQ.

Signed: Edwina Grant

Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Children's Services

Publication Date: 2 June 2014

Explanatory notes:

New middle school places are required in Biggleswade as a result of significant housing development within the area.

PROPOSAL FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATION

Dated – Monday 2 June 2014



**Central
Bedfordshire**

1 - Name of Proposer

(Local Education Authority or Governing Body)

Central Bedfordshire Council

2 - School Name

Edward Peake Church of England Voluntary Controlled Middle School

3 - School Address

Potton Road
Biggleswade
Bedfordshire
SG18 0EJ

4 - Description of proposed prescribed alteration

To expand Edward Peake Cof E VC Middle School from its current capacity of 480 places to 600 places, from 4 forms of entry to 5 forms of entry.

5 – Evidence of demand

Up to 2018 1,063 dwellings are planned for the Biggleswade area including 1,020 dwellings within the Land East of Biggleswade, South of Potton Road and the Kings Reach developments. From 2019 to 2027 a further 903 dwellings are planned for the Biggleswade area within the Land East of Biggleswade, South of Potton Road and the Kings Reach developments plus a further 330 dwellings on land north of Potton Road.

The need for additional middle school places is proposed to be met through the expansion of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School which is immediately adjacent to the largest of the development areas at Kings Reach. The S106 agreement also includes provision for an allocation of land for additional facilities. The proposed expansion would take the school from its current capacity of 480 to 600 places.

The additional lower school places required as a result of the scale of demographic growth in the area is to be met through the new 2 Form Entry,

300 place expansion of St Andrew's CofE VC Lower School, Biggleswade, for implementation in September 2015 on a new site within the new development. Additional upper school places are proposed to be provided by the expansion of Stratton Upper School.

A consultation was carried out regarding the proposal to expand Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School from 3 March to 31 March 2014. The consultation document is attached at Appendix A.

Copies of the consultation document were provided to –

- The Governing Body of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School
- The staff of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School
- The parents and carers of pupils currently attending Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

And copies of the consultation document were made available to –

- The Member of Parliament for Biggleswade
- Biggleswade Town Council
- Neighbouring local authorities to Central Bedfordshire Council
- Local dioceses
- The Members of Central Bedfordshire Council
- All schools and academies within Central Bedfordshire

A press release was issued advising of the consultation.

The consultation document was also available on the Central Bedfordshire Council website with an on-line response facility.

Two meetings were held at Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School on 10 March 2014; the first at 4.00 pm for school staff and governors, followed by the second meeting at 7.00 for parents, carers and the general public . The presentation that was given at both meetings is attached at Appendix B. Notes of both meetings which include the concerns and questions that were raised, are attached at Appendix C and D

During the 4 week consultation, 58 responses were received, 83% of which were in favour of the proposal. The results of the consultation are available at Appendix E.

6 – Objectives

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School is one of two schools within Biggleswade that offer places for years 5-8. It is an Ofsted 'Good' school. The current school has a capacity for 480 and is now coming under increasing pressure for places from the new housing developments.

In terms of Central Bedfordshire Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in schools, this proposal will provide local places for local children promoting sustainable modes of travel and will create a more financially and educationally viable middle school above the suggested minimum size of 480 places. It will mean expansion of a popular and Ofsted rated Good school and will promote further partnership working within the Biggleswade Community Union of Schools which is already working together to deliver new places at

Lower and Upper Schools.

A feasibility study has been commissioned to inform the design process and ensure that capital investment in the expansion of the school also seeks opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.

7 – The effect of the proposed alteration on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area

There are two schools in Biggleswade that cater for middle school children (years 5-8): Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School and Biggleswade Academy. Edward Peake CofE VC Middle is the closer of the two schools to the new development being immediately adjacent to the largest of the development areas at Kings Reach. It is not anticipated that there will be any adverse effect on Biggleswade Academy from this proposal.

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School is a feeder school for Stratton Upper School, Biggleswade. As a result of a review of the forecast growth in Upper School pupil forecasts in the Biggleswade area, Stratton Upper, which is an academy, has been invited to undertake consultation and approval processes required, as an Academy, by the Education Funding Agency and the Council's Executive, to expand from its current capacity of 1,250 places to provide 1,650 places with an implementation date of September 2016. The Academy is undertaking significant detailed design work and has commenced the consultation process. The Academy has also confirmed its ability to accommodate forecast pupil numbers in the meantime.

8 – Project costs

The proposed new school is contained within Central Bedfordshire Council's New School Places Programme 2013/14 – 2018/19. The estimated capital cost of the project is £2.3m and it is to be funded through the Council's New School Places Programme.

9 – Implementation

It is proposed that the new school will be ready for the start of the new Autumn term in September 2016

10 – Procedure for responses; support, objections and comments

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal (i.e. by Monday 30 June 2014), any person may support, object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to the Deputy Chief Executive / Director Of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford, Beds, SG17 5TQ



Central Bedfordshire Council
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Appendix A

Consultation on the proposed expansion of Edward Peake Church of England Voluntary Controlled Middle School

To provide new middle school places for children in Biggleswade

**Monday 3 March 2014 –
Monday 31 March 2014**

1. Introduction

Councils have a duty to ensure there are enough suitable school places for children aged 5-16 (as per Section 14 of the Education Act 1996). The Council's role is to promote parental choice, diversity, high standards and fair access to education (Education and Inspections Act 2006).

This document explains the reasons for proposing to expand Edward Peake Church of England Voluntary Controlled (CofE VC) Middle School and how you can have your say.

2. Background

New middle school places are required in Biggleswade as a result of significant housing developments in the area. By 2018 1,063 new dwellings are planned for the Biggleswade area including 1,020 dwellings within the Land East of Biggleswade, South of Potton Road and Kings Reach developments. From 2019 to 2027 a further 903 dwellings are planned for the same areas of the town.

The Council has been working with schools and academies within the Biggleswade area that collectively comprise the Biggleswade Community Union of Schools (BCUS) to review places and plan for the impact of demographic changes across the area over the next five years and beyond. The pressure on existing provision and the need for more middle school places in this part of Biggleswade is clear, as is the requirement for additional lower and upper school places which are the subject of separate consultation processes.

3. Our proposal

In order to meet the increased demand for middle school places the Council now proposes to permanently enlarge Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School from its current capacity at four forms per year group (480 place) to become a five forms per year group (600 place) school on its existing site.

This proposal has been developed in consultation with the school's Governing Body and the St Alban's Diocese who are both supportive of the Council's plans.

4. Why are the Governing Body of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School and Central Bedfordshire Council consulting with you?

This proposal constitutes a significant expansion of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School which requires both informal consultation and the publication of Statutory Proposals, in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Informal consultation enables all interested parties to express their views on the proposal and thereby influence the decisions and actions made regarding the additional provision of school places.

Starting on page three of this document you will find a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) which may help to address some immediate concerns that you may have.

5. The consultation process

You can **have your say via the online form** which is available on the Council's website at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations or you can complete pages five and six of this document and return them to the FREEPOST address provided at the end of the form. Completed forms should be returned by **5.00pm Monday 31 March 2014**.

Meetings will be held with the staff, union representatives and governors of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School.

There will also be a **public meeting** which will be open to all interested parties. This meeting will be held at Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School on **Monday 10 March 2014 at 7.00pm**.

The timeline for the process will be –

Action	Timescale/Deadline
Four week consultation period begins	Monday 3 March 2014
Staff and Governors meeting	Monday 10 March 2014 at 4.00pm
Public meeting	Monday 10 March 2014 at 7.00pm
End of consultation period	Monday 31 March 2014
If decision is made to proceed with the proposal, Statutory Notices will be published on	Monday 2 June 2014
4 week period for the submission of comments and/or objections in response to the Statutory Notices	Monday 2 June 2014 to Monday 30 June 2014
End of Statutory Notice period	Monday 30 June 2014
Final decision regarding the proposal to be made by the Council's Executive Committee on	Tuesday 19 August 2014

If a decision is made to permanently expand Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School, formal implementation of the expansion will commence in September 2016, for the 2016/17 academic year.

6. Frequently asked questions

Q What new facilities will be provided at the school to accommodate the increased number of children? How will these new facilities impact upon the current school premises?

A -The Council is working with the school to consider not only the need for extra classrooms but to look at the impact the extra numbers will have on the rest of the school's infrastructure. The school is currently working with the Council on a feasibility study which will then inform further detailed design work. Proposals will be developed which will bring the school up to the recognised standards for the increased size of school in permanent accommodation. A separate planning process will be undertaken in due course.

Q – When will these new facilities be completed?

A – The overall changes will be phased in over a period of time so as to minimise the disruption to the rest of the school and a phasing plan will be developed in consultation with the school. The whole of the new facilities are proposed to be ready for occupation in September 2016.

Q – Does the Council have the funds to provide these new facilities?

A – Yes, the total costs are estimated at approximately £ 1.5m. The council will fund the expansion via developer contributions which the Council has already secured for education purposes under S106 agreements.

Q- Will the additional facilities reduce the amount of outdoor space that is available for the current and for the additional children?

A – The S106 agreement also includes provision for an allocation of land for additional playing fields.

Q – How will this expansion impact upon the existing staff at the school? Will additional staff be employed?

A – Yes, the school will need to recruit additional teaching and support staff.

Q -How will the proposed expansion impact upon the school curriculum?

A - The school will continue to deliver the national curriculum as at present. This will not change as a result of these proposals. However, the school will be provided with the additional space necessary to deliver the curriculum for the increased number of pupils.

Q – Will the admissions procedure for the school change because of the expansion?

A – No, the admissions procedure will remain the same.

Q – Has the Council considered any alternative solutions other than the expansion of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School?

A – Yes, the Council has considered other alternative solutions however this proposal will provide local places for local children, promoting sustainable modes of travel and will create a more financially and educationally viable middle school above the suggested minimum size of 480 places. It will mean expansion of a popular and Ofsted rated 'Good' school and will promote further partnership working within the Biggleswade Community Union of Schools which is already working together to deliver new places at lower and upper Schools. A feasibility study will be commissioned to inform the design process and ensure that capital investment in the expansion of the school also seeks opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.

There may be other questions you wish to raise and we will be happy to respond to these at the public consultation meeting on 10 March.

For more information about this proposal please contact Sue Barrow by telephone on 0300 300 5700 or email sue.barrow@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

**Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Children's Services
Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford
SG17 5TQ**



Appendix B

Consultation on the proposed expansion of Edward Peake Church of England Voluntary Controlled Middle School

Monday 3 March – Monday 31 March 2014

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Introductions:

- Many Reddick** – Head teacher, Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School
- Clare Neish** – Chair of Governors, Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School
- Rob Parsons** – Head of School Organisation, Admissions and Capital Planning, CBC
- Lydia Braisher** – Admissions Manager, CBC

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Statutory Responsibilities:

Education Act 1996 – to ensure that there are sufficient and suitable places for those who want them

Strategic Role:

- Commissioners of places, not necessarily providers
- Promoters of parental choice, diversity, high standards
- Fair Access

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Central Bedfordshire Council

School Organisation Plan

2013-2018 – Published September 2013

(Annually reviewed and rolled on a further year)

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

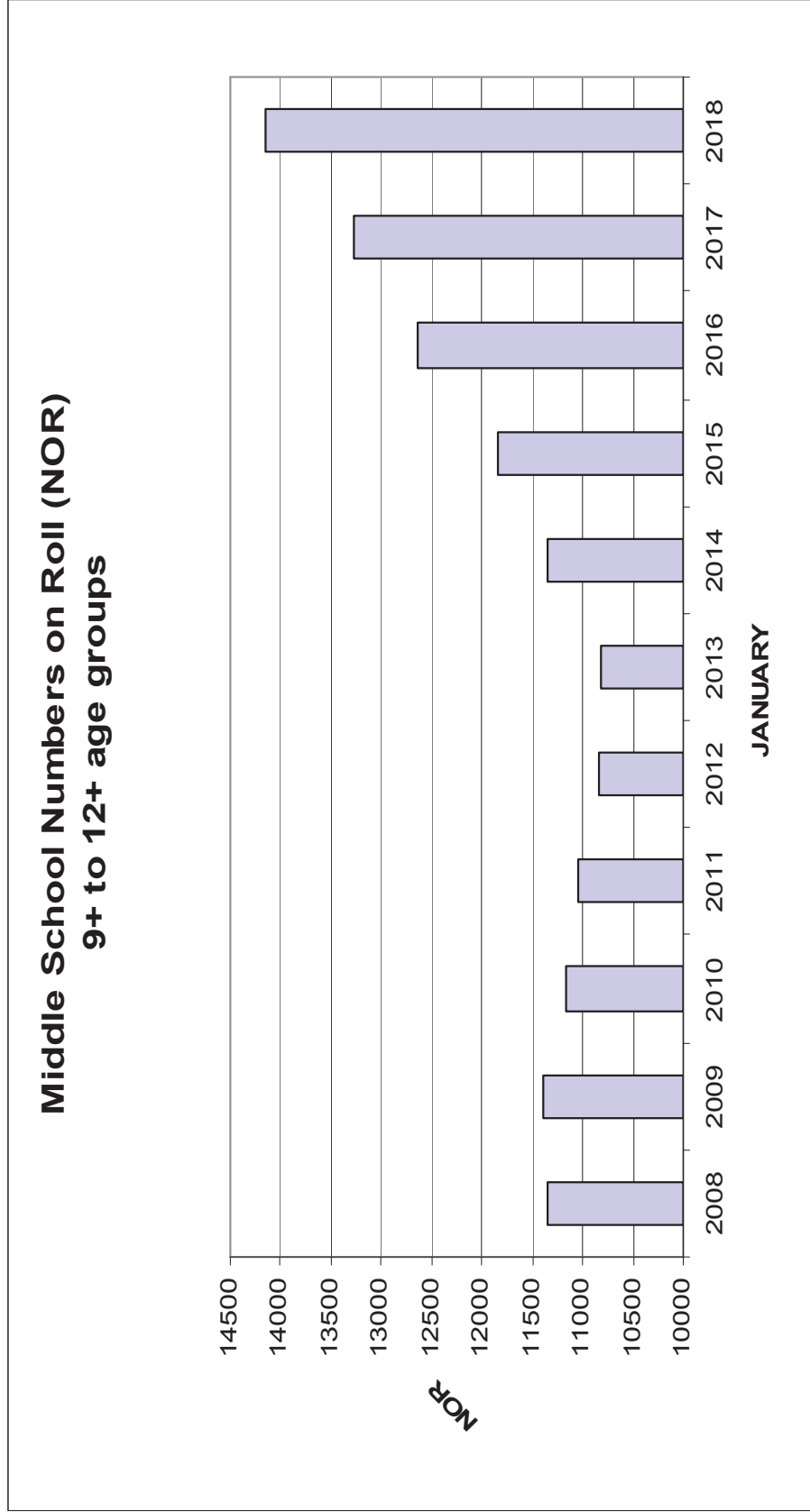
HOUSING:

New middle school places are required in Biggleswade as a result of significant housing developments in the area.

Up to 2018 1,063 dwellings are planned for the Biggleswade area including 1,020 dwellings within the Land East of Biggleswade, South of Potton Road and Kings Reach developments.

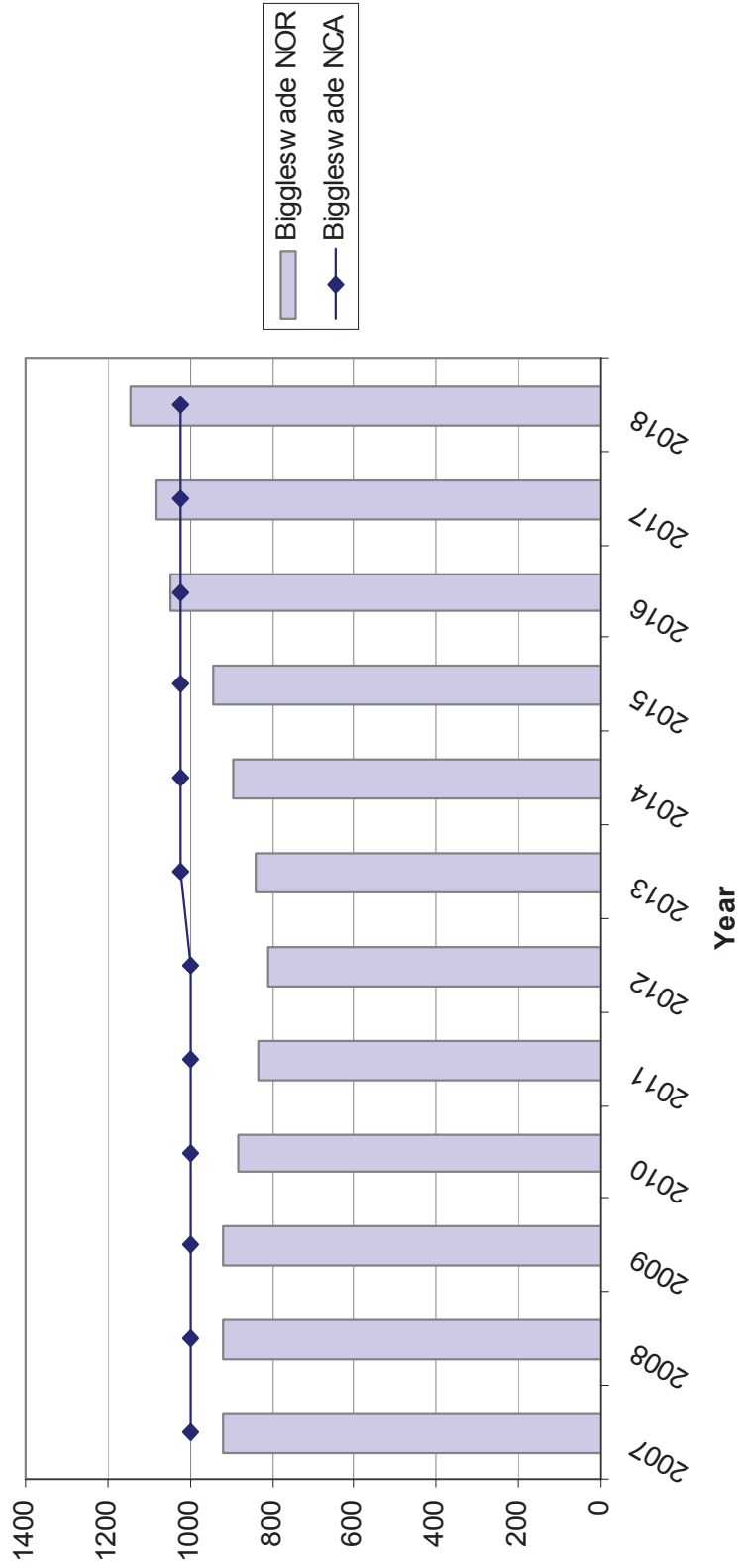
From 2019 to 2027 a further 903 dwellings are planned for the Biggleswade area within the Land East of Biggleswade, South of Potton Road and Kings Reach developments

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School



Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

**Biggleswade Middle School's:
Actual/Forecast Numbers on Roll (NOR) v NCA**



Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

The Council has been working with schools and academies within the Biggleswade area that collectively comprise the Biggleswade Community Union of Schools (BCUS) to review places and plan for the impact of demographic changes across the area over the next five years and beyond.

The pressure on existing provision and the need for more middle school places in this part of Biggleswade is clear, as is the requirement for additional lower and upper school places which are the subject of separate consultation processes.

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Process so far:

- December 2013 - Executive approved request to consult on the proposed expansion of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School
- Indicative capital budget established (revenue support to follow)
- School to draft its business case against Council's policy principles
- Consultation launched on Monday 3 March 2014
- Meetings held at school on Monday 10 March 2014
- Consultation ends on Monday 31 March 2014

Edward Peake VC Middle School

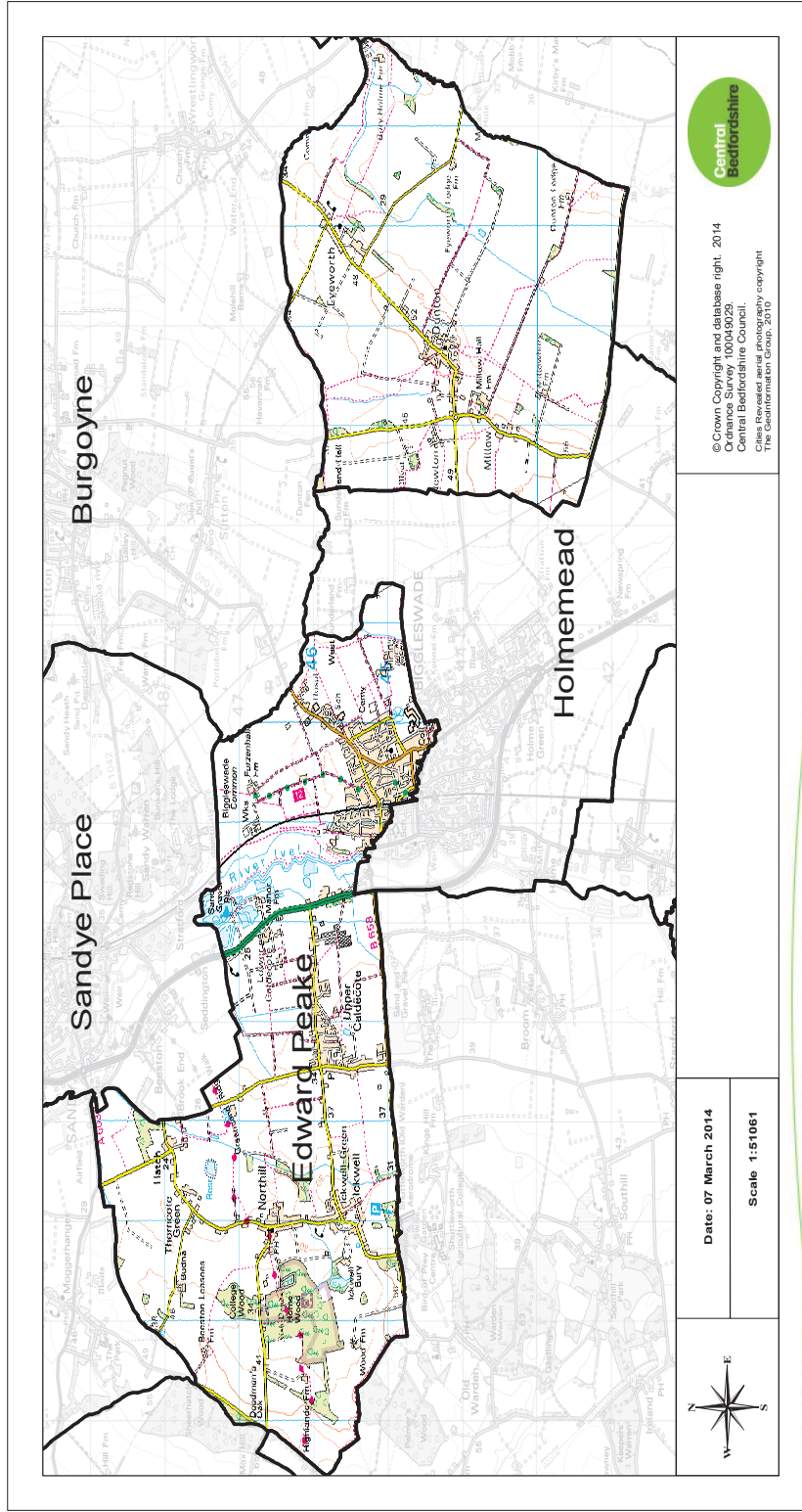
Admissions Criteria – September 2016

Published admissions number will be 150 places

- 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

The school's catchment area

- Catchment area will remain unchanged



Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

At Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School:

- Development of outline design proposals (feasibility)
- Use of DfE area guidelines (BB99)
- Full Estimate of Costs
- Detailed design proposals (incl phasing)
- Submission of planning application (subject to separate planning consultation requirements)

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Next Steps:

Report drafted on outcome of consultation

Statutory Public Notices – June 2014

Council's Executive Decision Making (August 2014)

Commissioning of building works July 2015?

Implementation Sept 2016

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Consultation Document:

Available from School, Council offices, Council website.

Responses either on-line (preferably) or via post

Closing date – Monday 31 March 2014

Frequently asked questions

Your questions

Consultation on the proposed expansion of Edward Peake Middle School, Biggleswade

Queries / comments raised at meeting with staff and governors – held at Edward Peake Middle School on Monday 10 March 2014 at 4.00 pm



Meeting led by –

Rob Parsons – Head of School Organisation, Admissions & Capital Planning
Lydia Braisher – Admissions Manager
Mandy Reddick – Head teacher, Edward Peake Middle School

Note taker - Sue Barrow – Information Manager

Mandy Reddick welcomed all to the meeting and introduced CBC staff to the group. She admitted that she was excited about the project but acknowledged that they need to retain the distinctiveness of the school.

Rob Parsons gave a presentation regarding the proposal; which included the background of local housing growth, the legal process for commissioning new school places, the responsibility of the Council and the stages and length of the process involved. Lydia Braisher advised on the admissions aspect of the proposed expansion

Query / comment	Answer / response
Can the project be delivered by September 2016?	Yes, we are already undertaking feasibility studies. This will be a complex build but we are currently building a 300 place school with a 9 month construction timeframe so this expansion will be possible within this time frame.
Changing an existing building is possibly more expensive than building new. There can be problems when adding a 5th form.	We are aware of the complications of expanding existing provision and are working with the school to ensure that current deficiencies in the existing school can also be addressed where possible.
Is £1.5m the absolute total?	No. It is yet to be confirmed but it will be a quality build.
There any many things that are unsatisfactory in school – e.g. we cannot gather the whole school together, and some building are away from the main block.	We are aware of these concerns and will look to see if we can address them in the new build and refurbishment works that will comprise the expansion project.
Who has the final say on the	CNC Planning and Development Control

design and look of the school?	colleagues will be consulted. The Governing Body will be required to sign off the plan before it goes back to the Council's Executive
Will car parking be considered? The proposal will mean more staff and more children which will result in an increased demand for parking and access for buses	We are aware of these issues. The school's travel plan will be updated and the Council's Sustainable Transport Officers will be consulted. The HT has already met with the designer and advised him of these issues

Rob Parsons further advised that an extra piece of land for a playing field has been secured. He added that we will need to look at how we provide the extra accommodation in the early stages.

He encouraged all staff and governors to respond to the consultation, both as groups and also as individuals.

Mandy Reddick summarised that it will be a long slow process but that the school will have a say in the plans

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm

Consultation on the proposed expansion of Edward Peake Middle School, Biggleswade

Queries / comments raised at meeting public – held at Edward Peake Middle School on Monday 10 March 2014 at 7.00 pm



Meeting led by –

Rob Parsons – Head of School Organisation, Admissions & Capital Planning
Lydia Braisher – Admissions Manager
Mandy Reddick – Head teacher, Edward Peake Middle School

Note taker - Sue Barrow – Information Manager

Mandy Reddick welcomed the few attendees to the meeting and introduced CBC staff to the group. She admitted that she was excited about the project but acknowledged that they need to retain the distinctiveness of the school.

Rob Parsons gave a presentation regarding the proposal; which included the background of local housing growth, the legal process for commissioning new school places, the responsibility of the Council and the stages and length of the process involved. Lydia Braisher advised on the admissions aspect of the proposed expansion

Query / comment	Answer / response
Transport is very bad in and out of school. Will extra car parking be considered? The proposal will mean more staff and more children which will result in an increased demand for parking and access for buses. Buses currently have to reverse onto the school site.	We are aware of these issues and this is an opportunity to address them. The Planning process will look into this in more detail and the school's travel plan will be reviewed. We expand local schools so as to allow sustainable methods of travel. The Town Council have spoken to the developers about a crossing point across the main road.
Does the Council have recent experience of expanding a 480 place into a 600 place middle school?	No, but we are taking Holywell in Cranfield from a 544 to a 600 place school. That project is following the same process and there will be similar issues.
Can we visit a project, i.e. a middle school expansion that the Council has completed recently?	The Council's Project Manager has recently delivered expansion projects at Redborne Upper, All Saints and at the University Technical College.

	We are currently working through the most active stage of the 5 year, £108m School Organisation Plan. Visits will be arranged as necessary to similar projects.
Given that much Government funding has dried up and local funding is squeezed hard, can the £1.5m budget for the project be raised?	£1.5m is a QS estimate. The budget is flexible. Most of the funding will come from the developers. The final budget figure will be confirmed in August. The improvements that have recently been commissioned for the school (as part of the Council's 'School Capital Maintenance Programme') are over and above this proposal
Can parents be assured that we are going for a quality expansion?	Yes. The budget for a 120 place expansion will be sufficient.
Will the school's management team be able to cope with the increased workload of this project?	Yes. The Head will be invited to submit a revenue application to the Council's Growth Fund in order to help pay for the time that she is spending on this project and any resulting 'back-filling'.
Will the standard of education that the children currently receive in school continue?	Yes, there is a good leadership team in place and the additional revenue funding will help us to back-fill posts. The additional admin work will be carried out by the admin team and not by the teaching staff.

Rob Parsons closed the meeting and encouraged all present to respond to the consultation.

