

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

**This meeting will
be filmed.***



please ask for Sandra Hobbs
direct line 0300 300 5257
date 24 March 2016

NOTICE OF MEETING

EXECUTIVE

Date & Time

Tuesday, 5 April 2016 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 Health
	M Versallion	– Executive Member for Education and Skills
	C Hegley	– Executive Member for Social Care and Housing and Lead Member for Children's Services
	N Young	– Executive Member for Regeneration
	B Spurr	– Executive Member for Community Services
	R Wenham	– Executive Member for Corporate Resources
	A Turner	– Executive Member for Stronger Communities

All other Members of the Council - on request

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MEETING***

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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 9 February 2016.

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 May 2016 to 30 April 2017.

Decisions

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
8.	Affordable Housing Guidance Note (South Central Bedfordshire)	41 - 66
	To adopt the Affordable Housing Guidance Note as planning guidance for the south of Central Bedfordshire.	

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|-----|---|-----------|
| 9. | Passenger Transport Strategy: Introduction of a Dynamic Purchasing Scheme and Consultation on Public Transport Proposals | 67 - 90 |
| | To seek approval to go out to public consultation on the Passenger Transport Strategy - Public Transport and the set up of a Dynamic Purchasing System. | |
| 10. | Local Transport Plan 4 | 91 - 104 |
| | To highlight the need for a new Local Transport Plan and propose a new strategic approach for investment in transport. | |
| 11. | Commissioning of New School Places in Biggleswade and Arlesey for September 2017 | 105 - 140 |
| | To seek support for the consultations by Biggleswade Academy Trust and the Governing Body of St Andrews Lower School, Biggleswade, each to expand by one form of entry (30 places in each lower school year group) by September 2017. The report will also seek the support of the Council's Executive for the consultation by Etonbury Academy, Arlesey, to expand by one form of entry (30 places in Year groups 5-11) by September 2017. | |
| 12. | New Lower School Places in Fairfield Parish | 141 - 164 |
| | To consider the next steps with the commissioning of new school places in Fairfield Parish. | |
| 13. | Orchard Community Building - Land East of Biggleswade | 165 - 170 |
| | To seek approval to transfer the new community building and commuted sum to Biggleswade Town Council including full ownership maintenance responsibilities and all future liabilities. | |
| 14. | Community Building at Marston Park | 171 - 176 |
| | To seek approval to transfer of the new Community Building at Marston Park, Marston Mortaine including ownership, management, maintenance and all future liabilities to Marston Moretaine Parish Council. | |

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, 9 February 2016.

PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)
Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Executive Members:	Cllrs	C Hegley B J Spurr A M Turner	Cllrs	M A G Versallion R D Wenham J N Young
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Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	A D Brown Mrs S Clark K M Collins I Dalgarno	Cllrs	S Dixon Mrs A L Dodwell E Ghent B Wells
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Apologies for Absence:	Cllr	Ms C Maudlin	Deputy Executive Member for Stronger Communities
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Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	Mrs A Barker R D Berry M C Blair D Bowater J Chatterley P A Duckett F Firth	Cllrs	Mrs S A Goodchild Ms A M W Graham D McVicar B Saunders D Shelvey G Tubb A Zerny
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Officers in Attendance	Mr Q Baker	Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer (Interim)
	Mrs D Broadbent-Clarke	Director of Improvement and Corporate Services
	Mr R Carr	Chief Executive
	Mr M Coiffait	Director of Community Services
	Mrs S Harrison	Director of Children's Services
	Mrs S Hobbs	Committee Services Officer
	Mr J Longhurst	Director of Regeneration and Business
	Mrs J Ogley	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
	Ms M Peaston	Committee Services Manager
	Mrs M Scott	Director of Public Health
	Mrs G Stanton	Chief Communications Officer
	Mr C Warboys	Chief Finance Officer

E/15/92. **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/15/93. **Members' Interests**

Councillor Versallion declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 14, Traded Services to Schools and Academies – Proposed Charges 2016/17, as a customer of the music service.

E/15/94. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Leader commented that a funding announcement had been made late the previous day in relation to the Local Government Financial Settlement. This would be explained further under item 9 Budget 2016/17 and MTFP, but it appeared that this Council's lobbying had helped secure some transitional funds.

E/15/95. **Petitions**

No petitions were received.

E/15/96. **Public Participation**

Mr Hamilton, relative of a resident at Greenacre Older Persons' Care Home, indicated that he wished to make a comment in relation to item 8, The Future of Greenacre Older Persons' Care Home. The Leader invited him to speak when this item was reached.

E/15/97. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2017 be noted.

E/15/98. **The Future of Greenacre Older Persons Home and Day Centre**

Mr Hamilton, a member of the public whose mother-in-law was currently a resident at Greenacre, was invited to speak. He explained that he had wanted his mother-in-law to be able to remain at Greenacre for the rest of her life. He had written to the Council raising a series of questions about the provider of Rosewood Court. In the event that the Council decided to proceed with Greenacre's closure, he was concerned that this should not be until Rosewood Court was in a position to take Greenacre residents.

Mr Hamilton also commended the Council for the respect he had been afforded and the transparency of the process, and he expressed thanks for the time which his family had been given to enable their involvement in discussions about this issue.

The Executive then considered a report from the Executive Member for Social Care and Housing that set out the outcome of the consultation on the future of Greenacre Older Persons' Home and Day Centre. Separate consultations had been carried out for the care home and the day centre as they served different customers, and the future options, which were also different.

It was noted that Greenacre Older Persons' Home had small rooms with no en-suite facilities. The Council had been offered places at Dukeminster Court, a newly built residential home, and also at Rosewood Court, a home with nursing care provision, due to open in March 2016. This would provide residents living in the care home with an opportunity to move to a better quality of accommodation. Residents and families had been consulted and a total of 26 responses had been received with half of the respondents supporting the preferred option to close the homes and re-locate current residents. 11 people disagreed with closure and 2 were neutral.

The consultation on the Greenacre Day Care Centre had been over five options with the opportunity to identify additional options. Two of the options involved relocation of the service to Houghton Regis Day Centre. Preference was indicated for the service to be relocated to an alternative venue in Dunstable. Officers would be investigating whether there was an alternative venue in Dunstable that would be appropriate.

No public consultation had been carried out in relation to the Step Up Step Down Unit as the nature of the service meant that it did not have any ongoing customers who would be affected by the proposals.

The Executive noted the individual risk assessments that had been carried out in relation to the relocation of residents and received assurance that the assessments had been carried out diligently and in consultation with other professionals such as residents' GPs.

During discussion, it was reiterated that the Council was concerned to ensure that residents of care homes would not be asked to move more than once. Additionally, the Executive noted that the reason for seeking the delegation to

the Director to determine the date of the proposed closure was to enable the best interests of residents to be accommodated.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to improve the quality of accommodation for the current residents at Greenacre Older Persons' Home and maintain an appropriate service for customers of the Greenacre Day Centre.

RESOLVED

1. **that the outcome of the consultations on the future of Greenacre Older Persons' Home and Greenacre Day Centre be noted;**
2. **that the closure of Greenacre Older Persons' Home and cessation of services at Greenacre Day Centre based on matters set out in this report, its appendices and background papers, be approved;**
3. **to authorise the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing to determine the date of closure of Greenacre Older Persons' Home, taking into consideration the assessed eligible care and support needs of residents of the home along with relevant operational matters;**
4. **to authorise the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing to determine the date of cessation of the provision of service at Greenacre Day Centre, taking into consideration the assessed eligible care and support needs of the day centre users and their carers along with relevant operational matters;**
5. **to authorise the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing to undertake the processes set out in paragraphs 89 to 91 in the report and to determine the location of the replacement day service;**
6. **to authorise the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing to commence the processes set out in paragraphs 92 to 95 in the report to determine the future of the 'Step Up Step Down' residential reablement service; and**
7. **that the commencement of the processes, set out in paragraphs 104 to 106 in the report, in relation to the staff employed at Greenacre Older Persons' Home, Day Centre and 'Step Up Step Down' unit, be approved.**

E/15/99.

Budget 2016/17 and Medium Term Financial Plan

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the proposed budget for 2016/17 and updated Medium Term Financial Plan. The Executive Member drew attention to the comments and recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the proposals and summarised the outcome of public consultation.

The budget for 2016/17 set out the Council's finances and identified the efficiencies required in the light of the reduction in Government funding and other pressures. £15.3m of efficiencies had been identified for 2016/17 and a further £30m of efficiencies were required over the subsequent three years to achieve the proposed MTFP.

Guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government made clear the Government's expectation that upper tier councils would raise council tax by both a 2% precept earmarked for adult social care and an assumed 1.75% for inflation in each of the next four years.

The Executive was advised that late on the previous day, the Secretary of State had announced additional, transitional funding covering two years only, in recognition of the impact of the loss of Revenue Support Grant. A short report was therefore tabled, explaining the impact of this announcement which was to provide the Council with £2.2m in 2016/17 and a similar amount in the subsequent year. This would reduce the need for the Council to draw on its reserves in 2016/17.

Further work would be undertaken to evaluate the final Financial Settlement and to ensure that this was reflected in the detailed appendices presented to Council on 25 February 2016 as part of the Executive's budget and MTFP proposals.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to consider the proposed budget for 2016/17 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 – 2019/20.

RESOLVED

1. to note the response to consultation with the overview and scrutiny committees as set out in Appendices K and K(i) to the Executive report, and the response to consultation with the public and stakeholders as set out in Appendix A to the Executive report;
2. to note the Council Tax Base as set out in Appendix G to the Executive report;
3. that certain efficiency proposals identified in Appendix I to the Executive report be noted, as they would be subject to formal consultation and Equality Impact Assessment in the coming months. If, following a review of the outcome of the consultations and Equality Impact Assessments any of the specific proposals cannot be delivered, the Corporate Management Team be instructed to propose alternative compensatory savings;
4. that the additional transitional funding be noted;
5. that Officers be instructed to make any necessary detailed changes, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to the budget allocations, as set out in the detailed appendices to the report, as a consequence of the late amendment, for final presentation to Council.

RECOMMENDED to Council

1. **that the Revenue Budget for 2016/17 and the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2016/17 to 2019/20, be approved;**
2. **that in line with Government guidance, the following increases in council tax (CBC element) for residents of Central Bedfordshire be approved:**
 - (a) **a Band D increase of £25.51, representing a 1.95% increase on the charge for 2015/16; and**
 - (b) **a Band D increase of £26.17, representing a 2.0% increase on the charge for 2015/16, reflecting a precept of this amount to help fund adult social care costs.**

In total the Band D increase will be £51.68, representing a 3.95% increase in the charge for 2015/16. The CBC element of Band D council tax for 2016/17 will therefore be £1,360.01.

Note: Cllr Tubb left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.

E/15/100. Capital Programme 2016/17 to 2019/20

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources setting out the proposed capital programme for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

The capital programme continued to feature some large schemes including the requirement to provide new school places, A421 dualling, highways structural maintenance, new highways depots and household waste recycling centres, the Woodside Link road and the Dunstable leisure centre and library.

The Executive also noted that a report later on the agenda addressed a proposal for additional capital funding for Dunstable leisure centre and library, which was reflected in the proposed capital programme.

Reason for decision: To enable Council to consider the proposed capital programme for 2016/17 to 2019/20 to facilitate effective financial management and planning.

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the Capital Programme for 2016/17 to 2019/20 be approved.

E/15/101. Budget for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Business Plan)

The Executive received a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Executive Member for Social Care and Housing setting out the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the proposed Budget for 2016/17. Within it were proposals governed by recent changes in Government policy on rent levels. Attention was drawn to the outcome of tenant consultation on the proposals.

The Executive also considered an additional recommendation which reflected a late announcement that rents for Supported Housing may be increased by CPI plus 1%.

Reason for decision: To enable Council to approve the budget for the Housing Revenue Account.

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget proposals for 2016/17 be approved, as follows:

- 1. that the recent legislative changes relating to Housing Finance and their impact on the Landlord Business Plan, be noted;***
- 2. that the HRA's debt portfolio and interest payments due in 2015/16, be noted;***
- 3. that the intention to commence principal debt repayments from 2017/18, as approved previously by Council in February 2015, be noted;***
- 4. that the Landlord Business Investment Plan, which proposes HRA investment throughout the Council area, be approved;***
- 5. that the HRA Revenue Budget for 2016/17 and the Landlord Business Plan summary at Appendices A and B to the Executive report, be approved;***
- 6. that the 2016/17 to 2019/20 HRA Capital Programme at Appendix C to the Executive report, be approved;***
- 7. that the average rent decrease of 1% for 2016/17 in line with the national rental decrease, as per Government legislation, be approved; and***
- 8. that an average rent increase of 0.9% for supported housing Tenants, be approved.***

E/15/102. Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Policy

The Executive considered a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources outlining the proposed Treasury Policy and Treasury Management Strategy for 2016/17.

Reason for decision: To enable an effective treasury management framework to continue to be in place, in line with the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (2011 edition) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (2011 edition).

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the Treasury Management Policy, Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Prudential Indicators for 2016/17, be approved.

E/15/103. Schools Budget 2016/17

The Executive considered a report of the Executive Member for Education and Skills setting out the proposed distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block for 2016/17. The Executive also received comments from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 29 January 2016.

It was noted that the appropriate proforma had been submitted to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) on 21 January and that ratification was now required by 28 February. The Executive was advised that for future years, delegated authority to the appropriate Director in consultation with the relevant Executive Member to ratify the final proforma would enable the EFA's tight timetable to be met.

Reason for decision: To enable the Authority Proforma Tool submitted to the Education Funding Agency on 21 January 2016 to be ratified.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant (Schools Block) for 2016/17, be noted;**
- 2. that the final proforma, submitted to the Education Funding Agency, be ratified;**
- 3. to delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Executive Member for Education and Skills and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, responsibility for ratification of the final proforma in future years.**

E/15/104. Traded Services to Schools & Academies - Proposed Charges for 2016/17

The Executive considered a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Executive Member for Education and Skills representing the annual review and proposed charges for traded services to schools and academies for non-statutory services for the year ahead. An inflation rate had been applied in line with the Council's Budget Strategy.

Comments had been received from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Reason for decision: To agree the charges for 2016/17 as part of delivering a balanced budget.

Note: Cllr Versallion had declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item earlier in the meeting (minute E/15/93 refers).

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the charges for 2016/17 for non-statutory services to schools and academies be approved.

E/15/105. Commissioning of New Lower School Places in Fairfield Parish

The Executive considered a report of the Executive Member for Education and Skills on proposals to commence consultation by the governing body of Fairfield Lower Park School on a permanent expansion onto a second site, including an increase of lower school places and the provision of a 60-place nursery. Demographic growth driven largely by new housing development in the area had led to existing school sites in Fairfield and Stotfold operating at full capacity.

Comments had been received from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council continues to meets its statutory obligations to provide sufficient school places.

RESOLVED

to support the proposed commencement of consultation by the governing body of Fairfield Park Lower School to permanently expand onto a second site, from a 2-form of entry (300 place) lower school for pupils aged 3 to 9, to a 4-form of entry (600 place) lower school for pupils aged 3 to 9, also providing a 60 place nursery, increasing the school's published admission number from 60 to 120 with effect from 1 September 2017.

E/15/106. European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF)

The Executive had agreed previously that each project proposed under the European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) should be the subject of a report seeking approval before its commencement.

In view of this, the Executive considered a report of the Executive Member for Regeneration on the outcome of the Innovation Bridge European Regional Development (ERDF) funding bid.

This bid built on the previously successful Innovation Bridge project which had ended in August 2015. The current bid proposed to expand the previous

delivery of innovation and support to small and medium sized businesses within the local area to enable them to grow.

Commencement would be from 1 April 2016 for a period of three years, and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) would require this Council to enter into a funding agreement.

Reason for Decision: To enable the successful outcomes delivered by the previous Innovation Bridge programme to be secured for the future..

RESOLVED:

1. **that the further detail provided on the Innovation Bridge European Regional Development Fund bid, including the budget, outcomes and any associated impacts and risks to the Council, be noted;**
2. **to enter into the funding agreement with DCLG for this project to enable it to commence;**
3. **to delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Business and the Section 151 Officer to make any minor amendments to this funding agreement, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration and the Executive Member for Education and Skills.**

E/15/107. **Houghton Hall Park Renaissance and Renewal Project**

The Executive received a report of the Executive Member for Community Services seeking delegated authority for the award of contracts for the landscape restoration works and the construction of a visitor centre at Houghton Hall Park, Houghton Regis.

The Executive was advised that the nesting season would start soon and landscape works should not be carried out during that period, which extended over approximately six months.

Reason for decision: The contract values were in excess of £500,000 and would therefore normally be awarded by the Executive. Delegation of authority to award the contracts would enable them to commence soon after approval by HLF Board in mid-February. This was preferable to waiting until the Executive meeting in April for contract approval, following which there would be 6 months of delay to avoid impacting on birds during their nesting period.

RESOLVED

to authorise the Director for Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Executive Member for Community Services, to award the contracts for the Houghton Hall Park Renaissance and Renewal project in order to facilitate time-critical landscape works ahead of the bird nesting season.

E/15/108. Redevelopment of Dunstable Leisure Centre and Library

The Executive received a report of the Executive Member for Community Services setting out revised proposals for the re-development of the Dunstable leisure centre and library.

The report also sought approval for additional capital expenditure.

The Executive had considered the re-provision of the leisure centre services and library in February 2015, and in August 2015 had authorised the procurement of a building contractor.

Preparations for the procurement of a building contractor had concluded that a gross budget of £15.6m would be insufficient to deliver the recommended scheme due to higher construction costs.

A summary of the available options had concluded that option 7 at a gross cost of £20m would enable the Council's objectives to be met.

The revised capital costs had been accounted for within the report on the Capital Programme elsewhere on this agenda.

Reason for decision: Option 7 offered the most financially viable approach and would secure the delivery of leisure and library services. Additionally, further opportunities for regeneration would be created.

RECOMMENDED to Council

that an additional £3.519m be allocated to implement the redevelopment of Dunstable Leisure Centre and Library in accordance with the revised option 7. (Note: this additional expenditure is included within the Capital Programme being recommended to Council elsewhere on this agenda.)

RESOLVED

that officers actively seek to meet the additional £3.519m requirement through new sources of funding or from within the existing capital budget, in order to create no net increase in capital requirements during the period of the plan.

E/15/109. Community Safety Partnership Priorities 2016 - 2019

The Executive considered a report of the Executive Member for Community Services setting out three proposed priorities, together with emerging issues, identified through the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment.

The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny had recommended that the Executive adopt the proposed priorities.

Members welcomed the assurance that local community safety groups and town and parish councils would be involved in the delivery of the priorities.

Reason for decision: to ensure that “hidden harms” were recognised and openly addressed, to increase community safety.

RESOLVED:

that the following three Partnership Strategic Assessment Priorities identified for Central Bedfordshire for 2016-19 be approved:

- **Protecting the Vulnerable – especially from modern day slavery, trafficking of human beings and preventing child sexual exploitation**
- **Dealing with Domestic Abuse – especially supporting black and ethnic minority groups, under 18’s and medium risk victims**
- **Protecting our Communities – especially dealing with street drinkers and nuisance motorcycles.**

E/15/110. Tender Award of a Five Year Contract for Council Housing Gas Appliance Maintenance and Service

The Executive received a report of the Executive Member for Social Care and Housing seeking the delegation of authority to the appropriate Chief Officer to award the gas maintenance and servicing contract.

Members noted that due to recruitment difficulties the procurement process had started late. The current domestic gas maintenance and service contract would expire on 31 March, and the next meeting of the Executive would not be held until 5 April.

In view of the urgency of this matter, the Chairman of the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been consulted and had agreed that the proposals did not require review by his Committee.

Reason for decision: The delegation of the authority would enable the contract award to proceed in accordance with the programme.

RESOLVED

To delegate authority to the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Member for Social Care and Housing, to award the Gas Maintenance and Servicing Contract in respect of the functions the Council is obliged to carry out under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

E/15/111. December 2015 Quarter 3 Revenue Budget Monitoring

The Executive received a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources setting out the financial position for 2015/16 as at the end of December 2015, including spend-to-date against the profiled budget and the forecast financial outturn.

Reason for decision: to maintain rigour and transparency through the Executive's regular public monitoring of the revenue budget.

RESOLVED

1. that the revenue forecast position which is currently to underspend budget by £0.1m (over budget by £0.9m in November, £1.1m over last year) be noted and that directorates be requested to continue to take the necessary action to maintain a balanced budget;
2. that the inclusion within the budget of £2.1m of contingency that is currently forecast to be used, be noted. There is no call on this contingency as present.

E/15/112. December 2015 - Quarter 3 Capital Budget Monitoring Report

The Executive considered a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources setting out the capital financial position for 2015/16 as at the end of December 2015, but not including the Housing Revenue Account which was addressed in a separate report.

Reason for decision: To note the schemes currently underway and to facilitate effective financial management and planning.

RESOLVED

that the gross forecast which is below budget by £42.5m (£24.9m at Period 9 last year against a lower budget of £116.8m) and the net forecast which is £32.9m below budget, be noted.

E/15/113. December 2015 Quarter 3 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring

The Executive received a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Executive Member for Social Care and Housing on the 2015/16 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projected outturn position covering both revenue and capital as at December 2015.

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

RESOLVED

1. that the revenue forecast position to achieve a balanced budget with a contribution to Housing Revenue Account Reserves of £6.067m, thus strengthening the Council's ability to invest and improve its stock of Council houses, be noted;
2. that the capital forecast position which indicates a net outturn of £1.525m below budget relating predominantly to the deferred timing on the Croft Green Development, be noted;

3. **that Right to Buy sales be monitored for the possible impact on predicted surpluses in the medium to longer term.**

E/15/114. Five Year Plan Performance Monitoring

The Executive considered a report of the Leader of the Council proposing the monitoring arrangements for the recently adopted Five Year Plan.

The proposed approach had been considered by each of the overview and scrutiny committees whose comments had been taken into account.

Reason for decision: The Council had refreshed its corporate plan priorities and in this context it was necessary for its performance regime to be updated.

RESOLVED

that the proposed suite of indicators to be reported to the Executive in future, be endorsed.

E/15/115. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED

to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that its consideration was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

E/15/116. Land at Hitchin Road, Fairfield

The Executive considered a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources proposing the disposal of land owned by the Council.

RESOLVED

to authorise the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to dispose of Council-owned land as set out in the report.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 11.50 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated

**Central Bedfordshire Council
Forward Plan of Key Decisions
1 May 2016 to 30 April 2017**

- 1) During the period from **1 May 2016 to 30 April 2017**, 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.

There are exceptions to these criteria which is set out in C2 1.3 in the Council’s Constitution. Specifically, expenditure which is identified in the approved Council revenue and capital budgets are not key decisions.