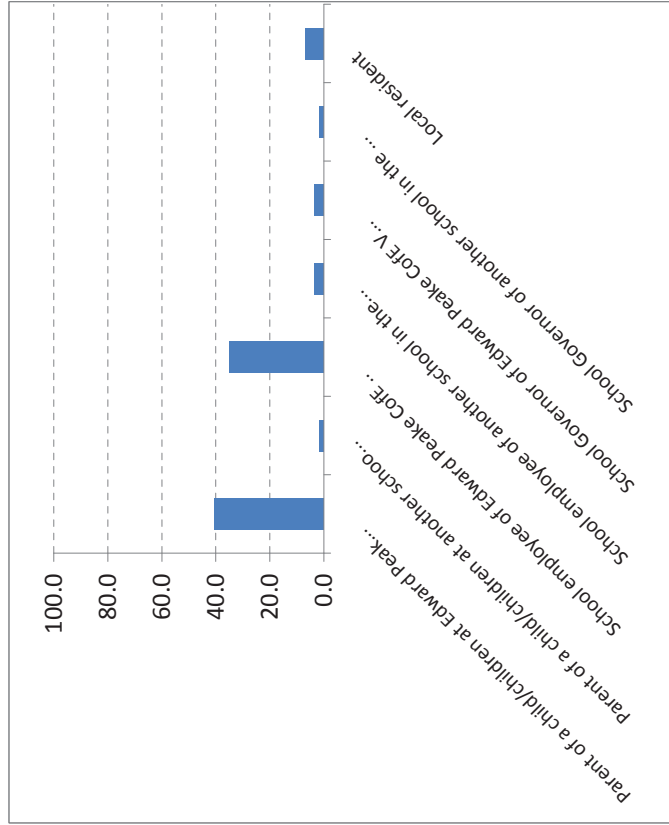
The meeting closed at 7.40 pm

**Edward Peake results
Based on 58 responses**

Appendix E

Q1 - Are you a: (Please tick one)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
Parent of a child/children at Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School	23	39.7	40.4
Parent of a child/children at another school in the area	1	1.7	1.8
School employee of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School	20	34.5	35.1
School employee of another school in the area	2	3.4	3.5
School Governor of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School	2	3.4	3.5
School Governor of another school in the area	1	1.7	1.8
Local resident	4	6.9	7.0
Other	4	6.9	7.0
Total	57	98.3	100.0
Missing	1	1.7	
Total	58	100.0	

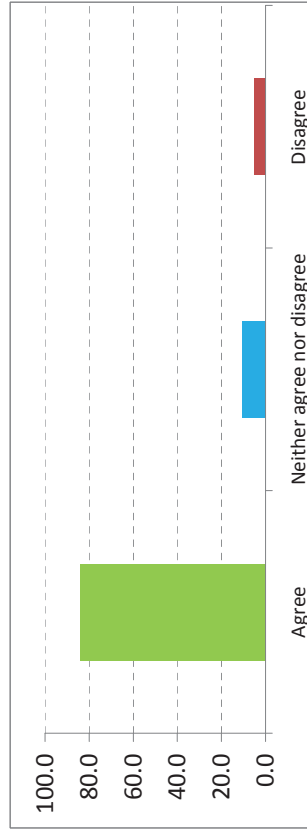


Q1.a - If other, please specify:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
Diocesan authority	1	1.7	33.3
Guardian of a child at the school.	1	1.7	33.3
Local Authority Officer	1	1.7	33.3
Total	3	5.2	100.0
Missing	55	94.8	
Total	58	100.0	

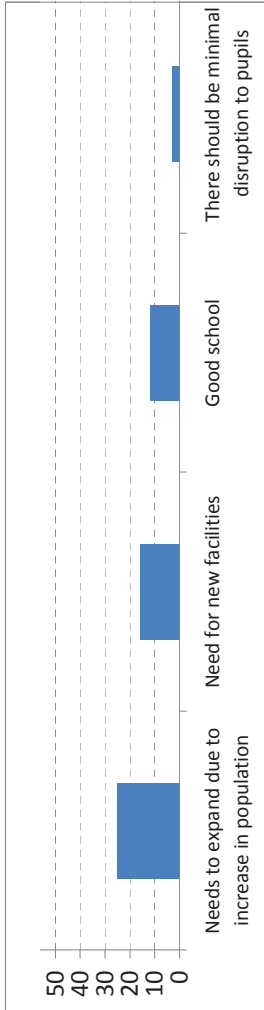
Q3 - Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to expand Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
Agree	48	82.8	84.2
Neither agree nor disagree	6	10.3	10.5
Disagree	3	5.2	5.3
Total	57	98.3	100.0
Missing	1	1.7	
Total	58	100.0	



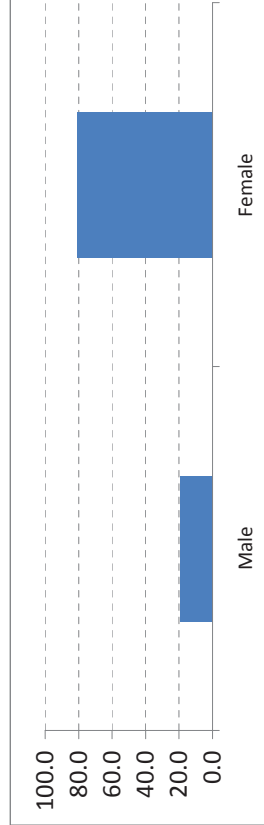
Q4 - Please give us your reasons why you agree or disagree with the proposed expansion of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Topic	Frequency
Needs to expand due to increase in population	25
Need for new facilities	16
Good school	12
There should be minimal disruption to pupils	3



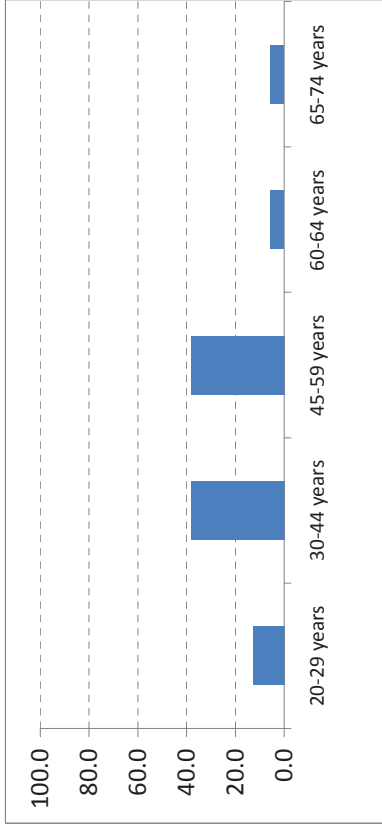
Q5 - Are you: (please tick one)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Male	11	19.0	19.3
Valid Female	46	79.3	80.7
Valid Total	57	98.3	100.0
Missing Total	1	1.7	
Total	58	100.0	



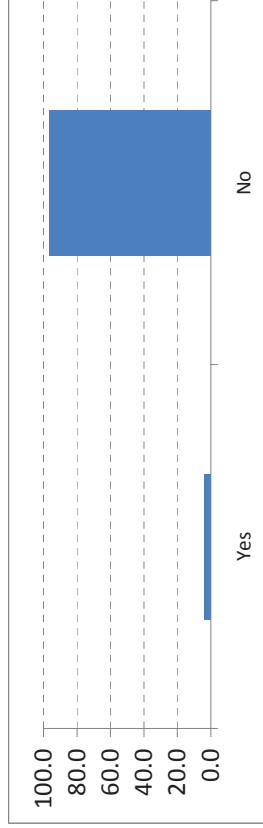
Q6 - What is your age? (Please tick one)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
20-29 years	7	12.1	12.7
30-44 years	21	36.2	38.2
45-59 years	21	36.2	38.2
60-64 years	3	5.2	5.5
65-74 years	3	5.2	5.5
Total	58	94.8	100.0
Missing	3	5.2	
Total	58	100.0	



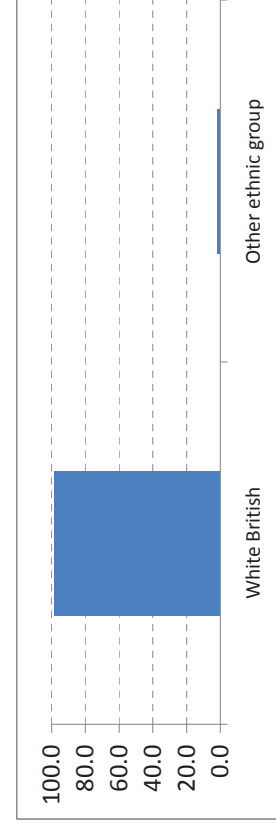
Q7 - Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
Yes	2	3.4	3.6
No	54	93.1	96.4
Total	56	96.6	100.0
Missing	2	3.4	
Total	58	100.0	



Q8 - To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
White British	55	94.8	98.2
Other ethnic group	1	1.7	1.8
Total	56	96.6	100.0
Missing	2	3.4	
Total	58	100.0	



Q9 - What is your postcode?

	Frequency
Valid	1
MK41 6DR	1
Mk443BQ	1
Mk443uj	1
MK45 2BA	1
MK45 4EU	1
pe19 1ra	1
PE19 8PJ	1
SG17 5LB	1
sg17 5tl	1
SG17 5TQ	1
SG18	2
Sg18 0 da	1
SG18 0AN	1
SG18 0BS	1
SG18 0DF	1
SG18 0DN	1
SG18 0ES	1
SG18 0FL	1
Sg18 0fp	1
SG18 0HF	1
SG18 0HH	1
SG18 0HL	1
SG18 0JN	1
SG18 0NX	1
SG18 0PT	1
SG18 8BT	1
SG18 8DY	1
SG18 8ES	1
SG18 8FB	1
SG18 8HD	1

sg18 8qd	1
SG18 8RH	1
Sg18 9ab	2
SG18 9AD	1
SG18 9AQ	1
SG18 9BD	1
SG18 9BH	1
SG18 9BX	3
SG18 9DA	1
SG18 9QS	1
SG180NS	1
Sg189eh	1
SG19 1AE	1
SG19 1HN	1
SG19 2DX	1
SG19 2QB	1
SG19 3JR	1
SG19 9EW	1
SG192RG	1
Total	53
Missing	5
Total	58

Business Case for proposed school and academy expansions for September 2016 implementation.

Stratton Upper School

Central Bedfordshire Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning

1	<p>The need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel.</p> <p>Location Stratton Upper School is ideally located to provide the additional upper school places required in Biggleswade. It is in easy walking distance from the areas of development. In addition work has already been completed to upgrade and extend an existing pathway to form a cycle route leading to and from the school and areas of new housing.</p> <p>Community The school has a strong track record of promoting community cohesion. It is a centre for a number of community activities including adult education and sports clubs. The large hall can seat up to 400 people and the stage area is professionally designed to accommodate concerts and theatre productions.</p>
2	<p>The need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable.</p> <p>Currently 15% of Stratton students are from families that have been eligible to receive free school meals in the last six years. This compares to national average of 29%. In areas of higher deprivation smaller schools (less than 900 students) may offer some cost benefit but that argument is not applicable to this context.</p> <p>The scale of the proposed expansion means that the number of 13 to 16-year-olds will increase from the current maximum of 900 to approximately 1150. This is well within the range of other upper schools in Central Bedfordshire and will create an institution of up to 1650 students including 6th form provision.</p> <p>The school has a strong ethos centred around respect and aspiration. In its most recent inspection Ofsted judged behaviour to be good and in the HMI visit of July 2013 noted that behaviour continued to improve. The school is on track to achieve an 80% reduction in fixed term exclusions and an 87% reduction in permanent exclusions measured between September 2012 and July 2014. The school's internal measurement of low level disruption reveals a reduction of incidents exceeding 90% during the same period.</p> <p>The school already benefits from having sufficient capacity to offer a wide and engaging curriculum. A further increase in student numbers would ensure that this can be sustained and enhanced in the future. Stratton Upper School has recently introduced a heavily revised curriculum offer concentrating on providing a broadly academic pathway to Key Stage 4 students. This is in line with current government thinking and supports current and future measures of accountability.</p> <p>Stratton has a proven track record of meeting student needs. In the Sixth Form students choose from a range of academic and applied Level III qualifications totalling 33 subjects. To support the Raising of the Participation Age agenda a 16+ Level 2 programme catering for the needs of students to achieve a solid qualification foundation before progressing to Level 3 academic qualifications, vocational pathways or accessing apprenticeships was successfully introduced.</p>

Larger schools are able to offer commensurately larger salaries to posts with responsibility. This will enable Stratton to attract more able and ambitious candidates for middle and senior leader positions creating capacity both in skill and scale.

The current Headteacher has been in post since 2010. He has experience of middle and senior leadership in four schools representing a range of contexts. This includes a school judged to be outstanding and a school judged to be good with outstanding features. The two most successful schools where the Headteacher worked prior to taking up post at Stratton both exceeded 1800 students. He is committed to a long-term relationship with the school and has introduced a number of reforms promoting rapid impact on school improvement. With the Governors, the school shares a joint vision of becoming an outstanding provider within three years.

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

Stratton Upper School is currently judged to "require improvement". However, this 2013 inspection also noted that the school was on "a well-planned journey of improvement" which continues.

In 2009, the school was judged to be good against the previous inspection regime though it identified weaknesses in Maths and only satisfactory performance across the Sixth Form.

The 2013 inspection recognised the measures that had been brought forward to address these areas, but also further initiatives to reshape the Key Stage 4 curriculum and improving teaching and learning. All development activities focus sharply on improving academic achievement.

At the time of the inspection 2013 the Sixth Form was judged good and the significant raising standards in maths noted. The leadership team were found to have made the correct decisions to create sustainable improvements to educational outcomes and to have the capacity to drive forward their change agenda.

Stratton Upper School continues to enjoy the confidence of its catchment. 93% of parents would recommend Stratton Upper School to another family (parent view).

Stratton Upper School has set itself robust targets to underpin school improvement over the coming years. These are summed up in the table below:

Key Stage	2012	2013	2014 (predicted)	2015 (estimated)	2016 (Targets)
	5A*-C (E&M) = 51.6%	5A*-C (E&M) = 52.4%	5A*-C (E&M) = 63%	5A*-C (E&M) = 62%	5A*-C (E&M) = 66% (note: this measure is not applicable in 2016)
4	Expected and exceeded progress English = 58%, 20% Maths = 71%, 29%	Expected and exceeded progress English = 63%, 32% Maths = 67%, 30%	Expected and exceeded progress English = 78%, 43% Maths = 77%, 42%	Expected and exceeded progress English = 84%, 45% Maths = 84%, 45%	Expected and exceeded progress English = 86%, 48% Maths = 86%, 48%
5	A Level Performance ALPS AS = 5 A2 = 4	A Level Performance ALPS AS = 2 A2 = 4	A Level Performance ALPS AS = 2 A2 = 3	A Level Performance ALPS AS = 3 A2 = 3	A Level Performance ALPS AS = 3 A2 = 3

	<p>Since the school's last inspection the school has worked closely with Elaine Taylor, the school's appointed HMI and John Greevy, an independent experienced Ofsted inspector. In the school's section 8 report (Elaine Taylor July 2013) the school was found to have taken secure and appropriate action to further accelerate improvement in achievement. The school's plans were found to be targeted accurately against the action points highlighted by the 2013 Ofsted report:</p> <p><i>"Priorities for development in the academy's action plans are clear and focus on the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The plans show what actions the academy will take, who will lead the work and what the impact will be. Governors are supporting the improvement work well by challenging leaders and checking the impact of their work."</i></p> <p>Stratton employs Mr Greevy as an external consultant to validate the Senior Team's analysis of standards and to inform progress against the school's targets.</p> <p>The school's targets for 2014 for both achievement and attainment are compatible with an Ofsted grading of "good". The school anticipates its next full inspection in Autumn of 2014.</p>
4	<p>The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities</p> <p>Stratton Upper School firmly believes in close partnership working in collaboration with schools to improve education practice.</p> <p>As a former training school, Stratton Upper School is a founding partner of the Central Bedfordshire Teaching School Partnership. The Headteacher is a founding Governor and Trustee of the Central Bedfordshire Academy, an alternative provision free school.</p> <p>It is the sponsoring Academy of Cambridgeshire middle school Gamlingay Village College. This school was placed in special measures in February 2011. Under the leadership of Stratton Upper School it has rapidly improved and was recently judged (October 2013) to be a secure Grade 3 (Requires Improvement). In July 2014 the Key Stage 2 results establish outcomes for the school that would support the judgement of "good" at the schools next inspection anticipated in the academic year 2014/15.</p> <p>Stratton plays a full part in the collaborative groups that exist within the authority. These include the Upper School Heads Group and equivalent Deputy Headteacher forums. Stratton has a particularly close collaborative training partnership with Vandyke Upper School.</p> <p>Stratton plays a full and active part in the development of the Biggleswade Community Union of Schools (BCUS). BCUS is a collaboration of all local education providers. This supportive network has at its core raising education outcomes at every age, stage and phase. Within the network both CBC middle schools are rated "good" whilst of the lower schools and early years providers three are "outstanding" whilst the remainder are "good".</p> <p>In support of Central Bedfordshire's wider policy of rationalising provision BCUS has actively supported the creation of Biggleswade Academy (0-13 provider), the expansion of St Andrew's Lower school (through the opening of a second site supporting demographic growth), the federation of Northill Lower with Edward Peake Middle and the latter's proposed expansion.</p> <p>On behalf BCUS Stratton has organised and presented two cross phase education conferences attended by over 400 staff. A third is planned for April 2014. As before the conference agenda is closely aligned with the area-wide BCUS development plan.</p>
5	<p>The ambition to achieve a single phase of education 0 -19 and reduce school transfer points</p> <p>Stratton Upper School is firmly committed to the vision of 0-19 seamless education. Through its collaborative work with BCUS it has promoted significant development in liaison between all phases of education to ensure curriculum continuity. Stratton's ethos is fully aligned with all members of BCUS and it has led projects designed to bring age appropriate consistency to</p>

	<p>issues as diverse as Sex and Relationship Education and homework policies across the area.</p> <p>Although Stratton Upper School has a particularly stable cohort of students it also has the ability to support mid-phase transfer through well-developed induction processes.</p>
6	<p>The need to support the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).</p> <p>Stratton Upper School prides itself on its ability to instil lifelong love of learning into its students. It is well placed to cope with the increasing demands brought about by the Raising of the Participation Age. Exceptionally few Stratton students become "NEET". A well-established pattern of post 16 destinations consists of 66 to 70% of students transferring to Stratton Sixth Form. Of the remainder, 25%-28% are tracked to other post 16 providers, typically FE colleges offering strong vocational pathways, whilst of the remaining students approximately 8% enter the workplace with training opportunities.</p> <p>In preparation for the Raising of the Participation Age Stratton Upper School Sixth Form strengthened its Level 2 curriculum offers to provide a viable alternative for students who narrowly missed out on qualification for Level 3 study. More recently, Stratton Upper School has identified a small demand amongst students who at 16+ are not yet emotionally ready to undertake the necessary travel arrangements to access alternative providers. With that in mind and in collaboration with the Ivel Valley school, a limited range of Level 1 provision has been developed.</p> <p>It should be noted that numbers in the Sixth Form have increased steadily over this period, and dedicated accommodation, particularly to support independent learning is at a very high premium within the campus. Our proposals include significant investment in Sixth Form provision.</p>
7	<p>To seek opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.</p>
	<p>The centrepiece of our proposal is the building of a dedicated block of Science Laboratories. We believe that providing the opportunity for a strong scientific education will enhance future employment prospects for the students we serve. Our ambition is to create an exciting and inspirational learning environment that will inspire future generations of Stratton Upper School students.</p> <p>A strength of Stratton Upper School in recent years has been the performance of its A-level scientists. Across Central Bedfordshire Stratton Upper School already leads the way for the number of students who successfully complete three facilitating A-levels. Many of these students chose a science pathway. Each year we are able to prepare candidates for the take-up places at the country's leading universities to read Natural Sciences, Medicine, Veterinary Science and Dentistry. In addition many other students choose university courses that have a strong science-based element. In a recent example a Stratton student has graduated from Cambridge University (June 2014) with a first-class honours degree in Geography.</p> <p>We want to use the opportunity of this expansion to develop Central Bedfordshire's premier 13 to 19 education facility for Science and become a beacon for outstanding practice.</p> <p>The other significant aspect of this project is the redesigning of the front of school which we see as having particular benefit to the community as well as a school itself. Improved reception facilities will support the use of the Great Hall as a community resource capable of supporting professional and amateur arts productions. In the second phase of our Masterplan (not part of this current investment) the school will further enhance role as a community resource by improving parking and seeking to build an artificial sports pitch capable of supporting numerous sport clubs.</p> <p>Local clubs supporting tennis, badminton, archery and cricket already make extensive use of the school's sports facilities now wholly managed by the school following the demise of the joint partnership arrangements with Stevenage Leisure (from April 2011). The school is proud</p>

	<p>to be a resource widely used and enjoyed by the community.</p> <p>Stratton Upper School is one of 100 schools nationally that have a school farm. At over 9 acres, it probably represents one of the biggest such organisations in the country. The new Science provision has been designed to have a close relationship with the farm. In addition to the fantastic learning opportunities enjoyed by Stratton Upper School students, the farm is open to the community on several occasions across the year and is widely accessed by pupils from local schools representing all phases of education.</p>
8	<p>To promote the diversity of provision offered in Central Bedfordshire to increase opportunities for parental choice</p> <p>Stratton Upper School is fully comprehensive and inclusive. It has supported a more diverse approach to local education provision by developing relationships with the soon-to-be opened Plymouth Brethren school in Biggleswade.</p> <p>The Local Authority's own notes make it clear that the increase in student numbers envisaged within Biggleswade would not adequately support a new school other than for early years and lower school pupils. The Authority recognises that to provide a breath of curriculum at secondary/upper school level a minimum of six forms of entry is required whilst the growth anticipated in Biggleswade even when the new development is a full capacity would generate less than 50% of the student numbers</p> <p>Stratton Upper School is not a faith-based school but has a long tradition of inclusion and tolerance that supports successful education provision for students from families representing all faiths and none.</p>
9	<p>To support vulnerable learners in Area Special Schools and integrate appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within mainstream schools</p> <p>Stratton Upper School has well-established links with the Ivel Valley school. Students from Ivel Valley are based at Stratton Upper School and integrate into form groups, assemblies and where appropriate, lessons. Stratton and Ivel Valley have collaborated to provide a number of specialised courses to support both Stratton and Ivel Valley students with specific needs.</p>

	<p>Capacity to Deliver the proposed expansion.</p> <p>For schools/academies that would like to procure design and construction works directly and manage the project to completion, please set out below the project management approach that you intend to take, including governance arrangements. Please ensure that you are clear of the professional support that you intend to engage and of the experience of the School and its Governing Body in successfully delivering significant capital projects.</p>
1	<p>Stratton Education Trust has set up a Project Board to manage the process of taking the project from initial scope to actual delivery of the finally agreed scheme. This Project Board includes representation from:</p> <p>School Governors (Including Chairman of the Trust) Staff including Executive Headteacher and Director of Finance Design Team Project Management</p> <p>In the preparation for the project the school has revised the support staffing structure. This review led to a recognition that there was a lack of experience in delivery of schemes of this size. As a consequence the Trust has appointed a</p>

Director of Finance, who will be responsible for being the initial point of contact within Stratton Upper School with both the externally appointed Project Management staff from Frost Associates and the externally appointed Design Team from Penoyre & Prasad.

Both Frost Associates and Penoyre & Prasad have demonstrable experience in the delivery of significant capital projects. Equally the newly appointed Director of Finance has over 30 years' experience within Local Government and for the past 8 1/2 years he was Deputy S151 with Milton Keynes Council, which has delivered significant new school build throughout that period.

The Project Board meets on a regular basis and reports directly to the Full Governor meetings at key milestones through the period covered by the project.

Appendix D – 19 August 2014 Executive

	Target implementation date	Funding			School funds
		Gross Cost	S106 Total	Basic Need	
Extension and relocation of Silsoe CofE VC Lower School from 135 to 225 places and 8 place BESD provision, Silsoe	September 2016	5,367,150	1,762,554	3,604,596	
Extension to Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School from 480 to 600 places, Biggleswade	September 2016	2,293,755	2,293,755		
Extension to Stratton Upper School from 1250 to 1650 places, Biggleswade	September 2016	8,422,245	3,219,451	5,202,793	
Relocation of Pippin Pre-School, Stotfold	January 2015	750,000		750,000	

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Appendix E – 19 August 2014 Executive

Business Case for proposed school and academy expansions for September 2016 implementation.

Silsoe CofE VC Lower School

Central Bedfordshire Council’s Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning

Please provide details of how you believe the proposed expansion of your school will meet each of the 9 principles below. As a guide, please consider and delete the explanatory grey text provided in each before inserted your text –

1	<p>The need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel.</p>
	<p>The development on the Cranfield site at the southern end of Silsoe village has increased the demand for places at the local lower school – Silsoe VC Lower School. We cannot accommodate this increased demand on our present site and as a result children within this catchment area have, on occasion, been denied a place within their local school. The impact of this is not only detrimental to individual families but contradicts Section 76 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 which places a duty on local education authorities to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs of their area. Ensuring the sufficiency of provision local to the areas of demographic demand supports this duty by reducing the need for car journeys and also limits potential growth in the cost of providing school transport on distance criteria to qualifying pupils to meet the Council’s statutory responsibilities.</p> <p>The education which can be provided within a local lower school to local children at the beginning of their school career is also very important in helping to foster a sense of community belonging. This is particularly significant within a rural community such as Silsoe where the school can provide the hub for the village. Building the school within the new development in the village will help to integrate these children and their families within the wider community. Section 38 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion. Providing sufficient accommodation within local schools enables children living in the same local community to attend the same school fostering a coherent community identity and enabling community ownership to build around a range of extracurricular activities. Close partnership between the school and the community centre which will be built next to the school has the potential to reinforce these benefits.</p>
2	<p>The need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable.</p>
	<p>Currently the standard number for each intake at Silsoe VC Lower School is 27 children per year group. We are already oversubscribed in four year groups but the size of the school site and infant class size legislation will prevent us from increasing our school size on this site beyond 150 pupils. This total is below the ideal size for a primary school and as such the school on its current site with its current numbers would be regarded as a small school.</p>

	<p>Small rural schools such as Silsoe have nationally shown themselves capable of delivering the National Curriculum and of providing a high standard of education. In determining a minimum school size, it is however not simply issues of quality that need to be considered but also but also organisational, social and community issues.</p> <p>Present funding arrangements puts particular pressure on a small senior leadership team and team of teachers because smaller schools have less staff to share key roles and responsibilities. Forthcoming changes to the local funding formula, as a result of national school funding reform, will increase the pressure to operate more efficiently. Smaller schools also have a smaller pool of parents from which to recruit a vibrant and talented governing body.</p> <p>Ideally lower schools should have 2 forms of entry (i.e. two classes per year group), leading to a school size of up to 300. This gives head teacher a balance of some teaching, as well as time to manage and monitor, with the ability to employ appropriate non-teaching support in the school. The proposal for the new school will be that it will be able to accommodate expansion to reach this ideal size. This will ensure the long term sustainability of high quality education for the youngest children within this community.</p>
3	<p>The ability to support the expansion of local popular and successful schools or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools.</p>
	<p>In line with the Council's vision of providing a good or outstanding school in every community Silsoe VC Lower School is fully committed to providing outstanding education for all of its pupils. The vision of the Governing Body and current leadership team is that the expansion of our highly successful school will enable us to provide the highest standard of education to more pupils.</p> <p>Our most recent Ofsted inspection judged the school to provide outstanding education as did our church school's inspection. This is a major reason for the school's popularity and explains why parents choose to send their children to Silsoe from outside the school's catchment.</p> <p>Our current school development plan is focused on maintaining outstanding education whilst managing the increase in numbers and the pressure on the current site. In future years our priority will be to ensure that our standards will continue to be exceptional. Our results over the past five years in Early Years outcomes, end of Year 2 assessments and Year 4 assessments have been exceptional. To maintain these standards we will focus on the recruitment of the best possible teachers to join the current highly successful team and will use the opportunity of new well designed facilities to provide the highest quality curriculum. These two factors will enable us to motivate the children and will support us in implementing curriculum change.</p>
4	<p>The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities</p>
	<p>Our school has been recognised as a National Support School in recognition of our successes over the past five years and the head teacher is a National Leader of Education. This means the school is working to support other schools in challenging circumstances locally. This ensures we are focused on the development of system leadership, succession planning and staff development.</p> <p>Two senior teachers currently work as moderators to support the local authority in monitoring the quality of end of Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 assessments.</p>

	<p>The expertise of our Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties team is recognised locally and recently the headteacher has worked as part of the Support and Aspiration Board to help to develop the local authority's response to the new special needs code of practice which will be introduced in September 2014.</p> <p>We also understand and fully endorse the importance of local partnerships. We work closely with the other schools in the Harlington Area Trust of which we are an associate member. We are part of the Bedfordshire group of Values based schools and work closely with the St Albans Diocese to enhance our status as a voluntary controlled Church of England school.</p>
5	<p>The ambition to achieve a single phase of education 0 -19 and reduce school transfer points</p>
	<p>There is evidence that learning can be lost at points of transfer between schools and also transition within schools from one phase or key stage to another. As a result the Harlington Area School's Trust aims to promote collaboration amongst the 13 schools which feed into Harlington Upper School. Silsoe VC Lower is one of these schools. The trust aims to provide for all children in this community continuity of pedagogy and curriculum, and shared expectations of progress, behaviour and ethos.</p> <p>Silsoe VC Lower School also works very closely with the onsite Pre-School. This partnership is essential in ensuring seamless transfer into school for all of the local children who attend the Pre-School. At present the Pre-School is managed by a parental management committee however the Governing Body of the School and the Management Committee of the Pre-school are considering changes to the Pre-School constitution to bring it under the management of the school. This would ensure the long term future of Early Years provision for children in this community from the age of two years plus. It would also improve the continuity of experience we can provide for our youngest children and their families.</p>
6	<p>The need to support the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).</p>
	<p>Effective lower school education is the first step to delivering the Coalition Government policy of ensuring that all young people are in either education, training or work related education / training full time up to the age of 18. Fundamental to ensuring that young people have the skills and desire to tackle further education or training they need to have key skills in reading, writing and mathematics and a desire for lifelong learning. Fundamental to the vision of Silsoe VC Lower School is the desire to inspire all of our pupils to enjoy learning. We are also committed to providing intervention and support to pupils with additional needs to overcome their difficulties and develop a resilient and determined approach to learning. Therefore our simple aim is to ensure our children are 'middle school ready' by the time they leave us and that they already have aspirations, self- belief and a desire to achieve at this stage in their lives.</p>
7	<p>To seek opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.</p>
	<p>The school will be designed to provide an inspirational environment which will promote values based education and will promote sustainability and outdoor learning. The facilities will be designed by the local authority but the school will be fully engaged in contributing towards the design choices. The key aim of the design will be to provide premises that are fit for purpose for the increased capacity of the school. The design will take into account the school's church foundation and the need to provide sufficient space for worship, sport and free</p>

	<p>school meals for all infants.</p> <p>The school will work closely with the parish council and local stakeholders to maximise the use of the community sports facilities including the shared sports fields.</p>
8	<p>To promote the diversity of provision offered in Central Bedfordshire to increase opportunities for parental choice</p>
	<p>Silsoe Lower school as a voluntary controlled lower school is part of Central Bedfordshire's comprehensive system of education. It is a co-educational school which provides for children between the ages of 4- 9 years.</p> <p>The school has a strong values based ethos and is proud of its denominational foundation. It is a voluntary controlled Church of England lower school and it works in close partnership with the local parish and the St Albans Diocese.</p>
9	<p>To support vulnerable learners in Area Special Schools and integrate appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within mainstream schools</p>
	<p>Silsoe VC Lower School has a strong and successful record in promoting inclusion.</p> <p>The school currently has a six place specialist provision for pupils with statements of need for Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). The needs of these children cannot be met within mainstream classes. Silsoe hosts one of the two SEBD provisions within the authority. Children with these types of additional needs are some of the most vulnerable and as such are at most risk of exclusion from school. Under the proposed expansion of the school the new school will be able to increase its offer to an eight place provision. The new school will be able to improve the facilities we can offer for these vulnerable pupils. The current provision whilst highly successful was not purpose built and as such is cramped.</p>