- 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:

Councillor James Jamieson	Leader of the Council
Councillor Maurice Jones	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Health
Councillor Mark Versallion	Executive Member for Education and Skills
Councillor Carole Hegley	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing and Lead Member for Children’s Services
Councillor Nigel Young	Executive Member for Regeneration
Councillor Brian Spurr	Executive Member for Community Services
Councillor Richard Wenham	Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Councillor Andrew Turner	Executive Member for Stronger Communities

- 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
5 April 2016	24 March 2016
7 June 2016	26 May 2016
2 August 2016	21 July 2016
11 October 2016	29 September 2016
6 December 2016	24 November 2016
10 January 2017	22 December 2016
7 February 2017	26 January 2017
4 April 2017	23 March 2017

Central Bedfordshire Council

Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 May 2016 to 30 April 2017

Key Decisions

Date of Publication: 24 March 2016

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
1.	Housing Strategy -	To receive the draft Housing Strategy for consideration and recommendation to Council.	7 June 2016	Public consultation carried out over a 6 week period.	Open Housing Strategy	Executive Member for Regeneration Comments by 07/05/2016 to Contact Officer Sue Frost, Interim Head of Service for Place Delivery Email: sue.frost@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4952
2.	Tender award for the redevelopment of Croft Green, Dunstable -	Appointment of the preferred contractor for the development of 23 sheltered housing apartments and communal facilities at Croft Green, Dunstable.	7 June 2016		Open Tender award for the redevelopment of Croft Green, Dunstable	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 07/05/2016 to Contact Officer: Matt Berry, Interim Regeneration & Renewal Manager Email: matthew.berry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4493

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.	Environmental Enhancement Framework -	To approve the Environmental Enhancement Strategy which is the compendium of strategies, policies and technical guidance relating to the environment. It covers areas such as ecology, landscape, climate change, renewables, trees, SuDS and sustainable growth.	7 June 2016	Key external stakeholders consulted as well as wider public consultation on individual components.	Open Environmental Enhancement Strategy	Executive Member for Regeneration Comments by 07/05/2016 to Contact Officer: Stephen Mooring, Environmental Policy Manager Email: stephen.mooring@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6241

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.	Commissioning of New School Places in Arlesey for September 2017 -	This report to the Council's Executive will consider the outcome of the consultation undertaken by Etonbury Academy on its proposal to expand by one form of entry (30 places in Year groups 5-11) by September 2017. The Council's Executive will be invited to support the proposal.	7 June 2016		Open Commissioning of New School Places in Arlesey for September 2017	Executive Member for Education and Skills Comments by 07/05/2016 to Contact Officer: Rob Parsons, Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning Email: rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5572
5.	Corporate Asset Management Strategy -	The report proposes the Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS) for Central Bedfordshire Council highlighting the Council's approach to the management of its assets, for consideration by the Executive.	7 June 2016		Open Corporate Asset Management Strategy	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/05/2016 to Contact Officer: Steven Girling Email: steven.girling@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5246

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.	Land Acquisition -	To seek approval to add a scheme to the Capital Programme and authorise the Director of Community Services to purchase replacement farmland.	7 June 2016		Open The report will be exempt due to the commercial nature of this item. Executive Report	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/05/16 to Contact Officer Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services Email: marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
7.	Waste Transfer Station Operational Contract and Residual Waste Lots -	Following a procurement exercise to select a Contractor to operate the new Waste Transfer Station at Thorn Turn, this report seeks approval from the Executive to award the Contract.	2 August 2016		Open Waste Transfer Station Operational Contract Award	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 02/07/2016 to Contact Officer: Alice Geary, Project Manager Community Services, alice.geary@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk , Tel: 0300 300 6970, Tracey Harris (Waste), Head of Waste Services tracey.harris2@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4646

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)
8.	Central Bedfordshire's Policy for Housing Assistance 2016 - 2020 -	To adopt the Council's Policy for Housing Assistance 2016 – 2020 for providing households with financial assistance to improve the homes of the most vulnerable households.	2 August 2016		Open	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 02/07/2016 to Contact Officer Nick Costin, Head of Housing Service Email: nick.costin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5219

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
9.	Commissioning of New School Places in Biggleswade for September 2017 -	This report to the Council's Executive will consider the outcome of the consultations by Biggleswade Academy Trust and the Governing Body of St Andrews Lower School, Biggleswade, each to expand by one form of entry (30 places in each lower school year group) by September 2017. The Council's Executive will be invited to support the proposals.	2 August 2016		Open Commissioning of New School Places in Biggleswade for September 2017	Executive Member for Education and Skills Comments by 02/07/2016 to Contact Officer: Rob Parsons, Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning Email: rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5572

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.	Passenger Transport Strategy - Public Transport -	The report will seek approval for the adoption of the Passenger Transport Strategy – Public Transport.	11 October 2016	Members, Town and Parish Councils, residents, commercial operators, community transport operators, neighbouring local authorities, relevant CBC services Formal Consultation with all stakeholders.	Open Passenger Transport Strategy	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Susan Childerhouse, Head of Public Protection (North) Email: susan.childerhouse@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4394
NON KEY DECISIONS						
11.	2015/16 Revenue Outturn Report -	To consider the 2015/16 revenue financial outturn report.	7 June 2016		Open 2015/16 Revenue Outturn Report	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/05/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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.	2015/16 Capital Financial Outturn report -	To consider the 2015/16 capital financial outturn report.	7 June 2016		Open 2015/16 Capital Financial Outturn report	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/05/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
13.	2015/16 Housing Revenue Account Financial Outturn (Revenue & Capital) -	To consider the 2015/16 Housing Revenue Account financial Outturn (Revenue & Capital).	7 June 2016		Open 2015/16 Housing Revenue Account Financial Outturn (Revenue & Capital)	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing, Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/05/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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 Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan -	The report proposes the Medium Term Financial Planning framework for 2017-18 through 2020-21.	2 August 2016		Open Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 02/07/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
15.	Period 3 (Quarter 1) – 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of June 2016.	11 October 2016		Open Period 3 (Quarter 1) – 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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.	Period 3 (Quarter 1) – 2016/17 Capital Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the Capital financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of June 2016. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.	11 October 2016		Open Period 3 (Quarter 1) – 2016/17 Capital Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
17.	Period 3 (Quarter 1) – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of June 2016.	11 October 2016		Open Period 3 (Quarter 1) – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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)
18.	Fees & Charges 2017 -	To consider the price changes for 2017.	11 October 2016		Open Fees & Charges 2017	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
19.	Schools Trading 2017/18 -	To consider the updated charges for 2017/18.	11 October 2016		Open Schools Trading 2017/18	Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Deputy Executive Member for Education and Skills Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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)
20.	Period 6 (Quarter 2) – 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of September 2016.	6 December 2016		Open Period 6 (Quarter 2) – 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 06/11/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
21.	Period 6 (Quarter 2) – 2016/17 Capital Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the Capital financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of September 2016. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.	6 December 2016		Open Period 6 (Quarter 2) – 2016/17 Capital Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 06/11/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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.	Period 6 (Quarter 2) – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of September 2016.	6 December 2016		Open Period 6 (Quarter 2) – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 06/11/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
23.	Draft Budget & Medium Term Financial Plan 2017/18 – 2020/21 -	The report proposes the Budget for 2017/18 and updates the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) approved by Council in February 2016.	10 January 2017		Open Draft Budget & Medium Term Financial plan 2017/18 – 2020/21	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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)
24.	Draft Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2020/21 -	The report proposes the Capital Programme for the four years from April 2017. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.	10 January 2017		Open Draft Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2020/21	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
25.	Draft Budget for the Housing Revenue Account 2(Landlord Service) 2017/18 - 2020/21 and Business Plan -	The report sets out the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Budget for 2017/18.	10 January 2017		Open Draft Budget for the Housing Revenue Account 2(Landlord Service) 2017/18 - 2020/21 and Business Plan	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing, Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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)
26.	Final Budget & Medium Term Financial Plan 2017/18 – 2020/21 -	The report proposes the Budget for 2017/18 and updates the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) approved by Council in February 2016.	7 February 2017		Open Final Budget & Medium Term Financial plan 2017/18 – 2020/21	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
27.	Final Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2020/21 -	The report proposes the Capital Programme for the four years from April 2017. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.	7 February 2017		Open Final Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2020/21	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
28.	Final Budget for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Service) 2017/18 - 2020/21 and Business Plan -	The report sets out the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Budget for 2017/18.	7 February 2017		Open Final Budget for the Housing Revenue Account 2(Landlord Service) 2017/18 - 2020/21 and Business Plan	Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
29.	Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of December 2016.	4 April 2017		Open Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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)
30.	Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Capital Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the Capital financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of December 2016. It excludes the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is subject to a separate report.	4 April 2017		Open Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Capital Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083
31.	Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring -	The report sets out the financial position for 2016/17 as at the end of December 2016.	4 April 2017		Open Period 9 (Quarter 3) – 2016/17 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Denis Galvin, Head of Financial Performance Email: denis.galvin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6083

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:

Period of Plan	Date of Publication
1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017	3 March 2016
1 May 2016 – 30 April 2017	1 April 2016
1 June 2016 – 31 May 2017	29 April 2016
1 July 2016 – 30 June 2017	26 May 2016
1 August 2016 – 31 July 2017	24 June 2016
1 September 2016 – 31 August 2017	21 July 2016
1 October 2016 – 30 September 2017	2 September 2016
1 November 2016 – 31 October 2017	29 September 2016
1 December 2016 – 30 November 2017	28 October 2016
1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017	24 November 2016
1 February 2017 – 31 January 2018	22 December 2016
1 March 2017 – 28 February 2018	26 January 2017
1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018	24 February 2017
1 May 2017 – 30 April 2018	23 March 2017

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 5 April 2016

Affordable Housing Guidance Note (South Central Bedfordshire)

Report of the Executive Member for Regeneration and Business, Cllr Nigel Young (nigel.young@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officers: Director of Regeneration and Business, Jason Longhurst, jason.longhurst@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk and Connie Frost-Bryant, Interim Local Planning Manager, connie.frost-bryant@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk, Tel: 0300 300 4329

This report relates to a Key Issue

1. This report asks Executive to endorse the Affordable Housing Guidance Note as planning guidance. The note provides guidance on the affordable housing target in the South of Central Bedfordshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **endorse the Affordable Housing Guidance Note (South Central Bedfordshire) as planning guidance for Development Management purposes; and**
2. **recommend that Council delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration and Business, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration and Business to make any minor amendments to the Affordable Housing Guidance Note**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

1. The Overview and Scrutiny committee recommended that the guidance note be endorsed by Executive on 17th March 2016.
2. A member of the committee questioned why the guidance did not cover the whole of Central Bedfordshire. This is noted in the body of the report at paragraph 4 but in addition it was explained that a development plan policy carries significantly more weight than guidance, having been subject to formal public consultation and having been found sound by a Planning Inspector at Public Examination. As such there would be no advantage in introducing guidance that carries less weight for the northern parishes.

3. There was also a question in relation to starter homes with regard to the likelihood of them being classified as affordable housing through the Planning and Housing Bill. The commentary on financial risk in the OSC report had identified a detrimental impact on overall provision for those in housing need if starter homes were to be classified as affordable housing. The paragraph on financial risk has therefore been updated (see paragraph 27) to take into account the third reading of the Planning and Housing Bill in the House of Lords which occurred after the OSC report had been drafted. Following this several amendments have been put forward which ask that local authorities are able to deliver starter homes alongside other affordable homes for rent in line with locally assessed need.

Overview

4. The Affordable Housing Guidance Note provides guidance to support the determination of planning applications for those parishes that formerly made up South Bedfordshire District Council. The South Bedfordshire Local Plan 2004 remains adopted development plan for this area and Policy H4 Affordable Housing remains the extant policy.
5. This guidance note does not apply to the parishes that formerly made up the legacy authority of Mid Bedfordshire District Council. The adopted development plan for this area is the North Core Strategy 2009. Under Policy CS7 Affordable Housing, 35% of homes on sites of 4 or more dwellings are required to be affordable, and as such no guidance in relation to this policy is sought at this time.
6. The note has been produced as interim guidance, and shall apply until such time as the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan reaches submission stage and its emerging affordable housing policy carries sufficient weight.
7. The guidance note is concerned with the percentage of affordable housing required and is not intended to provide detailed advice around the procedures related to the implementation of affordable housing policy.

Proposed Target in Guidance

8. The guidance note would make the target for affordable housing provision in the South of Central Bedfordshire **30%** on all qualifying sites of **4 dwellings** and above. On sites of 4 dwellings, one affordable dwelling must be provided.
9. This guidance has been produced because policy H4 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan is now out of date in relation to current evidence and national planning policy (The National Planning Policy Framework, 2012) that has been subsequently introduced.

10. Having reviewed national planning policy and current evidence this guidance reflects the current position and will be translated into any emerging affordable housing policy as part of the new Central Bedfordshire Local Plan.

Current Policy Requirement

11. The South Bedfordshire Local Plan Policy H4 seeks a lesser percentage of affordable housing (at least 20%) at a higher threshold (on sites of 25 dwellings or more or sites of over 1 hectare) and therefore would not allow the Council to seek affordable housing in line with the need identified by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015.
12. This would conflict with national planning policy which states that the council must have policies in place that seek to boost housing supply (National Planning Policy Framework, 2012, Paragraph 47).

Background

13. There are currently two adopted development plans in operation in Central Bedfordshire covering the respective legacy district council areas that previously administered the geographical extent of the current unitary authority. These plans will remain in place as the relevant development plan for the determination of planning applications until the new Central Bedfordshire Local Plan reaches submission stage in December 2017.
14. The Council had previously progressed a local plan to submission stage (known as the Development Strategy) which included affordable housing policy for the whole of Central Bedfordshire. This was however withdrawn in November 2015.

Evidence for Approach

15. The approach taken in this guidance is informed by:
 - National planning policy which stresses the need for local planning policy which meets identified need for affordable housing (National Planning Policy Framework, 2012, Paragraph 50).
 - The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2015 which identifies the objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing in Central Bedfordshire. This technical evidence identifies a need of 27% affordable housing which is translated to a policy target of 30%.

Reason/s for decision

16. If the guidance note is not endorsed to be used in the determination of planning applications, there is a risk that the Council could be challenged if it seeks to secure affordable housing in line with the identified need but with no endorsed guidance to support decisions.
17. This is particularly pertinent for smaller sites that fall below the 25 dwelling or 1 hectare threshold that is outlined in the extant policy of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan (H4). Smaller sites in the south tend to be in and around the villages where house prices are higher, and so by not recommending that this guidance be endorsed, it is likely that the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas will be disproportionately inhibited.
18. By introducing this guidance it also provides clarity to agents and developers on the Council's expected affordable housing target.
19. Furthermore, the guidance allows the Council to comply with national planning policy which requires local policy that boosts the supply of market and affordable housing. Without this guidance in place the Council will not be delivering a level of affordable housing on development sites in the south that correlates with the objectively assessed need for housing as identified by the SHMA 2015.

Council Priorities

This supports the Council's priority of 'creating stronger communities'.

20. This guidance will enable the Council to secure a higher percentage of affordable housing on a wider range of sites; particularly smaller sites which are more likely to be delivered in rural areas of the south. This will help to create stronger communities by ensuring greater diversity, choice and the ability to access a decent home for all residents.
21. A better mixed social composition in our communities can create a new dynamic which leads to increased land values, a better-functioning housing market, increased social sustainability and a reduction in overall concentrations of social deprivation. Neighbourhoods are thus less likely to be reliant on repeated 'regeneration' and or local authority intervention.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

22. Without adopted guidance in place, there is a greater risk of legal challenge in relation to the provision of affordable housing if the Council seeks a percentage in excess of that specified in the South Bedfordshire Local Plan and at a lower threshold. There is however a strong case for

doing so as the percentage requirement is stated within the preamble to the policy rather than the policy itself. Furthermore, the stipulation is for “at least 20%” allowing for a higher percentage as new evidence becomes available.

23. Affordable housing contributions are secured under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and like other planning obligations, make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable.
24. Section 106 agreements are formal commitments and legal deeds given between a land owner (and subsequent owners) and the local authority. These agreements are legally enforceable. If the S106 is not complied with, it is enforceable against the person that entered into the obligation and any subsequent owner. The S106 can be enforced by injunction or by direct action, with the recovery of expenses.
25. Counsel opinion has been sought in relation to this draft guidance note.

Financial and Risk Implications

26. The primary risk identified is that the state of the market may on certain larger sites not be sufficiently robust to allow the level of affordable housing to be provided, where there are multiple other constraints on development or exceptional infrastructure costs. The guidance note provides for this to be addressed in those exceptional cases by means of a financial viability appraisal. It also reminds agents and developers that affordable housing is not an abnormal cost and should be factored in to the cost of any land.
27. The Government’s proposals around lower cost housing known as ‘starter homes’ have not yet been finalised as they are being progressed through the Housing and Planning Bill. The proposal is that the definition of affordable housing includes ‘starter homes’.
28. However the House of Lords have proposed amendments to the third reading of the Bill which would ensure local planning authorities promote Starter Homes based on their local assessment of need and viability within the local area. It is also recommended that local planning authorities should have the powers and flexibilities to deliver Starter Homes alongside other affordable homes for rent, in line with the locally assessed need and viability undertaken in developing their local plan with communities.
29. If the amendment is not carried forward and starter homes are classified as affordable housing, this could have the potential to reduce stocks of affordable rented housing in Central Bedfordshire.

30. The final financial/risk related implication is in relation to the New Homes Bonus. The amount paid to local authorities is linked to the number of new build homes and there is also an extra payment for affordable housing which will mean an overall reduction to the award if the Council has to seek a lower percentage of affordable housing. Under the New Homes Bonus affordable homes premium mechanism, payments for new build affordable homes are based on matching the average national council tax band of the unit (Band D at £1308 for CBC) plus an additional £350 per unit per annum.
31. For 15/16 the total final payment for the Council was £9,070,127 in New Homes Bonus with 1281 affordable units delivered. If the policy percentage of affordable housing was reduced from 30% and only enforceable at a higher threshold, this would, assuming a static rate of delivery, result in a loss to the Council of much needed revenue.

Equalities Implications

32. The Council is strongly committed to providing everyone with the opportunity of a decent home and to providing affordable housing which meets demonstrated local needs.
33. Evidence of local need shows a continuing shortfall of affordable housing in Central Bedfordshire. A variety of demographic and social factors, coupled with pressures generated by economic growth and in-migration mean that a substantial number of households are unable to rent or buy in the open market.
34. This affordable housing guidance for the south of Central Bedfordshire will ensure that a higher percentage of affordable homes can be provided on new housing sites to meet identified needs of all residents including those in more vulnerable groups.

Sustainability

35. Providing an appropriate level of affordable housing is part of ensuring social sustainability. Specifically in relation to social inclusion issues, this guidance addresses the need to ensure that supply and need for affordable housing are related in policy terms and that the policy takes account of the relative ability of people to afford their own housing. It is considered that there are no potential conflicts between the Affordable Housing Guidance Note and overall sustainability.

Conclusion and next Steps

36. If the recommendations are agreed, the guidance note will be put before Executive on 5th April 2016 to be endorsed as planning guidance. This will enable Development Management officers to cite the note as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

37. It is expected that the percentage target and threshold stated in this interim guidance note will be the same as that in any affordable housing policy drafted for the whole of Central Bedfordshire in the emerging Local Plan, subject to any future changes to evidence.

Appendices

The following Appendix is attached:

The Draft Affordable Housing Guidance Note

Background Papers

38. The following background papers are available on the Council's website:

- (i) The South Bedfordshire Local Plan 2004
<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/ldf-south.aspx>
- (ii) The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/planning-policy/document-library.aspx>

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Affordable Housing

Guidance Note for Central Bedfordshire (South Area)

**DRAFT
FEBRUARY 2016**

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Contents

1. Purpose of the document
2. Summary of Policy Update
3. National Policy Context
4. Local Policy Background
5. Summary of Affordable Housing Need
6. Overview of Affordable Housing Target
7. Pre application Advice

Appendix A

Extract from the South Bedfordshire Local Plan 2004

Appendix B

Extract from the Central Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015

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1. Purpose of the document

- 1.1 This document is a guidance document *which has been endorsed as planning guidance* by the Council's Executive on 5th April 2016. It has been produced as interim guidance, and shall apply until such time as the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan reaches submission stage and its emerging affordable housing policy carries sufficient weight.
- 1.2 The Affordable Housing Guidance Note provides guidance to support the determination of planning applications for those parishes that formerly made up South Bedfordshire District Council. The South Bedfordshire Local Plan 2004 (Appendix A) remains adopted development plan for this area and Policy H4 Affordable Housing remains the extant policy.. Figure 1 shows the parishes in Central Bedfordshire that this guidance is applicable to.
- 1.3 This guidance is concerned with the percentage of affordable housing required and is not intended to provide detailed advice around the procedures related to the implementation of affordable housing policy.

2. Summary of Policy Update

- 2.1 The requirement for affordable housing provision in the South of Central Bedfordshire is **30%** on all qualifying sites of **4 dwellings** and above. Sites of 4 dwellings should include one affordable dwelling.
- 2.2 This guidance has been produced because policy H4 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan is now out of date in relation to current evidence and national planning policy (The National Planning Policy Framework, 2012) that has been subsequently introduced.
- 2.3 Having reviewed national planning policy and current evidence this guidance reflects the current position and will be translated into any emerging affordable housing policy as part of the new Central Bedfordshire Local Plan. The following sections provide context to the approach taken in this guidance.

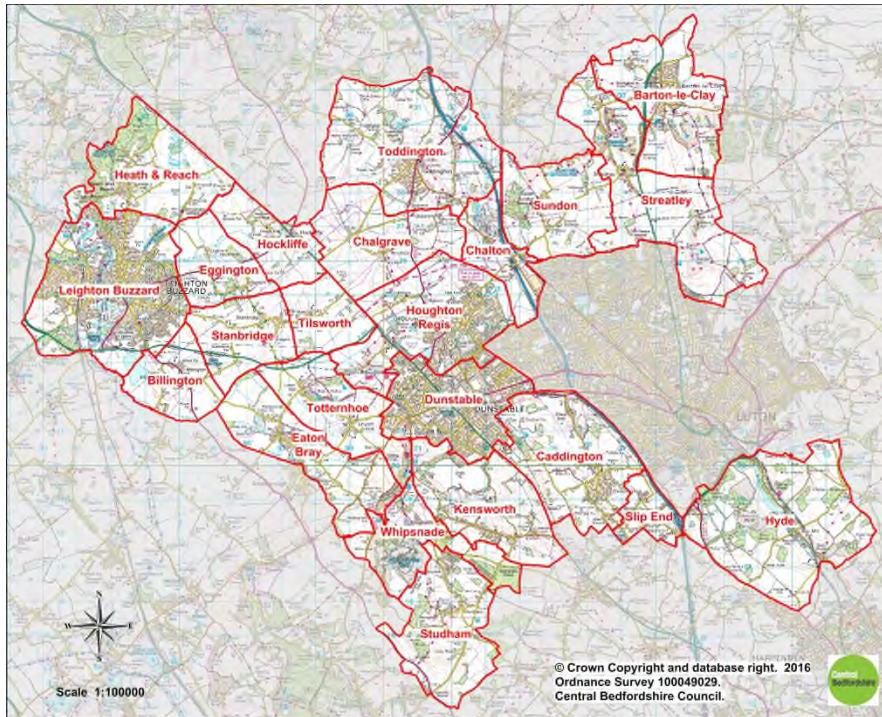


Figure 1

3. National Policy Context

3.1 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF makes it clear that

“...where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date...” then planning permission should be granted unless the “adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in this Framework indicate that development should be restricted”.

It is clear that the affordable housing policy (H4) in the South Bedfordshire Local Plan is out of date and that paragraph 14 of the NPPF is therefore engaged because:

- Policy H4 is not based on up to date evidence on housing need and has not been formulated in accordance with the NPPF and PPG
- Policy H4 is inconsistent with the NPPF as it limits housing supply

3.2 Policy H4 therefore carries limited weight as it does not enable the Council to boost the supply of housing as per the requirements of paragraph 47.

“To boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:

- *use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area”.*

- 3.3 Similarly it does not allow the Council to meet the stipulations of paragraph 50 of the NPPF.

“To deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should:

- *Where they have identified that affordable housing is needed, set policies for meeting this need on site....”*

- 3.4 National planning policy therefore supports the need of the local authority to provide guidance on affordable housing based on up to date evidence of housing need.

4. Local Policy Background

- 4.1 Central Bedfordshire Council is a unitary authority that is comprised of two legacy district councils (Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire) and functions of the former County Council. Two adopted development plans for the north and south of the authority area therefore remain in place until a plan for the whole of Central Bedfordshire can be sufficiently progressed.
- 4.2 This guidance note applies to the south of Central Bedfordshire as illustrated by the map at Figure 1.
- 4.3 The following table provides a summary of the planning background in the authority area in relation to affordable housing. It demonstrates that 30% or in excess of that has been sought as an affordable housing target since 2005; with the threshold of 4 or more dwellings having been in place since 2011.

Date of Endorsement or Adoption	North of Central Bedfordshire (area formerly known as Mid Bedfordshire District Council)	South of Central Bedfordshire (area formerly known as South Bedfordshire District Council)
2004		South Bedfordshire Local Plan Policy H4 Requirement of 20% of dwellings (in preceding text) on a qualifying threshold of 25+ dwellings or 1ha
2005		South Bedfordshire Affordable Housing Guidance endorsed by SBDC Executive Requirement of 35% affordable on same qualifying threshold
2009	North Core Strategy Adopted Requirement of 35% affordable on sites of 4 and above	

2011		Joint Core Strategy with Luton endorsed by the CBC's Executive Committee for development management purposes following withdrawal of that plan. Requirement of 35% affordable on sites of 15 dwellings or more in the Dunstable/Luton/Houghton Regis conurbation and on 4 or more in all other areas in the south
May 2014		The now withdrawn (2015) Development Strategy was endorsed at Executive for use for Development Management purposes and to supersede the Joint Core Strategy Policies previously in use. Requirement of 30% affordable on sites of more than four. On sites of 4 , one dwelling is required to be affordable.

4.4 Within the preamble to policy H4 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan, a target of *not less than 20%* affordable housing on all qualifying sites is set. In view of this, it is considered that the Council's approach in now seeking a target in guidance of 30% based on up to date evidence is entirely reasonable.

4.5 The note to policy H4 states:

"The District Council will regularly monitor the need for affordable housing in the District. The level of need and tenure preference is likely to vary over time and from location to location. Working from the basis of the guidelines in this plan, the most up to date data available will be used to determine the precise number of affordable dwellings needed in a particular location or on a particular site".

4.6 In view of these caveats, policy H4 is therefore in compliance with Paragraph 50 of the NPPF which states that "*Such [affordable housing] policies should be sufficiently flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time*". In the first instance Policy H4 itself is not directive, because the percentage is not stated within the policy itself and overall it was recognised in the Plan, even prior to the provisions of the NPPF that affordable housing policy should be predicated on the most up to date evidence on housing need.

5. Summary of Affordable Housing Need in Central Bedfordshire

Overview

5.1 The Council is strongly committed to providing everyone with the opportunity of a decent home and to providing affordable housing which meets demonstrated local needs.

- 5.2 Evidence of local need shows a continuing shortfall of affordable housing in Central Bedfordshire. A variety of demographic and social factors, coupled with pressures generated by economic growth and in-migration mean that a substantial number of households are unable to rent or buy in the open market.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015

- 5.3 In order to further quantify this need, Opinion Research Services (ORS) completed an update to the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) in 2015. This most recent assessment of housing need and its findings should be considered a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 5.4 The study concluded that there is an overall need for 29,500 housing units per annum of all types and tenures up to 2031. ORS recommend that 7400 of these units should be affordable housing, equating to 27% of overall housing need based on demographic growth (see extract at Appendix B).
- 5.5 ORS also considered the need for different tenures of affordable housing and concluded that split based on 73% affordable rent and 27% intermediate tenure would be required.
- 5.6 The higher level of need that the ORS study has demonstrated means that a broadly matched target of 30% is an appropriate percentage for negotiation on planning application sites. This affordable housing target also applies to conversions to provide units of residential accommodation, as well as new residential developments.

Viability Evidence

- 5.7 In 2014, the Council commissioned Three Dragons to undertake a refresh to existing viability work that had been produced to underpin the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule. As part of this evidence study, affordable housing provision at 30% on sites of 4 or more was tested and used as a local policy requirement in all scenario testing. The results of this showed that that provision at this percentage and threshold was viable across a range of sites when a CIL charge was applied to them.

6. Overview of Affordable Housing Target

- 6.1 While the status of this is planning guidance, the Council has resolved that the indicative target of 30% of new dwellings on qualifying sites (4 or more dwellings) to be affordable should be sought for the purpose of planning applications. The guidance is based on the following evidence:
- The evidence of housing need set out in the SHMA 2015

- The NPPF
 - Viability Evidence produced to support the Council's Draft Charging Schedule
- 6.2 The Council's preference is for developers to provide fully serviced land on site, at no cost to the affordable housing provider. Use of alternative mechanisms should be fully justified with evidence that this would not prejudice the level of delivery of affordable homes.
- 6.3 Provision of fewer affordable homes may exceptionally be considered on sites only if the applicant produces evidence to demonstrate that to provide the full amount would make the scheme unviable.
- 6.4 A developer must however, take affordable housing provision into account when negotiating the purchase of land. It is a principle of this guidance that affordable housing is not an abnormal development cost, even in situations where public subsidy is not available.

Off-Site Contribution

- 6.5 It is anticipated that a site suitable for housing will also be suitable to provide affordable housing on site. The presumption will be that provision of affordable should be made on the development site itself. It would only be in very exceptional circumstances that an alternative to on site provision would be appropriate.
- 6.6 Off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu of on site provision may be acceptable where it can be robustly justified, but such occasions will be rare. Commuted sums will be calculated on the basis of 50% of the open market units provided in order to maintain parity with on-site provision within the same settlement.
- 6.7 The order of preference of form of affordable housing which the Council will require is as follows:
- On site provision
 - Part on site and part off site/commuted payment
- Off site:
- Provision by applicant, developer or RSL
 - Commuted payment
 - Transfer of land
- 6.8 Where a developer/landowner considers that exceptional circumstances exist for affordable housing to be provided off-site, this will need to be demonstrated to the Council. Details of the following will need to be submitted:
- A detailed explanation of why off site provision is considered more appropriate.

- Details of the alternative proposed i.e. alternative site within the same settlement and/or financial payment in lieu of on site provision.

Design

- 6.9 In the interest of providing mixed and sustainable communities, the schemes should create tenure blind developments. Affordable housing should therefore be constructed and designed to the same standard as market housing and should be fully integrated into the development.
- 6.10 Within large housing developments, the affordable housing must be scattered through the development, or in small clusters. Modest sized clustering will negotiated with the applicant and is dependent on unit types, scheme design and the size of the site. As a general rule however the affordable housing units should be provided in clusters of no more than 10 -15 units for houses, and 10-20 units for flats.
- 6.11 It is expected that affordable housing will be let in accordance with the Council's allocation scheme and enforced through an agreed nominations agreement with the Council. All units must as a minimum meet any nationally described technical standards.

7. Pre-application Advice

- 7.1 Negotiations with developers to deliver affordable housing will seek to ensure that affordable housing will:
- Meet identified local needs both initially and subsequently
 - Be affordable both initially and subsequently
 - Comply with the design and specification requirements of Registered Providers (RPs).
 - Be integrated with the market housing
- 7.2 The Council encourages developers to meet their affordable housing obligations by forming partnerships with RPs, particularly those who have an existing development role in the district. These RPs have existing local infrastructure, such as housing management, and have established levels of service and unit allocation arrangements with the Council. It is appropriate that discussions with an RP should start at pre-application stage.
- 7.3 Council planning officers can offer the following service at pre-application stage:
- Interpretation and advice of planning policy and guidance, and what this means for an individual site.
 - Assist in calculating the required amount and mix of affordable housing.

- Advise on the standard and quality of the proposed housing, design, layout and other development control matters.

Key Contacts

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Appendix A - Extract from the South Bedfordshire Local Plan 2004

The Provision of Affordable Housing

- 6.1 Both PPG3 and Circular 6/98 "Planning and Affordable Housing" state that a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration. The District Council has commissioned Housing Needs Surveys which have demonstrated that many local residents are unable to afford housing at market rates despite the recent provision of smaller units at higher densities in many locations in the District. There is strong evidence that many local residents are unable to compete in the housing market with in-migrants from higher priced housing areas. This has caused problems of accessibility to housing which have been exacerbated by low levels of availability of affordable private rented housing in the District, the absence of new local authority housing and the supply of new social housing falling behind losses of Council housing through the "Right to Buy" provisions.
- 6.2 The results of the Council's District-wide Housing Needs Survey indicated high levels of housing expectation which were not backed up by the ability to buy into the housing market. The most recent District-wide Housing Needs Survey - published in March 2000 - concluded that while there was more than adequate supply to meet the overall housing requirements in South Bedfordshire, there was a large shortfall of affordable accommodation in both the rented and the "for sale" sectors. The Fordham Housing Needs Survey, (March 2000), indicates that an additional 4,300 homes are required to 2011 if the Council is to meet all of the current and projected affordable housing need. In 1999 the survey indicated that 2,151 affordable homes were needed. Average annual household income in South Bedfordshire in 2002 was £24,333 but the average income needed to secure a property was £43,483.
- 6.3 The results of this survey and future similar surveys, together with the Council's Housing Register (which indicates a significant need for affordable rented accommodation throughout the District), have been and will continue to be used to identify the level of affordable housing required in the various parts of the District.
- 6.4 The District Council recognises that the precise level of requirement for affordable housing will change over time and from area to area. The figures set down in this plan are intended to inform land owners and potential developers of the level of provision of affordable housing that they will be expected to meet in South Bedfordshire.
- 6.5 The Fordham Housing Needs Survey indicated that 4,300 affordable homes would be needed in South Bedfordshire District between 1999 and 2011, of that 4,300 the consultants estimated that 2,151 households were in immediate or urgent need of affordable housing, equating to 60% of the housing provision still to be made in the District up to 2011. Analysis of the Council's Housing Register indicates that 655 households are categorised as being in priority need, including those households that are homeless; those that are in overcrowded accommodation or accommodation that lacks facilities, or where facilities such as bathrooms, cooking facilities or internal WCs have to be shared. This figure tends to confirm the Fordham Housing Needs Survey finding that 67.6% of existing households in housing need will not be known to the Council because they do not appear on the Council's

Housing Register. The Fordham Housing Needs Survey recommends that the level of housing need identified in South Bedfordshire warrants seeking 30% contribution on suitable sites. Given the scale of housing need, the capacity of sites allocated for development in the plan, together with the possibility of some larger windfall sites coming forward for development and taking account of the level of contribution likely to be made by low cost market housing, the Council's own housing stock and other sources of housing provision, the District Planning Authority considers that it is justified in seeking the provision of not less than 20% of affordable housing on suitable sites. This indicative target figure is intended to form a basis for negotiation with developers. Suitable sites will normally be over 1 hectare in size or will accommodate 25 or more dwellings, and comply with the criteria set out in the policy.

- 6.6 Sites which are smaller than 1 hectare but which are capable of accommodating 25 or more dwellings are of particular value in terms of affordable housing provision because they tend to be located within existing urban areas rather than on their fringes, and to be well related to public transport routes and have ready access to a wide range of services and facilities without the use of a private vehicle. These are also sites which the District Planning Authority considers are likely to come forward earlier in the plan period than the larger fringe or urban edge sites – where lead times to development may be lengthy – thereby enabling the supply of affordable housing to be maintained throughout the plan period.
- 6.7 Any developer or landowner contemplating the purchase or development of either an allocated housing site (see Policy H1 of this plan and the accompanying schedule), or a site to be used for housing purposes is strongly advised to make early contact with the District Planning Authority to identify the full proportion of affordable housing needed in a particular location and to discuss the appropriate unit mix, tenure, type and acceptable registered social landlords.
- 6.8 For the purposes of this section of the Plan and Policy H4 which follows, the District Planning Authority defines affordable housing as that which meets the need of:
 - (a) Households with a gross household income which is less than 1/3 of their mortgage requirement; or
 - (b) Households in, or requiring, privately rented accommodation where this would take up more than 35% of their gross income.

This definition of affordable housing includes low cost market housing that meets the test of affordability.

- 6.9 In this context the relevant mortgage requirement or rent level is for a dwelling of the size needed by the household in question in accordance with the District Housing Authorities occupancy definitions.
- 6.10 Planning obligations will be sought to secure the 20% indicative target level of affordable housing provision on sites of 1 hectare or over or where 25 or more dwellings are proposed.

POLICY H4

PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING WILL BE SOUGHT ON ALL SUITABLE RESIDENTIAL SITES, NAMELY THOSE:

- (i) SITES OF 1 HA OR MORE IN SIZE, OR WHERE ERECTION OF 25 OR MORE DWELLINGS IS PROPOSED; AND**
- (ii) THAT CAN ACCOMMODATE AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF TYPES AND SIZES OF HOUSING; AND**
- (iii) THAT ARE SUITABLE IN TERMS OF LOCATION, ACCESS TO LOCAL FACILITIES, SERVICES AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT; AND**
- (iv) WHERE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING WOULD NOT PREVENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL, OR REALISATION OF OTHER PLANNING OBJECTIVES THAT SHOULD BE GIVEN HIGHER PRIORITY.**

THE LEVEL AND TYPE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO BE PROVIDED ON A PARTICULAR SITE WILL BE A MATTER FOR NEGOTIATION BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND THE DEVELOPER, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE INDICATIVE TARGETS SET IN THIS PLAN, AND THE NATURE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT. PLANNING OBLIGATIONS WILL BE SOUGHT, OR CONDITIONS APPLIED TO PLANNING PERMISSIONS, TO ENSURE THAT AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS PROVIDED, AND THAT INITIAL AND SUBSEQUENT OCCUPANCY IS RESTRICTED TO PEOPLE IN NEED OF SUCH HOUSING IN SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE. PROVISION CAN BE SECURED BY THE TRANSFER TO THE DISTRICT COUNCIL, OR SOCIAL HOUSING AGENCY⁽¹⁾ NOMINATED BY THEM, OF DISCOUNTED LAND; OR BY MAKING AVAILABLE COMPLETED DWELLINGS TO OCCUPIERS NOMINATED BY THE DISTRICT COUNCIL. IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES, AS AN ALTERNATIVE IT MAY BE ACCEPTABLE FOR THE DEVELOPER TO MAKE AN EQUIVALENT CONTRIBUTION IN CASH TO THE DISTRICT COUNCIL, TO ENABLE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON AN ALTERNATIVE SITE.

Continued...

POLICY H4 (Cont'd...)

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS POLICY, AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS DEFINED AS THAT WHICH IS OF THE SIZE AND TYPE REQUIRED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF HOUSEHOLDS WHERE:

- (i) GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME IS LESS THAN 1/3 OF MORTGAGE REQUIREMENT; OR**
- (ii) RENTING PRIVATELY WILL TAKE MORE THAN 35% OF GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME.**

NOTE:

- (1) Social Housing Agency means a housing association or Registered Social Landlord registered by the Housing Corporation.
- (2) The District Council will regularly monitor the need for affordable housing in the District. The level of need and tenure preference is likely to vary over time and from location to location. Working from the basis of the guidelines in this plan, the most up to date data available will be used to determine the precise number of affordable dwellings needed in a particular location or on a particular site. Landowners and developers are advised to make early contact with the District Planning Authority to discuss the appropriate level of affordable housing provision and mechanism to secure it.

Appendix B – Extract from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015

Affordable Housing Tenure

- 5.21 Within the overall need of 14,600 affordable homes identified by the model, it is possible to consider the mix of different affordable housing products that would be appropriate based on the mix of households needing affordable housing.
- 5.22 In order to profile the affordability of the mix of households needing affordable housing, income data from the English Housing Survey and ONS Survey of Personal Incomes has been combined and modelled to establish the income distribution by household type and age in the two local authority areas. This excludes any income from housing benefit, as the analysis seeks to determine to what extent housing benefit would be needed by households in each group.
- 5.23 Figure 69 sets out the housing mix in terms of property type, size and affordable housing tenure in each of the local authority areas. The analysis is based on two scenarios:
- » Spending up to 25% of gross household income (excluding housing benefit) on housing costs; and
 - » Spending up to 35% of gross household income (excluding housing benefit) on housing costs.

		Up to 25% of gross income			Up to 35% of gross income		
		Central Bedfordshire	Luton	TOTAL	Central Bedfordshire	Luton	TOTAL
AFFORDABLE RENT							
Flat	1 bedroom	640	220	860	600	190	790
	2+ bedrooms	740	1,040	1,780	660	850	1,510
House	2 bedrooms	1,850	950	2,800	1,630	790	2,420
	3 bedrooms	2,420	2,980	5,400	2,080	2,520	4,600
	4+ bedrooms	460	960	1,420	400	840	1,240
Sub-total		6,110	6,150	12,260	5,370	5,190	10,560
% of affordable housing		83%	85%	84%	73%	72%	72%
INTERMEDIATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING							
Flat	1 bedroom	80	40	120	120	70	190
	2+ bedrooms	170	200	370	250	390	640
House	2 bedrooms	420	190	610	640	350	990
	3 bedrooms	580	550	1,130	920	1,010	1,930
	4+ bedrooms	70	110	180	130	230	360
Sub-total		1,320	1,090	2,410	2,060	2,050	4,110
% of affordable housing		17%	15%	16%	27%	28%	28%
TOTAL DWELLINGS		7,400	7,200	14,600	7,400	7,200	14,600



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Central Bedfordshire Council

Executive

5 April 2016

Passenger Transport Strategy: Introduction of a Dynamic Purchasing Scheme and Consultation on Public Transport Proposals

Report of Cllr. Brian Spurr, Executive Member for Community Services
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This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. The Passenger Transport Strategy (PTS) for Central Bedfordshire is currently being prepared. Proposals for the delivery of Public Transport form part of the PTS. The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Executive on proposals relating to Public Transport, including: subsidised public bus routes, community transport provision and concessionary travel, in order to approve the proposals for public consultation. Agreement is also being sought for Public Transport to move from the current procurement framework to a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to procure transport providers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive is asked to:

1. **approve the policies relating to Subsidised Bus, Services, Concessionary Travel and Community Transport set out in Appendix A for public consultation; and**
2. **approve the use of a Dynamic Purchasing Scheme (DPS) to procure transport providers.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. This report was considered by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 10 March 2016. The recommendations of the committee are as follows:
 - that Executive approves the policies relating to Subsidised Bus, Services, Concessionary Travel and Community Transport set out in Appendix A for public consultation; and
 - that Executive approve the use of a Dynamic Purchasing Scheme (DPS) to procure transport providers.

Background

3. Central Bedfordshire Council does not have a current Passenger Transport Strategy (PTS) and is therefore in the process of developing one. The aim of the PTS is to deliver transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose and provide a framework for decision making processes in relation to all PTS services.
4. The PTS will be developed alongside and sit within the Central Bedfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) which is also currently under review. The PTS will set out the Council's objectives for passenger transport in the Central Bedfordshire area and will be supported by relevant policies and best practice.
5. The PTS refers to users of road based 'public' transport such as commercially operated local bus routes and community transport as well as fleet transport for the provision of home to school transport and home to day setting transport for vulnerable children and adults.
6. Before a PTS can be adopted consultation with relevant stakeholders must be undertaken. There are three strands to the PTS which require public consultation: subsidies for public bus routes, funding for community transport providers and concessionary travel. The other work streams are either being consulted on with internal stakeholders or the policy has already been consulted on and adopted.

Public Transport

7. The proposals for subsidised bus services, concessionary fares and community transport are set out in more detail at Appendix A

Subsidised Bus Services

8. Central Bedfordshire Council currently subsidises many bus services although this is not a legal requirement. In 2015/2016 the total cost of subsidies will be approximately £1,300,000. Whilst subsidising local bus services is discretionary we must take account of social inclusion especially for the elderly. If we did not offer such support there is likely to be many areas without a bus service.

9. There are currently 85 conventional bus services in Central Bedfordshire. Of these, 45 receive subsidy from CBC the remaining 40 routes are fully commercial. Many types of local bus service require financial support because they are not commercially self-sustaining, generally because of low patronage.
10. In order to promote clear and transparent decision making and create a sustainable system for allocating future subsidies it is proposed that subsidies will be determined by a Subsidised Bus Service Assessment Process using a network of core, secondary and least-used routes (Appendix A). It is also proposed that subsidies will be limited to times of higher passenger demand:
 - Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm
 - Saturday 8am to 3pm
 - No subsidies for Sunday services.

Concessionary Fares

11. There are approximately 43,000 bus pass holders in Central Bedfordshire. Their journeys represent in approximately 40 per cent of all total bus journeys within Central Bedfordshire. The Council also provides a Travel Aid scheme. This allows discounted travel for the unemployed on many local bus services for a fee of £5 for 28 days. Applications for Travel Aid passes are made via local Job Centres.
12. In order to improve processes, reduce waste and deliver efficiencies it is proposed that national time regulations for free travel for bus pass holders are adopted, automatic renewal of travel passes is ended and a move to online applications for travel passes will be implemented from 2020. It is also proposed that the Travel Aid scheme will only continue for bus companies wishing to participate, at no additional cost to the council. More detail regarding these proposals is set out in Appendix A.

Community Transport

13. Financial support for Dial-a-Ride services is discretionary. The Council currently chooses to support Dial-a-Ride services through grant payments. Market research conducted November 2015- January 2016 demonstrated the high quality of Dial-a-Ride services in Central Bedfordshire and the significant social value these services provide.
14. In order to create a clear and transparent process for funding Dial a Ride services in future, it is proposed that the Council introduce a tender-based system where organisations are invited to provide Dial a Ride proposals for Central Bedfordshire with options for members of the public to pay part of the fare.