	<p>Capacity to Deliver the proposed expansion.</p> <p>For schools/academies that would like to procure design and construction works directly and manage the project to completion, please set out below the project management approach that you intend to take, including governance arrangements. Please ensure that you are clear of the professional support that you intend to engage and of the experience of the School and its Governing Body in successfully delivering significant capital projects.</p>
1	<p>Not applicable.</p>

Appendix F – 19 August 2014 Executive

Business Case for proposed school and academy expansions for September 2016 implementation. –

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Central Bedfordshire Council’s Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning

Please provide details of how you believe the proposed expansion of your school will meet each of the 9 principles below. As a guide, please consider and delete the explanatory grey text provided in each before inserted your text –

1	<p>The need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel.</p> <p>Edward Peake C of E (VC) Middle School draws from a wide catchment area but the new developments completed and planned in Biggleswade are very close to the school. This will mean that more children will be able to walk to school, reducing the need for travel in cars, minimising additional school transport and ensuring the safety of our pupils as they journey to and from school. Currently, 62% of our pupils walk to school, 20% travel on a school bus and the remainder travel by car or cycle although we do not encourage the latter as the roads around the school are very busy and potentially dangerous. By ensuring there are enough local places, the need for car journeys will be reduced as will the demand for the LA to provide transport to and from school.</p> <p>New housing developments are the start of new communities within Biggleswade and as such Edward Peake would be at the heart of these communities and the school will be in a position to serve and build strong links with the community. Education provided within a local school is an important factor which contributes to children fostering a sense of belonging within the community. Section 38 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion. Expanding Edward Peake C of E (VC) Middle School will mean that children living locally will all be able to attend this school which will foster a coherent community identity.</p> <p>The projected figures for September 2016 are 600, meaning a 5 form intake. The school was originally built to accommodate 480.</p> <p>An expansion to the school will mean improved facilities. Edward Peake C of E (VC) Middle School would be able to accommodate more external clubs thus using the school facilities more efficiently by the local community. A larger school will mean more variety of staff with extended skill sets to offer more before and after school clubs for the local community.</p> <p>We have a strong relationship with many local churches, which points to wider community engagement. The school building is used by the 'New</p>
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	<p>Life' church every Sunday for their weekly worship. The congregation is made up of people from the local community in the main.</p>
2	<p>The need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable.</p>
	<p>The number of pupils requiring places in year 5 will continue to grow both as a result of new housing developments and an increased birth rate. In order to meet the needs of the local community the school will need to expand. It is important that whilst being financially viable, the school does not lose its distinctive ethos. Although the expansion will result in an increased intake, it will still be below the recommended number of 720. The expansion will make the school building fit for purpose and more able to meet the needs of pupils, staff and the curriculum.</p> <p>The leadership team are conscious that careful consideration will need to be given to practical issues associated with creating a functional 5 class per year units in a school building design where classes are currently organised in hubs of 4. This will be particularly applicable in Years 5 & 6 where a substantial proportion of the teaching is primary based. Similarly, adequate specialist areas must be available to support high quality KS2 and KS3 teaching.</p> <p>As the school grows so does the need for more facilities. We need to continue to deliver KS2 Maths and English by experienced staff. We need to also continue to maintain the upward trend in results that we are presently achieving. No expansion will mean our ability to attract competent staff will be compromised.</p> <p>Expansion will mean that the budget will enable us to attract high calibre, experienced leaders - whether in curriculum areas or leadership roles. We need to have a budget to attract and retain experienced teachers. We will need to improve our specialist areas and this will be a perfect opportunity to improve tired areas in school which need to be able to deliver a curriculum of the future.</p> <p>The proposed expansion will be an opportunity to increase efficiency and reduce costs across the school. With increased numbers comes increased income. Existing capital resources will be improved and future proofed through physical expansion. Better use of space and resources will reduce costs. Increasing energy costs can be offset by using energy efficient materials and construction techniques. This is also an opportunity to address staffing in a more creative and cost effective way. E.g split timetabling with larger numbers of staff.</p>
3	<p>The ability to support the expansion of local popular and successful schools or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools.</p>
	<p>The school has become more popular since new leadership has made changes. The recent Ofsted report has helped being rated good and having an Outstanding grade for Behaviour and Safety. The SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) report also</p>

	<p>graded the school as a good school with outstanding Leadership and Management. Being a C of E school is also a factor which appeals to many parents. We have had almost 20 pupils transfer to our school from local schools since September.</p> <p>The position of the school within the local community has improved greatly within the last few years. This is reflected in the percentage of cohort that the school has attracted over the last two years. The expansion will support this upward trend in both of results and community status.</p> <p>We understand and endorse the importance of local partnerships by working closely with other local schools via BCUS (Biggleswade Community Union of Schools). We also work closely with other schools in this area through our commitment to a Values based education and also with the Diocese of St Albans to enhance our status as a Voluntary Controlled Church school.</p> <p>We believe that this is a good proposal for the provision of high quality education in this area of Biggleswade because it builds on the existing success of Edward Peake C of E (VC) Middle School.</p>
4	<p>The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities</p>
	<p>In September 2012, Edward Peake C of E (VC) Middle School entered into a soft Governance Federation with Northill Lower School. Since September 2013, the Head teacher became the Federation Head teacher and has lead both schools towards further improvement. Both governing bodies are currently considering forming a hard governance federation. The expansion of the building at Edward Peake would mean that facilities would be able to be used by pupils from this small rural lower school with increasing effectiveness.</p> <p>We enjoy very strong links with all schools in Biggleswade via the BCUS (Biggleswade Community Union of Schools) group. The Head teacher has been key in supporting the Head teacher of St Andrews Lower School which is to expand over the additional site at Kings Reach development. This development is assigned to increase the catchment of Edward Peake and so the two Headteachers consider it important to work closely together to ensure a seam free transfer at the end of Year 4.</p> <p>As part of BCUS we regularly work with other local schools to improve our provision for pupils. Staff at all levels meet regularly with other staff from the community of schools. Partnership work ranges from curriculum planning to strategic planning, sharing of resources and training.</p> <p>As a church school, we enjoy very strong relationships with St Andrews Church and the Biggleswade community of churches. Expanding our facilities will enable us to support the work of the church further and therefore build on our values education and Christian ethos.</p>

5	<p>The ambition to achieve a single phase of education 0 -19 and reduce school transfer points</p>
	<p>There is potential to extend the federation with Northill Lower School to protect small lower schools from closing. In order to do this, we would require sufficient resources in school - including leadership - and flexible staffing to allow free time to move between schools.</p> <p>We work very closely with all our link school at both ends of transfer. We are introducing the Inspire Curriculum which will help to provide a seamless education from lower school to middle school. We have regular meetings at KS3 to further develop the links between middle and upper. This has led to more sharing of information making the transition a smoother process.</p>
6	<p>The need to support the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).</p>
	<p>With increased numbers and improved facilities, Edward Peake C of E (VC) Middle School would be in a position to support post 16 provision by offering work experience placements for students from Stratton Upper School, thus further establishing strong links with our local Upper School, this being the school to which most of our pupils transfer at the end of Year 8.</p> <p>Effective middle phase education is a step towards delivering the Coalition Government policy of ensuring that all young people are in either education, training or work related education up to the age of 18. Pupils need to enjoy their learning therefore, and at Edward Peake C of E (VC) Middle School we ensure that pupils have the skills and desires to engage in further education and training by fully developing the keys skills of reading, writing and maths. We have a comprehensive intervention programme in place in order to achieve this and an outstanding SEN department which supports pupils with additional needs and helps them to overcome their difficulties and develop a resolute approach to their learning.</p>
7	<p>To seek opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.</p>
	<p>The school building is currently used out of school hours as a venue for religious, sports and recreational groups. A larger, re-designed school would enhance its attractiveness to the people of Biggleswade. With the new housing close by it would be the perfect venue for many community groups to meet. They could walk or cycle with ease.</p> <p>The school building as it exists at present does not meet our needs and current inadequacies will worsen as numbers continue to increase. For example it will become almost impossible for the whole school to assemble (an important consideration for a church school where collective worship is key). There will not be large enough specialist teaching space or the space will not conform to new requirements. We are fortunate to have such large grounds but the building itself it quickly becoming</p>

	<p>outdated. The building and the outside space could be much more attractive and as such would attract more members of the community to use the available facilities. The site has the space to expand, but needs careful re-planning to ensure continued excellent and inclusive provision.</p> <p>In order for the school to be a community hub it needs to be accessible, vibrant and welcoming to all. Improving the transport access and the public image of the building will encourage parents and community residents to engage with the school more regularly.</p> <p>Improving the learning environment by creating 21st Century multifunctional spaces will make the school a more vibrant and inspiring place in which to learn.</p>
8	<p>To promote the diversity of provision offered in Central Bedfordshire to increase opportunities for parental choice</p>
	<p>As a Church of England school we have a clear, strong and distinctive Christian ethos. Our work towards becoming a values school has made us popular with parents who wish their children to continue with the values philosophy they have received at lower school. Our numbers continue to increase showing that more parents are choosing to send their child to Edward Peake. This choice is frequently attributed to the fact that we are a faith school.</p> <p>The expansion will enable us to build on our distinctive ethos and the unique learning experience we offer within the community. It will offer us the opportunity to increase our status/standing even further through improved and new facilities.</p> <p>The school has a strong values based ethos and is proud of its denominational foundation. It is a voluntary controlled Church of England middle school and it works in close partnership with the churches of Biggleswade (Churches Together) and the Diocese of St Albans.</p>
9	<p>To support vulnerable learners in Area Special Schools and integrate appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within mainstream schools</p>
	<p>The school has a very strong and effective pastoral system which is reflected in our 'outstanding' grading for Behaviour and Safety (Ofsted July 2013). We employ a Family Support Worker who liaises closely with struggling families within our school community.</p> <p>At Edward Peake we have a higher than average number of pupils with Special Educational Needs (21%) but ensure that the needs of these pupils are met within mainstream education. This has meant that these pupils often make better than expected progress.</p> <p>Our Learning Support Unit (The Peake) will be at the heart of any expansion plans. It will offer an opportunity to provide access for those with disabilities. It will be located in a central position either in the existing building or as part of the new build.</p>

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	Capacity to Deliver the proposed expansion.
	For schools/academies that would like to procure design and construction works directly and manage the project to completion, please set out below the project management approach that you intend to take, including governance arrangements. Please ensure that you are clear of the professional support that you intend to engage and of the experience of the School and its Governing Body in successfully delivering significant capital projects.

Meeting: Executive
Date: 19 August 2014
Subject: Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report proposes the medium term financial planning framework for 2015-16 through 2018-19.

Advising Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer and s151 Officer
Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer and s151 Officer
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/a

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The action supports all of the Council's priorities. A sound understanding of the financial climate, a robust plan for the medium term and proper awareness and mitigation of risks are key to enable the Council to further its objectives for the community.

Financial:

1. The planning process takes place against the background of the June 2013 Spending Review (which covered the period to 2015-16 only) and whilst the national economy shows some positive signs, there is no indication of any relaxation of the Government's austerity measures.

The Spending Review announcement revealed further cuts to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) budgets of some 10%. It is not yet clear exactly how this will be apportioned to individual local authorities. Coupled with this is the forthcoming General Election, scheduled for 7 May 2015. This means that incoming resources (Formula Funding and other grants) for the last three years of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) are highly uncertain.

Legal:

2. Nothing specifically arising from this report, but the Council is required to set a balanced budget and to undertake consultation on its proposals. See also Equalities and Consultation sections below.

Risk Management:

3. The state of the UK and world economies and other global economic influences will continue to have an effect on growth and their full impact remains uncertain at this time.

Prudent estimates of known factors will be built into the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), along with reasonable estimates where no firm data exists.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. None arising directly from this report.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. To ensure that any decision does not unfairly discriminate, public authorities must be rigorous in reporting to Members the outcome of an equality impact assessment and their legal duties.

Public authorities must ensure that decisions are made in a way which minimises unfairness and without a disproportionately negative effect on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, women and men. It is important that Councillors are aware of this duty before they take a decision. When decisions are made, decision makers must have access to the relevant data, including the results of equality impact assessment, and of consultation and involvement, to ensure they reach an informed decision.

Public Health:

6. None arising directly from this report.

Community Safety:

7. None arising directly from this report.

Sustainability:

8. None arising directly from this report.

Procurement:

9. None arising directly from this report.

Overview and Scrutiny:

10. This report will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 23 September 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. recognise the risks and uncertainty including those arising from the 2015 General Election and the likelihood of further austerity measures in the years following;**
- 2. endorse the proposed framework for the updating of the Medium Term Financial Plan and the preparation of a Budget for 2015/16; and**
- 3. endorse the timetable for the consultation process**

Reason for Recommendations: To put in place a framework to meet the financial challenges faced by Central Bedfordshire Council over the medium term.

Executive Summary

11. This report starts the formal process that leads to the setting of a budget and Council Tax rate in February 2015. It sets a framework for the 2015-16 Budget and MTFP with updated planning assumptions. It also considers the impact of changes in Local Government financing and how these may be addressed.
12. The report also sets out proposals for consultation.

Introduction

13. This report sets out the framework for preparing the Council's 2015-16 Budget and the annual updating of the MTFP, so that it covers the period to 2018/19.
14. The process and timetable for setting the budget and updating the MTFP up to its approval by Council on 26 February 2015 is also included in this report for consideration.

Policy

15. The Council's constitution and related financial procedures set out the process for budget setting. In addition, the Council is required to undertake a public consultation exercise on its budget proposals.

Background

16. The Budget for 2014/15, which was agreed by Council in February 2014, was set in an environment of tough economic conditions and the continuation of Government public spending reductions, factors which continue into the present budget setting round. The MTFP identified a budget 'gap' (that is, a requirement for further savings as yet unspecified) of some £5.8 million for 2015/16 and £7.3 million over the following 2 years to 2017/18.

The Spending Review announced in 2013 provided an indicative financial settlement for 2015/16 but not beyond, in recognition that a General Election will take place in May 2015. This means that there will be significant uncertainty for the last three years of the MTFP.

The MTFP will need to address this through making reasonable and prudent estimates in the absence of confirmed data. Since there is every indication that funding to local authorities will be further reduced, the Council will be required to make further efforts to find savings through service efficiencies in order to avoid service reductions.

Issues

17. The financial plan will address the following issues:
- (a) the priorities of the Council and more specifically the outcomes it wants to achieve over the medium term under those priorities and the allocation of resources to deliver them;
 - (b) changes to the MTFP (revised economic, financial and demographic assumptions and facts);
 - (c) the Revenue Budget for 2015-16, including the required level of general fund reserves;
 - (d) the Capital Programme for 2015-16 through to 2018-19; and
 - (e) the outcome of the budget consultation process .

MTFP as per 2014/15 Budget Report

18. The Council agreed an MTFP on 20 February 2014 which took account of the economic conditions and continuing austerity measures by Government in allocating funding for local authorities.

19. The key figures from this current MTFP are shown in the table below:

Medium Term Financial Plan	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Resources				
Formula Grant	36.9	28.4	27.4	27.4
Council Tax Freeze Grants	1.3	2.6	2.6	2.6
Retained Business Rates	28.1	29.4	30.2	32.3
Council Tax	119.6	119.9	120.7	121.4
Total Resources	185.9	180.3	180.9	183.7
Planned Revenue Budget				
Opening Base Revenue	370.7	367.7	362.1	362.7
Expenditure				
Net inflation	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7
Pressures	11.8	4.9	5.3	5.1
Base Income	(181.8)	(181.8)	(181.8)	(181.8)
Total Planned Spend Before Savings	203.3	193.5	188.3	188.7
Efficiency Savings	(17.4)	(7.4)	(4.5)	(0.6)
Efficiency Savings to be allocated	-	(5.8)	(2.9)	(4.4)
Total Planned Spend After Savings	185.9	180.3	180.9	183.7

20. This Plan enables the Council to achieve and maintain a sustainable level of General Fund reserves over the life of the MTFP. The level of General Fund Reserves at 31 March 2014 was £15.1m (subject to audit), after a £0.9m contribution to reserves in 2013/14.

21. A minimum prudent level of reserves, based on assumptions contained in the agreed MTFP is a range between £11.5m and £25m. This takes into account the Council's expenditure levels, increasing risk profile and investment plans. The strategy for maintaining reserves is set out in paragraph 33 and the minimum prudent level will be reviewed as part of the final budget setting process, to reflect changes such as the transfer of 7 Care Homes brought back into Council operations, implications of the Children & Families Act, Care Act, Better Care Fund and integration with the NHS.

Current Economic Outlook

22. The prospects for the UK economy are improving but the recovery is not yet fully established, with the country experiencing a period of relatively slow growth since the recession. In addition, the UK's credit rating was downgraded from AAA to AA+ by some credit scoring agencies (Standard & Poor's rating remains at AAA). With the continued reductions in public sector spending, growth rates are expected to remain low in the short to medium term. For households, therefore, the picture continues to look challenging, with low wage rises and comparatively low mortgage approvals.

23. The financial situation in Europe seems to be improving. Euro area financial system stress has remained moderate over the last half-year, according to the new Financial Stability Review of the European Central Bank (ECB) released at the end of May 2014. Investor concerns regarding the global financial crisis have continued to diminish, amid on-going action to address “legacy” risks of past crises for both banks and sovereign nations. Euro area banks have accelerated the clean-up and strengthening of their balance sheets since the third quarter of 2013, when discussions about the ECB’s comprehensive assessment intensified. Sovereign risk has improved with the implementation of fiscal consolidation and structural reforms, although progress has been uneven.
24. UK inflation has remained reasonably flat over the past year and stands at 1.9% (CPI) and 2.6% (RPI) – both July 2014 figures. Inflation is now below the Government target of 2% although a strain remains on household finances at a time of static or falling real wages.
25. The Bank of England has revised its interest forward guidance policy.
- Outlining the Bank's revised policy, the Governor of the Bank of England said the Bank would now be looking at a wider range of indicators, including wages, productivity and spare capacity within the economy.
- Official interest rates remain at the all time low of 0.5% and are expected to remain so until at least Spring 2015 according to the Bank.
- Longer term, rates are then projected to rise to 2% by early 2017. Beyond 2017, the message from the Bank is that 'even when the economy has returned to normal... the appropriate level of Bank rate is likely to be materially below the 5% level set on average by the [Bank] prior to the crisis'.
26. The UK jobs market continued to improve in the three months to April 2014, although the rate of wage increases slowed sharply. Official figures show that the number of people out of work fell by 161,000 to 2.16 million over the period, (Office for National Statistics).
- This brings the unemployment rate down to 6.6%.

Strategic and Directorate Plans

27. The Council’s high level priorities are set out in its Medium Term Plan, which identifies specific service outcomes by each Directorate. These defined priorities will become the driver behind the financial assumptions within the MTFP. They will also determine where the efficiencies are to be found and identify cost pressures.

Areas of focus

28. Although still at an early stage of the process for identifying further efficiencies, a number of areas have been identified, which build on the four year efficiencies programme outlined in the 2014/15 MTFP. These include areas for efficiencies such as moving from institutional investment to personal solutions, and review of contract and tendering arrangements. These will be kept under review as the overall funding parameters become clearer.

Consultation and Communication

29. There is a legal requirement on the Council to consult with council tax payers and non domestic rate payers on its Revenue Budget and Council Tax options.

A plan for communications and engagement has been developed which will include three phases of activity.

30. The first will seek feedback from the community on local priorities and the core principles of our medium term financial plan. This feedback will be gathered via a residents' survey which will be distributed to all households via the autumn edition of News Central. Simultaneously a representative group of residents will be invited to respond to the survey in order that Members can understand reactions from the public in general and a sample which reflects the broader community in terms of age, gender and other demographic characteristics.

This feedback will be presented to Members to inform the development of the draft budget.

31. Once the budget has been prepared (following the Chancellor's Autumn Statement which is expected in December), the draft budget report will be extensively promoted to the community including local business, the media, the equalities forum and other stakeholder groups in order to elicit further feedback on the proposals within it. Feedback from this phase of activity will feed into the Executive and Full Council consideration of the budget in February 2015.

The final phase of activity will be to feedback to the community and stakeholders, the decisions of the Council through a range of communication channels and activities including the conventional leaflet together with social media, our website and face to face opportunities.

Budget Assumptions

32. The current MTFP as agreed at Council in February 2014 includes a number of assumptions that will need to be reviewed and revised as appropriate for the new MTFP. The key factors are detailed in the paragraphs below. The Plan will also be extended a year to include projections for 2018-19.

33. The MTFP included an assumption that reserves would exceed the minimum prudent level at 31 March 2014 and that there will be no further material transfers to General Fund Reserves. General Fund Reserve stood at £15.1m at 31 March 2014 (subject to audit) and will be kept under constant review to ensure that there is adequate protection against adverse risks from economic, financial and other factors.
34. In December 2013 central Government set out an indicative provisional settlement for 2015/16 alongside the 2014/15 settlement, which indicated an £8.5m reduction in this Council's Revenue Support Grant. There is an expectation that the final settlement should align closely with the provisional amounts though nothing will be confirmed until the final settlement announcement (likely to be in late December 2014). For future years the Formula Grant has been assumed to reduce by a further 3.5% in 2016/17.
35. Since the Spending Review only covered one year, and given the forthcoming General Election in May 2015, information for the remaining years is much less predictable.
36. The current MTFP assumes some growth in business rates or NNDR receipts beyond the amount assumed in the provisional settlement for 2015/16. More detailed modelling of projected NNDR receipts is currently underway and will inform the MTFP process.
37. Inflation levels for the current MTFP are set at the rates detailed in the table below:

Table 2 – Current MTFP inflation assumptions

	2015-16 and future years
Employees:	
Pay	1.0%
Increments	0.0%
NI	0.0%
Prices	2.0%
Contracts	2.0%
Income	2.0%

38. These inflation factors will be subject to review, including taking account of new economic data and supplier contract terms.
39. A number of known service pressures have been included in the MTFP, such as those arising from increased demand for care services and an ageing population, pensions strain and capital financing. Other pressures will emerge as the budget process develops. This will in turn increase the level of savings required.

40. For 2013/14 the Council was in receipt of one Council Tax Freeze Grant of 2.5% of Council Tax income (worth £3.2m) and another of 1% of Council Tax income (worth £1.3m). The first of these was to be a four-year grant which was originally due to end in 2014/15. The second was a two-year grant also originally due to end in 2014/15. These grants have now been extended as described in the Spending Review section below.
41. Following legislative changes taking effect on 1 April 2012, the Council now 'self finances' the Housing Revenue Account. Central Bedfordshire now retains all rental income from its housing stock, whilst in return, on 1 April 2012, the Council received an allocation of the national housing debt. The Current MTFP includes rental income of £29 – £32m for each of the three years to 2017/18, fully offset by revenue and capital spending, and debt repayment costs.
42. The baseline for the 2015/16 Budget will be the 2014/15 Budget. At this stage it is anticipated that the final outturn for the year will be close to Budget overall.

Spending Review 2013

43. Central Government carried out a Spending Review last year and announced the results on 26 June 2013. This will have some significant impacts on our budget assumptions, not all of which can be fully determined until the autumn statement and its impact on Departmental spending expected in December 2014 are made clear. The key issues are described below.
44. The Spending Review unusually covers only one year – 2015/16, in recognition that a General Election will be held in May 2015. This means that there will be significant uncertainty for the last three years of the MTFP. A provisional Settlement had already been announced for 2015/16 and there have been no indications so far that there will be any major changes on final settlement.
45. The "Departmental Expenditure Limit" (DEL) for DCLG has been cut by 10% for 2015/16. This will therefore necessarily be passed down to local authorities in some form, though how this affects the formula funding model on a council by council basis is unknown at present.
46. Funding for the Education Services Grant is likely to be cut by 20% from 2015/16. This grant replaced LACSEG in 2013/14, at the same time reducing income for CBC from £5.8m to £3.0m in that year. The grant is a per-pupil amount paid for maintained schools only, and reduces as schools convert to academies. The rate of conversions in 2013/14 resulted in a reduction of funding for CBC of around £0.3m. Assuming a similar rate in 2014/15 and factoring in the 20% cut could mean that just £1.9m will be received in 2015/16 – representing a cut of 67% in three years. The balance will continue to reduce if schools continue to convert to academies.
47. The announcement included a 1% cap on public sector pay rises. This is in line with present MTFP assumptions, though nationally, the public sector unions are challenging this which has already resulted in industrial action.

48. A further two-year Council Tax Freeze Grant at 1% of Council Tax revenues will also be available for those Councils freezing Council Tax in 2014/15, and an additional 1% in 2016/17 for those freezing Council Tax in 2015/16.

Subsequent to the Spending Review announcement, Government confirmed that both of the original Freeze Grants and any new Grants in 2014/15 and 2015/16 will be 'baselined' into the Formula Grant and will therefore constitute continuing funding.

49. April 2013 saw the beginning of a number of welfare reforms (e.g. benefit cap, under occupancy subsidy). The full impact of these has yet to be seen but the Council has responded well to the increased workload whilst maintaining service levels to claimants. The number of claimants for Council Tax Support has reduced from 17,000 to 15,600 between April 2013 and July 2014.

Funding for the Local Welfare provision is likely to be removed from 2015/16 onwards. The Council has been able to create an earmarked reserve to continue to fund this service in 2015/16, but thereafter there will be an additional budget pressure.

50. There were also various other announcements covering health and social care pooled budgets, the transfer of the Independent Living Fund to local authorities, investment in the roads network, extension of the Troubled Families programme and introduction of a new Schools Formula from 2015/16. The impact of these will be assessed as far as possible within this MTFP.

51. A major change for the Council is the impact of the Care Act 2014 which came onto the statute books on 14 May 2014. It sets out a new framework of local authority duties in relation to the arrangement and funding of social care, along with a number of changes to the regulation of social care providers. It will have a very significant impact on local authorities and the market for social care. These impacts will need to be reflected in the MTFP.

Budget Process - Revenue

52. The budget process will deliver alignment of the revenue and capital budgets, with a detailed review of the capital programme leading to a realistic budget over the planning timeframe.
53. Budgets will be built up during August / mid-September. This will include a full assessment of pressures and efficiencies which will then be the subject of formal review at Overview and Scrutiny meetings during January 2015. Following this process there will be further adjustments as required, leading to the preparation of a Final Budget Report with a balanced budget.

The four Overview and Scrutiny Committees are scheduled to jointly receive a high level presentation on the MTFP at the 21 October 2014 Corporate Resources O&S Committee meeting and scrutiny of the draft budget will take place at each O&S Committee separately in January 2015. The timetable allows for comments and recommendations from Scrutiny to be incorporated into the final Budget proposals.

The attached budget timetable (Appendix 1), sets out the timescales for all the above activities.

Budget Process – Fees & Charges

54. For the 2015/16 budget process, Council approval to Fee & Charges price increases will be accelerated to November 2014 Council rather than February 2015.
55. In addition, it is proposed to introduce price increases from 1 January 2015 rather than 1 April where possible.

Timetable

57. The key milestones for setting the 2014/15 budget are:
 - September – All O&S Committees to review proposed Fees & Charges increases.
 - 14 October – Executive Fees & Charges Report.
 - 21 October – Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny, with all O&S Committees to review high level MTFP.
 - 27 November – Council approves Fees & Charges price increases.
 - 13 January 2014 – Executive Draft Budget Report.
 - January 2015 – Overview & Scrutiny of draft budget.
 - 10 February 2015 – Executive Budget Recommendations.
 - 26 February 2015 – Council approves Budget.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Budget timetable

Background Papers:

None

Meeting: Executive

Date: 19 August 2014

Subject: Superfast Broadband Extension Programme

Report of: Cllr Nigel Young, Executive Member for Regeneration

Summary: The report proposes that the Council funds an additional £350,000 capital, over the £1.5 million already approved (May 2014) to further extend superfast broadband coverage as part of the Council's participation within the Broadband Delivery UK Superfast Extension Programme. This will be matched by £300,000 Broadband Delivery UK to allow approximately an additional 1,200 premises to be supported.

Advising Officer: Jason Longhurst, Director of Regeneration and Business

Contact Officer: James Cushing, Economic Policy and Investment Manager

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

Key Decision Yes

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

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

1. The delivery of superfast broadband directly addresses the Council's priority of Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport and the delivery of the Council's Joint Broadband Plan.
2. Additionally, superfast broadband can also contribute to a range of wider Council objectives including Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – particularly creating jobs and enabling businesses to grow, delivering great services and value for money, through supporting the accessing of services online and on demand. Likewise, participating in the project will secure significant public and private match funding to support the delivery of the Council's priorities.

Financial:

3. The funding profile for the Superfast Extension Project is highlighted below. Further BDUK funding has become available and it is with this in mind that an additional £350k is requested, £300k to be matched by BDUK and £50k to support project management costs.

	Gross Expenditure	External Funding	Net Expenditure
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000
Council initial Medium Financial Plan Approval	2,000	1,000	1,000
Additional Council Approval (May 2014)	1,490	990	500
Total currently approved	3,490	1,990	1,500
Additional Funding being requested for increased coverage	600	300	300
Additional funding being requested for Project Management Costs	50		50
Total scheme	£4,140	£2,290	£1,850

4. The Council will continue its role as lead accountable body for the wider Local Broadband Partnership (including Bedford and Milton Keynes Councils).
5. Project development and management costs are currently funded through existing reserves. Extending the duration and scope of the project will require continued project management investment to meet the Council's obligations as part of the Joint Collaboration Agreement. As such £50k is sought to cover direct project costs, such as project management and external technical support. Any projects cost will be shared amongst project partners, in line with the Joint Collaboration Agreement. Under the collaboration agreement, other Local Authorities are responsible for putting in place their own project management resources.
6. The additional £350k will increase the overall capital spend of the Council, unless an alternative saving is made elsewhere. This will lead to a resultant revenue pressure in the financing of the £350k of approximately £28,245 per annum.
7. Subject to BDUK's approvals and state aid approval, it is estimated that spend will be undertaken in 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years.
8. The Council's Constitution requires that the Council must approve expenditure over £350k before commencing any procurement. Approval for additional resources is sought at this stage due to BDUK project approval requirements.

Legal:

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

Risk Management:

11. There will be a number of procurement and state aid risks associated with the project. The use of the BDUK procurement and state aid frameworks and the use of specialist consultancy services will mitigate against these risks.
12. The project will utilise formal project management techniques, including a project risk register, which is reviewed at all programme board meetings.
13. There will be a number of risks associated with delivering the plan, in terms of securing a private sector partner and in project delivery risks. These will be mitigated through the use of the BDUK frameworks and early market engagement, continuing with the existing dedicated joint project management resource and processes for delivery, and through contracting with a private sector partner require sufficient project and risk management plans and processes to be put in place, with appropriate risk ownership clauses.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

14. A joint project manager is currently in place and the requested £50k will fund the Council's continued contribution to project management costs. Other staffing inputs will be through existing resources.

Equalities/Human Rights:

15. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and to foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

16. In developing the Local Broadband Plan consideration of the need to improve access for all has been a core principle. Analysis of options for intervention, while meeting state aid guidelines, has mapped access to areas of deprivation and found very little correlations. Likewise through the deployment process the Council will work with suppliers to ensure that broadband services are available to the maximum number of people and that access is not discriminated against in anyway.

Public Health:

17. Increasing accessibility to broadband will allow for increased tele-health opportunities and access to online information, albeit that services will need to be delivered independently to this project.

Community Safety:

18. Not applicable.

Sustainability:

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

Procurement:

20. The National BDUK procurement framework, which has already been out to Official Journal of the European Union competitive tender, will be used to competitively select a private sector partner. A mini competition process will be used to call off providers to deliver infrastructure locally.

Overview and Scrutiny:

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

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **recommend to Council to approve an additional £350,000 capital funding to secure additional external funding, and to extend coverage of superfast broadband infrastructure.**

Reason for Recommendations: To secure additional external resources and put in place the necessary infrastructure at the earliest opportunity to accelerate and extend the delivery of superfast broadband to Central Bedfordshire residents and businesses in line with achieving the Council's Medium Term Plan Objectives and Joint Local Broadband Plan.

Executive Summary

22. Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) have announced details of the Superfast Extension programme (SEP) which seeks to support 95% of premises to receive superfast broadband services and ensure access to infrastructure able to provide at least 2 Megabits per second to all premises.
23. It is proposed that an additional £350k capital funding is allocated to the Superfast Extension Programme. This will be matched by £300k BDUK funding. This is in addition funding already approved by the Council (May 2014) and external funding secured. This additional funding will enable approximately an additional 1,200 premises to receive superfast broadband services, over an above the expected 5,900 estimated premises to be supported through the Council's previous approvals to participate in the Superfast Extension Programme, and put in place necessary project management capacity.

Background

24. The Council has entered into collaboration with the Councils of Bedford Borough and Milton Keynes and formed a joint Broadband Partnership (under the project title Central Superfast) to deliver the Joint Local Broadband Plan (endorsed by full Council at its meeting on the 14 February 2012), which set out plans to deliver access to superfast broadband (defined as being at least 24Mbit/s) to 90% of all premises with the aim to ensure that all premises in Central Bedfordshire have access to infrastructure able to provide at least 2 Megabits per second.
25. Following a successful application to Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) for match funding and use of the competitive national procurement framework and state aid approval, BT were selected as a partner to deliver necessary infrastructure. The Council has invested £1million in the project, and secured external public funding of £1.4 million. The contract was awarded in August 2013, with the first telecommunication cabinet going live in Stanford in June 2014. In Central Bedfordshire this project is delivering superfast services to almost 15,500 premises, with deployment complete in Quarter 1 2016. There has already been considerable public demand for increased coverage, for example the Council has developed an online demand registration tool which has already received well over 3,000 responses requesting better broadband, and over 98% would support investment in Superfast Broadband.
26. In the June 2013 Spending Round the Government announced a further £250m of funding to increase the availability of superfast broadband to 95% of premises in the UK by 2017. BDUK have developed the Superfast Extension Programme (SEP) to deliver this. Central Bedfordshire was indicatively allocated £1.74 Million as part of this. The total allocation to the Central Superfast Area and Luton was £3.18 million.

Superfast Extension Project

27. Participating in the SEP is likely to result in accelerated delivery and support at least an additional 5,900 premises to receive superfast broadband services, if the 95% target is achieved. These premises are not currently being served through commercial plans or the existing Central Superfast Project and there is very little chance of these premises being supported through other means.
28. The Council has already approved participation in the Superfast Extension Programme and allocated £1.5 million to deliver extended coverage of superfast broadband (May 2014). In addition to this, £250k has been secured through Central Bedfordshire Together to match the BDUK allocation. Through a competitive process, the Council will again select a private partner to put in place necessary broadband infrastructure and seek to maximize coverage above the 95% target. Depending on BDUK approvals and timescales, it is expected that funding will be spent in 2016/17 and early 2017/18.
29. Private sector contributions to the project will be sought through the procurement process. This will increase the value of the project and resulting coverage levels. This will not impact in the Council's capital contribution.
30. BDUK have extended the national procurement framework and state aid framework, and inline with previous approvals, the Council will utilise these in selecting a private sector bidder.
31. BDUK have indicated that additional funding is now available, if Local Authorities are able to match this. As such an additional £300k capital is sought, to match available BDUK resources. Additional resources of a total of £600k would be expected to support approximately an additional 1,200 premises, bringing the total number of premises supported under the Superfast Extension Programme to approximately 7,100. The exact number will be dependent on the outcome of the procurement process, and the Council will seek to maximise coverage in line with priorities previously agreed by the Council.
32. In order to support effective project management of the project and comply with the Council's obligations under the Joint Collaboration Agreement, £50k is sought for the Council's contributions to the Joint Project Manager and associated project development costs, such as external technical support. This brings the total additional investment by the Council to £350k.

Conclusion and Next Steps

33. The Council will begin the necessary pre procurement and state aid requirements, including undertaking an Open Market Review in August, looking to go out to tender in October, before selecting a provider in January/ February 2015, dependent on BDUK approvals processes.

34. In addition to the BDUK projects to tackle existing premises, the Council's Draft Development Strategy highlights the requirement for new developments to consider putting in place superfast broadband infrastructure, to ensure that new premises are planned for from the outset and so not creating future need for public sector intervention.

Appendices:

N/A

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Joint Local broadband Plan:

http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/Joint%20Local%20Broadband%20Plan_tcm6-41719.pdf#False

Current BDUK project and rollout plans: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/broadband

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Meeting: Executive

Date: 19 August 2014

Subject: Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property

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

Summary: The report proposes that Executive approve and adopt the proposed Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property to introduce more flexibility in preventing homelessness through the offer of private sector accommodation.

Advising Officer: Julie Ogle, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing

Contact Officer: Nick Costin, Head of Housing Solutions

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Executive

Key Decision Yes

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

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The report supports the following Council Priority:

- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.

Financial:

1. Currently, the Council receives Homelessness Prevention funding, which is partly used to provide incentives to landlords to work with the Council and provide private tenancies to customers approaching the Council. Budget monitoring ensures that the level of activity does not exceed the external funding provided to the Council. Consequently, there are no budget implications arising from this policy as expenditure is externally funded and contained within existing budgets.
2. Officers will continue to explore all external funding opportunities to maximise the availability of private rented sector accommodation to the Council. This includes, in some case, the return of tenancy deposits, which can be recycled for future customers' deposits.

Legal:

3. The Localism Act 2011 (Part 7) enables local authorities to discharge their duty towards homeless households in priority need by using privately rented housing irrespective of whether the household is in agreement with this. The Council previously had the power to discharge duty to social rented accommodation.

Risk Management:

4. The policy includes suitability criteria to reduce the risk that the Council discharges its homelessness duty to an unsuitable property and consequently, the risk that homeless households may be placed in unsuitable accommodation. The suitability criteria have been subject to consultation, in particular having regard to the Council's equality and diversity duties and Government guidance. The policy also mitigates the risks of failing to deliver the Council's priorities and failing to discharge its statutory responsibilities.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

5. Not applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

6. 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.
7. The draft policy is subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (attached at appendix B) and has been presented to the Equalities Forum, whose comments and concerns have helped shape the policy. In particular, there is a commitment that the implementation of the policy will be monitored to ensure that there is not a disproportionately negative effect on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, women, and children and young people. These groups have been identified as being more likely to be affected by the policy..
8. Applicants considered vulnerable, requiring adaptations to the property due to their disability and those fleeing domestic violence, violence or harassment will be exempt from private sector offers. This will ensure that these groups can receive the support that social housing is typically more readily able to provide. This will also reduce repeat homelessness. The suitable property criteria provide additional protections for vulnerable households so that they are not placed in poor quality accommodation. The risk that homeless households might be placed in unsuitable accommodation will be reduced.

9. Homeless households should benefit from a reduced length of stay in temporary accommodation (TA). This will reduce stress, frustration and the financial impacts. The suitable location criteria will protect children from being moved away from a school during important exam years. Older and disabled people that rely on family and friends delivering care and support will not be detrimentally impacted as homeless households providing this support will be housed within suitable proximity to enable them to continue to deliver this support. Homeless households will not have to make a choice between a home and employment as the criteria takes in to account access to employment.
10. Proximity to cultural and faith resources are not specifically considered in the policy, however under human rights legislation individuals have a right to hold a religious belief but the right to manifest that belief is qualified. To ensure that the Council meets this requirement the policy states “due regard will be given to issues related to the Equality Act protected characteristics’ to take account of access to religion or belief”.

Public Health:

11. Poor housing can have a detrimental effect on the health and well being of householders. The risk that homeless households might be placed in unsuitable accommodation will be reduced through the application of the suitability criteria, which includes the requirement that no category 1 hazards are present within the property.

Community Safety:

12. The draft policy includes particular safeguards for applicants fleeing domestic violence; other violence; or harassment. There are also safeguards concerning younger people, who may be at greater risk in some types of shared accommodation and might need a greater level of support to sustain a tenancy.

Sustainability:

13. The policy will require that a valid energy performance certificate is available and that there are no category 1 hazards relating to Excess Cold. The intention is that accommodation is not unaffordable for tenants to keep warm and safe. This in turn should encourage sustainable tenancies and reduce incidences of repeat homelessness.

Procurement:

14. Not applicable. The policy and legislation requires that a property is affordable to the homelessness applicant. This will determine which properties can and cannot be used to discharge duty.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **adopt the Policy to Discharge the Council’s Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property (Appendix A).**

<i>Reason for Recommendation(s):</i>	<i>To introduce more flexibility in preventing homelessness through offers of private sector accommodation and use social housing to maximum effect with an increase in planned allocation.</i>
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Executive Summary

15. The Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property sets out the Council's approach to discharging its homelessness duty and the definition of a suitable home.
16. The Localism Act 2011 provided local authorities with the power to discharge the homelessness duty to the private rented sector without consent from homeless applicants applying as homeless to the Council. In response to this the Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property confirms that the Council will use this power if the criteria are met.
17. Statutory regulations require local authorities to take a number of matters into account in determining the suitability of accommodation. The Council's suitability criteria are set out in the policy and include affordability, vulnerability of applicants, suitability and location of the property.
18. The consultation was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and consultation with stakeholders; the outcomes of which are included as background papers and in Appendix B.
19. The Policy was presented to the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 July 2014. The Committee's comments are attached as Appendix C.

Background

20. The Council has embarked upon an ambitious programme of housing reform, driven largely through the opportunities presented by the Localism Act 2011. Following Member seminars held in August 2012, June 2013 and subsequently, the work of a member Task and Finish group, a local Housing Green Paper was developed, setting out the direction of travel and broad aims. The local Green Paper's vision for Housing in Central Bedfordshire includes:
 - (a) Social mobility will be supported with a range of products which will open up home ownership and 'affordable' renting to a greater number of households, helping people onto the 'housing ladder'.
 - (b) The local housing market will offer a good choice of locations, property and tenure types to older people.
 - (c) Well-managed, good quality social housing will be used to provide a strong safety net to those who are vulnerable.
 - (d) Social housing will be allocated fairly, and used to support people's working lives.

- (e) Social landlords will support their tenants to make the most of their tenancy as a springboard into work and financial stability.

21. The Localism Act 2011 introduced changes in legislation which gives Local Housing Authorities greater freedom and flexibility in determining who can apply for social housing. The Housing Allocations Policy governs who can apply to join the housing register, the size of the property for which a person can apply and the priority given to housing applications. The same Act also provided local authorities with the power to discharge the homelessness duty to the private rented sector without consent from homeless applicants applying as homeless to the Council. The development of a Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property is a key step within the scope of the local Housing Green Paper.

Context and demand

- 22. Demand for Housing advice, including Homelessness is growing. There were 2,206 households approaching the Council in 2013/14, an increase from 1,841 in 2012/13. Whilst the number of Homelessness Cases Determined fell slightly from 176 (in 2012/13) to 160 (2013/14), this was mainly due to increased Homelessness Prevention activity, which increased from 655 households to 727. These cases are where Homelessness is prevented or relieved.
- 23. There has been success in 2013/14 in preventing homelessness through arranging private rented sector (PRS) tenancies for households approaching the Council. Building relationships with private landlords and having a focused staff resource increased the number of PRS lets from 14 in 2012/13 to 69 in 2013/14. This success in prevention has also seen a small reduction in Bed and Breakfast use, with 57 households being housed in Bed and Breakfast during the year, a reduction from 71 in 2012/13. Both years are, however, higher than 2011/12 when 35 households were placed in Bed and Breakfast.
- 24. Whilst there is work to identify alternative and less costly temporary accommodation, the approval of the Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property may provide an extra incentive for households approaching the Council as homeless to consider more closely the prevention options, in particular the PRS, as this is potentially where the duty could be discharged to were the household to be accepted as priority homeless. Evidence suggests that locally the PRS has grown to around 14 to 15% of the housing stock and whilst much will be unaffordable to people approaching as homeless, there will be some supply available to the Council through partnership working with landlords.

Suitable Home Criteria consultation outcomes

- 25. The draft Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property (Appendix A) sets out the proposed criteria that the Council will consider in assessing whether an available property (Social Rented or Private Sector) is suitable for a household accepted as Priority Homeless (where the Council has a statutory duty to rehouse that household). The suitability criteria are closely aligned with Government guidance and have been the focus of consultation and stakeholder engagement.

26. Whilst there was not a large response to consultation, for most of the proposed suitability criteria, there was between 91% and 100% support. There were some concerns about discharging homelessness duty to a property in a neighbouring authority area but still 72% agreed with the safeguards being proposed.
27. There was near 100% agreement with the criteria that deemed a property to be unsuitable. Some comments questioned whether there should be a valid Energy Performance Certificate provided. This is, however, a legal requirement for new lettings.
28. The consultation outcome document (Appendix D) also provides some qualitative feedback and comment, particularly those stakeholders who have experience of homelessness or applying for housing with the Council. The document records responses to these comments, and where appropriate, the changes to the policy that have been made. Some comments were concerning finer detail of what needs to be considered by Officers in determining suitability. The finer detail points, aligned with the draft policy, will be included in a Staff Good Practice Guidance document that will be prepared as the Policy is approved.

Conclusion and Next Steps

29. The growing demand from residents approaching the Council, potentially as homeless, has implications on resources and how the Council makes best use of housing stock to meet housing need. The Localism Act encourages local authorities to consider wider options in meeting housing need, in particular the private rented sector, which has grown in Central Bedfordshire.
30. The Housing Green Paper sets strategic direction for Housing in Central Bedfordshire and the Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property is a key step in meeting the aims of the Green Paper.
31. The policy contains suitability criteria that have been generally accepted through engagement and consultation, and meet Government guidance and legislation. Outcomes from the policy will be monitored to ensure that the Council meeting its Equalities and Human Rights duties.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Draft Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property

Appendix B – Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix C – Comments from Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Appendix D - Consultation and Engagement Outcomes document

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None.



Appendix A

Discharge Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Home Policy

Directorate	Social Care Health and Housing		
Service	Housing Solutions, Housing Services		
Author	Jo Bellamy, Policy and Performance Officer		
Approved by		Version	0.7
Approval date		Review date	

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Local authorities can discharge their homelessness duties through securing suitable, available accommodation for the household. The property can be either social housing or a property in the private rented sector. A local authority can end its main homelessness duty through an offer of a suitable home, without requiring the applicant's agreement.
- 1.2 The power to discharge the homelessness duty to the private rented sector without consent applies to new homeless applicants applying as homeless from 9 November 2012. However, the Council will only apply this policy to applicants where the homelessness duty is accepted after formal approval of the policy. Applicants that were accepted as homeless under the duty before the policy approval date will not have a private sector offer.
- 1.3 Statutory regulations require local authorities to take a number of matters into account in determining the suitability of accommodation. The Council's suitability criteria are set out in this policy.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 This policy sets out the Council's approach to discharging its homelessness duty and the definition of a suitable home.
- 2.2 This policy introduces more flexibility in preventing homelessness. Suitable private accommodation will be offered to the client, who initially appears to be homeless with priority need, before an application is made. This should resolve homelessness more quickly; as if a homelessness application is successful, the same property will be offered to the client thereby ending the homelessness duty.

SECTION 3. SCOPE, DEFINITIONS AND RELATED POLICIES

- 3.1 This policy is supported by the practice guidance, which sets out the information that officers should consider when determining the suitability of a property.
- 3.2 The Homelessness Strategy sets out the Council's approach to preventing homelessness and discharging our duty. The strategy, which is due for review in 2014, will set out the Council's approach to ensuring the appropriate supply of private sector properties to enable the timely discharge of our duty.
- 3.3 Definitions**
 - 3.3.1 Private Sector Offer – is defined by section 193 of the Localism Act 2011 as an offer of an assured short hold tenancy made by a private landlord to an applicant. The tenancy must be for a period of at least 12 months, but the Council will try to secure two-year agreements with

landlords, where possible). The local authority must have arranged the availability of the property to discharge its homelessness duty.

- 3.3.2 Homelessness applicant – This is a person who completes an application to be assessed as homeless. The definition of legally homeless is set out in the 1996 Housing Act. This policy refers to a homelessness applicant as ‘the applicant’.
- 3.3.3 Homelessness Duty – This is a duty on local housing authorities to secure permanent accommodation of unintentionally homeless people in priority need. The duty is set out in *Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977* and this policy refers to this as ‘the duty’.

SECTION 4. POLICY DETAILS

4.1 Options to Discharge the Council’s Homelessness Duty

- 4.1.1 Central Bedfordshire Council has the following options available to discharge its duty:
- a) Social housing through a direct let
 - b) Social housing via Choice Based Lettings (CBL)
 - c) Private Sector Offer (available only for applicants that applied after the introduction of this policy)
- 4.1.2 A social housing property is suitable if:
- a) The Council considers the property to be affordable following an assessment of the household’s circumstances,
 - b) It meets the social housing provider’s lettable standard and
 - c) It meets the suitability criteria (see appendix A).
- 4.1.3 A Private Sector Offer (PSO) is suitable if:
- a) The Council considers the property to be affordable following an assessment of the household’s circumstances, (practice guidance will help define how to assess “affordable”).
 - b) The suitability criteria is met (see Appendix A),
 - c) The property is not unsuitable (see Appendix B) and
 - d) The applicant is suitable (see 4.1.4).
- 4.1.4 Officers will consider the following when deciding if to make a PSO:
- a) We would not usually make a PSO if the applicant is considered vulnerable, requires supported accommodation or unlikely to be able to sustain a private rented tenancy. Single vulnerable applicants under 35 years of age that are reliant upon housing benefit will be given particular consideration as they would be restricted to shared accommodation in the private sector.
 - b) We would not make a PSO if the property does not meet the accessibility needs of the household and significant disabled adaptations would be required to make the property suitable.

- c) We would not usually make a PSO if the applicant was previously a social housing tenant and who has fled domestic violence; other violence; or harassment.

4.2 Making the offer to discharge the homelessness duty

- 4.2.1 An offer will be made to the applicant that made the most recent application if a property is equally suitable for two or more applicants. The same PSO property will be offered where possible as a prevention option before an application is made.
- 4.2.2 Applicants that identify a private sector property they wish to move to can only do this once the Council has checked that the property meets the suitability criteria. The application will close and the two-year re-application period (see 4.4) will not apply if the applicant moves to a property not arranged by the Council.
- 4.2.3 The Council will notify the receiving local authority where a suitable PSO is in another area. The receiving authority should receive notification within 14 days (s208 of the Housing Act 1996) of the PSO.
- 4.2.4 Officers will send a letter to the applicant when making an offer, setting out the following:
 - a) that the Council is satisfied that the accommodation is suitable
 - b) the possible consequences of refusal or acceptance
 - c) the right to request a review of the suitability of accommodation
 - d) that the Council has discharged its duty.
- 4.2.5 The application will close if the applicant refuses the property and a review is not requested. The applicant must leave any temporary accommodation where provided.

4.3 Right of applicant to request a Review of Property Suitability

- 4.3.1 The applicant can request a review under s202 of the Housing Act 1996. The review request should be made within 21 days of the offer of accommodation being made. A senior officer or an appointed independent agent not involved in the original decision will conduct the review.
- 4.3.2 The application will continue if it is found that the property was not suitable. A further offer of accommodation will be made when possible.
- 4.3.3 The duty will be discharged and the case closed if it is found that the accommodation was considered to be suitable.

4.4 Right to re-application (PSO only)

- 4.4.1 If the applicant, who was housed following a PSO, becomes unintentionally homeless again within a two-year period of the initial application, the applicant will not need to complete a new application and the original duty will continue through a re-application application.
- 4.4.2 During the first year of a PSO tenancy, the Council will endeavor to provide some level of support to the applicant to help sustain the tenancy, subject to resources available and competing demand for services. Where appropriate, support services, such as Bromford Support, will be sought to help sustain the tenancy.

SECTION 5. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 *Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977* – Duty on local housing authorities to secure permanent accommodation of unintentionally homeless people in priority need.
- 5.2 *The Housing Act 1996* - Set out the priority need definition. *The Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) Order 2002* updated this legislation.
- 5.3 *Localism Act 2011* (Part 7, s148 and s149)) – Enabled local authorities to discharge their duty towards homeless households in priority need by using privately rented housing irrespective of whether the household is in agreement with this.
- 5.4 *Supplementary Guidance on the homelessness changes in the Localism Act 2011 and on the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012* – explains the changes section 148 and 149 of the Localism Act make to the homelessness legislation
- 5.5 *Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (2006)* - the local authority must have regard to the guidance when discharging the duty to the private rented sector. Under this code, local authorities also have a duty to ensure that advice and information about the prevention of homelessness is available free of charge to any person in their local authority area.

SECTION 6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 6.1 The potential impact of this policy on the various protected characteristics has been identified and addressed through an Equality Impact Assessment.

SECTION 7. MONITORING AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 7.1 Monitoring will be included within the performance framework of the Social Care Health and Housing Directorate. In particular, officers will monitor the outcomes of PSOs to help assess the success of the policy.

SECTION 8. INFORMATION AND TRAINING

- 8.1 Appropriate staff will receive training on the policy principles and the practice guidance prior to implementation of the policy.

SECTION 9. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 9.1 The Head of Housing Solutions is responsible for overseeing the delivery and monitoring the impact of the policy.

SECTION 10. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 10.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years unless a review is required prior to the end of the three-year period.

Appendix A

Suitability of property location for a Private Sector Offer (PSO)

In determining whether the property location is suitable, Central Bedfordshire Council will consider:

- 1. The significance of any disruption caused by the location from employment, caring responsibilities, or education of the household**
 - 1.1 The PSO location must be within a reasonable travel to work area for employed members of the household. Transport links must be frequent enough to enable this. Employment is usually taken to be at least 16 hours per week. A PSO could still be suitable if it is further away from the place of work than the applicant's current location.
 - 1.2 The location of a PSO will need to be of sufficient proximity to enable an applicant to continue with their caring responsibilities. Officers must verify that the applicant is a carer for another person, who cannot readily withdraw this care without serious detriment to the well-being of the other party.
 - 1.3 If any members of the household attend a special needs school or are undertaking GCSEs or A levels at school (Years 10 to 13), or other proven vital examination, then they should not be required to change schools.

- 2. The proximity to and accessibility of medical facilities and other support, which are used by, or essential to the well-being, of the household**
 - 2.1 If the applicant or any member of the household requires specialist medical treatment or support then the location will need to be of sufficient proximity to enable this. The Council will also have regard to other medical treatment or support required by the applicant or any member of the household where health professionals consider that it will be disruptive or detrimental to change provider or location.

- 3. The proximity and accessibility to local services, amenities and transport;**
 - 3.1 Regardless of location, the Council will seek to offer a home that is reasonably accessible to local services and amenities, especially for people on low incomes, and those reliant on public transport.
 - 3.2 Due regard will be given to issues related to the Equality Act protected characteristics.

4. PSO outside the Central Bedfordshire area

- 4.1 The Council, where reasonably practicable, will seek to offer private sector accommodation within the Central Bedfordshire area, except:
- a) When it considers it beneficial to move the household out of Central Bedfordshire, for example, to reduce the risk of domestic violence, other violence, or harassment; or to assist persons in breaking away from detrimental situations, such as drug or alcohol abuse, or
 - b) When the household requests to move away from Central Bedfordshire, or
 - c) When the applicant consents to move away from Central Bedfordshire, or
 - d) When a person has a very limited / no local connection to Central Bedfordshire (for example, they may have approached having fled violence from another area).
 - e) When moving to a property in a neighbouring local authority will satisfy the suitability criteria set out above.
- 4.2 If a suitable home is not available within Central Bedfordshire, a suitable private sector offer can be made in a neighbouring authority. This location must have reasonable facilities and transport links.

Appendix B

Accommodation unsuitable for a PSO

Suitability of a property according to the family make up is set out in the Allocations Policy. Supplementary to this, Central Bedfordshire Council will use the following criteria to consider whether a property is unsuitable:

No.	Unsuitability criteria	Evidence
1	The accommodation is not in a reasonable physical condition .	<p>Central Bedfordshire Council officers will either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physically inspect all PSO accommodation before it is offered; or • require a letting agent to physically inspect a property (usually requiring that agent to be a member of a suitable trade body); or • request another local authority or agent to undertake an inspection on its behalf (usually for out-of-area property). <p>Inspectors will record the condition of the property using broadly similar categories to those used by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to ensure consistent quality. Housing staff will usually undertake the inspections, but a qualified HHSRS assessor will carry out a further inspection if possible HHSRS category 1 or more serious category 2 hazards are found.</p>
2	Electrical equipment does not meet the requirements of the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regs 1994.	<p>All landlords/ agents will be asked to supply a satisfactory Electrical Safety Certificate from within the last five years.</p> <p>Any moveable electrical items in the property will require evidence of a Portable Appliance Test (PAT) within the last year.</p> <p>The inspection of the property will seek to identify any broken fittings or obvious electrical defects, such as loose wiring, or electrical faults.</p>

3	The landlord has not taken reasonable fire safety precautions	<p>The inspection of the property will check that it is fire safe. Landlords should provide working smoke detectors (battery or mains) in all properties. The landlord should provide a copy of a Fire Risk Assessment if there are additional fire safety provisions, e.g. where a building has common parts.</p> <p>All furniture and furnishings supplied by the landlord must also be shown to comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended).</p>
4	The landlord has not taken reasonable precautions to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning	<p>The Council will provide a carbon monoxide detector if the property has an active gas supply (for heating or cooking) and a recent detector is not supplied by the landlord. The Council will provide appropriate advice and assistance to ensure the detector is fitted properly.</p> <p>Landlords should provide a Gas Safe certificate for gas fires.</p>
5	That there is not a current gas safety record for the property	All landlords/ agents of properties with a gas supply must supply a current Gas Safety Certificate before a letting starts.
6	That the accommodation does not have a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) .	All landlords/ agents should supply a valid EPC Certificate for the property.
7	Where the local housing authority are of the view that the landlord is not a fit and proper person to be a landlord	Private Sector Housing colleagues will check their records for evidence that could indicate whether a landlord or agent is not a 'fit and proper' person.
8	That the accommodation is a House in Multiple Occupation or HMO (inc subject to additional licensing) and is not licensed.	HMO properties are not expected to be used for PSO's. Where they are, Private Sector Housing will check that the property is properly licensed and compliant, particularly in respect of fire safety and management.

9	That the landlord has not provided a written tenancy agreement that the local authority considers adequate.	<p>The Council offers a model Assured Short-hold Tenancy (AST) for landlords to use. Where this is not used, officers will ensure that an acceptable, written AST is used, clearly setting out the tenant's and landlord's obligations, rent and charges, and is free from any unfair or unreasonable terms.</p> <p>Officers will also inform landlords of the requirements to use Tenancy Deposit Schemes prior to sign-ups.</p>
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Appendix B Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

Title of the Assessment:	Discharge of Homelessness Duty in to a Suitable Home Policy	Date of Assessment:	19/02/14
Responsible Officer	Name:	Nick Costin	Extension Number:
	Title:	Head of Housing Solutions	
	Email:	Nick.costin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk	

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

Stage 1 – Aims and Objectives	
1.1	<p>What are the objectives of the proposal under consideration?</p> <p>The Discharge of Homelessness Duty in to a Suitable Home Policy sets out the Council’s approach to discharging its homelessness duty. The policy provides a clear definition of suitable accommodation for discharging its duty to social housing and the private rented sector and implements a power which will increase the availability of properties that can be used to relieve homelessness.</p> <p>The policy will :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> enable greater flexibility in bringing the homelessness duty to an end use social housing stock to maximum effect with an increase in planned allocation reduce the number of people on the housing register reduce the use and time spent in expensive temporary accommodation.
1.2	<p>Why is this being done?</p> <p>Currently, if an applicant has been accepted by the Council as homeless the applicant will be offered a social housing property once a suitable property becomes available. This is either through a direct let or through Choice Based Lettings following a Housing Register application. The policy introduces an additional route for the applicant to be housed which is an offer for a suitable property in the private sector.</p> <p>Applicants should be housed more quickly due to the increased availability of properties, spend less time in temporary accommodation and more social housing properties can be allocated to those in need making a planned move.</p>
1.3	<p>What will be the impact on staff or customers?</p> <p>The anticipated greater choice of accommodation could enable households to remain close to a school or family. Homeless acceptances are likely to be provided with a settled home more quickly reducing the length of stay in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Other households in housing need on the housing register will benefit from an increase in available social housing lets (which would have otherwise been allocated to people owed the homelessness duty).</p> <p>The main potential negative impact on customers is that applicants would no longer be sure of the allocation of social housing to relieve their homelessness. The disadvantage of private rented sector housing compared to social housing is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the quality of accommodation; - poorer access to tenancy sustainment support;



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- higher rents; and
- less security of tenure.