Smarter Procurement

15. The Procurement of Public Transport is currently catered for within the Passenger Transport Framework in Lot 4 – Supported Local Public Bus and Community Bus Services. The framework is due to expire in June 2016, however; this has been extended by a year to enable a new procurement mechanism to be set up.
16. The current Framework allows for mini competitions to be held between transport operators that have been accepted on to the Framework at the initial set up stage. The framework also caters for the other areas of Passenger Transport within three other Lots:
 - Lot 1 – Short Notice and Urgent Transport Services
 - Lot 2 – Mainstream School Transport
 - Lot 3 – Special Educational Needs and Social Care Transport.
17. As with all frameworks, once the application deadline has past the framework is locked and further additions are not permitted. During the existing Framework set-up, several public transport companies did not meet the deadline and therefore have been prevented from tendering for routes during the entire lifetime of the Framework. This has restricted the availability of contractors and resulted in less competition and potentially increased costs to the Council. The use of a standard framework also means that new companies starting up after the application deadline, who may offer competitive rates, cannot tender or apply until the framework expires.
18. A Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) is a procedure available for contracts for works, services and goods commonly available on the market. As a procurement tool it shares some aspects of the standard framework agreement but new suppliers can join at any time during its existence. A DPS is a two stage process; an initial set up with selection criteria and a second stage where individual contracts are awarded following mini-competitions.
19. The DPS allows more flexibility as suppliers may join at anytime. It will allow new start up companies to apply for access during the life of the DPS and provide more competition for tenders.
20. After the initial set up mini competitions must be out for tender for a minimum of 10 days. This would make it unsuitable for emergency transport required by Special Educational Needs transport but this is a workable timeframe for Public Transport. A DPS requires more management during its lifetime than a framework agreement as provision must be made to evaluate any requests made by potential suppliers within 10 days of the application being made.

Reasons for decision

21. The decision to support the proposals for Public Transport (Appendix A) for public consultation is necessary as it is the next step in the delivery of the PTS that aims to deliver transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose.
22. The decision to move to a DPS is necessary because the current procurement framework for public transport does not allow for flexibility once the providers are set which has led to less competition between providers and higher costs to the council. The DPS will enable flexibility whilst allowing for quicker tendering times than can be used under separate individual procurement tenders.

Council Priorities

23. The PTS will meet the Council's priority of enhancing the local community by supporting residents to access the employment and services they need to live well through a range of passenger transport services.
24. The PTS will endeavour to promote health and wellbeing and protect the vulnerable by aiming to ensure that residents at risk of isolation and deprivation are able to access the transport they need
25. The PTS will promote better infrastructure and value for money by using smarter procurement methods to deliver transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose and provide a framework for decision making processes in relation to all PTS services.

Legal Implications

26. The implementation of the DPS will be undertaken in line with the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules Policy and all other relevant legislation. The consultation on the Public Transport proposals will be conducted in line with Council policy and procedure.
27. There is no direct impact on Legal Services.

Financial Implications

28. The budgets for 2015/16 are set out below.

Subsidised Bus Services	£1,265,840
Concessionary Fares	£2,382,450
Community Transport	£333,000
Total	£3,981,290

The aim of the Passenger Transport Strategy (PTS) is to make most efficient use of the budgets available, whilst delivering transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose and provide a framework for decision making processes that is transparent for stakeholders, in relation to all PTS services.

29. Efficiencies that could be achieved from the adoption of a Passenger Transport Strategy are set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Equalities Implications

30. 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 the nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
31. An Equality Impact Assessment for the PTS is being undertaken. The outcomes of the public consultation will allow us to ensure that adverse impacts in respect of the nine protected characteristics within the PTS are identified and mitigated as far as possible and the DPS requires the completion of a Technical Questionnaire to ensure equality of opportunity is promoted.

Next Steps

32. A twelve week public consultation will commence in April 2016 on the Public Transport proposals. The outcomes of the consultation will then be used to inform the PTS which will return to Council for adoption in November 2016.
33. The Business Support Team within Passenger Transport will complete work on the required documentation for the DPS ready for use via the Council In-tend system. A Prior Interest Notice is due to be drawn up to establish interest from the target market. An experienced procurement lead from Cambridge County Council has been brought in to consult and ensure the process is set up correctly. The DPS will be operational by November in line with the adoption of the PTS.

Date	Event
5 April 2016	Executive: Approve Consultation Docs
19 April-12 July 2016	Public Consultation
11 October 2016	Executive: Approve Final PTS
17 November 2016	Full Council: Adoption of PTS
18 November 2016 onwards	Implement PTS including new DPS

Appendices

The following Appendix is attached:
Appendix A: Public Transport Proposals

Background Papers

None

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Public Transport Proposals including: Subsidised Bus Services, Concessionary Travel and Community Transport

Draft Passenger Transport Strategy 2016



Executive Summary

The Passenger Transport Strategy aspires to

- Support residents to access employment and services they need to live well through a range of passenger transport services
- Ensure that residents at risk of isolation and deprivation are able to access the transport they need
- Support and strengthen a mixed economy of transport services, including commercial, voluntary, community and subsidised options.
- Achieve value for money for residents and council tax payers

Subsidised Bus Services (page 4)

Proposals:

- New network of core, secondary and least-used routes with subsidies determined by a Subsidised Bus Service Assessment Process
- Subsidies limited to times of higher passenger demand:
Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm
Saturday 8am to 3pm
No subsidies for Sunday services

Concessionary Travel (page 10)

Proposals:

- Adopt national time regulations for free travel for bus pass holders:
09:30 to 23:00 Monday to Friday, all day Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.
- Changes to travel pass issue and renewal:
No automatic renewal
Online applications from 2017

Community Transport (page 13)

Proposals:

- Introduce clear and transparent tender process for awarding of funding to support Dial a Ride services
- Encourage voluntary community bus service providers to take on additional services

Introduction

The aims of the Passenger Transport Strategy (PTS) is to deliver transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose and provide a framework for decision making processes in relation to all PTS services.

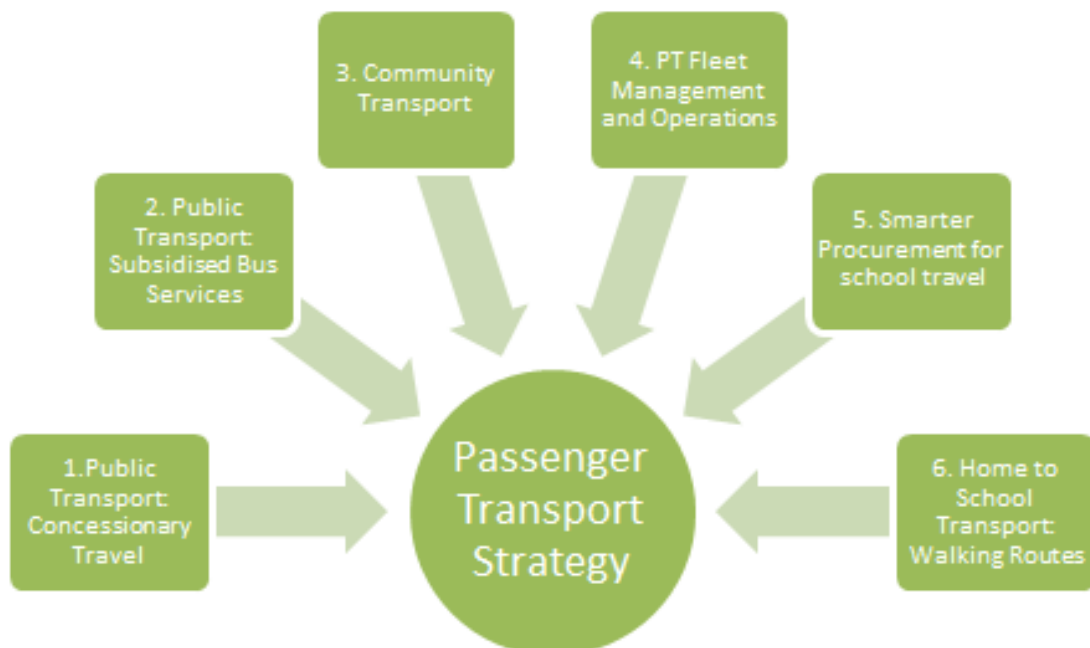
The PTS will be developed alongside and sit within the Central Bedfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) which is also currently under review.

The Strategy will set out the Council's objectives for passenger transport in Central Bedfordshire and will be supported by relevant policies and best practice.

The Strategy refers to users of road based 'public' transport such as commercially operated local bus routes and community transport as well as fleet transport for the provision of home to school transport and home to day setting transport for vulnerable children and adults

Scope of the Passenger Transport Strategy

- Subsidised Bus Services
- Concessionary Travel
- Community Transport
- Home to School Transport – Safe Walking Routes
- Fleet Services and Operations



Subsidised Bus Services

1. Background information

- 1.1 Central Bedfordshire Council currently subsidises many bus services although this is not a legal requirement.
- 1.2 The Council subsidises bus services to ensure social inclusion (the need for everyone, especially older people, to be able to shop and visit family and friends).
- 1.3 Many types of local bus service require financial support because they are not commercially self-sustaining, generally because of the low number of passengers. Where the majority of the passengers are free bus pass holders, this can affect the revenue of bus operators and the commercial viability of services.
- 1.4 There are currently around 85 conventional bus services in Central Bedfordshire. Of these, around 45 receive a subsidy from Central Bedfordshire Council. The subsidy can cover the whole service, or parts of the service. The remaining services are fully commercial.
- 1.5 There are a number of services which cross into neighbouring local authorities. These services are often subsidised by the other local authorities.

2. Proposals

2.1 Subsidies will be determined by a Subsidised Bus Service Assessment Process

- 2.1.1 The following five key principles are considered in the Subsidised Bus Service Assessment Process to determine how subsidies will be allocated.

1. Available alternatives

- Central Bedfordshire Council aims to ensure there is a network of services, with subsidised bus and community bus services provided where there is a proven need to connect people with family, friends and shops.
- Duplication of subsidised bus services is avoided in order to improve sustainability.

- Where there may be currently more than one service from some villages to a number of destinations, priority is given to the service with the highest demand.
- An alternative service is considered to be any viable alternative, be it another bus service, community transport, voluntary transport or taxi

2. Accessibility

- Central Bedfordshire Council aims to ensure there is bus service provision in areas where there is proven demand, of more than seven passengers per journey, from older people and people with a disability.

3. Commercial bus services

- The Council encourages the provision of commercial services, providing operators with advice and expert knowledge when required to do so, in preference to subsidising services at taxpayers' expense.

4. Reducing congestion

- An evaluation is made on how many passengers use each journey. There are certain journeys which may have very few or no passengers, but the return journey is quite well used. Therefore an average number of passengers per single journey is considered. With a single journey of an hour in length, an average of seven or more passengers per journey could be considered to be the minimum number of passengers required on average to subsidise a service. Fewer than seven passengers could be accommodated in a taxi or voluntary transport.
- Central Bedfordshire Council should ensure that bus services are provided in accordance with the Local Plan.

5. Affordability

- With a greater emphasis on a commercially provided bus services, the finances available can be more targeted.
- Central Bedfordshire Council takes account of available budgets in determining the frequency of individual services, and the provision of services normally running with less than seven people.
- The subsidy for individual one-way journeys currently costs between £0.08 and £17.50. To ensure that Central Bedfordshire Council is obtaining the best value, the cost per passenger for each service should be reviewed in relation to the available budget.

- Many councils are looking at a maximum of £3 per passenger. The cost per passenger is higher in rural areas, and therefore a variable maximum rate will be considered – for example £1.50 per passenger in urban areas within two miles of a town centre; £2.00 per passenger in urban fringe areas within four miles of a town centre; £3.00 per passenger in rural areas. Provision of any service beyond £3.00 per passenger would be assessed on a proven need for social inclusion of older people and people with a disability which could not be met by any other form of transport service.

2.2 Creation of a network of core, secondary and least-used routes

- 2.2.1 A network of core, secondary and least-used routes (Appendix A) will be created as part of the Subsidised Bus Service Assessment Process with priority being given to services on the core and secondary network.

2.2.2 Core Network

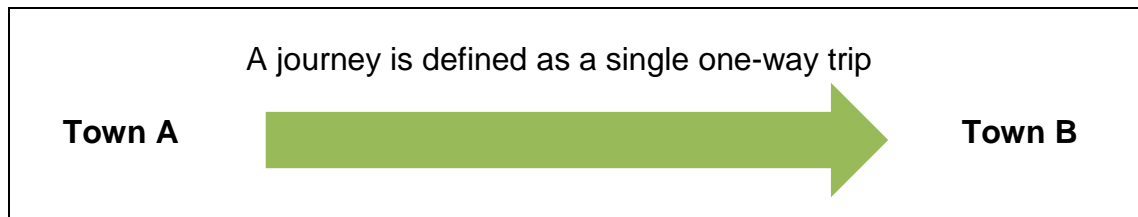
- 2.2.3 There will be a core network across Central Bedfordshire with a desired minimum of 10 journeys in each direction per day, Monday to Saturday. Core routes (defined as services connecting major towns with a proven demand for 10 or more journeys in each direction per day) will be expected to be mainly commercially provided, although subsidy may be required in some instances to maintain the desired minimum frequency.

2.2.4 Secondary Routes

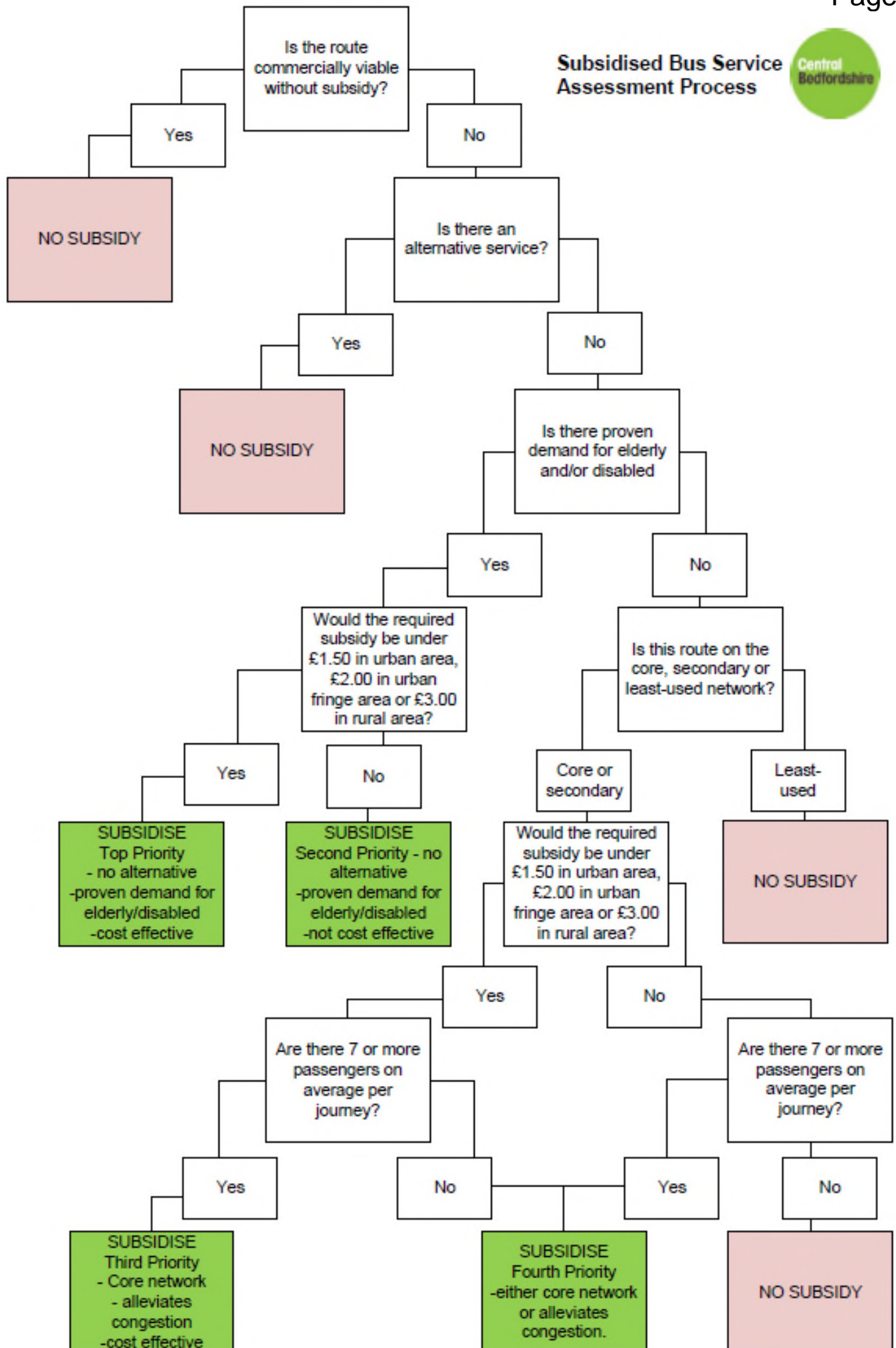
- 2.2.5 Secondary routes will be feeder services to a local town where there are shopping facilities and connections to the core network. Such services would have a desired minimum lower frequency, possibly four journeys in each direction per day Monday to Friday **between 8am and 6.30pm** when there is higher demand; and two journeys in each direction per day Saturday.

2.2.6 Least-used Routes

- 2.2.7 Least-used routes would be seen as infrequent services where there is limited demand, necessary for social inclusion so people can visit family, friends and shops. Such services would vary from one journey per week to one journey per day, or alternatively would be met by the voluntary sector.
- 2.2.8 Central Bedfordshire Council will work with bus operators to redraft timetables but will also look at alternative solutions for services bus operators no longer wish to provide, such as community transport and voluntary bus services.



Subsidised Bus Service Assessment Process



2.3 Restrictions to subsidies for Saturday services

- 2.3.1 Passenger levels on bus services on Saturdays have fallen over the years. In the smaller towns, this is particularly noticeable in the afternoons and evenings.
- 2.3.2 The Council subsidies will be allocated to those times of the week when there is more demand. Due to lower demand on Saturday afternoons and evenings, it is proposed that only commercial services would operate at this time. Subsidies will therefore only be considered for services **between 8am and 3pm**.
- 2.3.3 There will be no change to services while they are covered by development funding from a Section 106 agreement.

2.4 Withdrawal of subsidies for evening and Sunday services

- 2.4.1 In the previous consultation in 2012, evening and Sunday services were seen as lower priority. Although there is a need for bus services at such times, the demand for bus travel is much lower.
- 2.4.2 In times of restricted finances, it is proposed that Council subsidy should be allocated to those times of the week when there is more demand. Evening services after 6.30pm and Sunday services therefore will only be provided on a commercial basis without subsidy.
- 2.4.3 Currently the evening and Sunday services in the towns of Biggleswade, Sandy and Shefford are subsidised. Although bus operators may choose to operate a limited service commercially, this could only continue with high enough passenger numbers.
- 2.4.4 Evening and Sunday services will continue if they are supported by a Section 106 agreement from new development funding.

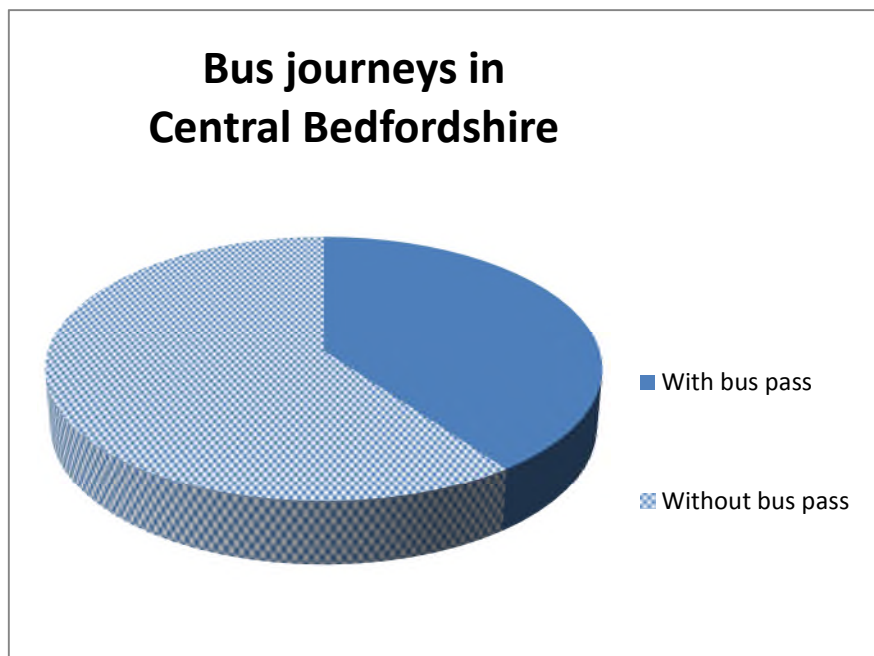
Policy PT1:Subsidised bus services

- Subsidies will be determined by the defined Subsidised Bus Service Assessment Process using the network of core, secondary and least-used routes
- Subsidies will be limited to times of higher passenger demand:
Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm
Saturday 8am to 3pm
No subsidies for Sunday services

Concessionary Travel

1. Background information

- 1.1 The English National Concessionary Scheme allows free travel on local buses across England for older people (currently those over 63) and people with a disability on Mondays to Fridays between 09:30 and 23:00, and any time on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. The age at which residents are entitled to a free travel pass is currently rising, and is the equivalent to the retirement age of women.
- 1.2 The current Central Bedfordshire Council scheme also includes the additional discretionary elements:
- Free travel for Central Bedfordshire residents before 09:30 and after 23:00 (Monday to Friday) if the journey starts in Central Bedfordshire or Hertfordshire.
 - If mobility is severely impaired so that assistance is required when travelling (either because of age or disability), there is entitlement to a Companion Pass. This allows a companion to travel free with the pass holder in Central Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Luton and Bedford.
 - Travel on Dial a Ride services, for scheme members, for a special fare.



- 1.3 Travel passes are issued free to those entitled who apply. They have a life span of five years, after which they are renewed automatically. Should a travel pass be lost, there is a fee of £11 (from April 2016) for a replacement. This does not apply if stolen. There are approximately 43,000 pass holders in Central Bedfordshire. Their journeys represent in approximately 40 per cent of all total bus journeys within Central Bedfordshire Council.
- 1.4 Central Bedfordshire Council also provides a Travel Aid scheme. This allows discounted travel for the unemployed on many local bus services for a fee of £5 for 28 days. Applications for Travel Aid passes are made via local Job Centres.