Personal circumstances are taken in to account when considering whether a Private Sector Offer (PSO) would be suitable to reduce the disproportionate effect the above disadvantages can have on vulnerable households. This includes consideration of affordability. The impact of the location of the property is minimised through consideration of access to schooling, employment, caring responsibilities, medical services and other services. A minimum standard of a suitable property is also set out to prevent applicants from living in poor quality housing.

There is no identified impact on staff.

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

The Housing Green Paper in 2013 set out the commitment to introduce the private sector offer power.

The policy supplements the Allocations Policy and Homelessness Strategy.

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

Applicants considered vulnerable, requiring adaptations to the property due to their disability and those fleeing domestic violence, violence or harassment will be exempt from private sector offers. This will ensure that these groups can receive the support that social housing is typically more readily able to provide. This will also reduce repeat homelessness.

The suitable property criteria provides additional protections for vulnerable households so that they are not placed in poor quality accommodation. Poor housing can have a detrimental effect on the health and well being of households. The risk that homeless households might be placed in unsuitable accommodation will be reduced.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Homeless households should benefit from a reduced length of stay in temporary accommodation (TA). This will reduce stress, frustration and reduce the financial impact as TA typically costs more and ‘living in limbo’ can hamper employment prospects.

The suitable location criteria will protect children from being moved away from a school during important exam years.

Older and disabled people that rely on family and friends delivering care and support will not be detrimentally impacted as homeless households providing this support will be housed within suitable proximity to continue to deliver this support.

Homeless households will not have to make a choice between a home and employment as the criteria takes in to account access to employment.

Applicants with substance misuse problems are unlikely to be placed in a position where they are



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forced to choose between an increased risk of relapse and a home by being housed near social networks that could trigger a relapse.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Allowing people owed the main homelessness duty to turn down offers of suitable accommodation in the private rented sector and wait for an offer of social housing is unfair:

- to other households on the housing register who have to wait longer to access limited social housing stock; and
- to the taxpayer who is funding expensive temporary accommodation whilst people owed the homelessness duty wait for an offer of social housing.

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?

Applicants that are housed in the private sector may not have the same level of access to tenancy sustainment services that social housing providers provide. To reduce this impact personal circumstances are taken in to account to understand whether a private sector offer would be appropriate. Also during the first year of a PSO tenancy, the Council will endeavor to provide some level of support to the applicant to help sustain the tenancy, subject to resources available and competing demand for services. Where appropriate, support services, such as Bromford Support, will be sought to help sustain the tenancy.

Vulnerable people such as applicants at risk of domestic abuse may be considered for a PSO out of the area so that they can move away from the risk. In these situations the Council may not be able to offer the same tenancy support that the applicant may have had in Central Bedfordshire. Instead the Council would only be able to make the receiving authority aware of the vulnerable person moving in to their area and signpost the applicant to available services.

The engagement activity highlighted a concern that applicants would not be treated as fairly in the private rented sector compared to social housing. It is perceived that private sector tenants would have a lower level of redress if problems developed with the property or the landlord. There is also the concern that outcomes can be different if the tenant chooses to exercise their rights. For example a private sector tenant can enforce their rights to get repairs done, but the landlord may decide not to renew the tenancy agreement at the end of the fixed term.

The suitability criteria does not specifically consider whether the landlord allows pets and the impact this could have on the household. Pets can be important to some applicants, particularly elderly people and rough sleepers who may rely on pets for companionship. The Council is of the view that homelessness is an emergency situation and a suitable property should not be refused if pets cannot be accommodated. This is the policy for Temporary Accommodation and so it is likely that the applicant would have made alternative arrangements prior to the offer. Council Officers will however try and match a household with a pet to a house where the owner allows pets but this might not be possible each time.

Proximity to cultural and faith resources are not specifically considered in the policy, however



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under human rights legislation individuals have a right to hold a religious belief but the right to manifest that belief is qualified. Consideration within the policy is given to ensuring that people have access to employment, education, local services, amenities and transport. **Added to this will be 'due regard will be given to issues related to the Equality Act protected characteristics' to take account of access to religion or belief..**

The policy states that the council would not usually make a PSO if the applicant is considered vulnerable. Vulnerability is not defined in the policy. Engagement activity has highlighted that young people are especially vulnerable in private sector accommodation but it is not clear whether young people and care leavers are included in this definition.

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

Stage 2 - Consideration of Relevant Data and Consultation

In completing this section it will be helpful to consider:

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

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

Internal desktop research

	Place survey / Customer satisfaction data		Demographic Profiles – Census & ONS
	Local Needs Analysis	x	Service Monitoring / Performance Information
	Other local research		

Third party guidance and examples

x	National / Regional Research		Analysis of service outcomes for different groups
x	Best Practice / Guidance	x	Benchmarking with other organisations
	Inspection Reports		

Public consultation related activities

x	Consultation with Service Users		Consultation with Community / Voluntary Sector
x	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		

Consulting Members, stakeholders and specialists



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	Elected Members	x	Expert views of stakeholders representing diverse groups
x	Specialist staff / service expertise		

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

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

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

- **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+

National data:

In 2009-10 1% of homeless acceptances had priority need because of old age. 7% had priority need because of their young age (16-17year olds and 18-20 year old care leavers).

Local data:

16-44 year olds are those that are most affected by homelessness. Four households were classified as vulnerable due to old age (P1E 2012-13).

The applicant's age when accepted as eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need (April 2012 March 2013)

Age	Count
16 - 24	66
25 - 44	67
45 - 59	20
60 - 64	1
65 - 74	3
75 & Over	2

P1E – 2012/13

66% of homeless households were families with children. This corresponds with national data which found that 68% of homeless acceptances were households with dependant children or included a pregnant woman

Applicant households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need during the quarter (analysis by household type)

	1 child	2 children	3 or more children	All households
Applicant whose household includes dependent children	57	32	16	105
Applicant is, or household includes, a pregnant woman and there are no other dependent children				24
Applicant aged 16 or 17 years old				2
Applicant formerly "in care", and aged 18 to 20 years old				2



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P1E – 2012/13

On average 34 households are in temporary accommodation each month. 22 (64%) of these were households with dependents or a pregnant woman. The average length of stay for households with dependents or a pregnant woman is 19.5 days, 8.3 more days compared to other households.

Temporary Accommodation

Measure	April 2013- January 2014
Average per month of households in Temporary Accommodation	34
Average per month of households in Temporary Accommodation (households with dependants / pregnant)	22
Average length of stay in temporary accommodation - Pregnant/dependants households	19.5 days
Average length of stay - all other households	11.2 days

Housing Balanced Scorecard 2013/14

Homeless children living in temporary accommodation are some of the most deprived children in this country, missing out on schooling, on play, and opportunities to develop (Shelter: Living in Limbo 2004).

Cold, damp housing harms children’s health. Children growing up in such conditions are 25% more likely to suffer severe ill-health and disability during childhood or early adulthood. (DCLG, Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012: Final Stage Impact Assessment, 2012 – from here on referred to as DCLG, 2012)

Good quality accommodation can bring other benefits that can give rise to positive externalities including improved attendance at school and consequent improvements in educational performance and labour market participation. For instance Shelter estimate that 8% of children in sub-standard accommodation miss out on one quarter of all their schooling (DCLG, 2012)

Young people may need additional support to maintain a tenancy due to their inexperience in maintaining a home. Due to the additional tenancy support typically available in social housing, young people may be at higher risk of repeat homelessness in private sector housing.

Older people may also require additional support to sustain their tenancy and may have better outcomes in social housing as this support is more readily available.

The consultation asked ‘In determining the suitability of a PSO, the Council will consider the proximity and accessibility to local services, amenities and transport’. Do you agree with this suitability criteria? 10 responded ‘yes’ and 1 responded ‘no’. 1 respondent provided qualitative feedback regarding this criterion stating that consideration to a person’s age and/or disability should be considered when assessing accessibility.

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

National data:

In 2009-10 14% of homeless acceptances had a priority need related to a physical disability or



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mental illness.

Homelessness and disability

Accepted as homeless applicant, or a member of their household is vulnerable as a result of:	2012/13
Physical disability	8
Mental illness or disability	15
Drug dependency	0
Alcohol dependency	0

P1E 2012-2013

Cold, damp housing can increase rates of asthma, respiratory and skin allergies, and other lung diseases. Poor quality housing is linked to physical accidents and injuries, to social and mental effects including depression, isolation, anxiety or aggression. Noise-related stress, exposure to toxins, lead, asbestos or carbon monoxide can have very severe health impact and even more so on those that already have poor health (DCLG, 2012).

Shelter, the housing charity, found that there are high levels of depression associated with homelessness and living in temporary accommodation. Nearly half of parents with children and 71 per cent of childless people reported being depressed. (Shelter, Living in Limbo, 2004).

Overall, half of people who responded to Shelter’s 2004 survey said that their health or their family’s health had suffered due to living in temporary accommodation. People who had been living in temporary accommodation for more than a year were more likely to report damage to their health through living in temporary accommodation. (Shelter, Living in Limbo, 2004).

Frequent moving and disruption associated with living in temporary accommodation makes it difficult for children to keep school places, maintain their attendance and do well at school. Two fifths of parents (43 per cent) reported that their children had missed school due to their housing situation. On average, children had missed 55 days of school equivalent to quarter of the school year. One in ten parents (11 per cent) said that at least one of their children did not have a school place at all for the term. Parents also said their children had long journeys to school and had problems with transport. (Shelter, Living in Limbo, 2004).

The trauma of becoming homeless and stresses associated with living in temporary accommodation affect children’s mental and emotional well being. Over two fifths (42 per cent) of parents said that their child was ‘often unhappy or depressed’. Children also experienced a lot of problems at school including bullying and behavioural problems. One in ten parents (11 per cent) said that their child had been given a statement of Special Educational Needs and one in ten said their child had been suspended, excluded or expelled from school. (Shelter, Living in Limbo, 2004).

- 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*

Over 2 million people become carers every year (Carers UK). Every day, another six thousand people take on a caring responsibility and 3 in 5 people will become a carer at some point in their lives. By 2026 more than 10% of the population will be over 75 and significant numbers of the workforce age 45+ will have caring responsibilities.



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Valuing Carers 2011 estimates that the economic value of the contribution made by carers in the UK is around £119 billion per year. This is 37% higher than an estimate made in 2007.

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

- 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)*

24 homelessness acceptances were households that included a pregnant woman and no other dependent children in 2012/13 (P1E – 2012/13).

On average 22 households with dependents or a pregnant woman are in temporary accommodation each month. The average length of stay for households with dependents or a pregnant woman is 19.5 days, 8.3 more days than other households.

Cold, damp housing harms children’s health and can contribute to post-natal depression in mothers. The development of babies and young children in poor housing conditions can be significantly affected. (DCLG, 2012).

A suitable proximity to ante natal services will be important for pregnant women to ensure consistency in care.

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

National data:

In 2009-10 14% of homeless acceptances were Black or Black British, 7% were Asian or Asian British, 3% were mixed and 45 Chinese or other.

Ethnicity of homelessness acceptances 2012-13

	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Other
Numbers accepted as being homeless and in priority need	145	7	2	5	0

Table 784: Local authorities' action under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Acts: financial year 2012/13

Ethnic minority households are more likely to live in rented accommodation and flats, and about a quarter are living in pre-1919 homes, many of which are in a poor condition. (Race Equality Foundation 2014). In particular black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi households are more likely to live in homes that fall below the Decent Homes Standard than white households. (Department for Communities and Local Government)



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Housing services are usually tailored to the needs of different clients, but this is rarely the case for Gypsies and Irish Travellers. Many authorities recognise that they would rather live on sites, but since there are not enough of these, they do little to make the accommodation they can provide more suitable, for example by providing tenancy support to those who have recently moved from sites. As a result many Gypsies and Irish Travellers find it difficult to keep up their tenancies, leading to a cycle of eviction, from housing to homelessness and unauthorised encampments, and to eviction again. (CRE)

Overall black and minority ethnic people are more likely to be unemployed, irrespective of their qualifications, place of residence, sex or age. They are less likely to hold senior management positions. (Equality Review (ER)) A property that prohibits access to current employment could therefore have a more significant impact than on White British people.

In 2006 at GCSE 5+A*-C, pupils from of African, African-Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani backgrounds achieved below national averages. Disrupting education with a school move could therefore have a more detrimental impact on these groups.

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

A lack of awareness about a person’s religious or other beliefs can lead to discrimination. This is because religion can play a very important part in the daily lives of people and access to cultural and faith resources may be of significant importance.

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

National data:

In 2009-10 45% of homeless acceptances were lone parent households with a female applicant and a further 12% were single female applicants.

Two applicants were accepted as homeless as a result of fleeing domestic violence in 2012-13 (P1E – 2012/13).

Lone parents that are female are significantly more likely to be accepted as homeless than male lone parents, but single men are more likely to be accepted than single women.

Applicant households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need

Couple with dependent children*	Lone parent household with dependent children		One person household		All other household groups
	Male Applicant	Female Applicant*	Male Applicant	Female Applicant	
37	7	82	20	6	7

* include expectant mothers with no other dependent children

Source: P1E 2012-13



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

Data is not collected on the sexual orientation of homeless applicants.

When parents are very hostile to young lesbian and gay people, some feel forced to leave home even though they may become homeless as a result. The main cause of homelessness in Central Bedfordshire is eviction by parents who are no longer willing to accommodate them (CBC Housing Green Paper 2011/12).

One in five lesbian and gay people expect to be treated worse than heterosexuals when applying for social housing.

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

Tenants in private rented accommodation are 50% more at risk of carbon monoxide poisoning than both home owners and social housing tenants. It is likely that this risk will be more starkly reflected in poor quality private rented sector accommodation. According to the Chief Medical Officer for England (2011), Carbon Monoxide poisoning causes 50 deaths and hospitalises 200 people a year, and also sends 4,000 people to A&E (DCLG, 2012).

**2.3. Summary of Existing Data and Consultation Findings – Employment
Considering the impact on Employees**

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

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

- **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*

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

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

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



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

- **Sex:** *Women / Men*

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

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

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

The Government identified in its EIA of the Homelessness duty that:

“The priority given to certain groups of young people and people who are disabled or mentally ill (who are considered most vulnerable and likely to suffer hardship if not secured accommodation), combined with the fact that households that include a pregnant woman or a dependant child are considered to have a priority need for accommodation under the homelessness legislation, means that women, pregnant women, young people and children, and disabled people are more likely to be affected by any change in the way that the main homelessness duty can be fully discharged. People from black and minority ethnic communities are also more likely to be affected because they are over-represented among homeless acceptances (compared to the general population).”

2.5. To what extent do current procedures and working practices address the above issues and help to promote equality of opportunity?

Those at most risk of tenancy failure will not be considered suitable for a private sector offer. We would therefore not usually make a PSO if the applicant is considered vulnerable, requires supported accommodation or is considered unlikely to be able to sustain a private rented tenancy.

We would not usually make a PSO if the applicant or a member of their household requires significant disabled adaptations to make the property suitable.

We would not usually make a PSO if the applicant was previously a social housing tenant and who has fled domestic violence; other violence; or harassment.

- To mitigate concerns about reduced security of tenure in the private rented sector, legislation put additional protection in place such as a minimum fixed term tenancy of at least 12 months. Moreover, the duty will recur if the applicant becomes homeless again within two years of accepting the private rented sector offer, through no fault of their own, regardless of whether they still have a priority need for accommodation. The Council is also looking to develop an information pack outlining expectations of tenants and landlords to ensure that there is transparency and availability of information.

The Central Bedfordshire policy states that the Council will try to secure two-year agreements with landlords, where possible.



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The suitability decision can be reviewed on request by the applicant.

A property will not be suitable if:

- Significant disruption will be caused to employment, caring responsibilities, or education of the household.
- There is insufficient proximity to and accessibility of medical facilities and other support, which are used by, or essential to the well-being, of the household will also be taken into account.
- The proximity and accessibility to local services, amenities and transport is not adequate.
- The accommodation is not in a reasonable physical condition and does not meet minimum standards set out in the policy.

During the first year of a PSO tenancy, the Council will endeavor to provide some level of support to the applicant to help sustain the tenancy, subject to resources available and competing demand for services. Where appropriate, support services, such as Bromford Support, will be sought to help sustain the tenancy.

2.6. Are there any gaps in data or consultation findings

Wider views on the policy have not been sought on the impact of the policy.

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

Formal consultation will be carried out on the policy in March 2014.

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

Stage 3 – Assessing Positive & Negative Impacts

Analysis of Impacts	Impact?		Discrimination?		Summary of impacts and reasons
	(+ve)	(- ve)	YES	NO	
3.1 Age	*			*	Young people and older people may have poorer outcomes in a private sector property due to higher risks of tenancy failure. However personal circumstances are considered in PSOs and tenancy support is available.
3.2 Disability	*			*	Accessibility requirements will be considered before accommodation is offered to ensure that the property is suitable.
3.3 Carers	*			*	Applicants with caring responsibilities will be housed in reasonable proximity to the cared for person.



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3.4 Gender Reassignment	*			*	Increased availability of properties will lead to a faster homelessness solution reducing the need for TA.
3.5 Pregnancy & Maternity				*	Temporary accommodation (TA) and poor accommodation can have negative outcomes on pregnant women and those who have recently given birth. The policy will reduce the need/length of TA use and ensure that accommodation is appropriate.
3.6 Race	*			*	Increased availability of properties will lead to a faster homelessness solution reducing the need for TA.
3.7 Religion / Belief	*			*	
3.8 Sex	*			*	Increased availability of properties will lead to a faster homelessness solution reducing the need for TA.
3.9 Sexual Orientation	*			*	Increased availability of properties will lead to a faster homelessness solution reducing the need for TA.
3.10 Other e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion Marriage and Civil Partnership				*	

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?	<p>The introduction of private sector offers will increase the supply of housing for homeless households. This will mean that households will spend less time in temporary accommodation. Other households in housing need on the housing register will benefit from an increase in available social housing lets.</p> <p>Private sector housing can have a number of disadvantages compared to social housing such as poorer quality of housing, poor access to tenancy sustainment support, higher rent and less security of tenure. The policy will mitigate these disadvantages by checking the suitability of a property against the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerability - Disability



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordability - the significance of any disruption caused by the location from employment, caring responsibilities, or education of the household - the proximity to and accessibility of medical facilities and other support, which are used by, or essential to the well-being, of the household - the proximity and accessibility to local services, amenities and transport - PSO outside the Central Bedfordshire area - suitability of property 																							
<p>4.2 What changes will be made to address or mitigate any adverse impacts that have been identified?</p> <p>No changes are required.</p>																							
<p>4.3 Are there any budgetary implications?</p> <p>No adverse implications. If the policy can reduce bed and breakfast use, there may be a positive implication.</p>																							
<p>4.4 Actions to be taken to mitigate against any adverse impacts:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Action</th> <th>Lead Officer</th> <th>Date</th> <th>Priority</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Consult stakeholders on the policy to check that the criteria will not lead to any adverse impacts.</td> <td>Jo Burnham</td> <td>03/03/14</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Action	Lead Officer	Date	Priority	Consult stakeholders on the policy to check that the criteria will not lead to any adverse impacts.	Jo Burnham	03/03/14	H												
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Stage 5 - Checking that all the relevant issues and mitigating actions have been identified

<p>Stage 5 – Quality Assurance & Scrutiny: Checking that all the relevant issues have been identified</p>	
<p>5.1 What methods have been used to gain feedback on the main issues raised in the assessment?</p> <p>Two stakeholder engagement events were held in February 2014 to gather views from members of staff and customers that may be affected by the changes such as homelessness applications and Housing Register applicants.</p> <p>A formal consultation ran for 4 weeks in March 2014. 11 responses were received.</p>	
<p>Step 1:</p>	
<p>Has the Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity) reviewed this assessment and provided feedback? Yes</p>	
<p>Summary of CPA’s comments:</p>	
<p> </p>	



Appendix B Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

I support the findings and issues highlighted in the EIA. Additional national data and conclusions drawn from the Government's EIA has been added by way of comparison in sections 2.1 and 2.4. I would recommend further consideration of the following issues:

- The Government identified in its EIA of the Homelessness Duty that individual applicants will be able to appeal against decisions by local authorities if they believe that the offer of accommodation is not suitable (through the courts as per other decisions under homelessness legislation). The policy does not highlight that applicants are able to appeal a decision or provide information as to how this should be done. It is recommended that this is included for the sake of transparency. Comments: The policy does include a section outlining the 'Right of applicant to request a Review of Property Suitability'. Section 4.3 of version 0.6 of the policy explains that *the applicant can request a review under s202 of the Housing Act 1996. The review request should be made within 21 days of the offer of accommodation being made. A senior officer or an appointed independent agent not involved in the original decision will conduct the review. The application will continue if it is found that the property was not suitable. A further offer of accommodation will be made when possible. The duty will be discharged and the case closed if it is found that the accommodation was considered to be suitable.* Section 4.2 of the v0.6 policy sets out how clients are informed of this right: *Officers will send a letter to the applicant when making an offer, setting out the following [...] the right to request a review of the suitability of accommodation [...].*
- There is evidence that highlights that social isolation can have negative health impacts on elderly people and that pets can help :

***The support older people want and the services they need** Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Pets were cited as a source of pleasure and of company, but as a source of some anxiety if people thought they should talk about problems in the discussions. They described some of the responsibilities, generally foreseeable, arising from pet ownership, such as meeting the cost of vets' bills and, in the case of dogs, being able to exercise them.*

Given the low numbers of elderly people and homelessness applications, perhaps an exception could be considered on a case by case basis in relation to pets and vulnerable older people? Comments: The first priority for households accepted as priority homeless will be to find a roof over their heads. This may mean that accommodation where pets are allowed will be a secondary matter. Council officers will try and match a household with a pet to a house where the owner allows pets but this might not be possible each time.

- It also recommended that consideration is given to the needs of people who have guide dogs and assistance dogs (rather than pets) and how this would impact on the way in which the duty is discharged. Comments: Applicants that need assistance dogs will be considered vulnerable and so will not be made a PSO. Further details on this will be included in the good practice guidance.
- Under human rights legislation individuals have a right to hold a religious belief but the right to manifest that belief is qualified. The Equality Act also protects people with no religious and other beliefs (e.g. Athesim Humanism, climate change etc.). Consideration within the policy is given to ensuring that people have access to employment, education, local services, amenities and transport and this may provide sufficient consideration. Given the largely rural nature of the Central Bedfordshire area it could potentially be argued that it will not be reasonably practicable to build very wide ranging additional



Appendix B Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

considerations into the policy. Comments: Under 'The proximity and accessibility to local services, amenities and transport' in Appendix B of the policy the following will be added 'due regard will be given to issues related to the Equality Act protected characteristics'.

- The policy states that the council would not usually make a PSO if the applicant is considered vulnerable. It may be helpful to include a definition of vulnerability. The Officer for Voluntary Organisations for Children, young people & families has recently contacted me to highlight that currently there is no mention of young people in relation to the local authority legal duty, or a mention of their vulnerability with regard to the private sector offer. Comments: This has been included in section 1.6 as an area for potential improvement and the definition of vulnerability will be defined in the practice guidance.

Step 2:

5.2 Feedback from Central Bedfordshire Equality Forum 27 March 2014

Members highlighted the following issues:

- The suitability criteria is really important in helping to ensure that people are placed in appropriate and safe accommodation.
- Emphasis was placed on the importance of checking that the landlord is a fit and proper person
- The effectiveness of energy performance certificates was queried. The use of sub-meters within properties by landlords can mean that fuel bills for individual tenants are substantial, impacting adversely upon the actual affordability of the property.
- The issue of guide and assistance dogs was considered. Landlords will be covered by the Equality Act and so will be subject to indirect discrimination legislation and also provisions relating to discrimination arising from disability. Blind / partially sighted people are likely to be viewed as vulnerable and so may be less likely to be subject to this provision. The issue of retired working dogs was highlighted as they often continue to reside with their owner.
- In considering the Equality Act it was also recognised that landlords will not be able to turn down an individual on the basis of a protected characteristic.
- The Forum debated whether any Equality Act contractual implications were created between the council and the landlord in relation to the delivery of public services but it was noted that the tenancy agreement is between the landlord and the individual.
- The issue of access to faith facilities was considered. It was felt that there should not be a blanket exclusion of this issue and that it should be considered as part of the broad range of suitability factors that are considered. It was suggested that Page 8 Appendix B - suitability of property location could be updated at item three to highlight that due regard will be given to issues related to the Equality Act protected characteristics.

5.3 Feedback from Child Poverty Meeting – 11 March 2014

Attendees at the meeting expressed the following views:

- There is a need to ensure that debt advisers support tenants because there is a risk that people may go into the private sector and then experience increasing levels of debt. There is a need to consider how people in difficulty can be signposted to support such as that provided by Bromford.
- When identifying out of area placements there is a real need to ensure that roots in a



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particular locality have been fully considered and the importance of strong networks such as provision of childcare by grandparents are not overlooked.

- Concern was expressed that rent in the private sector can be significantly higher and so checks on affordability will be particularly crucial.
- Good access to local sources of employment is important to consider when identifying suitable placements. The Council shouldn't place individuals in areas where it will be hard to find work.
- Concern was expressed that the policy might provide a short term fix but that families will come back to the council needing help further down the line.

The meeting was informed that individuals would still be able to apply to the housing register and the process will help reduce queue jumping,

- There was agreement that the needs of family experiencing domestic abuse required special consideration.

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?
	The actions will be monitored by the Head of Housing Solutions.
6.2	What sort of data will be collected and how often will it be analysed?
	<p>The Council collects data for the Government's P1E statistical returns. This enables us to monitor how many households are accepted as homeless and offered accommodation in the private rented sector (and monitor any corresponding reductions in households in temporary accommodation). P1E data also tell us the types of household who are being accepted as homeless.</p> <p>In addition to this, data will be collected on the incidences where the duty has recurred because the applicant has become homeless again within two years of accepting the private rented sector offer, through no fault of their own. This will enable us to monitor the volume of re-applications within two years of the duty being ended with a private sector offer.</p>
6.3	How often will the proposal be reviewed?
	The policy will be reviewed every three years unless a review is required earlier.
6.4	Who will be responsible for this?
	Head of Housing Solutions.
6.5	How have the actions from this assessment been incorporated into the proposal?
	Actions will be incorporated following the development of the final draft of the policy once



Appendix B Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment

consultation results have been reviewed. This is anticipated to be May 2014.

Stage 7 - Finalising the assessment.

Stage 7 – Accountability / Signing Off

7.1 Has the lead Assistant Director/Head of Service been notified of the outcome of the assessment

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

7.2 Has the Corporate Policy Adviser Equality & Diversity provided confirmation that the Assessment is complete?

Date: _____

Appendix C

**Recommendation from the
Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Held on 28 July 2014**

Recommended that the Social Care Health and Housing OSC fully support the proposed Policy to Discharge the Council's Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Property.

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Draft Discharge of the Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Home Policy

Response to Formal Consultation

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Localism Act, 2011, provides a power to local authorities to discharge the homelessness duty to the private rented sector without consent of new homeless applicants from 9th November 2012. Local authorities can discharge their duties through securing suitable, available accommodation for the household. The accommodation can either be social housing or a property in the private rented sector.
- 1.2 Statutory regulations require local authorities to take a number of matters into account in determining the suitability of accommodation. The Council's suitability criteria that it proposes to consider when discharging its homelessness duty to the private rented sector are set out in the draft Discharge of the Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Home Policy.
- 1.3 This power will only be exercised by Central Bedfordshire Council following final agreement of its Discharge of the Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Home Policy. Homelessness applicants who apply or who have applied before the policy approval date will not have a private sector offer (PSO).
- 1.4 Central Bedfordshire Council formally consulted on the suitability criteria set out in the draft Discharge of the Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Home Policy for 4 weeks from 3rd March to 28th March 2014.
- 1.5 The consultation was managed via a formal consultation document. This was available in paper format; downloadable from the CBC website, or was obtainable by telephoning or writing to the contact details provided in the letters to prospective housing register applicants.
- 1.6 Additional feedback was also obtained via stakeholder engagement events held on 10th and 13th February 2014 where prospective tenants, hostel and temporary accommodation residents, staff, Registered Social Landlords and private sector landlords were invited to comment on the suitability criteria in the draft Discharge of the Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Home Policy. See Appendix 3 for full details of feedback from these events.

2. RESULTS OF CONSULTATION: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

- 2.1 In total, 11 people responded to the suitability criteria in the draft Discharge of the Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Home Policy consultation.
- 2.2 18% of respondents were residents within Central Bedfordshire currently homeless or at risk of homelessness and are housing register applicants, 9% were housing register applicants, 9% were homeless or at risk of homelessness and 55% of applicants were residents within Central Bedfordshire.

Appendix D

- 2.3 45% of respondents were male, 45% were female and 9 % preferred not to say.
- 2.4 27% of respondents were aged 55 years or over.
- 2.5 18% of respondents stated that they had a disability.
- 2.6 64% of respondents stated that they were heterosexual.
- 2.7 73% of respondents were White: British, 9% were White: Other, 9% preferred not to say and 9% did not respond.
- 2.8 55% of respondents' stated their religion or belief was Christian and 27% of respondents stated they had no religion or belief.
- 2.9 Appendix 2 provides a full demographic statistical profile of respondents.

3. RESULTS OF CONSULTATION: QUESTION RESPONSES

The formal consultation was designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative data from respondents, with results summarised as follows:

- 3.1 Q1. In determining the suitability of a Private Sector Offer (PSO), the Council will consider disruption caused by the location from employment, caring responsibilities, or education of the household.**

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%

11 respondents (100% of respondents) agreed with this proposal. No additional qualitative feedback was received.

- 3.2 Q2. In determining the suitability of a PSO, the Council will consider the proximity and accessibility to medical facilities and other support which are used by, or essential to the well-being, of the household.**

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	10	91%
No	1	9%
Don't Know	0	0%

10 respondents (91%) agreed with the proposal. 1 respondent (9%) did not support this proposal but did not provided qualitative feedback.

3.3 Q3. In determining the suitability of a PSO, the Council will consider the proximity and accessibility to local services, amenities and transport.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	10	91%
No	1	9%
Don't Know	0	0%

10 respondents (91%) agreed with the proposal. 1 respondent (9%) provided qualitative feedback regarding this criterion stating that consideration to a person's age and/or disability should be considered when assessing accessibility.

3.4 Q4. In determining the suitability of a PSO outside the Central Bedfordshire area the Council will consider the reduction in the risk of domestic violence, other violence, or harassment; or to assist persons in breaking away from detrimental situations, such as drug or alcohol abuse.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	10	91%
No	1	9%
Don't Know	0	0%

10 respondents (91%) agreed with the proposal. 1 respondent (9%) provided qualitative feedback regarding offering additional support to people effected by drug or alcohol abuse.