2. Proposals

2.1 Applying national time regulations Monday to Friday

- 2.1.1 In Central Bedfordshire most journeys using travel passes are made between the hours of 09:30 and 23:00. Therefore the Council will discontinue use of the Travel Pass scheme before 09:30 and after 23:00 on Monday to Friday. This is in line with the national scheme which is based on usage of buses by individuals over the age of 60 at the time of introduction (this has now increased to 63 the national retirement age for women in England and will increase to 65 by 2020)
- 2.1.2 Where infrequent services are provided, exceptions to the 09:30 rule will be allowed. If there are not any bus services from a town or village between 09:30 and 10:30, free travel would be allowed on the latest journey prior to 09:30 (if there is one). For example, if there are buses departing from a village at 08:00, 09:00, 11:00, the concessionary bus pass can be used on the 09:00 departure.

2.2 Changes to travel pass issue and renewal

- 2.2.1 Travel passes have a lifespan of five years after which they are currently automatically renewed. In future pass holders will need to apply for a new travel pass when renewal is required. This would be free of charge. At the current time, a large number of passes are reissued only to be returned due to the holder having moved or passed away. The new process of reapplying will remove any distress which may occur if the passholder has died.

3. Other concessionary schemes

3.1 Companion Passes

3.1.1 There are currently no proposals to change the issue of Companion Passes. They would continue to be used within and from Central Bedfordshire, and in other local authorities for which an agreement has been made with Central Bedfordshire Council. This currently applies to Bedford, Luton and Hertfordshire. The agreements with other local authorities are subject to change.

3.2 Travel Aid

3.2.1 The Travel Aid scheme will continue for bus companies wishing to participate, at no additional cost to Central Bedfordshire Council. It is understood that this scheme may be superseded by bus companies' own schemes or changes to Universal Credit.

Policy PT2: Concessionary Travel

- National time regulations for free travel for bus pass holders adopted: 09:30 to 23:00 Monday to Friday, all day Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.
- No automatic renewal of travel passes
- Move to online applications for travel passes from 2020
- The Travel Aid scheme will only continue for bus companies wishing to participate, at no additional cost to CBC.

Community Transport

1. Background information

- 1.1 There are two types of Community Transport: Dial a Ride and voluntary community bus services. The first receives regular financial support from Central Bedfordshire Council; the second does not (apart from reimbursement for journeys made using a bus pass).
- 1.2 There are three Dial-a-Ride operators within Central Bedfordshire: Buzzer, South Beds Dial a Ride, Link a Ride. They provide door-to-door services for older people or those less mobile who are unable to use buses. They operate on a charitable basis, but staff are paid.
- 1.3 There is a Service Level Agreement between Central Bedfordshire Council and the Dial a Ride operators until March 2017 - with each operator receiving a grant from CBC and a contribution for each passenger journey.
- 1.4 There are four voluntary community transport operators providing bus services within Central Bedfordshire: Flittabus, Wanderbus, Ivel Sprinter and Roadrunner. These are charitable organisations run by volunteers. They have fixed regular routes which are open to the general public, and they charge fares and accept bus passes.

	Dial a Ride	Voluntary Community Bus Services
Operators	Buzzer South Beds Dial a Ride Link a Ride	Flittabus Wanderbus Ivel Sprinter Roadrunner
Charity	✓	✓
Paid staff	✓	✗
Volunteers	✗	✓
CBC grant	✓	✗
Accept bus passes	✓ ¹	✓
For older people and people with a disability	✓	✗

¹ At a special fare

1.6 Dial a Ride

- 1.6.1 Financial support for dial a ride services is discretionary. They currently receive an annual grant and a concessionary reimbursement of £1 per passenger per journey. There were 35,776 passenger journeys in 2014/15.
- 1.6.2 Passengers pay a special concessionary fare. Higher fares are charged for some journeys with allowance sometimes made for the amount of time a journey takes.
- 1.6.3 The quality of service provided by the current Dial a Ride operators is very high. There are instances where the Dial a Ride driver may be the only person the customer sees in a number of days. The following tasks may be undertaken: driver sees the customer inside the house, assists with carrying shopping, checks to make sure a pre-booked passenger is not waiting anywhere, and adjusting the time return journeys from medical appointments if the user is running late.

1.7 Voluntary Community Buses

- 1.7.1 There are four operators providing bus services using voluntary staff. Three of these offer a range of infrequent services to some villages in Mid Beds. The fourth operator is based in Bedford Borough, but provides a limited service to some villages in Marston Vale.
- 1.7.2 These services are open to all, and operate in much the same way as conventional buses to a fixed timetable. Concessionary bus passes can be used on these services.
- 1.7.3 Voluntary bus services are particularly useful in areas where a very limited bus service is needed (perhaps once a week). However, there is a limit to the services that can be provided. Therefore the services usually just provide one return journey to a town, where it waits for two or three hours before bringing the passengers back. It can also be seen as a day out for the volunteer driver.
- 1.7.4 Central Bedfordshire Council does not make any financial contribution to the running costs of these services. The operators are reimbursed for concessionary bus passengers. Grants are available from central government from time to time.

Proposals

2.1 Dial a Ride

- 2.1.1 In order to create a clear and transparent process for funding Dial a Ride services, the council will introduce a tender-based system where organisations are invited to provide Dial a Ride proposals for Central Bedfordshire with options for members of the public to pay part of the fare. Market research was undertaken with Community Transport and Central Bedfordshire Council Fleet Service users between 23 November 2015 and the 11 January 2016. The outcomes from this research will be used to inform the requirements for the Dial a Ride service provision going forward.

2.2 Voluntary Community Buses

- 2.2.1 The Council will encourage voluntary service providers to take on additional services which cannot be met by conventional bus services.

Policy PT3: Community Transport

- A clear and transparent tender process for awarding of funding to support Dial a Ride services will be implemented
- Voluntary community bus service providers will be encouraged to take on additional services that cannot be provided by conventional bus operators.



A great place to live and work

Passenger Transport

0300 300 8049

Public.transport@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

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

Central Bedfordshire Council

Executive

5 April 2016

Local Transport Plan 4

Report of Cllr Nigel Young, Executive Member for Regeneration
(nigel.young@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officers: Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services
(marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) and Ben King, Transport Strategy
Team Leader (ben.king@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. To highlight the need for a new Local Transport Plan.
2. Propose a new strategic approach for investment in transport.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. approve the production of a new Local Transport Plan;
2. endorse the vision and objectives of the new Plan; and
3. support the timetable for its production and adoption.

Overview and Scrutiny Comments / Recommendations

3. This item has not gone to Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, as the individual elements of the Local Transport Plan are developed over the course of the next 18 months, Overview and Scrutiny will be engaged accordingly.

Background

4. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Central Bedfordshire sets out a strategic framework for investment in local transport. It is a statutory requirement for all highways authorities to have an LTP in place and it has been the vehicle through which Central Government fund local transport schemes since 2000.

5. The current LTP (LTP3) was adopted in April 2011 and so is 5 years old. Previous LTPs (LTP1 & LTP2), which were produced by the County Council, had 5 year timeframes and whilst there is no statutory requirement for us to replace the LTP at this point in time, there are a number of factors which point towards it being in need of review.
6. This report details the need for the production of a new Local Transport Plan, the vision and objectives it proposes to work towards, and the structure and processes through which these will be achieved.

Why produce a new Plan?

7. There have been a number of changes since the adoption of LTP3 which need to be reflected in a new strategic approach to investing in transport across the authority. Table 1 below summaries these key drivers for change.

Table 1: Drivers for Change

Change	National	Local
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in Government Policy (May 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in local priorities following the election in May 2015
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities for funding via SEM LEP Autumn Statement (November 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTP funding settlement announced (July 2014) Emerging Community Infrastructure Levy
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing role of LEPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five Year Plan (2015)
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of Highways England (2015) Funding of East-West Rail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the Woodside Link & A5-M1 (Spring 2017) New major scheme priorities identified.
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Local Plan (2017/18)
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GDP growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net growth in jobs

8. In addition to the above, it is a priority of the authority to produce a Passenger Transport Strategy and a new Parking Strategy in the near future. These are being produced at present, will be completed ahead of the final LTP and will be incorporated into that Plan. However, they cannot come forward without a review of the strategic context within which they will sit, hence commencement of work towards a new LTP.

New Focus to the LTP

9. The current LTP3 has 10 objectives and 11 Local Area Transport Plans (LATPs) through which funding is allocated and within which these objectives are sought to be achieved. It is felt that on reflection this does not provide a focused enough direction or targeted investment programme.
10. It also adopted a more bottom up as opposed to top down approach to determining scheme priorities and whilst welcomed by many, it was not structured in a way which could maximise the ability of transport to contribute towards the wider strategic objectives of the authority.
11. Therefore it is proposed to focus the new LTP4 on delivering sustainable growth as the single most predominant issue facing the authority. Sustainable growth forms the basis to the Government's economic policy and is key to securing the future prosperity of Central Bedfordshire.
12. Given this focus, there are three broad areas through which transport can contribute to facilitating growth, and these three areas are intended to form the objectives of the Plan. They relate to:
 - a. Capacity,
 - b. Connectivity, and
 - c. Communities.

Objective 1: Capacity – Provide the transport capacity to facilitate growth

13. New development will increase pressures on the transport network and the demand to travel in the local area. Providing new capacity and making better use of the existing capacity will allow the authority to absorb this increase and accommodate additional trips, to enable development to come forward and minimise the impact on existing residents.

Objective 2: Connectivity – Improve connectivity to jobs and services

14. Connected communities which can readily access the new jobs and opportunities provided by growth ensure that all local residents can realise the benefits associated with new investment in an area. Improved connectivity also helps to give business a competitive advantage and embed sustainability into the growth agenda.

Objective 3: Communities – Create safe and attractive communities

15. Safe, attractive and inclusive communities are places in which people want to live and businesses want to invest.

Through the creation of more civilised streets, reducing the impact of traffic and improving safety and personal security, transport investment can help create communities and preserve a local environment that draws in external investment.

16. Each of these objectives also encapsulate the wider benefits of investing in transport improvements such as improved health and wellbeing, environmental improvements, better air quality and improved quality of life.
17. They will be supported by a series of targets and indicators, and where possible these will be the same as those adopted at the start of LTP3, to ensure continuity in monitoring and enable us to identify trends over a longer period of time.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities

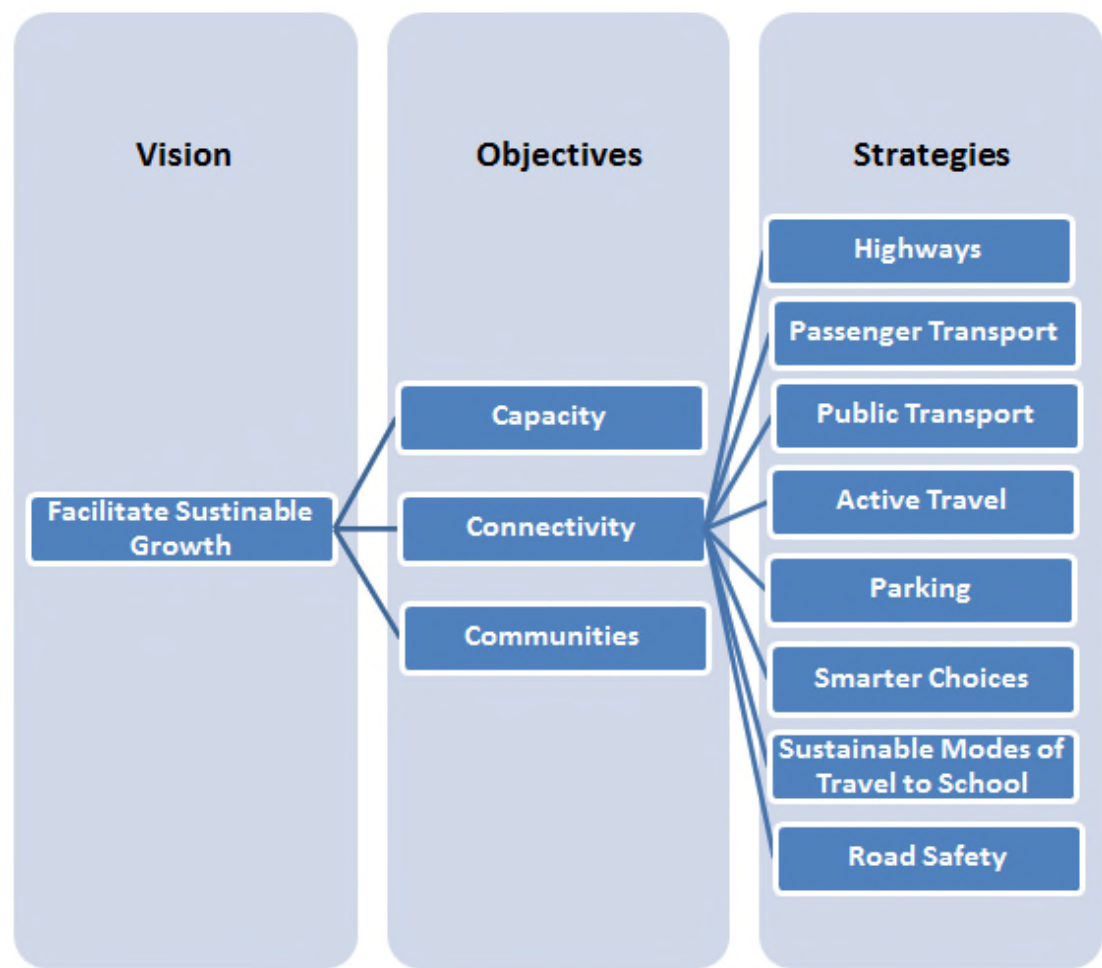
18. The proposed objectives of the LTP align with the six priorities contained within the Five Year Plan, as approved by Executive Committee in October 2015. Table 2 below highlights the inter-relationship between the priorities and objectives.

Table 2: Relationship between LTP4 Objectives and the Five Year Plan

	LTP4 Objectives		
5 Year Plan Priorities	Capacity	Connectivity	Communities
Enhancing Central Bedfordshire	✓	✓	✓
Delivering great residents services	✓	✓	✓
Improving education and skills		✓	
Protecting the vulnerable and promoting well being		✓	✓
Creating stronger communities	✓	✓	✓
An efficient and responsive council	✓	✓	✓

Proposed Structure

19. Given the vision and objectives of the Plan, it is proposed to develop a series of strategies which will sit alongside a concise overarching LTP as highlighted below:



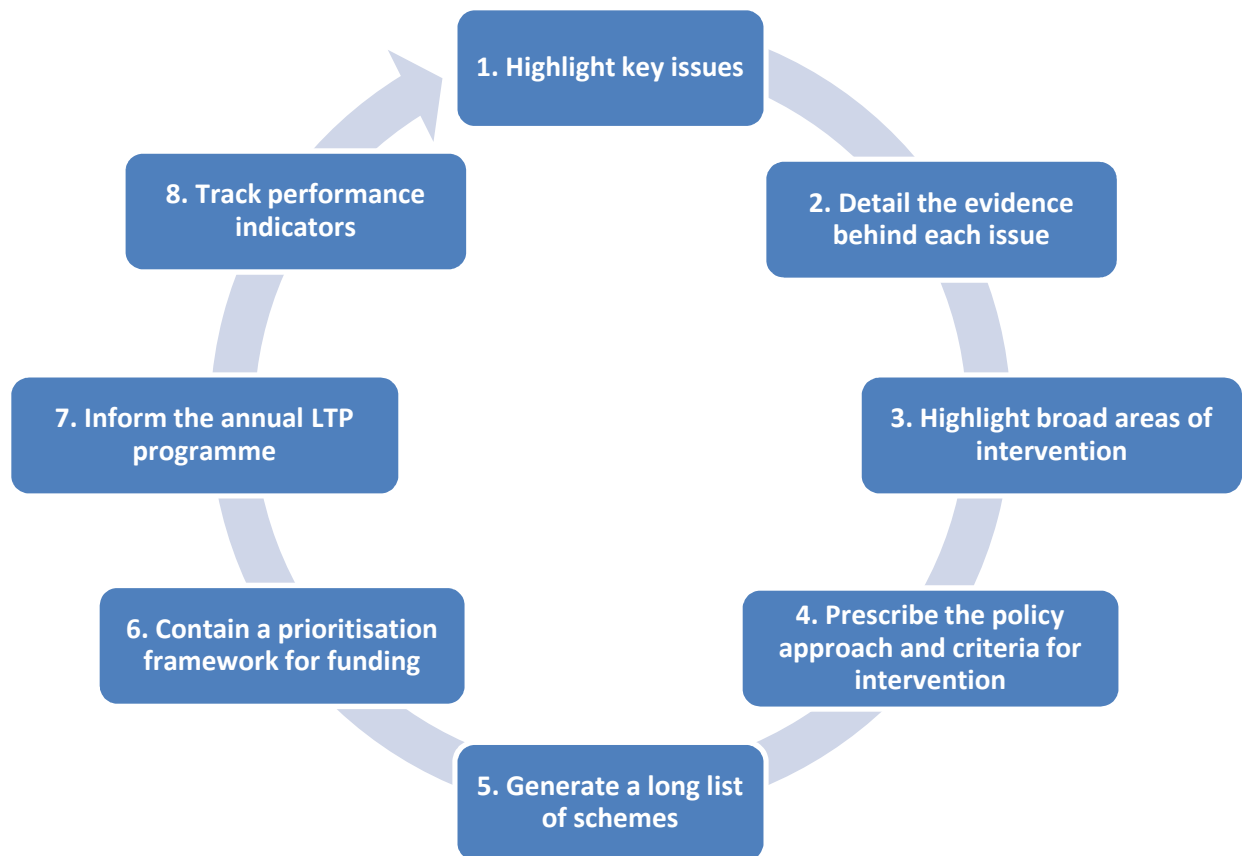
20. Table 3 highlights the potential ability of each strategy to contribute towards the proposed objectives of the LTP. A series of additional documents will also be produced to understand the wider implications of the Plan including a Highways Asset Management Plan, an Equalities Impact Assessment and a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Table 3: Relationship between Strategies and Objectives

	LTP4 Objectives		
Strategy	Capacity	Connectivity	Communities
Highways	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓
Passenger Transport	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
Public Transport	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓

Strategy	LTP4 Objectives		
	Capacity	Connectivity	Communities
Active Travel	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
SMOTS ¹	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Smarter Choices	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Parking	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Road Safety	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓

21. Within the overarching context of the LTP each strategy will:



22. This process will form a sound and robust evidence base to justify investment, ensure value for money and provide effective schemes on the ground that will contribute towards the overarching objectives of the LTP and the priorities within the Five Year Plan.

¹ SMOTS – Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy

23. A summary of each the content of each strategy is set out in Table 4.

Table 4: Content of Strategies

Strategy	Key Issues	Inter-dependencies	Date for Adoption
Highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion • Missing links in the network • Inappropriate routing of traffic • Severance • Movement of freight • Air quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Model • Local Plan • Highways Asset Management Plan • Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn 2017
Passenger Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidised public transport • Home to school transport • Community transport • Fleet operations and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School expansion programme • SMOTS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn 2016
Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure • Interchanges • Information • Services • Ticketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Model • Passenger Transport Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring 2017
Active Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging walking and cycling • Enabling healthier lifestyles • Addressing safety concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure Strategy • Health Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn 2016

Strategy	Key Issues	Inter-dependencies	Date for Adoption
SMOTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe access to schools • Sustainable access to schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School expansion programme • Passenger Transport Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn 2016
Smarter Choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Choices • Travel Plans • Promotions, marketing and information • Car sharing and car clubs • Electric charging points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging “Access Fund” from Central Government • Legacy LSTF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring 2017
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of parking • Inappropriate and inconsiderate parking • Management and enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passenger Transport Strategy • Highways Strategy • Design Guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn 2016
Road Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual and perceived safety concerns • Engineering • Education • Enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways Strategy • SMOTS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn 2017

Funding – Local Schemes

24. The authority receives an annual allocation of capital funding associated with the LTP which is £1.365M for the next 4 years. This funds a programme of relatively small scale improvement schemes each year.
25. The Integrated Transport Block (ITB) funding as it is referred to by Central Government is also utilised locally to support the Rural Match Fund (RMF) process which levers in additional transport contributions from local town and parish councils.
26. The amount Central Bedfordshire Council will receive in the coming years was provided in July 2014 and is detailed in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Funding associated with the LTP

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
£1.365m	£1.365m	£1.365m	£1.365m

Funding – Major Schemes

27. In addition the new LTP will provide the evidence and policy basis upon which to bid for major scheme funding (projects worth over £5m) from Central Government and the Local Economic Partnership (SEM LEP).
28. Central Bedfordshire Council has been extremely successful in recent years in securing funding for large scale transport projects including:
 - Luton to Dunstable Busway (in partnership with Luton)
 - A5 to M1 Link (in partnership with Highways England and developers)
 - Woodside Link
 - A421 Dualling
 - M1 to A6 Link (indicative allocation)
 - Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)
 - Leighton Linlade Cycle Town Project
29. A new LTP4 will ensure that the authority remains competitive in an increasingly difficult financial climate.

Timeframe for Adoption

30. It is proposed that LTP4 is in place by late 2017 or early 2018 to align with the adoption of the new Local Plan. Member endorsement of the vision, objectives and framework of the Plan will enable this process to commence.

31. The component strategies will be produced over the next 18 month period to enable the full consideration of each individual documents by members, the public and other stakeholders alike, whilst also providing sufficient time to develop the evidence bases to set their direction, and factor in all of the many interdependencies. The indicative timeframe is set out in Table 6.

Table 6: Timetable for Adoption

Date	Milestone
April 2016	Approval of Vision, Objectives and Structure of LTP4
Autumn 2016	Adoption of SMOTS Strategy
	Adoption of Passenger Transport Strategy
	Adoption of Parking Strategy
	Adoption of Active Travel Strategy
Spring 2017	Adoption of Smarter Choices Strategy
	Adoption of Public Transport Strategy
Autumn 2017	Adoption of Road Safety Strategy
	Adoption of Highways Strategy
	Member Approval of Final LTP4

Council Priorities

32. The Local Transport Plan is an important tool in helping to deliver the Council's priorities, and this has been drawn out in the above report. Either directly or indirectly it facilitates:
- Enhancing local communities.
 - Improving access to education and training.
 - Promoting health and well being.
 - Providing better infrastructure.
 - Enabling great universal services (in terms of transport services), and
 - Contributes towards achieving value for money through taking an evidenced based, data-led approach to transport investment.

Legal Implications

33. None

Financial Implications

34. The authority receives £1.365M as an annual capital settlement from Central Government for spend associated with the Local Transport Plan. This is detailed in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
35. From 2016/17 onwards the way this funding is allocated is proposed to reflect the new structure of the LTP, with contributions aligning with the respective strategies which comprise the Plan. These will be agreed with members on an annual basis as part of the wider Highways Capital Programme.

Equalities Implications

36. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) will be produced as a background document to the LTP and the individual strategies it will contain. The EIA for the current LTP focused on the importance of providing realistic travel choice and alternatives to the car to enable access to training and opportunities, particularly for those in more deprived areas with less disposable income or access to a car.

Sustainability Implications

37. The Plan will bring forward sustainable transport measures and ensure that the new development is accessible by a choice of means of transport to reduce reliance on the car.
38. The LTP will be supported by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (as was produced for LTP3), which will detail the implications of the proposed approach to investment the Plan contains, in terms of issues associated with noise, air quality, health, bio-diversity, climate change, landscape and cultural heritage.

Risk Management

39. Updating the Local Transport Plan will mitigate the risks of:
 - Failing to deliver the Council's priorities
 - Failing to address the national and local drivers for change, as outlined in this report
 - Failing to discharge statutory responsibilities, and
 - Reputational damage, arising from not addressing community needs.

Conclusion and Next Steps

40. Subject to the approval of the Executive, work will commence on the production of the new Local Transport Plan on the framework and to the timescales set out within this report.

41. Once in place it will supplement the Local Plan to provide a strategic, integrated long term vision for facilitating growth within the authority. It will detail the short, medium and long term investments in transport that will be required to provide the capacity for growth, ensure connectivity to jobs and opportunities, and create safe and attractive communities where people want to live and businesses want to invest.

Appendices

None

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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

5 April 2016

Commissioning of New School Places in Biggleswade and Arlesey for September 2017

Report of: Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Education and Skills
(mark.versallion@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officer: Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services
(sue.harrison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. This report seeks support for proposed consultations by Biggleswade Academy Trust and the Governing Body of St Andrews Church of England (C of E) Voluntary Controlled (VC) Lower School, Biggleswade, each to expand by 1 form of entry (30 places in each lower school year group) by September 2017.
2. The report also seeks the support of the Council's Executive for the consultation by Etonbury Academy, Arlesey, to expand by 1 form of entry (30 places in Year groups 5-8 and 80 places in Year groups 9-11) from September 2017 to provide a total of 180 places in each Year group 5 – 11.
3. The schools referred to within the report serve the Wards of Arlesey, Stotfold and Langford, Biggleswade North and Biggleswade South.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Support the proposed commencement of consultation by Biggleswade Academy Trust to expand by 1 form of entry (30 places in each lower school year group) by September 2017.**
2. **Support the proposed commencement of consultation by the Governing Body of St Andrews Church of England VC Lower School, Biggleswade, to expand by 1 form of entry (30 places in each lower school year group) by September 2017.**
3. **Support the proposed consultation by Etonbury Academy, Arlesey, to expand by one form of entry (30 places in Year groups 5-8 and 80 places in Year groups 9-11) from September 2017 to provide a total of 180 places in each Year group 5 – 11.**

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny

4. This report was presented to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 15 March 2016 and the Committee was asked to indicate its support for the recommendations set out within the report. The views of the Committee will be reported to Executive at its meeting.

Pupil place planning for Lower School places in Biggleswade

5. Since 2013 the Council has commissioned an additional 300 lower school places in Biggleswade, required as a result of demographic growth in the area, most significantly due to increases in housing on the land east of Biggleswade and adjacent developments.
6. The additional places have been provided by the expansion of St Andrews CofE VC Lower School on a new site in the Kings Reach area. The construction of the new school site is now complete and it accepted its first intake in September 2015.
7. In July 2015 the demographic forecasts for the Council's School Place Planning pyramid area covering Biggleswade and the surrounding rural area were revised with refreshed data as part of the annual review of the Council's School Organisation Plan.
8. The outcome confirms a further sustained 2 form entry (60 places per year group) forecast deficit in Lower School provision in the town by 2018/19 with pressure building from Sept 2016 when at least 1 additional reception class will be required, and a further new reception class required from Sept 2017.
9. Other than the now complete satellite site for St Andrews C of E VC Lower School there are no new school sites secured through S106 in the town, on Kings Reach or any other new development area other than St Andrews.
10. The anticipated rate of growth in the town's lower school year groups is also such that a new standalone school would not fill and be revenue efficient for a number of years. The solution to manage the further growth in places is therefore through the expansion of existing schools.
11. The town is served by 3 lower schools, St Andrews, Lawnside Lower and Biggleswade Academy, all rated Good by Ofsted. Of these, Lawnside Lower is on a restricted and land locked site that does not currently meet Department for Education guidelines for its gross site area and is therefore not suitable for expansion.

12. In December 2015 Executive approved acquisition of a parcel of land to be used for expansion purposes in conjunction with the new St Andrews C of E VC Lower School, Chestnut Avenue, on the Kings Reach development in Biggleswade.
13. Biggleswade Academy Trust is formed of the predecessor schools of Holmemead Middle School which converted as an Academy in March 2012 and Southlands Lower School which joined the Trust as an Academy in March 2013.
14. Since September 2013, Biggleswade Academy Trust has also provided education and wrap-around care for children aged 2 to 13 following a merger with Brigham Pre-School located on the school site and in December 2015 the Council also approved a merger with The Lawns Nursery School and Children's Centre.
15. Both Biggleswade Academy Trust and St Andrews C of E VC Lower School are members of the Biggleswade Community Union of Schools (B.C.U.S.). This is a group of local schools who work together on joint priorities such as transition, new school provision and joint development priorities to ensure the town's educational provision is as supportive and seamless as possible for children and young adults between the ages of 0-19.

Expansion of Lower School Places in Biggleswade from September 2016

16. Biggleswade Academy Trust is located centrally within the town and has indicated its willingness to admit children above its published admission number and accommodate the additional reception class required in September 2016.
17. To do so it has commissioned a new build with Ivel Valley School that is to be procured by the Trust to replace temporary accommodation on the school site and also to manage an increase in Early Years places required by the area special school. Further permanent accommodation will be required to enable the new reception class to continue through subsequent year groups.
18. The Academy has submitted an application to the Education Funding Agency following feasibility studies supported by the Council, for capital funding in 2016/17 to expand and also address a number of accommodation issues on the school's site. If successful, the Academy and Council would be able to pool capital resources to permanently provide 1 of the additional forms of entry in growth in new lower school places required in the Biggleswade area.
19. St Andrew's new satellite school site is in the centre of the main housing development that is the predominant source of the growth in demographic demand for school places in Biggleswade.

The school is growing quickly with pupil numbers and could only accommodate an additional reception class from September 2017 if additional physical accommodation is provided.

20. Following acquisition by the Council in December 2015 of the land adjacent to the new school site, feasibility studies have been undertaken and are now complete to enable a further 1 form entry expansion of St Andrews Lower to be deliverable by Sept 2017.

Pupil place planning for Middle and Upper School places in Arlesey

21. In 2013 the Council's forecasts confirmed an anticipated deficit in middle and upper school places serving the Arlesey, Stotfold and Fairfield area from September 2015.
22. Working in partnership with the Council, Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust (BEMAT) developed a proposal to expand Etonbury Academy to provide the additional Middle School places required to serve its catchment and also to change the age range of the Academy to provide the additional Upper School places required in the catchment of Samuel Whitbread Academy.
23. Etonbury Academy was rated Good by Ofsted at its last inspection in 2012.
24. In May 2013 the Council's Executive considered a detailed business case submitted by BEMAT and approved the capital expenditure required for the expansion of Etonbury Academy from its original capacity of 480 places to provide a total of 600 middle school places and a further 300 places to serve the upper school age range with an implementation date of September 2015.
25. The Academy's proposal was subsequently approved by the Department for Education and the Council has worked in partnership with BEMAT to deliver a range of new school facilities at Etonbury including a community sports and fitness centre along with a 3G AstroTurf pitch on expansion land adjacent to the school site, leased by the Council.
26. In July 2015 the demographic forecasts for the Council's School Place Planning pyramid area covering Etonbury's catchment were revised with refreshed data as part of the annual review of the Council's School Organisation Plan. A separate review had also been undertaken of the forecasts of middle and upper school places through to 2024.
27. The increasing size of Year 5 catchment cohorts that has been accommodated by the Academy above its published admission number of 150 in the past 2 years has been enabled as a result of the new accommodation and smaller cohorts feeding out of the school in Year 8.

28. The forecast further increases in size of the Year 5 catchment cohort, and the Academy's retention of its first Year 8 into Year 9 on site from September 2016 produces a forecast deficit in provision from September 2017.
29. As a result, and as options are further considered by the Council for managing a forecast additional total requirement for catchment places equivalent to a new 5 form entry (1050 place) school serving children from 9 to 16 in the longer term, it is proposed to further expand Etonbury Academy to provide a total of 6 forms of entry (180 places in each year group) from September 2017.
30. This proposal will provide the Academy with coherent size of year groups from Year 5 through to 11 with students continuing to have choice to express a preference to access Samuel Whitbread from Year 9 and an enhanced offer at Key Stage 4 across both of these BEMAT schools.

Conclusion

31. Each of the 3 schools in this report supports the proposals to expand and provide new school places for their local communities.
32. As a maintained mainstream school the Governing Body of St Andrews C of E VC Lower School can propose an enlargement of premises without following a formal statutory process and the school has indicated an intention, subject to the support of the Council's Executive, to consult with the support of Council officers with its local community and other stakeholders.
33. The school's consultation document is attached to this report at Appendix 3.
34. As Academies, Biggleswade Academy Trust and Etonbury Academy can similarly propose an enlargement of their premises and must consult with stakeholders as a requirement of the Department for Education.
35. Each Academy's consultation documents are attached to this report at Appendix 2 and 4. A map indicating the location of each of the schools subject of this report is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.
36. The consultees for all 3 proposals will include parents and carers of pupils at the schools and at their feeder schools, the head teachers and governing bodies of all other Central Bedfordshire schools, all members of Central Bedfordshire Council and local town and parish councils.

37. The outcome of the consultations along with a business case submitted by each school to illustrate the alignment of their proposal with the Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools will be reported to the Council's Executive for final approval.
38. The Executive will consider the outcome of the Etonbury proposal in June 2016 and for Biggleswade Academy Trust and St Andrews CofE Lower School a report will be presented in August 2016.
39. Executive approval of each proposal will enable the schools to continue to work in partnership with Council officers to influence the design and delivery of the new provision, funded through developer contributions and Department for Education basic need grant, within the Council's New School Places Programme.

Reasons for decision

40. The recommended consultations on the proposals to expand the schools in this report are to ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations to provide sufficient school places.
41. Commitment to capital expenditure and therefore final approval of each proposal will be determined by the Council's Executive, informed by the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken by each Governing Body and the business case which each will also prepare.
42. Ward Councillors have received briefings on the Council's forecasts of demographic growth and the need to plan for additional school places in these areas and are supportive of each school's proposal.

Council Priorities

43. The report supports Central Bedfordshire's Five Year Plan 2015- 2020 and the specific priority of Improving Education and Skills.

Legal Implications

44. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on Councils to secure sufficient primary and secondary school places to provide appropriate education for pupils in its area. S14A of the Education Act 1996 imposes a duty to consider representations about the exercise by local authorities of their functions from the parents of qualifying children in relation to the provision of primary and secondary education. Qualifying children include all those of compulsory school age or under.
45. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Councils a strategic role as commissioners, of school places and includes duties to consider parental representation, diversity and choice, duties in relation to high standards and the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and fair access to educational opportunity.

46. The main legislation governing school organisation is found in sections 6A-32 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.
47. Department for Education Guidance for proposers and decision makers regarding school organisation in maintained schools was published in January 2014 to support the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.
48. This guidance can be viewed at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>
49. As a consequence of changes introduced by these 2013 Regulations and Statutory Guidance, Governing Bodies are now able to propose to make a range of changes to their schools without following a formal statutory process. These include significant expansion such as that proposed to St Andrews C of E VC Lower School.
50. Governing Bodies are required to adhere to the usual principles of public law: they must act rationally; they must take into account all relevant considerations; and they must follow a fair procedure.
51. The Governing Body of St Andrews CofE Lower School will also be expected to liaise closely with the Local Authority to ensure that the proposal is aligned with wider place planning/ organisational arrangements and that any necessary consents have been gained.
52. The Governing Body is also expected to ensure that there is effective consultation with parents and other interested parties and will be supported throughout the consultation, to gauge demand for the proposed change and provide consultees with sufficient opportunity to give their views.
53. The Governing Body will need to work with the Council to ensure that the new accommodation is suitable and the necessary capital funding and planning permission has been secured before the expansion can be implemented. Once the change has been implemented, the Governing Body must inform the Secretary of State.
54. Department for Education (DFE) Guidance for Academies wishing to make significant changes, including enlargement of their premises, was published in January 2014.

55. The Guidance can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-significant-changes-to-an-existing-academy>
56. Academy Trusts are to exercise their own judgments in deciding whether a change is significant although it is anticipated that the proposals set out in this report by BEMAT and Biggleswade Academy Trust would come within the definition of 'fast track significant change' as set out by 2014 DfE Guidance.
57. The process is overseen by the Education Funding Agency on behalf of the DfE and requires an Academy to undertake consultation, to obtain consent of the Secretary of State and to secure any capital required by the proposal before implementation.
58. The business case submitted to the Education Funding Agency must be rigorous enough for a decision to be made on whether the change is necessary. Details of minimum content are set out in the 2014 DfE Guidance.

Financial Implications

59. The New School Places Programme is funded by developer contributions and Basic Need grant income from the Department for Education (DfE) and on current planning assumptions the programme 2016/17 to 2020/21 is now forecast with gross expenditure of £20.2M in 2016/17, £25M in 2017/18, £19M in 2018/19, £17M in 2019/20 and £7.7M in 2020/21.
60. The Council will continue to ensure that all opportunities are taken to increase income and to seek alternative funding sources for new build and expansions of existing school buildings.
61. 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 (DSG) and is based primarily on the numbers of pupils attending and will increase accordingly in an expanded school.
62. 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 DSG funded Growth Fund established by the Schools Forum.

63. 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 Director of Children's Services as required by the Council's Constitution.
64. There are no financial implications arising out of a decision to support the commencement of consultations as outlined in this report.

Equalities Implications

65. 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.
66. 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.
67. This statutory duty includes requirements to:
 - i. Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - ii. Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
 - iii. Encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
68. As commissioner of the new school places that will be provided through the proposals set out in this report the Council has considered that there are no specific discrimination issues that arise from the change being proposed.

Risk Management

69. The proposal to commission new school places and to allocate related capital investment outlined in this report implements the identified need to manage demographic growth in the previously published School Organisation Plan and mitigates the risk on the Council of failing in its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

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.
- Inability of schools to recruit suitable additional staff
- Failure to secure planning consents
- Financial risks, including;
 - Non realisation of anticipated Section 106 monies and anticipated levels of government grant.
 - Potential for overspend on any project within the programme.

Appendices

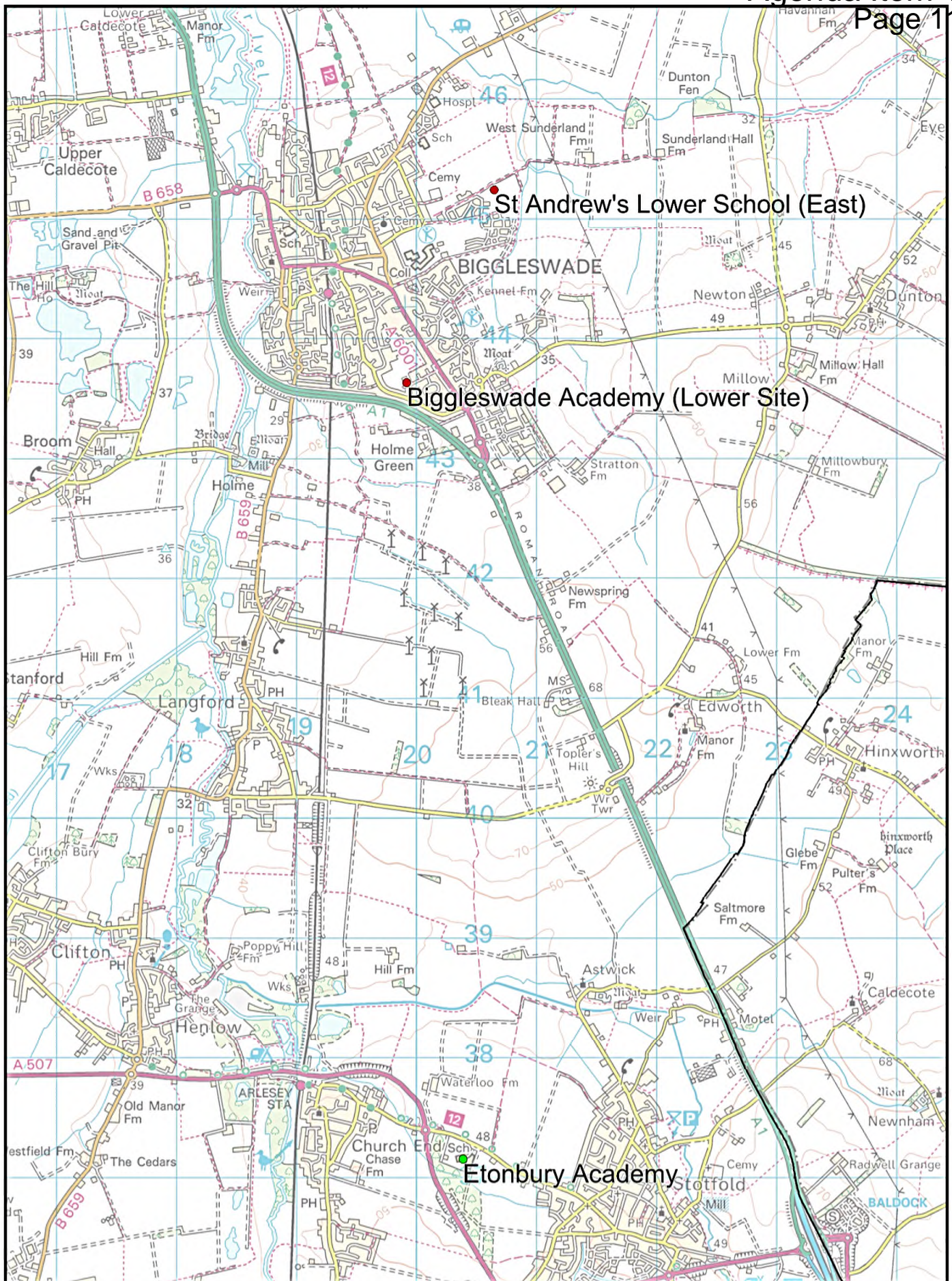
The following appendices are attached:

Appendix 1 – Map showing the location of each school subject of this report


Appendix 2 – Biggleswade Academy Trust's expansion consultation documents

Appendix 3 – St Andrews C of E Lower School's expansion consultation documents

Appendix 4 – Etonbury Academy's expansion consultation documents



Location of School Expansions Proposed for September 2017

	<p>Date: 26 January 2016</p> <p>Scale 1:43032</p>	<p>© Crown Copyright and database right. 2016 Ordnance Survey 100049029. Central Bedfordshire Council.</p> <p>Cities Revealed aerial photography copyright The GeoInformation Group, 2010</p> 
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Purpose of this consultation document

The purpose of this document is to provide information relating to the proposal by the Directors of Biggleswade Academy Trust to expand Biggleswade Academy for each 'lower school' aged year group, from 2 forms of entry (60 children) for children aged 5–9, to 3 forms of entry (90 children) for children aged 5–9 on a permanent basis, via an expansion to the Academy facilities, with a phased intake from September 2017.

This would eventually increase the academy's published admission number for 'lower school' year groups (Years R-4) from a maximum of 60 pupils per year to a maximum of 90 pupils per year on a permanent basis.

Background

Biggleswade Academy was opened in 2012 following the closure of its predecessor school, Holmemead Middle School. In July 2013, Southlands Lower School also converted to become part of Biggleswade Academy and on 1st September 2013 the newly merged school (also incorporating the former Brigham pre-school) opened in its current form - providing education and wrap-around care for children aged 2 to 13, 51 weeks of the year, across a single extended campus.

In order to help address the demand for lower school places in Biggleswade, St Andrews Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School has already been expanded to provide a total of 150 Reception places per year. This expansion was achieved via a new second campus, which opened in September 2015 on Bantock Way. Further expansion of this second campus is also required and is currently subject to consultation by the school's governing body.

Despite this expansion, the demand for lower school places is forecast to exceed the number of places available locally and, if the proposal to expand Biggleswade Academy is approved by the Department for Education (who must be consulted for all proposed changes to academies) the Directors of Biggleswade Academy Trust have indicated its willingness to accommodate an additional new class per 'lower school aged' year group.

Proposal

In July 2015 the demographic forecasts for the Council's School Place Planning pyramid area covering Biggleswade and the surrounding rural area were revised with refreshed data as part of the annual review of the Council's School Organisation Plan.

The outcome indicates a further sustained forecast deficit in Lower School provision in the town. This is as a result of additional local housing developments, including the area off Potton Road in Biggleswade, that are now reflected in the Council's current housing trajectory.

Following discussions with Central Bedfordshire Council, the Directors of Biggleswade Academy Trust have agreed to consult on a proposed expansion of Biggleswade Academy's facilities to house the provision of an additional 150 'lower school' aged places from September 2017, the increase in pupils phased over a five year period.

School capacity

The current capacity of Biggleswade Academy, for pupils entering through the Kitelands Road entrance, is 300 children from Reception to Year 4 and from the Mead End entrance is 560.

The majority of pupils and parents access the site either from Kitelands Road or from Mead End. However, some pupils and parents also utilise the school entrance from Kitelands Park (situated in the middle of these two entrances) to access both parts of the site.

The proposed expansion would provide additional accommodation for up to 150 pupils aged 3- 9 and it is proposed that such accommodation would be most easily accessed from this third entrance – directly from Kitelands Park.

This will allow the current classroom configuration at the Kitelands Road end of the site to be adapted slightly to accommodate pupils from Year R – Year 2 (Early Years and Key Stage 1 pupils, in addition to the 4+ Nursery class also situated here), whilst creating a more specifically 'Key Stage 2' area for years 3, 4 & 5 from a combination of new and existing accommodation accessed most directly from Kitelands Park.

Objectives of proposal

- To meet local demographic demand for school places in the future
- To meet parental demand for Biggleswade Academy evident in sustained levels of over subscription
- To expand an already highly regarded, Ofsted 'good with outstanding features' academy.

Timeline

Following approval by Central Bedfordshire Council's Executive Committee on 5 April 2016 for the Governing Body's consultation on the proposed expansion to commence, the timetable for the consultation process is as follows-

Action	Date –
Consultation starts	14 April 2016
Drop in meeting for staff, parents, carers and other interested parties	27 th April 2016
Consultation ends	12 May 2016
Outcome of consultation considered by the Governing Body and decision regarding whether to proceed advised to Council	By 27 May 2016
Governing Body submit application to DfE for approval to expand – if applicable	By 27 May 2016
Council Executive consider consultation outcome and determine funding for proposed expansion- if applicable	2 August 2016
Proposed implementation – if applicable	1 September 2017

Attached to this proposal is a Consultation Response Form (pages 5-7). Please complete the form and return it to the address provided. Alternatively, responses to the consultation can be made by e-mail to enquiries@biggleswadeacademy.org

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Below is a list of 'Frequently Asked Questions' that may help to address some immediate concerns that you have.