3.5 Q5. In determining the suitability of a PSO outside the Central Bedfordshire area the Council will consider a persons' very limited / no local connection to Central Bedfordshire (for example, they may have approached the Council having fled violence from another area).

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	10	91%
No	1	9%
Don't Know	0	0%

10 respondents (91%) agreed with the proposal. 1 respondent (9%) provided qualitative feedback suggesting that prospective tenants fleeing domestic violence could be given higher priority for suitable housing.

3.6 Q6. In determining the suitability of a PSO outside the Central Bedfordshire area the Council will consider the suitability criteria as set out in questions 1 to 5 above.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%

All respondents agreed with this criterion. No additional comments were made.

3.7 Q7. If suitable accommodation is not available within Central Bedfordshire, a suitable private sector offer can be made in a neighbouring authority. This location must have reasonable facilities and transport links.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	8	72%
No	3	27%
Don't Know	0	8%

8 respondents (72% of respondents) support this proposal.
2 respondents, (18% of respondents), provided qualitative feedback that questioned what is reasonable and the equality support provided to people wishing to stay within Central Bedfordshire

3.8 Q8. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority are of the view that the accommodation is not in a reasonable physical condition.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%

100% of respondents agree with this criterion. 1 respondent provided qualitative feedback stating that accommodation should be fit for purpose.

3.9 Q9. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority is of the view that any electrical equipment does not meet the requirements of the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%

All respondent agree with this criterion. 2 respondents (18%) provided qualitative feedback that assessments should be made by professionals and that minor repairs could be undertaken to meet the standard.

3.10 Q10. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority are of the view that the landlord has not taken reasonable fire safety precautions.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%

All respondent agree with this, 2 have provided qualitative feedback that reasonable precautions should be listed and landlords' could be given time to comply with regulations.

3.11 Q11. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority are of the view that the landlord has not taken reasonable precautions to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	10	91%
No	1	9%
Don't Know	0	0%

10 respondents (91% of respondents) agree with this criterion, 1 of those respondents has also provided qualitative feedback that reasonable precautions could be expensive therefore impacting on the rental costs.

3.12 Q12. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable that there is not a current gas safety record for the property.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	10	91%
No	1	9%
Don't Know	0	0%

10 respondents (91% of respondents) agree with this criterion, 1 of those respondents has also provided qualitative feedback questioning if gas will be in properties.

3.13 Q13. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable that the accommodation does not have a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC).

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	7	64%
No	4	36%
Don't Know	0	0%

7 respondents (64% of respondents) agree with this criterion. 4 respondents who disagreed with this also provided qualitative feedback questioning the relevance of energy performance within otherwise suitable properties.

3.14 Q14. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority are of the view that the landlord is not a fit and proper person to be a landlord.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%

11 respondents (100% of respondents) agreed with this proposal. No additional qualitative feedback was received.

3.15 Q15. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the accommodation is a House in Multiple Occupation or HMO (including subject to additional licensing) and is not licensed.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%

11 respondents (100% of respondents) agreed with this proposal. No additional qualitative feedback was received.

3.16 Q16 PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the landlord has not provided a written tenancy agreement that the local authority considers to be adequate.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Yes	10	91%
No	1	9%
Don't Know	0	0%

10 respondents (91% of respondents) agree with this criterion.
1 respondent has also provided qualitative feedback suggesting that a free of charge template tenancy agreement be provided to landlords.

3.17 Q17. Overall, have we got the proposed suitability criteria right?

Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%

All respondents support the suggested criterion, 1 respondent has suggested the use of "unsuitable" accommodation on a temporary fixed term basis until it meets the suitability criteria.

4. SUMMARY

4.1 In summary, the 11 respondents were in support of the suitability criteria put forward in the formal consultation.

Whilst there was support for the proposed criteria being fair and welcome, the consultation raised some suggestions from respondent for inclusion within the draft Discharge of the Homelessness Duty to a Suitable Home Policy and/or criteria to provide more clarity on requirements for landlords to be able to provide suitable accommodation for prospective tenant(s).

At the engagement events there was support for the Suitability Criteria within the Policy as it provided more housing options for tenants, questions were also raised by landlords around the possible financial implications in meeting the standard to allow for them to let properties to tenants affected by this proposal and what incentives may be on offer to meet this.

Both tenants and landlords questioned what, if any, on-going support would be provided to both parties to ensure that tenancies can be maintained.

Appendix D

Full details of comments received through the consultation are provided in Appendix 1 and full feedback received from the Stakeholder Engagement Events in Appendix 3 & 4.

Appendix 1: Results of Consultation: Qualitative Feedback

Q1. In determining the suitability of a Private Sector Offer (PSO), the Council will consider disruption caused by the location from employment, caring responsibilities, or education of the household.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

No comments received

Q2. In determining the suitability of a PSO, the Council will consider the proximity and accessibility to medical facilities and other support which are used by, or essential to the well-being, of the household.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

No comments received

Q3. In determining the suitability of a PSO, the Council will consider the proximity and accessibility to local services, amenities and transport.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

It all depends what is proximity, short walk or a short bus journey is acceptable, as long as they're not disabled or old.

Officer response – all of these aspects will be considered by Officers when considering suitability of location.

Q4. In determining the suitability of a PSO outside the Central Bedfordshire area the Council will consider the reduction in the risk of domestic violence, other violence, or harassment; or to assist persons in breaking away from detrimental situations, such as drug or alcohol abuse.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

You need more than this for me to give a meaningful opinion. In principle of course I will agree but who could really disagree? Being away from sources of drink and drugs will never be 100% and the person will still need help. These addictions are the symptoms of something bigger, not always the cause. If you are paying housing benefit direct to the claimant, they will be tempted to waste it. It is better (albeit not the done thing now) to pay the money direct to the landlord and help the recipient with a deposit.

Officer response – the ability to pay benefits, in particular Housing Benefit, directly to the landlord is not something that is within the realm of

this policy. The concern is recognised and it is in the Council's interest also that the tenancy is sustained. It is intended that tenants are supported to help sustain their tenancies, perhaps through agencies like Bromford Support.

- Q5. In determining the suitability of a PSO outside the Central Bedfordshire area the Council will consider a persons' very limited / no local connection to Central Bedfordshire (for example, they may have approached the Council having fled violence from another area).**

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

In this example, where the person is vulnerable, and this authority is deemed as suitable, then the application should actually be ranked higher.

Officer response – agreed, each case will be considered on its merits and risks to clients as to what is considered suitable.

- Q6. In determining the suitability of a PSO outside the Central Bedfordshire area the Council will consider the suitability criteria as set out in questions 1 to 5 above.**

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

No comments received

- Q7. If suitable accommodation is not available within Central Bedfordshire, a suitable private sector offer can be made in a neighbouring authority. This location must have reasonable facilities and transport links.**

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

This is too woolly a definition, what does reasonable mean?

Officer response – reasonable facilities are those required for normal day to day living and include considerations mentioned elsewhere in the draft policy. What the policy proposes is that where all other suitability criteria are met, a property in a neighbouring authority would be considered.

While as you have said some will want to leave or flee and area, we must be asking questions why we can provide facilities for travellers for instance yet someone who wants to stay in an area and build a stable life is being shipped out.

Officer response – where possible, suitable properties within Central Bedfordshire will be offered first. There will be times, however, when a suitable affordable property in a neighbouring area provides the

same (or sometimes a better) option than what is available within Central Bedfordshire.

- Q8. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority is of the view that the accommodation is not in a reasonable physical condition.**

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

It must be fit for basic purpose.

Officer response – This is policy intention

- Q9. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority is of the view that any electrical equipment does not meet the requirements of the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.**

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

But minor items can be corrected in a reasonable time.

Officer response – Agree, landlords would be given some time to remedy minor items but these would have to be made clear to the tenant.

I am assuming that this means that the property will be actively checked over by a qualified professional.

Officer response – this would normally be in the form of certification from a competent professional. Usually, it will be unfurnished accommodation.

- Q10. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority is of the view that the landlord has not taken reasonable fire safety precautions.**

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

But given time to comply.

Officer response – Agree where minor items. More major hazards might result in the property being deemed unsuitable.

E.g. Fire Alarms, Carbon Monoxide alarms. Assuming that there are no extenuating circumstances like those mentioned above.

Q11. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority is of the view that the landlord has not taken reasonable precautions to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Of course I agree but we mustn't place undue burden on a landlord if it puts the price up. Are the reasonable precautions cheap and simple?

Officer response – It is proposed that where a carbon monoxide detector is not present (and the property contains a risk of CO) the Council will work with owners to have one installed. This might be by installation through a Council partner.

Q12. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable that there is not a current gas safety record for the property.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Is there gas in the property?

Officer response – this would only apply if gas is supplied to the property.

Q13. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable that the accommodation does not have a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC).

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

This can be corrected in days

It has to be better than sleeping on the street so the energy performance is irrelevant.

How energy efficient a house is, is not really essential.

Now this is a load of old tosh. Good insulation brings down running costs and so this must not be overlooked but I am not convinced a paid for EPC is needed. Perhaps last year's running costs could be provided.

Officer response – The property should have a valid EPC in any event. The policy requirement is not over and above normal requirements. It is intended that the property is not unaffordable to keep warm. This should help the tenancy be sustained.

Q14. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the local housing authority is of the view that the landlord is not a fit and proper person to be a landlord.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

No comments received.

Q15. PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the accommodation is a House in Multiple Occupation or HMO (including subject to additional licensing) and is not licensed.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

No comment received.

Q16 PSO accommodation will be deemed unsuitable where the landlord has not provided a written tenancy agreement that the local authority considers to be adequate.

Do you agree with this suitability criteria?

Fine but why not provide one FOC and encourage good landlords to come forward and take on council tenants.

Officer response – we will work with landlords to improve practice but ultimately it is the landlords' responsibility to have an adequate, written tenancy agreement.

Q17. Overall, have we got the proposed suitability criteria right?

But in many cases, the New Tenant's might be prepared to accept on a temporary basis while its being sorted to comply...[within a planned period to fix]

Officer response – Agree in respect of minor items. Each case has to be considered.

Appendix 2:

Results of Consultation: Demographic Profile of Respondents

18. Please tell us which type of respondent you are:

	No.	Percentage
Homeless or at risk of homelessness	3*	27%
Housing Register applicant	3*	27%
Central Bedfordshire resident	8*	73%
Employee of CBC or partner organisation	0	0%
Other	1	9%
Not recorded	0	0%

**Respondents were asked to tick all categories that apply to their situation, 2 (18%) respondents ticked 3 categories*

19. Please tell us your gender

Male	5	45%
Female	5	45%
Transgender	0	0%
Prefer not to say	1	9%

20. Please tell us your age

18-24 years	1	9%
25-34 years	3	27%
35-44 years	1	9%
45-54 years	2	18%
55-64 years	1	9%
65-74 years	2	18%
Prefer not to say	1	9%

21. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

Under the Equality Act 2010 a person is considered to have a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a sustained and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Yes	2	18%
No	6	55%
Prefer not to say	2	18%
Not recorded	1	9%

22. Please tell us your sexual orientation

Heterosexual	7	64%
Bisexual	0	0%
Gay	1	9%
Lesbian	0	0%

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Prefer not to say	3	27%
Not recorded	0	0%

23. Please tell us your ethnicity

White: British	8	73%
White: Irish	0	0%
White: Gypsy or traveller	0	0%
White: other	1	9%
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	0	0%
Mixed: White and Black African	0	0%
Mixed: White and Asian	0	0%
Mixed: other	0	0%
Asian or Asian British: Indian	0	0%
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	0	0%
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	0	0%
Asian or Asian British: Chinese	0	0%
Asian or Asian British: other	0	0%
Black or Black British: Caribbean	0	0%
Black or Black British: African	0	0%
Black or Black British: other	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Prefer not to say	1	9%
Not recorded	1	9%

24. Please tell us whether you have a religion or belief

No religion	3	27%
Christian	6	55%
Buddhist	0	0%
Hindu	0	0%
Jewish	0	0%
Muslim	0	0%
Sikh	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Prefer not to say	1	9%
Not recorded	1	9%

Appendix 3: Qualitative Feedback from Engagement Events with Stakeholders

Questions/Comments - Staff – Social Care, Health and Housing and Registered Social Landlords.

Question 1:	
What are the advantages / disadvantages of the options to discharge Homeless duty via:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Housing - Direct let - Private Sector Offer (applicants under new policy) 	
Answers:	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Opens up the housing market	Lack of good condition stock Officer response – Agree, this is a risk
More availability/choice of housing – area and variety	How do you know if they are a good tenant? Officer response – This is a risk but tenant background will be explored during homelessness application process.
Reduction in waiting lists	What about tenants that have A.S.B. or Rent Arrears, are they going to be pushed into the private sector Officer response – This is a risk but tenant background will be explored during application process. The policy is not about pushing “poor” tenants into the PRS, this policy applies to social housing stock also.
Guaranteed tenant for at least 12 months, therefore offering some sustainability	If you house them in the private sector what about the costs e.g. deposit as this is normally required by a private sector landlord. Officer response – The Council may have to consider incentives to landlords such as paying the deposit/rent in advance. This could be externally funded and is cost effective
	Rental cost – private a much higher than the local authority Officer response – This is a risk but currently, there are landlords approaching the Council with lower priced accommodation.
	Lack of control over repairs etc Officer response – This is a risk but tenants will know who to raise issues

	<p>with and the landlord will know Council expectations, so risk should be lower.</p> <p>.</p>
	<p>Prevention work with Private Sector – need assurance/incentives See above</p>
	<p>Need the right sort of properties (2 beds) Agree and this will be part of suitability assessment</p>
	<p>Direct Let adhoc at the moment no clear process The policy will provide a clearer process.</p>
	<p>Some problems already exist around hard to let properties e.g. reputation of area, boarded up etc. – this will need to be improved if these are to be let in the future. Officer response – To make this policy work, the risk of clients refusing tenancies for these reasons needs to be reduced. It is possible that the lower cost properties will be in less desirable areas but there are not considered to be “no go” areas in Central Bedfordshire. If an area became blighted with high numbers of empty homes, this would be addressed through a focused approach.</p>
	<p>End of tenancy – after 12 months if managing tenancy should it be considered to move off list as not sustainable to hold longer term Officer response – the duty stays for 2 years.</p>
	<p>Properties – no clear idea of houses available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacking ready list (central list of people – homeless / type – all round suitability) • If property hard to let then can look at above list. This could include section 106 <p>Officer response – Officers are currently establishing working relationships with landlords and letting agents under the Let’s Rent scheme. It is intended to build upon this approach.</p>
	<p>Concerns for landlord – 2yrs on register – banding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question –whether policy can ensure equality – put in band 4 for length of

	<p>tenancy Officer response – This is a risk but will be reviewed as the policy progresses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would individual be disadvantaged for private housing if this was the case Officer response – unsure of the issue here.
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Questions 2.

What are the most important issues that the Council has to consider in determining whether a property is suitable for households accepted as homeless?

Do you consider the proposed suitability criteria to be fair and reasonable? Please explain your answer

Answers:

There is a difference between the Private Sector and Local Authority in terms of determining what a suitable property is. Generally Private Sector landlords have their own standards and this is dependant on the type of property etc.

Officer response – The aim of this policy is that PRS properties must be suitable in terms of their condition, safety etc.

There should be balance between intervention - Private Sector and the Local Authority

Officer response – This policy will require that the Council works more “in partnership” with PRS.

Due to the geographical nature of Central Bedfordshire, some tenants may view/accept the offer of Private Sector offers as an viable option as it may offer better accessibility to schools, employment, transport, medical facilities etc. **Officer response – Agree**

Affordability – general the cost of renting privately is dearer

Officer response – Officers must ensure that accommodation is affordable. It may be more expensive but it must still be affordable.

It is felt that there should be a basic level of suitability criteria that should take place before each letting – for example:

Check for Category 1 Hazards

Gas Safety Records/Certificate

Energy Performance Certificates

Smoke/Carbon monoxide Testing equipment

Officer response – agree, this is what is proposed in the policy.

Are we comparing with the individuals current situation? Would it be unreasonable to consider for them to travel further to work for example? Need good practice guide to include cost / income = affordable action

Officer response – In the example raised, it may be considered suitable to increase travel distance to work but as long as it is not excessive or unreasonable. Officer’s will have to consider each case on it’s merits.

School – feeling on table felt it is OK for younger children move school as they can change / adapt. Protection for children at critical time at school

Officer response – Agree

Medical Needs – No major hospital within Central Bedfordshire – need to travel. Care packages can be changed. More important should consider if they have caring needs to consider. Try to keep in the area.

Officer response – Agree

What about pets – question do we consider this? Need to consider if for medical need. Currently if going into temporary accommodation we can not take animals.

Officer response – Generally, if someone is facing homelessness, resolving their housing situation should take priority over whether they have pets. It is recognised that people become very attached and Officers would try and match people to homes that allow pets but this might not always be possible whether it is a PRS property of social housing.

Condition of housing –

Need to comply with HRO and legal requirements

CO Detectors – not a requirement by law (could be part of the incentive)

Vulnerable Clients – single person within Social Housing not restricted / Private

Housing restricted if reliant on benefits under 35yrs old they can share

Officer response – This is recognised as a potential issue. It might not be possible to find a supply of good quality shared accommodation for younger single adults.

Question 3

When should PSO's be considered?

Answers:

It should be considered from the outset/first point of contact

Officer response - Agree

Tenants should be given options and should it should be made clear why these option are being made

Officer response – The Council would rather resolve housing needs before taking a homelessness application and will work with clients to explore options at an early stage. What might be an “option” before an application might also be the home that duty is discharged to.

It will dependant on how well trained/informed the officer is

Officer response – Training is important to ensure the policy works.

It will be dependant on the tenant's circumstances; therefore, it is really important to gain as much information as possible from the outset.

Officer response - Agree

PSO – check if 2 tier system

Register housing options – match up / matrix system (simple spread sheet – accessible for everyone)

Officer response – a Matrix to match accommodation with specific needs might be a good approach. This will be explored.

Questions 4

How do we shape the housing market to support this policy?

Answers:

Clear/concise accessible information for all involved

Officer response – Agreed, there is a certain need for good information to prospective clients and landlords.

<p>Good supply of housing Officer response - Agree Incentives for landlords and do we make it attractive (more detailed discussion needed) Advertisement on Home Connections Tenancy agreements Rent Guarantees Insurance Need more resource within the Council to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is only one Housing Options officer • Prevention side, Choice, Discharge <p>Officer response – The Housing Solutions team will need to focus some resource in this area of work, which in return might help reduce supply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Inspecting the properties need Private Sector support, need specialist (need to consider Private Sector capacity, referrals coming through) Need Stamp of Approval. Should it be an accredited standard? Do we say over a long period of time? <p>Officer response – The condition of homes and how they are assessed might be a two tier approach. PSH Officer resource might be called upon if first level view of the property indicates some possible concerns.</p> <p>Should have clear timescales Publicity around this that not worse off – sending message out regarding support given.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With Housing Options a lot of work is done to support tenancy • Need Support Officer there to support, could be organisations like Bromford Support after the 12 month period <p>Officer response – The support to a tenant is recognised as important in some circumstances to sustain a tenancy. There is a resource issue if high level of support is needed, which itself might prevent the use of a PSR property being used.</p>
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<p>Question 5</p> <p>What do you think should be considered in assessing the priority of allocating suitable accommodation when there is more than one applicant?</p>
<p>Answers:</p> <p>Affordability Date order Choice Availability Will probably need a mix and match approach depending on the individual circumstances</p> <p>Officer response – The mix and match approach might be the most appropriate in many circumstances but a date order system would be used where all other aspects are equal.</p>
<p>Question regarding Neighbouring authorities – competing against, would need to make more attractive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives • Stock of landlords ready to work with • Support – point of contact • Assistance, advice / to bring properties up to standard /more suitable (could

offer grants to support)

- Housing benefit – having an agreement to fast track (support officer – other authorities support, ability to sustain tenancy, debt advice, benefit advice)

Officer response – All of these issues will be important to progress whether the property is in Central Bedfordshire or a neighbouring authority. A property in a neighbouring area will mean that there is less direct control/influence with things like fast tracking housing benefit.

General comments/observations:

The need for good, clear and concise information from the outset
Officer response – Agreed, information must be clear to advise clients.

The responsibilities of the tenant/landlord
Officer response – Agreed, information must be clear to advise clients.

Who will supply the information and when – clear protocols
 Good practice guidance
Officer response – This will be developed as the policy is approved.

Education/training for all
Officer response – Agreed, Officers will need training following adoption of the policy.

What will be the L.A. role and the support they will offer
Officer response – It is likely that the Council will need to work with partners regarding support provided, such as Bromford Support.

Clear pathway of options
Officer response – The intention is that clients’ options will be made clear before a homeless application is made. In many cases a PRS let will be the most appropriate option, whether before or after a homeless application is made.

One point of contact
Officer response – This is desirable for PRS landlords and letting agents, and will help ensure suitable properties become available.

Who would give the information and ensure it is kept up-to-date, especially around rights and legislation.
Officer response – Information must be clear to advise clients and would be responsibility of the Housing Solutions service.

Appendix 4: Qualitative Feedback from Engagement Events with Stakeholders

Questions/Comments – Prospective Tenants.

Question 1.
What conditions do you think the council need to consider in determining whether a property is suitable for households accepted as homeless? Looking at appendix B & C - do you consider the proposed suitability criteria to be fair and reasonable? Please explain your answer
Answer:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the whole it seems fair - tenants should be made aware of what their expectations of the landlord should be and what the landlord’s commitment for the tenant will be. • The need for annual checks on the items listed in appendix B & C and the landlord themselves. • Inspections at the beginning of the tenancy • Who is going to make sure they actually do what they say they are going to do and monitor that their certificates etc. are in date for the duration of tenure and that they are conducted annually. <p>Officer response – the checks made at the beginning will illustrate the Council’s expectations to the landlord. After the first 12 months tenancy, there may be further checks by the Council to ensure that any annual requirements are met. This will depend upon the partnership and understanding between the Council and landlord. In addition the tenant will be aware of what the landlord’s obligations are and will know who to contact within the Council if requirements are not met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An information pack outlining what the expectation are from both sides would be a good move forward along with copies of certificates, contact details etc. <p>Officer response – this is considered to be a good idea and will be developed in conjunction with progressing the Policy approval.</p>

Question 2
If you are homeless you may not have a choice in the type of housing that is offered, although deemed suitable based on need. Do you think is fair? If not, what would make it fair? Please explain your answer.
Answer:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important that the Council vets the tenancy agreement to ensure that the landlord is appropriate and meets its responsibilities. Landlords should be vetted on an annual basis and have an inspection, or the landlord could complete a checklist to show that the property is still suitable annually. If the property no longer meets the suitability criteria then the Council should take action. It should be clear how complaints about the landlord can be made. The tenancy agreement should clearly state what costs the tenant is responsible for and what facilities are available to them especially in HMOs. Landlord checks should include whether they are VAT registered and have liability insurance. <p>Officer response – the checks made at the beginning will illustrate the Council’s expectations to the landlord. After the first 12 months tenancy, there may be further checks by the Council to ensure that any annual requirements are met. In addition the tenant will be aware of what the landlord’s obligations are and will know who to contact within the Council if</p>

requirements are not met. Officers will explore the offer of template, good practice tenancy agreements. The policy does, however, include requirements for appropriate tenancy agreements.

The issue around liability assurance will be explored by Officers. It may, however, be too onerous on landlords to require such insurance.

- Pets should be in the criteria as they are a coping mechanism for some people. **Officer response – This is recognised as a potentially difficult issue. The first priority for households accepted as priority homeless will be to find a roof over their heads. This may mean that accommodation where pets are allowed will be a secondary matter. Council Officers will try and match a household with a pet to a house where the owner allows pets but this might not be possible each time. There are restrictions in Council property on pets, not just the PRS. In summary, a property will not be rejected as unsuitable if the landlord does not allow pets, although Officers will try and match where possible.**

- The criteria should consider ‘no go areas’, i.e. areas where the applicant could be at more risk of relapsing because they may be moved in to an area where drug pushers are known to operate or where old social networks that had a negative impact on their health and well being could be based. This is applicable to offending behaviour and also drug and alcohol abuse.

Officer response – these issues would need to be considered as part of suitable location. It is likely that external agency advice would be needed for some issues. There is a risk however, that households may be too restrictive on areas than is reasonable.

- Access to private outside space and light has health and wellbeing implications. **Officer response – these facilities are beneficial but are not always available and would not make a property unsuitable if they were missing.**

- The property needs to be suitable for the person’s accessibility needs e.g. a top floor flat with no lift is not suitability for people with mobility problems.

Officer response – agreed. In most cases, households containing someone with a significant disability would need an adapted or adaptable property.

- Lorraine did not have a preference for social or private sector housing. The important element was assurances about the quality of property and that there was someone available to contact if there were problems with the landlord

Officer response – agreed regarding quality of property. The provision of an information pack will be explored before the policy is fully implemented.

- The local authority’s role should continue throughout the 2 years to deal with problems raised by the applicant around whether the property was still suitable. Normally relationship ends with the L.A. once the tenant is in situ. I feel there still needs to be a relationship with the LA. For the following reasons:

- Landlords need to submit a fit for purpose service and that this should be monitored independently

- Internal systems need to be in place to ensure that it remains a suitable property. L.A. should not wash their hands of the tenant.

Officer response – The Housing Solutions team contain officers who can check property condition and will respond to tenant’s concerns.

Questions 3
As a prospective tenant – What do you think we need to do to increase the number of available homes to meet homelessness demand (any tenure)?
Answer:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer pathways what is “affordable” • Definitions of tenure e.g. sub-lets, shared etc. • Where there is shared tenancy there should be a clear agreement on who pays for what based on rooms size and amenities. • Good balance of properties <p>Officer response – These views are noted and will be considered within the Good Practice guidance notes as finer detail considerations. Whilst they may be desirable, they may not be a strict requirement.</p>

Questions 4
<p>Currently prospective tenants are considered based on their housing need and date of application.</p> <p>From the following 8 listed factors please rank in order of priority/importance you would consider when assessing the priority of allocating suitable accommodation? (1 being the highest priority/importance – 8 being low priority/importance)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability/cost of renting • Location of property • Location from employment • Caring responsibilities • Accessibility to schools and education • Access to Medical Facilities • Accessibility to local services and amenities • Access to transport
Answer:
<p>Affordability/cost of renting</p> <p>1 - Location of property</p> <p>2 - Access to transport.</p> <p>3 - Access to Medical Facilities</p> <p>4 - Accessibility to local services and amenities</p> <p>5 - Accessibility to schools and education</p> <p>6 - Location from employment</p> <p>7 - Caring responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are no good/regular transport links in place, then it makes having access to the other services out of reach. • Depending on who you talk/engage with the above will change due to their personal circumstances. • I would like added to the above list pets being allowed into RSL properties” as Pets are really important and may be seen as family and may be their only coping mechanism.

Question 5
Where all other suitability conditions are met, what are your views on being allocated a property in a neighbouring authority
Answer:
Discharging the duty outside the local authority area will compromise the applicants’

ability to get on to the social housing register due to the residency criteria. 2 years is not enough for a number of local authorities' allocations policies and moving the person out of the area will put them in to 'no man's land'.

Officer response – this is recognised but the aim of this policy is to remedy homelessness in the first instance. A secondary aim is for a sustainable tenancy in the PRS, not for an eventual move into social housing.

Further Comments

- If you are with the L.A. you get tenancy support – RSL don't provide this. The process is very complicated and not easy to understand.
- You also have better rights with a L.A. than a RSL
- It's about trust and honesty

Meeting: Executive
Date: 19 August 2014
Subject: June 2014 – Quarter 1 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report sets out the financial position for 2014/15 as at the end of June 2014. It sets out spend to date against the profiled budget and the forecast financial outturn. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account which is subject to a separate report.

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

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

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

Financial:

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

Legal:

- | |
|----------|
| 2. None. |
|----------|

Risk Management:

- | |
|----------|
| 3. None. |
|----------|

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

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

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken prior to the allocation of the 2014/15 budgets and each Directorate was advised of significant equality implications relating to their budget proposals.

Public Health:

6. None.

Community Safety:

7. None.

Sustainability:

8. None.

Procurement:

9. None.

Overview and Scrutiny:

10. The June Quarter One Revenue Budget Monitoring report will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 September 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. consider the Revenue forecast position which is currently to overspend budget by £0.7m; and
2. request officers to continue with their efforts to achieve a minimum balanced outturn or an underspend.

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

Executive Summary

11. The report sets out the provisional financial position for 2014/15 based at the end of June 2014. Further explanations are set out in Appendices A - C. This report enables the Executive to review the overall financial outturn position of the Council, which is subject to audit.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY HIGHLIGHTS (Directorate Budget Monitoring Detail in Appendix A)

- 12
- The forecast outturn position as at June 2014 is an overspend of £0.7m.
 - The Year to Date (YTD) spend is £1.0m above budget of which £0.2m is within the Service directorates, with the remainder relating to schools and the HRA.
 - Risks and opportunities indicate a risk to forecast outturn of £3.4m (see Appendix C).
 - June non current debt (i.e. debt that is more than 14 days from date of invoice) excluding House sales and Grants is £7.9m (£8.1m in May). All debt is under active management (see Appendix C).

The table below details the YTD and Full Year variances by directorate:

Directorate	Year to Date - June P3			Full Year		
	Budget £m	Actual £m	Variance £m	Budget £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Variance £m
SCHH	15.8	16.1	0.4	62.9	63.4	0.5
Childrens Services	11.4	11.4	(0.0)	44.8	45.8	1.0
Community Services	8.9	8.9	0.0	36.7	36.5	(0.2)
Regeneration	0.4	0.6	0.2	5.1	5.1	0.0
Public Health	(1.0)	(1.0)	(0.1)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Improvement & Corporate Services	5.4	5.6	0.2	21.6	21.6	0.0
Corporate Resources	1.3	1.0	(0.2)	5.0	5.0	0.0
Corporate Costs	2.1	1.8	(0.3)	9.9	9.2	(0.7)
Total Exc HRA	44.2	44.4	0.2	186.0	186.7	0.7
Schools	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
HRA	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	44.2	45.2	1.0	186.0	186.7	0.7

RESERVES POSITION

Earmarked Reserves (Appendix B)

13. The opening balance of General Fund Earmarked Reserves (EMR) is £24.7m (Excluding HRA and Schools). The current reported position proposes the planned use of £3.56m Earmarked reserves (used of offset expenditure) and proposed transfer to Earmarked reserves of £0.09m (budgeted), and the creation of a new proposed Business Rates Retention reserve for £0.5m as funding has been received that relates to costs that will be incurred in 2015/16. This would result in a forecast closing position of £21.74m. See Appendix B for details of which reserves have been used.