Frequently asked questions –

Q – My child currently attends Biggleswade Academy, how can I be assured that standards and provision would be maintained and improved if the academy is expanded?

A – The Governors and staff of Biggleswade Academy are proud of their Ofsted rating of 'good with outstanding features' for the main Academy and 'Outstanding' for the Pre-School.

Both of these reports graded the Leadership and Management of the Academy to be 'Outstanding' validating the fact that the Academy is well placed to grow further to support the needs of the town. In addition, the Academy are fully committed to continuing to provide a curriculum that is well designed and matched to the needs, abilities, interests and aspirations of all of their children and are confident in their ability to do so for an extended number of children.

Q - Would Biggleswade Academy be able to continue to provide a full and varied curriculum on the expanded campus?

A – The curriculum taught across Biggleswade Academy is well designed and matched to the needs, abilities, interests and aspirations of all children, also being commented positively upon during the school's last inspection. Staff regularly review this curriculum and would simply continue to plan this to meet the needs of the additional children. The academy also already has an extremely well developed extra-curricular programme and extended school activities which would be able to be accessed by all new children joining the Academy.

Q – What are you proposing to build and what facilities would be available?

A –Proposals are being developed which would provide accommodation for an additional 150 pupils, also allowing the more logical re-grouping of pupils across the Academy site into their related Key Stages. All building will be to the recognised standards for our size and type of school.

There will be a town planning application process for the propose expansion and therefore there will be a separate opportunity to comment on the plans as part of that process.

Q – When would the new facilities open?

A - Subject to obtaining all the necessary consents it is likely that the new facilities would be operational from September 2017 with the Academy gaining an additional class per year group (YR-4) from this point. An additional class could also be accommodated from September 2016 utilising alternative accommodation.

Q – Does the Council have the funds to provide this expansion for Biggleswade Academy??

A –The costs for building the extension to the academy and fitting it out would be paid for by developer's contributions and the Department for Education's basic need grant via the Council's New School Places Programme.

Q – How would admissions to the expanded campus be managed? Would there be an intake from across the age range?

A –. The same admissions arrangements and criteria would remain in place for the expanded campus and the catchment area for the academy would remain unchanged. The only difference would be that a total of 90 places would eventually be available per year group from Years R-4.

As always, the Council and Biggleswade Academy would work very closely together to plan for specific numbers and year groups in more detail as parental preferences are known and admission numbers are confirmed.

Q – Would this expansion impact upon the existing staff at the academy?

A – The academy would need to recruit new teaching and support staff to enable the larger academy to operate effectively.

– Have any alternative solutions been considered, other than the expansion of Biggleswade Academy?

A – Yes. A number of options were considered by the Council including the possible creation of a completely new school. However, by asking Biggleswade Academy to expand, the Council is following its Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning, which underpin all council decisions regarding new school places. These policy principles include -

1. the need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel
2. the need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable
3. the ability to support the expansion of local popular and successful schools or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools
4. the potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities



Consultation Response Form

Please read the consultation document and tell us what your views are.

If you prefer not to use this form, you can put your views in a letter or email.

Letters or completed forms should be returned to -

Biggleswade Academy, Kitelands Road, Biggleswade, Beds SG18 8NX

or responses can be sent by e-mail to enquiries@biggleswadeacademy.org

All responses must be received by 3.30 pm on Thursday 12th May 2016

How much do you agree with the following statement? Please tick as appropriate.

- I support the proposed expansion of Biggleswade Academy

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know

Do you have any comments/concerns regarding the proposed expansion? If so, please list them here -

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

	Please tick
Individual	
Organisation – please specify	

Optional information -

Name	
Address	
Postcode	

If you are responding as an individual, please tell us a little bit about yourself.

The following information will help us when considering your opinions and to make sure that we are getting views from all sections of the community. All the questions are optional, and you can give as little or as much information as you wish.

Please tell us if you fall into any of the following categories (please select all that apply)

Please tick all categories that apply	√	Additional information
Pupil - please state which school/academy and which year group		
Parent/ carer of child / children - please state which school/academy		
Parent/ carer of preschool child / children		
School Governor - please state which school/academy		
School Staff - please state which school/academy		
Other please specify		

Gender

Male	Female	Transgender	Prefer not to say

Age

Under 18	18 - 24	25- 34	35- 44	45- 54	55- 64	65 and over

	Yes	No
Do you consider yourself a disabled person		

Ethnic Group	Please tick as appropriate
White British	
White Irish	
White other – please specify	
Black or Black British Caribbean	
Black or Black British African	
Black or Black British other – please specify	
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	
Mixed White and Black African	
Mixed White and Asian	
Mixed other – please specify	
Asian Indian	
Asian Pakistani	
Asian Bangladeshi	
Asian other – please specify	
Chinese	
Other – please specify	

Data Protection Act 1998 - please note that your personal details supplied on this form will be held and/or computerised by Biggleswade Academy for the purpose of the consultation. Summarised information from the forms will be shared with Central Bedfordshire Council and may be published, but no individual details will be disclosed under these circumstances. Your personal details will be safeguarded and will not be divulged to any other individuals or organisations for any other purposes.

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Dear parents, carers and other stakeholders

Proposed Permanent Expansion of
St Andrews Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School,
Biggleswade – East Site



As you will be aware, St Andrews C of E VC Lower School was expanded onto a second site in Bantock Way, Biggleswade in order to serve the new housing on the King's Reach development, on land east of Biggleswade, and other smaller local developments. The new site opened in September 2015.



In view of the increased number of children that now require school places within the catchment area, the governing body propose to expand the eastern site of St Andrews Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School, on Bantock Way, Biggleswade, from two form of entry to three form of entry, from 300 places to 450 places, for Year Reception to Year 4.



It is proposed that building works would be completed to allow the extra facilities to be available from September 2017.



For a proposed permanent school expansion the Department for Education requires the school's governing body to consult with all interested parties and provide sufficient opportunity for them to give their views. The attached consultation document details the proposal and gives you the opportunity to respond. It also lists some 'frequently asked questions' which we hope will answer many of the concerns that you may have regarding the proposal.



Please respond to this consultation by completing the response form on pages 5 - 7 of the consultation document and returning this to the school **by 3.00 pm on 12 May 2016**. All of the responses received by the close of the consultation will be considered by the Governing Body when deciding whether or not to pursue the proposed expansion.



If the School's Governing Body decides to proceed, a summary of the outcome of the consultation will be provided to the Council who would subsequently decide on 2 August 2016 whether to commit the funding required.



If you have any queries regarding the proposed expansion please contact us via the School Office or the school email: standrews@cbc.beds.sch.uk

Yours sincerely



Head Teacher

Chair of Governors

Aspire, Believe, Celebrate



St. Andrew's VC Lower School
Brunts Lane, Biggleswade, Beds. SG18 0LY
Headteacher: Mrs. S. Rolfe

Tel: 01767 312311 Fax: 01767 600531

Email: standrews@cbc.beds.sch.uk

www.standrewslowerschool.co.uk



Consultation on the proposed expansion of

St Andrews Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School, East Site, Bantock Way, Biggleswade.



Purpose of this consultation document

The purpose of this document is to provide information relating to the Governing Body's proposal to expand the East site of St Andrews C of E VC (Church of England Voluntary Controlled) Lower School, at Bantock Way, Biggleswade, from a two form of entry (300 place) to a three form of entry (450 place) school for children aged 4 – 9.

This would eventually increase the school's published admission number for the Bantock Way site from 60 to 90.



Background

St Andrews C of E VC Lower School was expanded onto a second site which opened in Bantock Way, Biggleswade in September 2015 in order to serve the new housing on the King's Reach development, on land east of Biggleswade, and other smaller local developments. Up to 2500 new dwellings are being provided within the Kings Reach development and the original plans for the development included the new site for additional lower school provision to serve the area and also provided capital contributions towards the cost of the new provision. The school's expansion onto the second site had the support of the St Alban's Diocese and mirrored federation arrangements elsewhere in Central Bedfordshire where schools are managed in a similar way and governed across two or more sites.

Other Biggleswade schools are also being expanded to meet demographic growth, via Central Bedfordshire Council's New School Places Programme, these include: Edward Peake C of E VC Middle School where 120 additional places are to be provided at by September 2016 and the Academy of Stratton Upper School which is to be expanded from its current capacity of 1250 places to provide 1650 places with a phased implementation date. Work is also underway to plan for further growth and the need for school places in the area.

Proposal

In July 2015 the demographic forecasts for the Council's School Place Planning pyramid area covering Biggleswade and the surrounding rural area were revised with refreshed data as part of the annual review of the Council's School Organisation Plan.

The outcome indicates a further sustained forecast deficit in Lower School provision in the town. This is as a result of additional local housing developments, including the area off Potton Road in Biggleswade, that are now reflected in the Council's current housing trajectory.





An option to purchase an area of land adjacent to the new Lower School site within the Kings Reach development was approved by the Council in December 2015 to enable further expansion and accommodate pupils arising from other developments in the area. The area of this land is sufficient to provide a further 1 form (30 places per year group) of accommodation as an expansion to the existing school.

Following discussions with Central Bedfordshire Council, the Governing Body of St Andrews C of E VC Lower School has agreed to consult on a proposed expansion of the school's Bantock Way site by the provision of an additional 150 lower school places from September 2017, the increase in pupils phased over a five year period.

The Governing Body always understood that there was a possibility that the new East site would need to expand in order to meet the growing demand from not only the Kings Reach development but from other smaller local developments in Biggleswade.

School capacity

The current capacity of St Andrews C of E VC Lower School, across both sites, is 750 children from Year Reception to Year 4. The proposed expansion would provide additional accommodation for up to 150 pupils. The proposed total capacity for St Andrews C of E VC Lower School, across both campuses, is therefore 900 children from Year Reception to Year 4.

Objectives of proposal

- To meet local demographic demand for school places in the future
- To meet parental demand for places at St Andrews C of E VC Lower School
- To expand an already highly regarded, Ofsted 'good' school

Timeline

Following support expressed by Central Bedfordshire Council's Executive Committee on 5 April 2016 for the commencement of the Governing Body's consultation on the proposed expansion, the timetable for the consultation process is as follows-

Action	Date –
Consultation starts	14 April 2016
Informal drop-in event in school – between 3.30 pm and 7.00 pm	<i>To be agreed</i>
Consultation ends	12 May 2016
Outcome of consultation considered by the Governing Body and decision regarding whether to proceed advised to Council	By 27 May 2016
Council Executive consider consultation outcome and determine funding for proposed expansion	2 August 2016
Proposed implementation	1 September 2017

On pages 5 – 7 there is a Consultation Response Form. Please complete this and return it to the address provided. Alternatively, responses to the consultation can be made by e-mail to standrews@cbc.beds.sch.uk



Below is a list of '**Frequently Asked Questions**' which may help to address some immediate concerns that you have.

Q – My child currently attends St Andrews C of E VC Lower School, how can I be assured that standards and provision would be improved or maintained if the school is expanded?

A – The Governors and staff of St Andrews C of E VC Lower School are proud of their 'good' Ofsted rating and are committed to continuing to provide a curriculum that is well designed and matched to the needs, abilities, interests and aspirations of all of their children. With the economies of scale of a larger organisation, there would be more resources available for a good standard of teaching and a good quality curriculum. A larger organisation would also be able to spread subject leadership roles which would have a positive impact on future curriculum development.

Q – What are you proposing to provide for the school within the planned expansion?

A – Proposals are being developed for a building that which would provide for up to 150 pupils (aged 4 - 9) There will be a town planning application process for the new building and there will be a separate opportunity to comment on the plans as part of that process. Design proposals for the new buildings are being developed in parallel with this consultation exercise.

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

A – Yes, the land is owned by the council. The costs for the building the school and fitting it out would be funded through the Council's New School Places Programme.

Q – Would changes be made to the admission arrangements for the school?

A – The admissions arrangements would remain as they are for the two school sites, other than an increase in the admission number by the additional 30 places per year group for the East site. The catchment area for each site would remain unchanged and a total of 900 places would eventually be available across the two sites

Q – What provision would be made for early years and 'wrap around' care?

A – The current consultation is specifically related to provision for statutory aged pupils. The provision of extended school activities would be the subject of further discussions between the school and community to establish the type of provision and/or activities which are to be sought or needed and could be provided within the available accommodation. In terms of pre school provision, this is not currently part of the consultation and is not subject to the same legal process. Pre school provision was proposed within the original planning approvals for the development to be provided through the establishment of an external provider in new premises to be constructed by the developer of the Kings Reach site. As this has been delayed, the school has made arrangements with a pre-school to provide early years education, as well as wrap around care and holiday care, for school age children on site.

Q – Would this expansion impact upon the existing staff at the school?

A – The school would need to recruit new teaching and support staff to enable the larger school to operate effectively in the long term.



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

A - The Executive of Central Bedfordshire Council will consider the proposal to expand St Andrews C of E VC Lower School at their meeting in August 2016, following the outcome of the Governing Body's consultation. If the Executive give their approval for the proposal, the Governing Body has indicated its willingness, if necessary, to accommodate a new reception class from September 2016, on the existing school site and utilising a spare classroom, ahead of the availability of the new school buildings in September 2017.

Q – Have any alternative solutions been considered, other than the expansion of St Andrews C of E VC Lower School?

A – Yes. A number of options were considered by the Council including the possible creation of a completely new school. A number of alternatives are being taken forward, of which the further expansion of St Andrews is one. However, by asking St Andrews C of E VC Lower School to consider expansion, the Council is following its Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning, which underpin all Council decisions regarding new school places. These policy principles include -

1. the need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel
2. the need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable
3. the ability to support the expansion of local popular and successful schools or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools
4. the potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities



St. Andrew's VC Lower School
Bruns Lane, Biggleswade, Beds. SG18 0LY
Headteacher: Mrs. S. Rolfe

Tel: 01767 312311 Fax: 01767 600531

Email: standrews@cbc.beds.sch.uk

www.standrewslowerschool.co.uk

St Andrews C of E VC Lower School Consultation Response Form

Please read the consultation document and tell us what your views are. If you prefer not to use this form, you can also put your views in a letter or email.

Letters and completed forms should be returned to St Andrews C of E VC Lower School, Bantock Way, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, SG18 8UQ or responses can be sent by e-mail to:

standrews@cbc.beds.sch.uk

All responses must be received by 3.00 pm on Thursday 12th May 2016

How much do you agree with the following statement? Please tick as appropriate.

I support the proposed expansion of St Andrews C of E VC Lower School.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know

Comments/concerns:



Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

	Please tick
Individual	
Organisation – please specify	

Optional information -

Name	
Address	
Postcode	

If you are responding as an individual, please tell us a little bit about yourself.

The following information will help us when considering your opinions and to make sure that we are getting views from all sections of the community. All the questions are optional, and you can give as little or as much information as you wish.

Please tell us if you fall into any of the following categories (please select all that apply)

Please tick all categories that apply	√	Additional information
Pupil - please state which school and which year group		
Parent/ carer of child / children - please state which school/s		
Parent/ carer of preschool child / children		
School Governor - please state which school		
School Staff - please state which school		
Other please specify		

Gender

Male	Female	Transgender	Prefer not to say



Age

Under 18	18 - 24	25- 34	35- 44	45- 54	55- 64	65 and over

	Yes	No
Do you consider yourself a disabled person		

Ethnic Group

	Please tick as appropriate
White British	
White Irish	
White other – please specify	
Black or Black British Caribbean	
Black or Black British African	
Black or Black British other – please specify	
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	
Mixed White and Black African	
Mixed White and Asian	
Mixed other – please specify	
Asian Indian	
Asian Pakistani	
Asian Bangladeshi	
Asian other – please specify	
Chinese	
Other – please specify	

Data Protection Act 1998 please note that your personal details supplied on this form will be held and/or computerised by St Andrews C of E VC Lower School for the purpose of the consultation. Summarised information from the forms will be shared with Central Bedfordshire Council and may be published, but no individual details will be disclosed under these circumstances. Your personal details will be safeguarded and will not be divulged to any other individuals or organisations for any other purposes.

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CONSULTATION

31st March 2016

Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust Ltd [BEMAT]

Dear Parents, Guardians, Head Teachers, School Leaders, Staff, Governors and Members of the Community.

As you know, Etonbury, Robert Bloomfield, Gravenhurst, Langford, Gothic Mede and Samuel Whitbread Academies together form the multi academy trust of BEMAT Ltd. In partnership with its foundation, Bedfordshire East Schools Trust Ltd [BEST], BEMAT is working with Central Bedfordshire Council [CBC] in order to meet the Council's need for school places to serve the communities of Stotfold, Fairfield and Arlesey.

BEMAT is proposing to enlarge its Etonbury campus to increase the number of places it currently offers for children across the middle and upper school age range. If approved, this further expansion of Etonbury Academy serving children from Year 5 to Year 11 with a PAN of 150 would change it to a school serving the same age range but with a PAN of 180. This would increase the total size of the school from 900 places to 1260 places from September 2017.

This will increase the number of school places that are available to serve the Academy's local catchment from Year 5 and will also increase the GCSE provision in the Etonbury catchment area without enlarging the already extensive campus at Samuel Whitbread Academy. This new proposal for development builds upon the facilities at Etonbury due to be completed at the end of May 2016.

Further details can be found in our FAQ document and we would be delighted if you could take a little time to complete our questionnaire. This can be found on the BEMAT website and hard copies are available in the reception area of Etonbury Academy.

BEMAT will also be holding a public consultation meeting at Etonbury Academy on 12th April at 1830 in the Main Hall and we are eager to gauge local public opinion and receive the views of parents, the local community and local schools.

Ian F Kite
On behalf of BEMAT and Etonbury Academy

BEMAT | BEST House | Shefford Road | Clifton | Shefford | Bedfordshire | SG17 5QS | 01462 811519

Bedfordshire East Multi-Academy Trust BEMAT Registered Company Number: 07546141



Etonbury
Academy



Robert Bloomfield
Academy



Samuel Whitbread
Academy



Gravenhurst
Academy



Gothic Mede
Academy



Langford Village
Academy



Frequently asked questions:

Q – My child currently attends Etonbury, how can I be assured that standards and provision would be maintained as the campus grows?

A – BEMAT, the Local Governors and staff at Etonbury are proud of their 'Good' Ofsted rating and are committed to continuing to improve to 'Outstanding', provide a curriculum that is well designed and matched to the needs, abilities, interests and aspirations of all of their pupils.

This development will enable the excellent work on standards at Etonbury to be fully accommodated. BEMAT and local Governors intend to build upon the 'best ever' key stage 2 results of last year and provide an all through learning experience for the children in Arlesey and Stotfold, 9 to 16 with outstanding facilities.

Q - Would the expanded Etonbury Academy be able to continue to provide a full and varied curriculum?

A – The curriculum of Etonbury Academy is well designed and matched to the needs, abilities, interests and aspirations of all children. Staff regularly review the current curriculum and would plan the curriculum for the extended school site to meet the requirements of the national curriculum and the needs of the community. The school would also work with the local community to develop relevant extra curricular and extended school activities.

Q – What are you proposing to build on the Etonbury site and what new facilities would be available?

A – The proposal is to expand Etonbury Academy to provide 180 places in each of the school's year groups from year 5 to year 11. The recent developments will accommodate pupils for sports and recreation and the proposed accommodation for this further expansion would mostly comprise of classrooms, a dance studio, offices and circulation space.

There will be a town planning application process for the planned expansion and therefore there will be a separate opportunity to comment on the plans as part of that process.

Q – How would the new facilities be used, e.g. what age groups/pupils would it serve?

A – The pupils will study at key stage 2, 3 and KS 4 [GCSE], aged 9 to 16. In the main pupils will transfer to Samuel Whitbread Academy at 16+ for Sixth Form programmes of study.

Q – Will parents have the option to transfer their children to Samuel Whitbread at the end of year 8?

A – Yes, parents will be able to complete the relevant admissions documents on the CBC website.

Q – When would the new accommodation for the school's expansion be completed?

A - Subject to obtaining all the necessary consents it is likely that the new accommodation would be subject to a phased completion from September 2017.

Q – Does the Council have the funds to provide the accommodation needed for the school's expansion?

A – Yes, the cost of the school expansion and fitting out would be paid for by developer's contributions and the Department for Education's Basic Need Grant via the Council's New School Places Programme.

Q – How would admissions to the expanded school be managed? Would there be an intake from across the age range?

A – The admissions arrangements would remain as they are for the existing Etonbury Academy site, with the same admissions criteria remaining in place. The catchment area for the academy would remain unchanged and a total of 180 places would eventually be available per year group. The admission to Etonbury would be based primarily on its catchment.

Q – What provision would be made for early years and 'wrap around' care?

A – The current consultation which the Council supports, is specifically related to provision for statutory aged pupils. The provision of extended school activities would be the subject of further discussions between the academy and community to establish the type of provision and/or activities which are to be sought or needed and could be provided within the available accommodation.

The Academy is seeking to establish nursery provision on the school site but this is not part of the current consultation and is a proposal that is being developed separately with further announcements to be provided in due course.

Q – Would this expansion impact upon the existing staff?

A – The school would need to recruit new teaching and support staff to enable the larger school to operate effectively in the long term.

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

A - The Executive of Central Bedfordshire Council will consider the proposal to commence consultation on the proposal to expand Etonbury Academy at their meeting on 5 April 2016. If the Executive give their approval for the proposal, Etonbury Academy has indicated its willingness to accommodate catchment pupils over its admission number in September 2016, ahead of the availability of the new buildings in September 2017.

Q – Have any alternative solutions been considered, other than the expansion of Etonbury Academy?

A – Yes. A number of options were considered by the Council including the possible creation of a completely new school. However, by asking BEMAT to expand Etonbury Academy, the Council is following its Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning, which underpins all council decisions regarding new school places. These policy principles include -

1. the need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel
2. the need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable
3. the ability to support the expansion of local popular and successful schools or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools
4. the potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities



Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust Ltd [BEMAT]

The expansion of Etonbury Academy [phase 2]

Questionnaire – please circle your answer [YES/NO] and make a comment if you wish.

1. Would you be in favour of Etonbury Academy expanding to provide secondary education in the Arlesey and Stotfold area so that all children can be educated locally?