General Reserves

14. The opening position for 2014/15 is £15.1m (subject to audit). There are no further uses or contributions planned for 2014/15.

RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

15. Directorate risks & opportunities indicate a risk to the outturn of £3.4m

The main risks identified are:

- £1.0m SCHH 65+ placements and packages - increasing demand for services and increased complexity of care.
- £0.9m SCHH - under 65 Learning Disability placements and packages - additional transitions, more personalised support packages.
- £0.35m ICS Legal Services - Forecast Pressures around staff costs and court fees may not be able to be mitigated by savings in other parts of the service area.
- £0.25m Community Services – possible non achievement of parking income £0.43m Children's Services - agency staff efficiency at risk due to delay in permanent recruitment.

Opportunities :

- Minimum Revenue Provision might be lower than budget £0.2m (calculation subject to audit).

Total £0.2m

Appendices

Appendix A – Detailed Directorate Commentary

Appendix B – Earmarked Reserves

Appendix C – Debt Management

APPENDIX A – DIRECTORATE COMMENTARY

Social Care, Health and Housing

1. The forecast general fund position is an overspend of £0.5m.

Month: June 2014	Year to date				Year				
Director	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Social Care Health and Housing									
Director of Social Care, Health, Housing	48	50	-	2	193	213	20	-	20
Housing Management (GF)	331	257	-	(74)	1,324	1,322	(2)	-	(2)
Adult Social Care	14,363	15,099	(128)	608	57,344	59,281	1,937	(511)	1,426
Commissioning	2,809	2,808	(14)	(15)	11,236	11,205	(31)	(55)	(86)
Business and Performance	(1,790)	(1,868)	(72)	(150)	(7,158)	(7,730)	(572)	(286)	(858)
Total Social Care and Health	15,761	16,346	(214)	371	62,939	64,291	1,352	(852)	500

2. The Adult Social Care division is showing a projected overspend of £1.4m after the use of reserves. Within this division is the risk of increases in the Older People and Physical Disability package costs. People are living longer and the costs of dementia are on the increase. Demographic pressure of £1.5m has been built into the budget to reflect this, however, efficiency targets for this area total just over £2m.
3. 65+ placements and packages – a projected overspend of £2m – mainly on residential placements reflecting a rolled forward recurring overspend of £2m plus a further £0.2m flow through effect. The rolled forward pressure was offset by non-recurring underspends in 2013/14 and also by additional customer income which continues to exceed budget in 2014/15 by £0.858m (see paragraph 8). There is also a projected overspend of £0.950m on external home care packages which is associated with rising customer numbers but a reducing weekly package cost.
4. Within Learning Disabilities, additional budget of £0.8m has been provided to cover the impact of new customers in 2014/15 and the flow through effect of new customers in 2013/14 but there is some uncertainty around the costs of services for children transferring. Challenging efficiency targets have also been set for this area amounting to £1.3m. A shortfall of £0.5m against these efficiency targets is currently forecast.
5. In addition, it is mainly within Learning Disabilities that the cost of Ordinary Residence (OR) transfers falls and there is a risk associated with this. The current cost of OR cases is £0.351m which exceeds the reserve of £0.281m
6. In respect of former self funders, these continue to exert pressure on residential and nursing placements budgets. Four have required council support during April to June. Extrapolating the current numbers to the end of March 2015 generates a forecast pressure of £0.134m (with a £0.226m full year cost) that the Council would have to support. Given the current financial climate this trend is unlikely to diminish and will be closely monitored for the rest of the year
7. The Reablement service continues to achieve reductions in care hours and during the period April to June the service has saved 533 hours which is equivalent to an in year saving of £0.086m with a projected full year saving of £0.216m.

8. The Commissioning service is forecasting an underspend of £0.087m. The key variance after reserves is a projected overspend on the S75 Mental Health Agreements of £0.150m (due to an efficiency shortfall). This is offset by a projected underspend on the Dementia Quality Mark (DQM) budget by £0.2m.
9. Business and Performance is showing a projected underspend of £0.86m the majority of which relates to a projected over achievement of the customer contributions budget. This partly offsets the overspends relating to placements and packages.
10. HRA is subject to a separate report.

Children's Services

11. The full year projected outturn position for 2014/15 as at June 2014 is £1m over budget after £0.78m use of reserves set aside at the end of the 2013/14 financial year.

Month: June 2014	Year to date				Year				
	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Children's Services									
Director of Children's Services	103	104	-	1	413	412	(1)	-	(1)
Children's Services Operations	7,319	7,514	(157)	38	32,212	33,843	1,631	(637)	994
Commissioning & Partnerships	1,420	1,377	(22)	(65)	4,403	4,565	162	(88)	74
Joint School Commissioning Service (Transport)	2,017	1,989	-	(28)	7,780	7,780	-	-	-
Partnerships	242	240	(13)	(15)	601	653	52	(52)	-
School Improvement (incl Music)	787	827	-	40	1,260	1,257	(3)	-	(3)
Total Children's Services (ex Schools / Overheads)	11,888	12,051	(192)	(29)	46,669	48,510	1,841	(777)	1,064
DSG Contribution to Central Support	(180)	(180)	-	-	(719)	(719)	-	-	-
ESG Contribution to Central Support	(289)	(289)	-	-	(1,157)	(1,208)	(51)	-	(51)
Total Children's Services (excluding Schools)	11,419	11,582	(192)	(29)	44,793	46,583	1,790	(777)	1,013

12. The Children Services net budget of £44.8m is a net increase from 2013/14 of £5.2m. The efficiencies (including a cross cutting procurement efficiency), of £2.6m are offset by £7.8m of pressures. The pressures reflect in part (£2.5m) the reduction in Grant income.
13. The tables below reflects the increased number of looked after children and related placement costs.

	June 2013	June 2014	% increase / (decrease)
Number of LAC	254	276	9%
In House Placements	88	92	5%
Independent Placements	110	108	-2%
Special Guardianship Orders	60	87	45%
Child Protection Plan	266	182	-32%
Children in Need	1,662	1,307	-21%
Number of Referrals (YTD)	588	526	-11%

	Movement for 2014/15
LAC	+5
In House Placements	0
Independent Placements	-2
Special Guardianship Orders	1

Placement Type	May cost per placement
Highest Cost Placement (Residential Children with Disabilities)	£25,093
Lowest Cost Placement (externally funded)	£0
Average cost Special Guardianship Order	£160

The lowest cost placement excluding externally funded is £684 per month.

14. Central Bedfordshire Council has been allocated £230k of The Adoption Reform Grant for 2014/15. The purpose of the grant is to provide support to Local Authorities with the implementation of the reforms. The main allocations for the grant are as follows:-
 - Pilot a 'fostering for adoption' project.
 - Increase legal capacity.
 - Increase Social Work capacity by 2fte to assess adopters.
 - Support for Children's life story work, an important part of fostering and adoption support to ensure a successful placement.

15. The year to date spend of £11.6m is under budget by £29k after in year use of reserves. This spend to date variance is mainly due to staffing vacancies, some of which will be covered by agency, no activity has yet taken place on high cost services where single incidences will have a large impact (Mother and Baby Units, Child-minding and Family Centres), delays in web design in Commissioning, and building and maintenance works at Youth centres.

16. Not currently forecast is the possible risk of non achievement of the agency staff efficiency in Children's Services Operations for 2014/15 and the on-going use of agency above that previously forecast. The Recruitment drive has not progressed as expected with agency staff covering substantive posts in a number of the operational teams. There has been no permanent recruitment in the last 5 months other than 2 conversions from agency.

Community Services

17. Community Services forecast outturn is an underspend of £162k after the use of earmarked reserves of £1.05m for one-off specific projects. The forecast underspend is in Community Safety and Libraries, and relates to salary underspends.

Month: June 2014	Year to date				Year				
Director	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Community Services									
Community Services Director	80	60	-	(20)	319	319	-	-	-
Highways Transportation	3,173	3,201	(7)	21	13,070	13,366	296	(296)	-
Environmental Services	5,622	5,668	(47)	(1)	23,301	23,897	596	(758)	(162)
Total Community Services	8,875	8,929	(54)	-	36,690	37,582	892	(1,054)	(162)

Regeneration and Business Support

18. Regeneration and Business Support's forecast outturn is to achieve a balanced budget after the use of earmarked reserves of £724k for one-off specific projects.

Month: June 2014	Year to date				Year				
Director	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Regeneration and Business Support									
Director	76	93	-	17	303	293	(10)	-	(10)
Business Support & Skills	(456)	(434)	(105)	(83)	913	1,271	358	(328)	30
Planning	821	1,053	-	232	3,768	4,115	347	(367)	(20)
Programme Delivery	(14)	(21)	(4)	(11)	116	145	29	(29)	-
Total Regeneration and Business Support	427	691	(109)	155	5,100	5,824	724	(724)	-

Public Health

19. Public Health forecast outturn is to achieve a balanced budget after use of reserves of £0.128m.

Month: June 2014	Year to date				Year				
Director	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Public Health									
Director of Public Health	(2,320)	(2,299)	-	21	(9,280)	(9,119)	161	(128)	33
Assistant Director of Public Health	1,351	1,269	-	(82)	9,280	9,247	(33)	-	(33)
Total Public Health (Excl overheads)	(969)	(1,030)	-	(61)	-	128	128	(128)	-
Contribution to Central Support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Public Health	(969)	(1,030)	-	(61)	-	128	128	(128)	-

Improvement and Corporate Services

20. Improvement & Corporate Services (ICS) forecast outturn is to achieve a balanced budget after the use of earmarked reserves of £29k for one-off specific projects.

Month: June 2014	Year to date				Year				
Director	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Improvement and Corporate Services									
Improvement and Corporate Services Leadership	49	83	-	34	197	197	-	-	-
Communications and Insight	193	215	-	22	771	771	-	-	-
Customer Services	491	520	-	29	1,963	1,963	-	-	-
Programme and Performance	117	108	-	(9)	469	497	28	(28)	-
Policy & strategy	39	52	-	13	157	157	-	-	-
Customer & Community Insight	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Procurement	19	62	-	43	75	75	-	-	-
People	622	643	-	21	2,487	2,487	-	-	-
Information Technology	1,738	1,807	-	69	6,953	6,953	-	-	-
Legal & Democratic Services	948	767	-	(181)	3,886	3,886	-	-	-
Assets	1,148	1,336	(1)	187	4,592	4,593	1	(1)	-
Total Improvement and Corporate Services	5,364	5,593	(1)	228	21,550	21,579	29	(29)	-

Corporate Resources and Costs

21. The full year budget of £14.9m is made up of:

- Corporate Resources £5.0m
- Corporate Costs £9.9m

The forecast outturn is an underspend of £0.65m.

Month: June 2014	Year to date				Year				
Director	Budget	Actual	Use of Reserves	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Proposed use of Earmarked reserves	Forecast Variance after use of earmarked reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Corporate Resources									
Chief Executive	76	67	-	(9)	302	302	-	-	-
Finance	1,303	1,071	-	(232)	5,212	4,722	(490)	490	-
Housing Benefit Subsidy	(119)	(119)	-	-	(477)	(477)	-	-	-
Total Corporate Resources	1,260	1,019	-	(241)	5,037	4,547	(490)	490	-
Corporate Costs									
Debt Management	3,148	3,047	-	(101)	12,592	12,192	(400)	-	(400)
Premature Retirement Costs	714	714	-	-	2,855	2,855	-	-	-
Corporate Public Health Recharges	(158)	(158)	-	-	(631)	(631)	-	-	-
Corporate HRA Recharges	(23)	(23)	-	-	(90)	(340)	(250)	-	(250)
Efficiencies	128	(23)	-	(151)	(56)	(56)	-	-	-
Contingency and Reserves*	(1,738)	(1,740)	-	(2)	(4,809)	(4,809)	-	-	-
Total Corporate Costs	2,071	1,817	-	(254)	9,861	9,211	(650)	-	(650)
Total Corporate Resources & Costs	3,331	2,836	-	(495)	14,898	13,758	(1,140)	490	(650)

22. The forecast underspend consists of a £0.4m net reduction in financing costs, largely as a result in lower than expected borrowing and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) costs, following prior year underspends against the capital programme, and an additional £0.250m contribution to overheads from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) following recent increased levels of support provided to the service.

Appendix B – Earmarked Reserves

Description	Opening Balance 2014/15 £000	Spent £000	Released £000	Grants in Advance £000	Balance before new transfers £000	New Proposed transfers	Proposed Closing Balance 2014/15 £000	MEMO: Net movement after proposals	For Information: Description of EMR (this is the 13/14 narrative)
Social Care Health and Housing Reserves									
Social Care Reform Grant	157	(92)			65		65	(92)	Reserve to fund multi year Transforming People's Lives project. Includes SWIFT/AIS implementation.
Deregistration of Care Homes	281	(281)			-		-	(281)	Reserve to fund costs associated with deregistering of a national care provider
LD Campus Closure	345	(55)			290		290	(55)	Reserve for the smoothing of double running costs resulting from re-provision of Learning Disabilities services.
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	881	(230)			651		651	(230)	Grant given in 12/13 to implement Deprivation of Liberty assessments in hospitals - roll forward of unused balance. Further £500k addition proposed re Supreme Court ruling in April 2014
Winter Pressure 12/13	50				50		50	-	12/13 Winter Pressures grant and Falls Prevention Pilot health funding carry forward of unspent balance net of expenditure met from 10/11 & 11/12 grant reserve
Winter Pressure 13/14	103				103		103	-	Underspend of CCG Winter Pressures Funding
Mental Health Action Plan	115				115		115	-	To fund improvements identified in the Mental Health Improvement Plan to be jointly delivered with SEPT. Reserve to cover possible S117 repayments
Outcome Based Commissioning	3,505	(184)			3,321		3,321	(184)	To fund costs associated with Residential Futures Programme and also the 2014-15 costs associated with the BUPA homes (includes property maintenance)
Step Up /Step Down	490				490		490	-	To be used to fund the Step-up, Step Down unit at Greenacres - unspent grant monies from 2011/12
NHS Grant 2013/14 - Better Care Fund	280				280		280	-	13/14 NHS Grant - projects not completed by 31st March 14. Agreed with NHS Commissioning Board to be applied to Better Care Fund programme in 14/15 to fund development of joint delivery plan, reporting and governance arrangements.
Welfare Reform - local welfare provision grant	340				340		340	-	New reserve for unspent local welfare provision grant and Housing Solutions underspend. Linked to the development of a credit union in Central Beds
Zero Base Review grant	59	(10)			49		49	(10)	Grant awarded in 13/14 to develop new performance and financial reporting - report development resource not available until 2014/15
NHS Grant - Strategic Transitions Project underspend	86				86		86	-	Funding has been allocated in 13/14 for the Strategic Transitions project and for the Ageing Well Project - likely to be some slippage
Total Social Care, Health and Housing	6,692	(852)	-	-	5,840	-	5,840	(852)	
Children's Services Reserves									
Fostering & Adoption	998	(208)			790		790	(208)	As per MTFP £499k x 2 years Fostering Fee Scheme
Children's Homes Co-location	232	(116)			116		116	(116)	As per MTFP £116k x 2 years Children Centres
Performance Reward Grant	144	(52)			92		92	(52)	LPSA Grant ring fenced
LSP Sustainable Neighbourhoods	47				47		47	-	LPSA Grant ring fenced
"Working Together" - new National Guidance	50	(20)			30		30	(20)	Existing Reserve held for increasing costs of LSCB due to new Government requirements.
CWD	70	(9)			61		61	(9)	Refurbishment of flat at Maythorn & South Hub Settlement costs, pressure for MTFP
Transformation Challenge Award	150				150		150	-	Income received March 14 Transformation Challenge Award Earmarked and carried forward
Support and Aspiration Grant	65				65		65	-	Support and Aspiration Grant Earmarked
Children's Services Unspent Grant Income	311	(311)			-		-	(311)	ASYE Grant Programme to train & develop newly qualified SW's £7k, Troubled Families Grant £304k Earmarked
Assets of Community Value	13				13		13	-	New Burdens Grant for Assets of Community Value Earmarked
The Central Bedfordshire Academy of Social Work and Early Intervention	118	(61)			57		57	(61)	Additional Practice Educator to support an increased cohort of newly qualified social workers, project support and leadership qualification funding
Children's & Families Act	200				200		200	-	Development of communications and implementation materials to present whole of CBC's offer to families
Total Children's Services	2,398	(777)	-	-	1,621	-	1,621	(777)	
Community Services Reserves									
Leisure Centre Reinvestment Fund	179	(185)		140	134		134	(45)	Contractual requirement for share of profits from leisure contracts in North area for the reinvestment in building and worn out equipment. The reserve does hold a one off of £26k for an insurable risk assessment fund which in 13/14 is being funded by the base budget
Integrated consumer protection	116	(49)			67		67	(49)	This money is being held to assist with additional costs associated with protection of consumers either through specialist investigation costs or costs for legal proceedings. Without these monies specialist investigations will be extremely limited which may result in the inability to achieve a successful outcome in relation to consumer protection
Transport Fund	125				125		125	-	Parking income directed to transport infrastructure improvements.
Community Safety partnership fund	226				226		226	-	Contributions from community safety partners, Home Office (IOM), and money held on behalf of HMCS relating to cash seizures.
Bedford & Luton Resilience Forum	65				65		65	-	Contributions from partners with CBC acting as treasurer to Forum and arising from subscriptions made by each of the partnership organisations to fund work undertaken by BLLRF.
Financial Investigation Unit	237	(150)			87		87	(150)	now earmarked reserve not RIA/ GIA
Community Safety Grant	78				78		78	-	now earmarked reserve not RIA/ GIA (additional is income from probation that they had over in 2013/14 for work in 2014/15)
Biggleswade wind farm	23				23		23	-	ringfenced income
countryside access grant									Linslade Wood income for Phone Masts and Grant of Easement for Shefford - both Ring fenced income
flood recovery - highways	296	(296)			-		-	(296)	allocation from central government received late march - part rev part capital in relation to work needed as result of bad weather
Total Community Services	1,345	(680)	-	140	805	-	805	(540)	

Appendix B – Earmarked Reserves (Cont)

Description	Opening Balance 2014/15 £000	Spent £000	Released £000	Grants in Advance £000	Balance before new transfers £000	New Proposed transfers	Proposed Closing Balance 2014/15 £000	MEMO: Net movement after proposals	For Information: Description of EMR (this is the 13/14 narrative)
Regeneration Reserves	-				-		-		
Career Development framework	33				33		33		This reserve is to fund 2 two year planning trainee 'apprenticeship' posts in partnership with Westminster University. These posts sit in Development Management division.
External Funded Regeneration reserve	340	(192)			148		148	(192)	
Local Development Framework	365				365		365		To support the examination hearings of development strategy, gypsy and traveller and CIL which had been due to take place in 2013/14. The 2014/15 budget had been reduced in the MTFP process to reflect this.
Pre-application service development	302				302		302		This reserve is used to resource and support Planning Performance Agreements specifically enabling external technical expertise to be secured to deliver against the milestones set out in the signed agreements. PPAs are entered into by Developers for an assured level of service and bring income into the Authority. Failure to deliver the levels of service set out in the agreement will result in reductions in income levels from PPAs and loss of reputational issues for the Council
Minerals and Waste partnership funds	104				104		104		
NIRAH	34	(15)			19		19	(15)	
Woodside connection options appraisal	50				50		50		
Business growth grants	51	(51)			-		-	(51)	
Flood Defence	315	(315)			-		-	(315)	now earmarked reserve not RIA/ GIA
Natural England	10	(10)			-		-	(10)	now earmarked reserve not RIA/ GIA
Building control	205				205		205		Previously this has been treated as a receipt in advance - however as building control is a trading account it needs to be treated as an earmarked reserve
Unauthorised Development	159				159		159		Previously this has been set up as a provision but the correct treatment is as an earmarked reserve.
neighbourhood planning grant	30				30		30		ringfenced grant
Total Regeneration	1,998	(583)			1,415		1,415	(583)	
Public Health Reserves									
Transitional Grant Reserve	927	(128)			799		799	(128)	
Total Public Health	927	(128)			799		799	(128)	
Improvement and Corporate Services Reserves	0				0		0		
Pan Public Sector Funding	28	(28)			-		-	(28)	Partnership Funding to facilitate the successful delivery of the Implementation of Total Place in Luton and Bedfordshire through Projects.
Customer First	35				35		35		Support allocated to Customer First Revenue activities
Elections Fund	94				94		94		Build sufficient reserve over four years to run council election
Individual Electoral Registration	19				19		19		
Assets	40				40		40		Transition - Reduce reliance on Consultants & fund transitional period in staff restructure.
ICT Webcasting	150				150		150		
ICS - HR (Apprentices & Graduates)	150				150		150		
Total Improvement & Corporate Services	516	(28)			488		488	(28)	
Finance									
Housing Benefit Subsidy Audit Reserve	500				500		500		Reserve to cover outcome of Housing Benefit Subsidy audits
NNDR Discretionary Relief & NNDR Bad Debts	502				502	490	992	490	Receipt of new accounting guidance - will impact 14/15 collection fund
Total Finance	1,002				1,002	490	1,492	490	
Corporate Reserves									
Redundancy/Restructure Reserve	2,414	(16)			2,398		2,398	(16)	Reserve to cover redundancy and actuarial costs
Insurance reserve	4,404				4,404		4,404		Reserve to cover insurance costs based on actuarial assessment
Welfare Reform	460				460		460		The Government has introduced a range of changes to benefits and other welfare payments, with effect from 1 April 2013. This includes abolition of Council Tax Benefit, replaced with a localised Council Tax Support system and the Under Occupancy Charge for those benefit claimants deemed to be occupying a greater number of bedrooms than is required. There have also been changes in the transfer of the former Social Welfare Fund payments to local authorities. The Council has budgeted for these changes but is aware that the full implications and the impact on vulnerable groups of people has yet to be fully understood. This Earmarked Reserve has been created to provide scope to support any additional initiatives which the Council may wish to take as the position develops during the financial year.
Teachers Pensions	201				201		201		Reserve to cover authority's potential liability following historic scheme records issue
s31 NNDR Income to offset NNDR discounts	1,018				1,018		1,018		
Planning Decisions Legal Challenge	300				300		300		
Weed Spraying	200	(100)			100		100	(100)	Great Places in Central Bedfordshire
Grass Cutting	200	(100)			100		100	(100)	Great Places in Central Bedfordshire
Additional street cleansing / deep cleansing, footpath clearance, spot weed control, graffiti removal / painting, emergency 'streetscene'	300	(150)			150		150	(150)	Great Places in Central Bedfordshire
Street sweeping	130	(65)			65		65	(65)	Great Places in Central Bedfordshire
Town Centre jet wash	100	(50)			50		50	(50)	Great Places in Central Bedfordshire
Road Marking Line renewal	70	(35)			35		35	(35)	Great Places in Central Bedfordshire
Total Corporate Reserves	9,797	(516)			9,281		9,281	(516)	
Total Earmarked Reserves (General Fund)	24,675	(3,564)		140	21,251	490	21,741	(2,934)	

Appendix C - Debtors

- 1 Total general CBC sales debtors (excluding house sales and grants) for June amounted to £9.9m (£10.2m in May). Of this £4.0m is less than 30 days old.

Of the Over 60 days - £4.1m is actively being chased, £0.2m have instalment arrangements in place. £0.9m is being dealt with through legal channels. A further £1.2m is in respect of house Sales.

Debtors June 2014														
DIRECTORATE	1 to 14 Days		15 to 30 Days		31 to 60 Days		61 to 90 Days		91 to 365 days		1 year and over		Total Debt	
	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%
Social Care Health & Housing	116	3%	282	8%	315	9%	709	20%	1,488	42%	632	18%	3,542	100%
Children's Services	92	19%	118	24%	17	3%	145	29%	112	23%	11	2%	495	100%
Community Services	44	7%	246	39%	149	24%	117	19%	-2	0%	73	12%	627	100%
Regeneration	447	15%	1,217	40%	64	2%	14	0%	390	13%	944	31%	3,076	100%
I.C.S	686	50%	182	13%	45	3%	68	5%	234	17%	146	11%	1,361	100%
Finance	5	4%	15	12%	4	3%	0	0%	48	39%	52	42%	124	100%
Public Health	548	75%	0	0%	0	0%	8	1%	172	24%	0	0%	728	100%
Unallocated & Non Directorate	-1	1%	-10	14%	-2	3%	0	0%	-33	46%	-26	36%	-72	100%
GRAND TOTAL	1,937	20%	2,050	21%	592	6%	1,061	11%	2,409	24%	1,832	19%	9,881	100%
PREVIOUS MONTH	2,100		1,554		1,970		1,405		1,491		1,729		10,249	

- 2 The largest items of note within the total debt are:

- Social Care general fund debt (excluding House sales) was £3.5m at the end of June (£3.8m May), of which £2.8m is Health Service debt. Excluding Health and house sales debt, there are 31 debtors whose outstanding balance is greater than £0.010m. These are all under active management.
- Community Services total debt at the end of June was £627k, of which £337k is over 31 days. All debt recovery is in accordance with Council policy.
- Regeneration debt at the end of June was £3.1m. Invoices relating to developers legal contributions to deliver planning requirements associated with new developments account for 87% of debt. All debt recovery is in accordance with Council policy.
- Total debt for Children's Services is £637k of which £268k is over 61 days.
- Public Health debt at the end of June 2014 is £728k, of which £172k is overdue and relates to 2 invoices to NHS Bedfordshire CCG. Payment for this is being pursued.
- Overall Corporate debt (ICS & Finance) has decreased by £0.164m in the month to £1.48m. Of this there is £0.89m is less than 30 days representing 60% of the overall debt. All debt is under active management.

3 Quarter One Debt Write offs

Write Off	Number	Value	Ave Value
£0 - £5,000	32	£ 18,288	£ 572
£5,000 - £10,000	0	£ -	£ -
£10,000 - £50,000	1	£ 23,857	£ 23,857
>£50,000	0	£ -	£ -
TOTAL	33	£ 42,145	£ 1,277

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 19 August 2014
Subject: June 2014 – Quarter 1 Capital Budget Monitoring Report
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report provides information on the projected capital outturn for 2014/15 as at June 2014. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account which is subject to a separate report.

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

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

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

Financial:

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

Legal:

- | |
|----------|
| 2. None. |
|----------|

Risk Management:

- | |
|----------|
| 3. None. |
|----------|

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

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

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken prior to the allocation of the 2014/15 budgets and each Directorate was advised of significant equality implications relating to their budget proposals.

Public Health:

6. None.

Community Safety:

7. None.

Sustainability:

8. None.

Procurement:

9. None.

Overview and Scrutiny:

10. The June 2014 Quarter 1 Capital Budget Monitoring report will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 September 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive is asked to:

1. **consider the overall forecast position which is to spend £111.7m compared to a budget of £116.8m; and**
2. **request officers to carefully examine their forecast spend to determine how realistic the proposals to defer spend into 2015/16 are.**

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

Executive Summary

11. The report sets out the projected capital outturn position for 2014/15 as at June 2014. Explanations for the variances are set out below. This report enables the Executive to review the overall capital position of the Council.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

12. The capital budget (including deferred spend) for 2014/15 excluding HRA is £116.8m (£70.3m net). The main issues to note are:
- i) Gross forecast is to spend £111.7m compared to a budget of £116.8m. The variance of £5.1m is a result of proposed deferred spend to 2015/16 of £9.4m and overspend of £4.3m.
 - ii) Additional grant has been received and therefore expenditure for Schools within Children's Services will be greater than budget. The forecast within Children's Services reflects the funding available, almost all of which is externally funded.
 - iii) Gross spend to date is £19.7m, below budget by £6.7m.
 - iv) Profiled budgets are still being worked on and so the Year to Date (YTD) position may not be fully reflective of the underlying position.
 - v) £87.4m (75%) of the gross budget relates to 20 of the top value schemes. £82.6m (74%) of the gross spend forecast relates to these schemes.
 - vi) Forecast capital receipts are £1.45m compared to budget of £7.45m. YTD is £23k.
 - vii) A summary of the position is in the table below.

Month: June 2014	Gross Year to Date			Gross Year				Variance Explanation	
Director	Budget	Actual	Variance	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Forecast % of Budget	Deferred Spend to 15/16	(Under) / Overspend
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000
Social Care Health and Housing	2,050	525	(1,525)	8,198	8,226	28	0 %	0	28
Children's Services	3,000	2,967	(33)	25,684	30,140	4,456	17 %	0	4,456
Community Services	16,952	14,823	(2,129)	67,809	58,984	(8,825)	(13)%	(8,676)	(149)
Regeneration and Business Support	852	0	(852)	3,409	3,409	0	0 %	0	0
Improvement and Corporate Services	3,565	1,380	(2,185)	11,671	10,946	(725)	(6)%	(725)	0
TOTAL EXCLUDING HRA	26,419	19,695	(6,724)	116,771	111,705	(5,066)	(4)%	(9,401)	4,335

DIRECTORATE COMMENTARY

Social Care Health and Housing

13. The forecast outturn is a small overspend at year end (£28k over gross, £92k under net). The budgets include slippage of £4.4m gross (£0.4m after external funding). Forecasts assume that the slippage will be spent in 2014/5.

The table below highlights the areas of spend.

SCHH Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast P3					
Scheme Categories	Gross Budget £k	Gross Forecast £k	Variance £k	Deferred Spend £k	Over / (Under) spend £k
NHS Campus Closure	3,073	3,073	0	0	0
Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme	2,700	2,700	0	0	0
Timberlands and Chiltern View Gypsy and Traveller Sites	324	324	0	0	0
Additional Gypsy and Traveller Sites	240	240	0	0	0
Review of Accommodation/Day Support	1,089	1,089	0	0	0
Adult Social Care ICT Projects	300	300	0	0	0
Empty Homes	300	300	0	0	0
Renewal Assistance	172	200	28	0	28
Total	8,198	8,226	28	0	28
% of Budget	100.3%				

SCHH Full Year Net Budget and Forecast P3					
Scheme Categories	Net Budget £k	Net Forecast £k	Variance £k	Deferred Spend £k	Over / (Under) spend £k
NHS Campus Closure	0	0	0	0	0
Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme	2,112	2,020	(92)	0	(92)
Timberlands and Chiltern View Gypsy and Traveller Sites	79	79	0	0	0
Additional Gypsy and Traveller Sites	90	90	0	0	0
Review of Accommodation/Day Support	0	0	0	0	0
Adult Social Care ICT Projects	0	0	0	0	0
Empty Homes	300	300	0	0	0
Renewal Assistance	122	122	0	0	0
Total	2,703	2,611	(92)	0	(92)
% of Budget	96.6%				

14. Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)
The grants provided to residents through the DFG programme assist some of the poorer and most vulnerable members of the community. Without these grants in many cases the properties involved would be unsuitable for the needs of the occupiers who may then be unable to remain in their own homes. This also reduces pressure on health service resources and residential care, as without these improvements more residents would require emergency or longer term care solutions.
15. Information on the types of DFGs and the number completed are reported on a quarterly basis. The table below provides details for the first quarter of 2014/15.

Type of adaptation	Total No complete Q1 2014/15	Council tenants	Other
Level access shower/wet room	32	5	27
Straight stair lift	16	3	13
Curved stair lift	5		5
Toilet alterations	5		5
Access ramps	7	1	6
Dropped kerb and hard standing			
Wheelchair/step lift	2	1	1
Through floor lift			
Major extension	2		2
Kitchen alterations	1		1
Access alterations (doors etc)	9		9
Heating improvements			
Garage conversions/minor additions			
Safety repairs/improvements			
Other	7		7
Total	86	10	76

Children's Services

16. The forecast expenditure outturn position for 2014/15 is £30.1m, £4.5m above the original budget following the latest grant awards and capital review.
17. The figures in the Council's capital programme were established in November 2013 based on the 2013/14 New School Places (NSP) programme and assumptions of Department for Education (DfE) grant income.

18. The business cases prepared in February 2014 provided an updated forecast for the programme which now includes a multi year basic need allocation whereas previous years have only been single year. The NSP programme is to be further reviewed and refreshed and will be reported to December 2014 Council's Executive as is now the established procedure for this programme.
19. The timeframe for preparation and approval of the Council's capital programme has never aligned with the DfE announcement of capital grants which historically have been made later in the year.
20. All but two projects Schools Access and Temporary Accommodation (£0.6m), are funded wholly by grant receipts that have no expenditure deadline.

The table below highlights the areas of spend.

Children's Services Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast P3					
Scheme Categories	Gross Budget £k	Gross Forecast £k	Variance £k	Deferred Spend £k	Over / (Under) spend £k
CS Commissioning & Partnerships	24,559	29,424	4,865	0	4,865
CS Operations	986	686	(300)	0	(300)
Partnerships	139	30	(109)	0	(109)
Total	25,684	30,140	4,456	-	4,456
% of Budget		117.3%			

Children's Services Full Year Net Budget and Forecast P3					
Scheme Categories	Net Budget £k	Net Forecast £k	Variance £k	Deferred Spend £k	Over / (Under) spend £k
CS Commissioning & Partnerships	600	600	0	0	0
CS Operations	0	0	0	0	0
Partnerships	0	0	0	0	0
Total	600	600	-	-	0
% of Budget		100.0%			

Community Services

21. The Community Services capital programme in 2014/15 is made up of 69 schemes which includes large groupings of projects that relate to Environmental services, Libraries, Leisure and Transport.
22. The forecast outturn is an underspend of £8.8m which relates almost entirely to the Enhanced Waste Disposal Facilities project

The Council is changing its approach to the procurement of a long-term waste management solution. At this time alternative waste disposal solutions are being explored by developing new and existing facilities.

The table below highlights the areas of spend.

Community Services Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast P3					
Scheme Categories	Gross Budget £k	Gross Forecast £k	Variance £k	Deferred Spend £k	Over / (Under) spend £k
Environmental Services	12,965	3,968	(8,997)	(8,848)	(149)
Libraries	167	167	0	0	0
Leisure	9,856	9,856	0	0	0
Transport	44,821	44,993	172	0	172
Total	67,809	58,984	(8,825)	(8,848)	23
% of Budget	87.0%				

Community Services Full Year Net Budget and Forecast P3					
Scheme Categories	Net Budget £k	Net Forecast £k	Variance £k	Deferred Spend £k	Over / (Under) spend £k
Environmental Services	11,717	2,720	(8,997)	(8,848)	(149)
Libraries	167	167	0	0	0
Leisure	9,256	9,256	0	0	0
Transport	32,781	32,953	172	0	172
Total	53,921	45,096	(8,825)	(8,848)	23
% of Budget	83.6%				

23. Transport Schemes

Biggleswade Interchange

A new transport interchange at Biggleswade Railway Station forecourt that will be remodelled to consist of a bus interchange, enhanced pedestrian and cycling routes and a rationalised parking and taxi drop off facilities.

Survey work will be undertaken on Network Rail land in July and follows on from the work completed earlier in June. Once this is complete it will be clear to determine the land that can actually be used to provide the interchange and commence discussions on land transferal / lease with Network Rail. Outline designs have been produced and these will be finalised following the publication of the survey results.

Approximate scheme design costs up to May are £7.4k and there will be a small amount of fees from Amey for June to undertake survey liaison work with Network Rail.

24. Leighton Buzzard Interchange

The purpose of the scheme is to support growth and development plans in the Leighton Buzzard area by creating an enhanced transport interchange, including improved facilities for buses, pedestrians, cyclists, taxis, and drop offs, at the Railway Station. This will also incorporate improvements to the public realm by creating an enhanced gateway to the town.

The Transport Interchange involves remodelling the current car park outside the station. This is to create a functioning bus interchange and terminus that will accommodate buses capable of travelling the Dunstable Luton Busway, improved cycle routes and cycle parking, a more attractive environment for pedestrians, and improving the quality of the urban environment to provide a high quality gateway into the town. The development of the Transport Interchange is being overseen by a Project Group consisting of Council officers, Network Rail, and London Midland.

The full project is currently on hold due to land being in private ownership. However, initial work is to facilitate access for the buses from the busway and incorporate the re-surfacing work to the car park and access road being undertaken by Network Rail. Amey have been commissioned to carrying out detailed design works. The original instruction from the Local Transport Programme fund was £48k in 2013/14. £29k of this was then moved to the Billington Heavy Goods Vehicle scheme, leaving £19k. Last year's spend on the interchange design was £4k, leaving £15k for 2014/15.

25. Leisure Schemes

The design, planning and tender process was completed for the Saxon Leisure Centre refurbishment. The successful contractor started on site on June 2014.

The contractor completed the main building work at Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre. The new café was installed and is up and running.

The design, planning and tender process was completed for Houghton Regis Leisure Centre refurbishment. The successful contractor started on site in June. Also a contribution to a community sporting facility at Etonbury has been agreed.

The Flitwick football pitches were seeded, work completed on the pavilion which includes new access to Amphthill Rd, blockwork, steelwork, roof, external windows and doors installed.

The Stotfold football pitches have been fertilised and seeded.

The feasibility has been completed for the Flitwick Leisure Centre Development, planning applications have been approved, and the tender process has started.

£100k was paid to the Shuttleworth Trust as match funding towards the delivery of the £2.6m Stage 2 Heritage Lottery funded (HLF) improvements to the Swiss Garden. Restoration works are almost complete. The Garden is due to re-open to the public in August 2014.

Development work is continuing on the Renaissance and Renewal Project, creating detailed plans for the restoration and improvement of Houghton Hall Park in Houghton Regis. This work will culminate in a Stage 2 HLF bid for approximately £2m of funding which will be submitted in August 2014.

Initial payments have been made for preparatory works for the new car park at Houghton Hall Park which will be constructed in the summer.

26. Libraries

The following changes were made in libraries during quarter one.

- Improvements made to security at Ampthill Library.
- Minor building works undertaken at Barton Library.
- A new self service machine was installed at Dunstable Library.
- Meeting room refurbished and security improved at Flitwick Library.
- A new self service machine installed at Leighton Buzzard Library and improvements made to security.
- Minor building works undertaken at Pottton Library.
- Shefford Library working with Assets to refurbish the library following the repair of the floor - installing new shelving, creating a new meeting room, up-grading security and improving facilities for children and PC users.
- Minor electrical works undertaken at Toddington library.
- Tender in preparation for replacement of theatre lighting.
- Tender in preparation for LED screens in meeting rooms.
- Tender for Leighton Buzzard box office and bar delayed due to issues with electrical infrastructure in building.
- Draft requirements for improvements to public toilets and meeting room in Biggleswade have been prepared.

Regeneration & Business Support

27. The Regeneration and Business support capital programme in 2014/15 is made up of 11 schemes which include large groupings of projects that were the result of developer funds to deliver planning requirements, associated with new developments.

28. The forecast outturn is to achieve both gross and net budget.

The table below highlights the areas of spend

Regeneration Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast P3					
Scheme Categories	Gross Budget £k	Gross Forecast £k	Variance £k	Deferred Spend £k	Over / (Under) spend £k
Total	3,409	3,409	0	0	0
% of Budget	100.0%				

Regeneration Full Year Net Budget and Forecast P3					
Scheme Categories	Net Budget £k	Net Forecast £k	Variance £k	Deferred Spend £k	Over / (Under) spend £k
Total	1,372	1,372	0	0	0
% of Budget	100.0%				

Improvement & Corporate Services

29. The overall forecast outturn for ICS Capital is £10.9m, an underspend of £0.7m which is proposed to be deferred into 2015/16.

The table below highlights the areas of spend.

Improvement & Corporate Services Full Year Gross Budget and Forecast P3					
Scheme Categories	Gross/Net Budget £k	Gross/Net Forecast £k	Variance £k	Deferred Spend £k	Over / (Under) spend £k
Assets	7,247	6,522	(725)	(758)	33
Information Assets	4,186	4,186	0	0	0
Others	238	238	0	0	0
Total	11,671	10,946	(725)	(758)	33
% of Budget	93.8%				

(Note gross and Net are the same as all internally funded)

30. The current net capital programme for Assets is £7.25m. The major projects are 2014/15 Corporate Property Rolling Programme (£1.5m), Stratton Phase 4 Access (£0.75m), Local Development Fund related costs (£0.75m) and Arlesey Phase 1 (£0.55m).
31. The forecast outturn position for Assets is currently £6.5m. It is expected that there will be a deferral of spend to 2015/16 of £225k for the Ivel Medical Centre and £0.5m for Stratton Phase 4, based on current cash flows.

32. There is a year to date underspend in Assets Capital of £1.25m. There are a number of schemes that are currently showing underspends. The main variance is £0.25m for the Ivel Medical Centre, £0.2m for Stratton, £0.27m for the Corporate Rolling programme, £82k for Local Development Fund and £86k for Health & Safety programme.

33. The current net capital programme for Information Technology (IT) is £4.2m. The major projects are 2014/15 IT Strategic Investment (£1.0m), Customer First Phase 2 (£0.6m), PSN Re-Architecture Phase 2 (£0.5m) and IT Infrastructure Rolling Programme 2014/15 (£0.5m).

The forecast outturn position for IT is currently expected to be on budget .

34. The current net capital programme for Other ICS Projects is £238k. The major project is Your Space 2 (£224k) which was slipped from 2013/14 and is expected to be completed during the early part of 2014/15.

The forecast outturn position for Other ICS Projects is currently expected to be on budget.

CAPITAL RECEIPTS

35. £23k of Capital receipts has been received to date. The forecast is £1.45m compared to budget of £7.45m.

Progress against the MTFP target remains challenging. A number of key strategic development projects, such as Arlesey and Thorn Turn, are progressing well but unlikely to deliver capital receipts until 2016/17 at the earliest. Additional disposal opportunities are being investigated to fill the gap and grow the pipeline.

There remains a number of disposals where legal representatives have been instructed to complete a sale which are expected to complete over the next 2 - 3 months. Overall, the forecast for the year remains behind target. There is the potential to receive disaggregation payments from Bedford Borough Council (BBC) relating to the Council's share of receipts achieved by BBC. The forecast will be updated following further engagement with BBC.

CONCLUSION

36. The budget for 2014/15 (including proposed deferred spend) at £116.8m is significantly higher than the levels of gross spend achieved over the past years (£72.3m in 2013/14 and £64.4m in 2012/13). The forecast as at June is to underspend by £5.1m, but this underspend is likely to increase through the year.

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Appendix A1 Top 20 Schemes

Directorate	Scheme Title	Total 2014/15 Budget				Full Year Forecast as at Month 3				Variance				Slippage to 2015/16				(Under)/Over Spend				
		Gross Expenditure	External Funding	Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure	External Funding	Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure	External Funding	Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure	External Funding	Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure	External Funding	Net Expenditure		
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children's Services	Schools Capital Maintenance	3,368	(3,368)	0	4,200	(4,200)	0	832	(832)	0	832	(832)	0	0	0	0	832	(832)	0	832	(832)	0
Children's Services	New School Places	20,201	(20,201)	0	23,550	(23,550)	0	3,349	(3,349)	0	3,349	(3,349)	0	0	0	0	3,349	(3,349)	0	3,349	(3,349)	0
Community Services	Leisure Strategy Implementation Invest to Save Project	2,522	0	2,522	2,522	0	2,522	0	0	2,522	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Saxon Leisure Centre	1,437	(600)	837	1,437	(600)	837	0	0	837	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Filwick Leisure Centre Redevelopment	4,320	0	4,320	4,320	0	4,320	0	0	4,320	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Highways Fixed Cost Services (Lump Sums)	1,850	0	1,850	1,850	0	1,850	0	0	1,850	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Additional Local Highways Maintenance Funding	1,321	(367)	954	1,321	(367)	954	0	0	954	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Highways Integrated Schemes	1,860	(1,862)	(22)	1,860	(1,862)	(22)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Highways Structural Maintenance Block	3,361	(3,571)	(210)	3,361	(3,571)	(210)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Highways Street Lighting (Efficiency)	1,584	0	1,584	1,584	0	1,584	0	0	1,584	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Highways Structural Maintenance Additional Expenditure	4,075	0	4,075	4,075	0	4,075	0	0	4,075	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	A1 South Roundabout (Biggleswade)	4,500	(1,800)	2,700	4,500	(1,800)	2,700	0	0	2,700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Luton Dunstable Busway	1,960	0	1,960	1,960	0	1,960	0	0	1,960	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Woodside Link	16,062	(3,372)	12,690	16,062	(3,372)	12,690	0	0	12,690	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	Enhanced Waste Disposal Facilities (includes BEAR)	10,000	0	10,000	1,000	0	1,000	(9,000)	0	9,000	0	9,000	0	0	0	0	9,000	0	0	9,000	0	0
Improvement & Corporate Services	CBC Corporate Property Rolling Programme 14/15	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	0	1,500	0	0	1,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Regeneration & Housing	Local Broadband Infrastructure	1,748	(1,737)	11	1,748	(1,737)	11	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Regeneration & Housing	NHS Campus Closure	3,073	(3,073)	0	3,073	(3,073)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Regeneration & Housing	Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme	2,700	(588)	2,112	2,700	(680)	2,020	0	(92)	2,020	0	(92)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(92)
Children's Services	Children's Services	23,569	(23,569)	0	27,750	(27,750)	0	4,181	(4,181)	0	4,181	(4,181)	0	0	0	0	4,181	(4,181)	0	4,181	(4,181)	0
Community Services	Community Services	54,852	(11,592)	43,260	45,852	(11,592)	34,260	(9,000)	0	34,260	(9,000)	9,000	0	0	0	0	9,000	0	0	9,000	0	0
Corporate Resources	Corporate Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Improvement & Corporate Services	Improvement & Corporate Services	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	0	1,500	0	0	1,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Regeneration & Housing	Regeneration	1,748	(1,737)	11	1,748	(1,737)	11	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Care, Health & Housing	Social Care, Health & Housing	5,773	(3,651)	2,122	5,773	(3,753)	2,020	0	(92)	2,020	0	(92)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(82)
Social Care, Health & Housing	Social Care, Health & Housing	87,442	(40,559)	46,883	82,623	(44,832)	37,791	(4,819)	(4,273)	37,791	(4,819)	9,092	(4,273)	9,092	0	9,092	9,000	4,181	9,000	4,181	(4,273)	(92)

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Meeting: Executive
Date: 19 August 2014
Subject: **June 2014/15 (Q1) Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring Revenue and Capital Report**
Report of: Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing and Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report provides information on the 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projected outturn revenue and capital position as at June 2014.

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

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

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

Financial:

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

Legal:

- | |
|----------|
| 2. None. |
|----------|

Risk Management:

- | |
|----------|
| 3. None. |
|----------|

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

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

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken prior to the allocation of the 2014/15 budgets and each Directorate was advised of significant equality implications relating to their budget proposals.

Public Health:

6. None.

Community Safety:

7. None.

Sustainability:

8. None.

Procurement:

9. None.

Overview and Scrutiny:

10. The June 2014/15 projected outturn Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue and capital report will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 September 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to note:-

- (1) **that the Revenue forecast position is to achieve a balanced budget with a contribution to HRA Reserves of £6.684m, thus strengthening the Council's ability to invest and improve its stock of Council Houses;**
- (2) **that the Capital forecast position indicates an outturn on budget (£17.942m) which includes deferred works from 2013/14 relating to Priory View of £2.325m; and**
- (3) **that Right to Buy sales will be monitored for the possible impact on predicted surpluses in the medium to longer term.**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

11. The report presents the 2014/15 HRA financial position as at the end of June 2014. It sets out spend to date against the profiled revenue and capital budgets, the forecast financial outturn, and provides explanations for any variations. This report enables CMT to consider the overall financial position of the HRA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

12. The revenue forecast position as at the end of June 2014 projects a year end surplus of £6.684m compared to a budgeted surplus of £6.191m, an improvement of £0.493m.
13. The key positive variance is a forecast increase in income of £0.656m, offset by a forecast increased expenditure for Housing Management of £0.178m.
14. The forecast position for the HRA capital programme indicates an outturn position on budget; this includes deferred works on Priory View from 2013/14.
15. Galliford Try Partnerships commenced work on site at the Priory View Extra Care Development in April 2014 with an estimated completion date of Autumn 2015. It is predicted that in 2014/15 £10.575m will be spent, funded from the Extra Care Development Reserve.
16. The 2014/15 budget for the HRA anticipates a contribution to the Extra Care Development Reserve of £5.182m and a contribution to the Strategic Reserve of £1.009m. The year end forecast suggests a contribution to reserves of £6.684m, an improvement of £0.493m. This equates to a predicted total reserve balance of £16.819m as at 31 March 2014.

HRA REVENUE ACCOUNT

17. The HRA annual expenditure budget is £22.389m and income budget is £28.580m, which allows a contribution of £6.191m to reserves to present a net budget of zero. A subjective breakdown of budget, year to date position and forecast outturn is shown in Table 1 below.
18. There are a number of year to date variances across the HRA. Total income has an adverse variance of £0.310m with a full year forecast positive variance of £0.656m expected to be achieved. The negative income variance is due to a rent free week in May and the rent year beginning on the 7th April. The positive outturn forecast variance is predominantly accounted for by reduced void loss (£0.480m forecast against £0.746m in budget) and increased income from the rental of garages (£1.035m forecast against £0.861m in budget).

19. Housing Management is reporting a positive year to date variance of £0.108m. The variance is mostly due to out of profile expenditure within Supported Housing and Telecare, and a small number of staff vacancies following the restructure of the Housing Service. Ultimately it is predicted that a minor year end adverse variance will result from under achievement of the vacancy saving targets.
20. The maintenance budget is experiencing an unexpected pressure of £0.3m. This is due to a number of issues, including increased demand and higher tender rates. Work is being undertaken to understand and address the problem but the pressure may be carried through the year.

Table 1

	2014/15 Budget	Budget YTD	Actual YTD	Variance YTD	Full Year Forecast	Variance Full Year Forecast to Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total Income	(28.580)	(7.145)	(6.835)	0.310	(29.236)	(0.656)
Housing Management	4.642	1.161	1.053	(0.108)	4.820	0.178
Financial Inclusion	0.220	0.055	0.036	(0.019)	0.220	0
Asset Management	1.045	0.261	0.270	0.009	1.013	(0.032)
Corporate Resources	1.610	0.403	0.365	(0.038)	1.610	0
Maintenance	4.473	1.118	1.418	0.300	4.490	0.017
Debt related costs	0.119	0.030	0	(0.030)	0.119	0
Direct Revenue Financing	6.667	1.667	1.667	0	6.667	0
Efficiency Programme	(0.395)	0	0	0	(0.395)	0
Interest repayment	4.008	1.002	0.993	(0.009)	4.008	0
Principal repayment	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Expenditure	22.389	5.697	5.802	0.105	22.552	0.163
Surplus	(6.191)	(1.448)	^ (1.033)	0.415	(6.684)	(0.493)
Contribution to / (from) reserve (actioned at year end)	6.191	1.448	1.033	(0.415)	6.684	0.493
Net Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0
^ Included for balancing and illustrative purposes only						

HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

21. There is a year to date positive variance of £2.818m, with a forecast year end outturn of £17.942m against a budget of £17.942m. The budget includes deferred works of £2.325m from 2013/14 relating to the Priory View development.
22. The Priory View development accounts for £2.314m of the under spend to date. Major construction works are about to commence on site, which will result in a steep increase in monthly expenditure that is anticipated to result in an outturn for the year of £10.575m.
23. Further underspends relating to Kitchens and Bathrooms (£0.126m), Aids and Adaptations (£0.171m), Stock Remodelling and Stock Refurbishment (£0.268m) are due to out of profile spend where programmes for the year are being developed.

Table 2

Scheme Title	2014/15 Capital Budget	Full Year Forecast	Variance	Monthly Budget Monitoring June 2014		
				Profilled Budget YTD	Actual YTD	Variance
				Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
				£'000	£'000	£'000
General Enhancements	100	100	0	25	8	(17)
Garage Redurbishment	31	31	0	8	0	(8)
Paths & Fences Siteworks	80	80	0	20	7	(13)
Estate Improvements	250	250	0	63	47	(16)
Energy Conservation	800	800	0	200	162	(38)
Roof Replacement	250	250	0	63	91	29
Central Heating Installation	1,000	1,000	0	250	340	90
Rewiring	372	372	0	93	65	(28)
Kitchens and Bathrooms	1,099	1,099	0	275	149	(126)
Central Heating communal	77	77	0	19	0	(19)
Secure Door Entry	281	281	0	70	103	33
Structural Repairs	156	156	0	39	69	30
Aids and Adaptations	905	905	0	226	55	(171)
Capitalised Salaries	357	357	0	89	95	6
Asbestos Management	150	150	0	38	55	18
Stock Remodelling	1,000	1,000	0	250	84	(166)
Drainage & Water Supply	51	51	0	13	3	(10)
Plasticisation	0	0	0	0	5	5
Sheltered Housing Reprovision	10,575	10,575	0	2,644	330	(2,314)
Stock Refurbishment (NEW)	408	408	0	102	0	(102)
HRA	17,942	17,942	0	4,384	1,668	(2,818)

24. The housing development team is still being recruited and is currently staffed on an interim basis. Both development and regeneration require significant initial investment of time and resources before a pipeline of schemes can be developed. Although work in both of these areas is underway it has been concurrent to the restructuring of the service and operational issues have, and continue to be, addressed.
25. The Garage Strategy continues to be refined with the development potential of the sites being refined. None of the sites are straightforward to develop, having poor access and often services running through them. Architects have been appointed and planning submission programmed for the first build of 4 new homes, a mix of shared ownership and social rent, with completion planned for the summer of 2015.
26. Other sites, primarily garage (and some recently identified infill) sites are being evaluated in detail, following the initial options appraisal. Support is being engaged to lead the buy back of privately owned garages and demolition of some of the Council's empty garages, in preparation for future development.
27. Architects have been appointed to complete designs on refurbishing one sheltered scheme, Croft Green, aiming for submission of planning permission in September 2014. The proposed scheme is supported by existing residents. Briefs are also being prepared for options appraisals to be drawn up for 4 other schemes that offer potential development opportunities, but will need the support of residents.
28. A review is being undertaken of all HRA land for development potential.
29. Amey Construction have been engaged to provide parking options in two areas where parking is particularly difficult. An options appraisal to review potential regeneration sites has been procured, with the initial findings expected in mid November 2014.

HRA EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME

30. Since 2010 the Housing service has been using Housemark to provide a benchmarking service. The analysis provided has assisted in identifying the areas where HRA budgets are higher relative to other stock retained authorities.
31. The HRA revenue budget for 2014/15 was reduced by £0.395m, as part of the Council's efficiency programme. The Housing Service is working with Housemark, to determine areas where efficiencies can be delivered and to formulate a revised Value for Money Strategy.
32. Whilst the Strategy is being developed it is not possible to identify areas for efficiency, so the efficiency saving has been profiled over the last half of 2014-15.

HRA ARREARS

33. Table 3 shows a breakdown of the HRA Debt position at the end of June. Total tenant debt amounted to £1.047m compared to £1.001m at the end of May 2014. Current tenant arrears are £0.620m or 2.11% (£0.583m or 2.27% at May) of the annual rent debit of £29.311m, whilst former tenant arrears are at 1.46% with a balance of £0.427m against a target of 1% (1.63% with a balance of £0.418m at May). Housing Benefit payments account for 57% of the rental income received.
34. In light of welfare reform housing management have implemented a proactive approach to managing the impact on rent arrears. This includes early intervention, downsizing where necessary, increased contact with our residents, supporting tenants in making the right decisions regarding payment of rent and strong enforcement action when all other options have been exhausted.
35. There are currently £0.103m of non tenant arrears (£0.115m May), which comprises the following: rents at shops owned by the HRA, service charges and ground rent relating to leaseholders who purchased flats via the Right to Buy scheme, and property damage relating to existing and former tenants.

Table 3

Debt Analysis - Tenant Arrears							
Description of debt	0-4 weeks	4-8 weeks	8-13 weeks	13-52 weeks	Over 1 yr	TOTAL	
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	
Current Tenant	0.192	0.154	0.129	0.145	0.000	0.620	
Former Tenant						0.427	
						1.047	
Debt Analysis - Other Arrears							
Description of debt	From 15 to 30 days	From 31 to 60 days	From 61 to 90 days	From 91 to 365 days	Over 1 yr but not over 2 yrs	Over 2 yrs	TOTAL
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
Shops	0.008	0	0	0.003	0.002	0.027	0.040
Leaseholders	(0.002)	0	0	(0.001)	0.010	0.028	0.036
Void recoveries	0	0	0	0.019	0.014	0.011	0.044
Misc recoveries	(0.010)	(0.002)	0	0	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.017)
	(0.005)	(0.002)	0.000	0.021	0.024	0.064	0.103

PROMPT PAYMENT INDICATOR

36. The performance target for payment to suppliers, where there is no dispute over the amount invoiced, is 90% of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt date. The HRA performance for May was 63% of 225 invoices paid on time. Of the 83 invoices paid late, a significant proportion were of low value, with 29 under £100 and a further 35 under £1,000. 21 of the invoices related to utility bills, where in some cases the delay was caused by a query over the amount of the invoice.

HRA CAPITAL RECEIPTS

37. New Right to Buy (RtB) discounts and proposals for re-investing the capital receipts came into effect from April 2012, which have increased the maximum discount available to tenants from £0.034m to £0.075m.
38. Up to the end of June 2014, 21 RtB applications were received with 9 properties being sold, compared to 11 Applications and 4 sales over the same period in 2013/14. It is currently projected that the number of RtB sales will be between 25 and 30 for the year, resulting in a residual receipt for the year of approximately £1.5m.
39. As a result of the changes to housing pooling the council has a balance at the end of June of useable capital receipts of £2.887m (balance bought forward from 2013/14 £2.546m), of which £1.253m is reserved for investment in new social housing. The Council has entered into an agreement with the Secretary of State to invest these receipts in new social housing. The use of these receipts is restricted to schemes that do not receive Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) funding.
40. The retained receipt can represent no more than 30% of the cost of the replacement properties, so the Council is committed to spend at least £4.178m on new build by 30 June 2017.
41. The Priory View project has been awarded £1.703m from the HCA, therefore the retained receipts from RtB sales reserved for new build cannot be used on this scheme.
42. The HRA's Budget proposals for the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) propose significant investment in new build (in excess of £5.0m by 30 June 2017, excluding spend on Priory View).
43. Current projections suggest RtB sales will not have a negative impact on the Business Plan, particularly if the number of new build properties exceeds the properties sold. However if annual RtB sales were to make up a significant percentage of the Housing Stock, such that it diminished by 10% (equivalent to approximately 500 properties) or more over the period to 31 March 2018, then this would pose a threat to the surpluses predicted both in the medium and longer term.

RESERVES

44. The total reserves available as at year end 2013/14 were £20.710m, comprising £2.0m in HRA Balances, £12.116m in the Extra Care Development Reserve, £6.394m in the Strategic Reserve and £0.2m in the Major Repairs Reserve.
45. The current position indicates a year end balance in reserves of £16.819m. HRA Balances are projected to remain at a contingency level of £2.000m, with the Extra Care Development Reserve decreasing to £6.433m, the Strategic reserve increasing to £8.186m, and the Major Repairs Reserve (MRR) remaining at £0.200m.

46. In total this equates to a forecast contribution to reserves for the year of £6.684m, offset by spend from reserves of £10.575m to result in a net decrease of £3.891m.
47. An Investment Strategy is currently being formulated, that will set out proposals for the use of the reserves that are forecast to materialise in the short to medium term. This strategy was referred to in the HRA Budget Report that was approved by Council in February 2014.

Table 4

Reserves		Month: June 2014			
Description	Opening Balance 2014/15	Spend against reserves	Release of reserves	Proposed transfer to Reserves	Proposed Closing Balance 2014/15
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
HRA Balances	2,000	-	-	-	2,000
Extra Care Development Reserve	12,116	(10,575)	-	4,892	6,433
Strategic Reserve	6,394	-	-	1,792	8,186
Major Repairs (HRA)	200	-	-	-	200
	20,710	(10,575)	-	6,684	16,819

Appendices - Appendix A – HRA Net Revenue Position Full Analysis

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Appendix A – HRA Net Revenue Position Full Analysis

Reserves		Month: June 2014			
Description	Opening Balance 2014/15	Spend against reserves	Release of reserves	Proposed transfer to Reserves	Proposed Closing Balance 2014/15
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
HRA Balances	2,000	-	-	-	2,000
Extra Care Development Reserve	12,116	(10,575)	-	4,892	6,433
Strategic Reserve	6,394	-	-	1,792	8,186
Major Repairs (HRA)	200	-	-	-	200
	20,710	(10,575)	-	6,684	16,819

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