YES NO

Comment

2. Would you be in favour of the enlargement of the campus to accommodate up to 1260 pupils by 2017 to facilitate this?

YES NO

Comment

3. Do you have any concerns about these proposed changes?

YES NO

Comment

4. Is there anything else you would like to suggest to us as part of this consultation?

YES NO

Comment

[Optional]

Name: Email:

Address:

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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

5 April 2016

New Lower School Places in Fairfield Parish

Report of: Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Education and Skills
(mark.versallion@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officer: Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services
(sue.harrison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. To provide Executive with the outcome of a consultation exercise for the commissioning of new lower school places within the Parish of Fairfield from September 2017.
2. To provide the Council's Executive with the school's business case for expansion, to recommend approval of the proposal and to consider the next steps in the commissioning of new school places within the Parish of Fairfield from September 2017.
3. To delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Education and Skills, to approve any contractual arrangements necessary on behalf of the Council to undertake the required capital works for the proposed project within this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Approve the proposal of the Governing Body of Fairfield Park Lower School to permanently expand onto a second site from a 2 form of entry (300 place) lower school for pupils aged 3 to 9, to a 4 form of entry (600 place) lower school for pupils aged 3 to 9 also providing a 60 place nursery, increasing the school's published admission number from 60 to 120 with effect from 1 September 2017, 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 2016.**
2. **Delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Education and Skills, to approve any contractual arrangements necessary to undertake capital works required to deliver the proposed project in this report.**

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny

4. On the 28 January 2016 Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee were consulted on a draft report to the Council's February Executive which set out the background of forecast demographic growth in Stotfold and the Parish of Fairfield.
5. The report provided a recommendation to support the commencement of consultation by the Governing Body of Fairfield Lower School to provide new Lower School places in Fairfield Parish from September 2017.
6. The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee indicated its support for the proposal to commence consultation on the provision of new lower school places in Fairfield Ward.

New School Places in the Parish of Fairfield

7. On the 9 February 2016 the Council's Executive received the report setting out the background of forecast demographic growth in Stotfold and the Parish of Fairfield.
8. The Council's Executive considered the report and approved the recommendation to support the commencement of consultation by the Governing Body of Fairfield Park Lower School to permanently expand onto a second site with effect from 1 September 2017.
9. The Executive also invited the school to prepare a business case to illustrate how its expansion would comply with the Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools.
10. In response to the Executive decision, the school's consultation commenced on the 10 February 2016. Consultees included;

Fairfield Lower School Staff
Trade Union representatives
Fairfield Lower School governors
Local residents
General public
Head teachers and Chairs of Governors of all other Central Bedfordshire schools and academies
All CBC Ward Members
Fairfield Parish Council
Stotfold Town Council
The Church of England and Roman Catholic Dioceses
The local MP.
11. A public meeting was also facilitated by the school, Council officers and members of the architectural design team were in attendance and a press release was published in the local newspaper.

12. The consultation concluded on the 9 March 2016 and received 16 responses in total of which 14 respondents indicated they agreed with the proposed expansion.
13. The remainder indicated they neither agreed or disagreed with the proposal and where issues were recorded by respondents the main themes were concerns over increased traffic congestion, the need for safe pedestrian crossings and a request for reduced speed limits and sufficient parking. These are issues which will be addressed through the separate planning application and design of the housing development within which the new school site will be provided.
14. A request for clarity over school admissions criteria across both sites and the need to future proof the second site were also recorded as issues by respondents. The Council continues to work with the School's Governing Body to ensure that appropriate admissions criteria can be provided for the growing community and that the design and layout of the new site maximises opportunities for further development, if needed.
15. The School's Governing Body has provided its own response in Appendix A to the main issues that arose from respondents and on conclusion of the consultation, and in consideration of the matters arising, the School's full Governing Body has confirmed its overwhelming support for the proposal and continues to work with the Council in developing the design proposal for the new facilities.
16. The business case that the Governing Body has prepared is attached at Appendix B.

Reasons for Decision

17. The proposal set out in this report represents the commissioning of new school places required by the Council to ensure it continues to comply with its legal obligation to meet the needs of the local demographic.
18. The proposal and consultation has followed the process required by DfE guidance on Governing Body proposals to make changes to maintained schools.
19. The School has submitted a business case which has been evaluated by Council officers and is provided at Appendix B attached to this report. The proposal complies with the Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools and the school's ambition is aligned with the Council's Partnership Vision for Education 2015-2019.

Council Priorities

20. The report supports Central Bedfordshire's Five Year Plan 2015- 2020 and the specific priority of Improving Education and Skills.

Legal Implications

21. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on Councils to secure sufficient primary and secondary school places to provide appropriate education for pupils in its area. S14A of the Education Act 1996 imposes a duty to consider representations about the exercise by local authorities of their functions from the parents of qualifying children in relation to the provision of primary and secondary education. Qualifying children include all those of compulsory school age or under.
22. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Councils a strategic role as commissioners, of school places and includes duties to consider parental representation, diversity and choice, duties in relation to high standards and the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and fair access to educational opportunity.
23. The main legislation governing school organisation is found in sections 6A-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.
24. Department for Education Guidance for proposers and decision makers regarding school organisation in maintained schools was published in January 2014 to support the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.
25. This guidance has recently been removed from the DfE website and we have been advised it is currently under review and will be replaced shortly where it can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>
26. As a consequence of changes introduced by the 2013 Regulations (at Schedule 2, paragraph 12), Governing Bodies are now able to propose to make a range of changes to their schools without following a formal statutory process. These include significant expansion such as that proposed to Fairfield Park Lower School.
27. Governing Bodies are required to adhere to the usual principles of public law: they must act rationally; they must take into account all relevant considerations; and they must follow a fair procedure.

28. As is required, the Governing Body of Fairfield Park Lower School has liaised closely with the Local Authority and the proposal is aligned with wider school place planning/ organisational arrangements. All necessary consents have been secured and the Executive recommendation is subject to the granting of any outstanding planning permissions required for the new school site.
29. The Governing Body has ensured that there has been effective consultation with parents and other interested parties to gauge demand and to provide consultees with sufficient opportunity to give their views for the proposed change.
30. The Governing Body continues to work with the Council to ensure that the new school site has suitable accommodation and the Council will ensure that all necessary capital funding and planning permissions have been secured before the expansion can be implemented. If Executive approve the recommendations of this report and the proposal is implemented, the Governing Body will inform the Secretary of State.
31. Where proposers seek to expand onto an additional site they will need to ensure that the new provision is genuinely a change to an existing school and not in affect a new school. Where proposers seek an expansion which is in fact a new school the Council would be required to set up a new free school through a prescribed DfE process in accordance with s6A Education and Inspections Act 2006.
32. The Council should therefore consider whether the proposal is an expansion of an existing school through a number of established factors. These factors are outlined in the previous Guidance which, although currently undergoing review, has set out established guidelines for such determinations. The purpose of considering these factors is to determine the level of integration between the two sites; the more integration, the more likely the change can be considered as an expansion.

These include,

- The reasons for the expansion
 - What is the rational for this approach and this particular site?
- Admission and curriculum arrangements
 - How will the new site be used (eg which age groups/pupils will it serve)?
 - What will the admission arrangements be?
 - Will there be movement of pupils between sites?
- Governance and administration
 - How will whole school activities be managed?
 - Will staff be employed on contracts to work on both sites? How frequently will they do so?

- What governance, leadership and management arrangements will be put in place to oversee the new site (eg will the new site be governed by the same governing body and the same school leadership team)?
 - Physical characteristics of the school
 - How will facilities across the two sites be used (eg sharing of the facilities and resources available at the two sites, such as playing fields)?
 - Is the new site in an area that is easily accessible to the community that the current school serves?
33. Council officers have evaluated the school's proposal, its business case attached at Appendix B and the school's consultation document and have confirmed that the proposal reflects significant integration across both current and new school site, serving the same community, under the same governance and leadership arrangements. Council officers have concluded that the proposal complies with the factors relating to an expansion of an existing school as set out in the previous DfE Guidance.

Financial Implications

34. The New School Places Programme is funded by developer contributions and Basic Need grant income from the Department for Education (DfE) and on current planning assumptions the programme 2016/17 to 2020/21 is now forecast with gross expenditure of £20.2M in 2016/17, £25M in 2017/18, £19M in 2018/19, £17M in 2019/20 and £7.7M in 2020/21.
35. As set in the report to the Council's Executive on 9 February 2016, the Council has secured the new school site and capital contributions for new education provision in the area in a Section 106 agreement with the developer of new housing on the site of the former pig testing unit on Hitchin Road, within the Parish of Fairfield.
36. The project and its anticipated funding are contained within the Council's New School Places Programme approved in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2019/20.
37. The Council will continue to ensure that all opportunities are taken to increase income and to seek alternative funding sources for new build and expansions of existing school buildings.
38. 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 (DSG) and is based primarily on the numbers of pupils attending and will increase accordingly in an expanded school.

39. 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 DSG funded Growth Fund established by the Schools Forum.
40. 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 Education and Skills, in consultation with the Director of Children's Services, as required by the Council's constitution.

Equalities Implications

41. 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.
42. 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.
43. This statutory duty includes requirements to:
 - i. Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - ii. Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
 - iii. Encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
44. As commissioner of the new school places that will be provided through the proposal of Fairfield Park Lower School the Council has considered that there are no discrimination issues that arise from the change being proposed.

Risk Management

45. The proposal to commission new lower school places and to allocate related capital investment outlined in this report implements the identified need to manage demographic growth in the previously published School Organisation Plan and mitigates the risk on the Council of failing in its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

Key risks include:

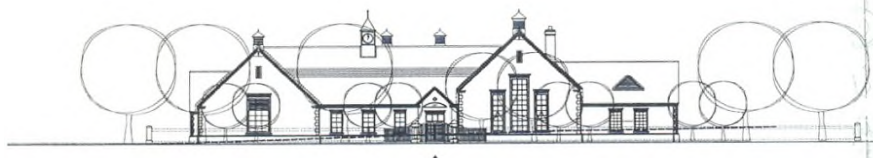
- Failure to discharge legal and statutory duties/guidance.
- Failure to deliver the Council's strategic priorities
- Reputational risks associated with the non delivery of required school places.
- Inability of schools to recruit suitable additional staff
- Failure to secure planning consents
- Financial risks, including;
 - Non realisation of anticipated Section 106 monies and anticipated levels of government grant.
 - Potential for overspend on any project within the programme.

Appendices

The following appendices are attached:

Appendix A – Governing Body's summary of consultation responses

Appendix B – Business case



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18th March 2016

e: Fairfield Park Proposed Expansion

At our Full Governing Board meeting last night, attended by all governors, we agreed unanimously with the proposal to expand onto a second site. Governors have been delighted with the overwhelmingly positive responses of the community. We have also seen positive support from the staff, who are all very excited by the opportunity to work with more families and extend the very positive ethos and high standards of the existing school.

Please find below a summary of the responses received from the community;

Total responses – 16

- 69% - Strongly agree with the proposed expansion
- 18.5% - Agree with the proposed expansion
- 12.5% - Neither agree or disagree

Main themes:

- Increased traffic congestion/reduced speed limits/sufficient parking
- Safe pedestrian crossings
- Admissions criteria across both sites
- Future proofing second site

The Governing Body are willing to work closely with the Council in order to address these concerns, to ensure the safety of our children, that the admissions criteria is the same across both sites and that the second site will accommodate the children from the new development.

We look forward to a positive outcome for this proposal and a successful working partnership with your team.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sue Howley MBE
Chair of Governors



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Business Case for proposed school expansion for September 2017 implementation.

Fairfield Park Lower School

Please insert how the proposed expansion of your school meets each of Central Bedfordshire Council's 9 policy principles for pupil place planning - below . As a guide, please consider and delete the explanatory grey text provided in each section before inserting 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 existing school opened as one form entry with a nursery in September 2007 with 57 children in Year R to Year 2. A partnership arrangement was made with "Poppyfields" to provide preschool places, Breakfast and After School Care especially for the significant number of working parents. This was operated initially from 2 of the classrooms but by 2009 it was essential to provide a separate building with community space which was commissioned by the LA.</p> <p>It was evident to governors that the population on the development would outstrip the places available. Numbers quickly grew and governors lobbied councillors to extend the school to 2 form entry to meet the needs of the catchment community. CBC accepted the need to provide more places for children in the immediate catchment and the school is now a 2 form entry school for Year R to Year 4 and a 30 place Nursery. The extension process began with the addition of one classroom in 2011. Following an archaeological dig of a large area of the grounds in the Spring of 2012 major works were carried out to all areas of the school to create a 2 form entry school ready for September 2014</p> <p><i>Section 38 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 also places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion. Promoting 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.</i></p> <p>The school has always been at the centre of its community, providing the only space for local groups until the Community Hall was finally completed in 2012. Almost all children are from the immediate catchment and the number of in catchment first preferences is greater than places resulting in appeals for the last 5 years. The Governing Board has led the demand for additional places for children living in the immediate community from its opening in 2007. The comprehensive before and after school provision fosters that community cohesion. The PTA arranges a range of family activities throughout the year which are very well attended. We would aim to mirror all of this provision on a second expanded site.</p> <p>Community ownership is currently strong and if the school expands it will continue to want to be at the heart of the community and mirror our current provision of 8am – 6pm provision and through the school holidays as well. We have a wealth of clubs that enrich the lives of our pupils from many sporting pursuits, to art, IT, cooking, gardening etc. Our facilities promote lettings to generate income and offer wider community events for wider family use from exercise, church events, and Children Centre activities and drop ins, sporting coaching activities, play schemes, parties and special occasions. We share car parking facilities with the community hall next door for the good of the whole community. Community generation would be at the heart of all new communities especially as this smaller site is not planning to have their own independent community centre so we would advocate being hosts to be the satellite community provision on this second school site. As this is a current embedded practice in the life of Fairfield Park this could be an asset to this new site.</p> <p><i>Section 76 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 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.</i></p>

	<p>The Fairfield Park Development has been built as a pedestrian friendly environment. A very large majority of our children walk / scoot and cycle. Our data demonstrates this and the school have had success in the Big Pedal Regional competition in 1st place in 2012, 2013 and 2nd in 2014, it is now an annual event. Our annual travel plan shows how these aspects thread through the school curriculum with added enrichment activities such as KS2 Bikeability and KS1 Scootability as annual events.</p> <p>We place considerable emphasis on healthy, active lifestyles which is evidenced by lunchtime and after school provision supported by our 2 Sports Apprentices. We celebrate sporting achievements by parents, pupils and staff in our termly Sports/PE bulletin for e.g.: staff participation in the Rainbow 5K run; staff ran, cycled, swum for Sport Relief; pupils have been selection for basketball and diving teams; supported a parent recently completing the London Marathon. Our aim would be to mirror this approach at the new school site.</p>
2	<p>The need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable.</p>
	<p>An expansion of Fairfield Park as another 2 form entry school would give the community further outstanding provision. All schools in the area are oversubscribed and extensive additional housing will create the demand for this school.</p> <p>The existing Ofsted outstanding school is very well managed with an excellent rich curriculum and resources which would be shared and mirrored. Finances have always been very well used to develop high quality learning environments.</p> <p>Over time the school has increased in size to accommodate catchment children using a variety of mixed age classes and rolling curriculum planning and cohort planning to ensure that the needs of all children are met.</p> <p>Fairfield Park Lower School is a proven successful 2 form entry lower school for Year R to Year 4 with a 30 FTE nursery and attached privately managed preschool. This model is very successful and allows the school to maintain very good outcomes for pupils which are higher than the National Average and better than similar schools in Central Bedfordshire. It is anticipated the new school will open as a 1 form entry school with the capacity to become 2 form entry as the population increases in response to demand. We believe that our current school can be replicated in this similar demographic development resulting in similar high outcomes. It will be led and managed by the current Headteacher and Governing Board, both very experienced in coping with expansion and with a good understanding of the local demographic. We employ a Business Manager and have developed a middle leadership structure to ensure that the Headteacher and Deputy can focus on leading teaching and learning, raising achievement and maintaining high standards.</p> <p>The Headteacher and deputy have led the existing school through a period of considerable change and growth and are well equipped to deal with further growth. This has always been a strength of the school and the leadership & management have maintained outstanding results over a 5 year period</p>

Attainment, Average Points Score at Key Stage 1 : Overall and by Subject (KS1.1Trend)

The following pages provide analysis of pupils' average points scores over the last five years in reading, writing and mathematics.

Table 4.2.4

Statistical significance tests have been performed on the data using a 95% confidence interval, and where the school value differs significantly from the corresponding national value for this group sig+ or sig- is shown below. Where the school value differs significantly from the previous year's, ↑ or ↓ is shown to indicate the direction of this change.

Year		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
All Subjects	Cohort	28	36	35	47	64
	School	17.9	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.8
	National	15.3	15.5	15.8	15.9	16.1
	Difference	2.6	2.0	1.7	1.6	1.7
	Significance	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+
Reading	Cohort	28	36	35	47	64
	School	18.0	17.7	17.7	18.1	18.0
	National	15.8	16.0	16.3	16.5	16.6
	Difference	2.2	1.7	1.4	1.6	1.4
	Significance	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+
Writing	Cohort	28	36	35	47	64
	School	17.5	17.3	17.3	17.0	17.6
	National	14.4	14.7	14.9	15.1	15.3
	Difference	3.1	2.6	2.4	1.9	2.3
	Significance	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+
Mathematics	Cohort	28	36	35	47	64
	School	18.1	17.6	17.5	17.4	17.8
	National	15.7	15.9	16.1	16.2	16.4
	Difference	2.4	1.7	1.4	1.2	1.4
	Significance	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+	Sig+

The Headteacher and governors are passionate that this High attainment and rigorous focus on standards is carried over to a second site ensuring that it keeps our distinctive ethos and curriculum provision. We believe the expansion has the potential to attract high quality teaching staff, offering greater curriculum expertise and greater middle leadership opportunities for career pathways. Plus a 4 FE will also have the economy of scales in terms of the Headship, Business Manager and financial and admin teams, thus providing greater value for money.

As this is set in an affluent area with low deprivation index a 4FE would benefit the whole Fairfield Park community especially as both sites will operate as a 2FE, giving parents and the pupils a sense of 2 smaller schools at an operational level thus allowing for confidence, personal and social success for pupils as in a rural setting with the economy of scale and expertise at a leadership capacity of a 4FE. Thus the element of concern of being able to maintain consistency, coherence and whole school ethos would be mitigated under a 2 site proposal. In this model we get the benefit of being an ideal school with the maximum financial benefits of a bigger school.

We would be able to add to our current success and formula as a 2 FE. Thus we would fit the national recommendations of an ideal lower school size on each site i.e. 2FE giving the headteacher and leaders a balance of some teaching, as well as some time to manage and monitor, with the ability to employ appropriate non-teaching support in the school. We currently attract a high level of support staff across the school to deliver on the standards agenda. As the school expands to a 4FE on 2 sites we would mirror this provision and we would have the financial capability to do this as a larger school attracting more pupil numbers.

The Headteacher was appointed to open the school in September 2007 and is now well regarded nationally as an NLE and locally as a SIP, member of the Teaching School Management Board and Chair of the local lower Heads group. The Chair of Governors has experience of a similar expansion onto a second site at Greenleas and is also a NLG working with other local schools on School Improvement. The school and governors believe that the Leadership & Management expertise will ensure that a larger school rigorously promotes school improvement, our track record is evidence of this relentless focus and standing in the local community on the standards agenda.

The expansion to create 2 schools would enable the Governing Board to determine a salary range for the Headteacher in Group 4 which would provide appropriate growth potential. The leadership team has been increased and strengthened and includes a strong team of senior, middle leaders and outstanding class practitioners.

The school over the 9 years of opening have managed a healthy budget and ensured that they are richly staffed and resourced to offer a quality provision to meet high outcomes. CBC have always supported and funded us accordingly for example – being place led for the first 5 years rather than pupil led and given adequate funds to kit the school in terms of the FFE (fixed furniture expenditure). We have prudently managed these funds over the years to grow with us as we have grown with the number of pupils through the years. We are confident that we have the skills and previous experience of builds and managing change for this will be sustained further over 2 sites.

CBC are currently supporting us with a temporary solution for September 2016 to house a 3rd Reception class, funding the changes to modify a class space and we have had notification of an additional 30k to support FFE for these additional pupils, pre any further expansion.

The Headteacher and Governing Board have considerable experience of working with the LA on expansions to the existing school. The Pre School build in 2009, the archaeological dig of the grounds which removed a large area of play space and two phases of development to grow from the one to the current 2 form entry which was very complex and intrusive. We have a very detailed knowledge of the procurement process as we have constantly purchased items for a brand new 1 FE and then an extended 2FE; all these processes are rigorously embedded into our financial systems. A business case has been submitted to support this process.

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

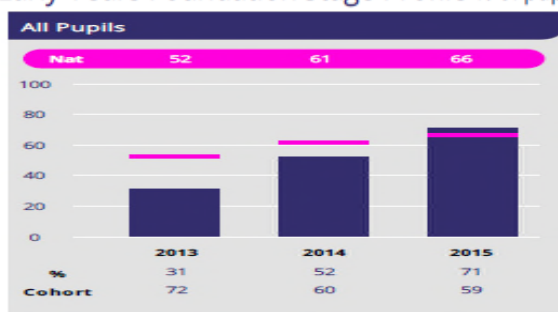
Fairfield Park is an Ofsted outstanding school. Demand for places at Fairfield Park is high with over subscription of first preferences leading to appeals.

We anticipate this will be the same at the new school as the school has a very good reputation locally. We have always worked closely with CBC to provide places for local children and provide community cohesion in a new development. Our extracurricular provision and close liaison with community groups including the new Parish Council reflect our commitment to working productively with the community. Our parents are overwhelmingly satisfied with the school as evidenced by annual surveys.

Data is very strong and reflects the commitment to ensuring high standards for all children.

Early Years Foundation Stage profiles outcomes

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile % of pupils that achieved a good level of development



EYFS pupils make very good progress, this graph shows an introduction of a new curriculum and assessment process in EYFS that had national dips re flaws in the system. Thus doesn't necessarily match the outstanding setting and outcomes of these pupils in the setting. The systems were further embedded by 2015 showing very good outcomes.

EYPS Pupils in 2104

Percentage of pupils achieving at least expected in													
Communication and language						Literacy				Mathematics			
Listening and attention		Understanding		Speaking		Reading		Writing		Numbers		Shape, space and measures	
Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat
93	84	90	84	85	82	90	74	72	67	67	75	88	79
89	79	86	80	79	78	86	69	64	60	71	71	89	76
97	89	94	88	91	87	94	80	78	75	63	78	88	83
100	74	100	74	67	72	67	58	33	51	67	60	67	65
93	86	89	86	86	84	91	78	74	71	67	78	89	82

EYFS Pupils in 2015

Percentage of pupils achieving at least expected in													
Communication and language						Literacy				Mathematics			
Listening and attention		Understanding		Speaking		Reading		Writing		Numbers		Shape, space and measures	
Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat	Sch	Nat
93	86	97	85	93	84	92	76	80	71	93	77	97	81
89	81	96	81	89	80	86	71	71	64	86	74	93	77
97	91	97	90	97	89	97	82	87	78	100	81	100	85
100	77	100	77	100	75	100	62	50	56	100	64	100	69
93	87	96	87	93	86	91	79	81	74	93	80	96	83

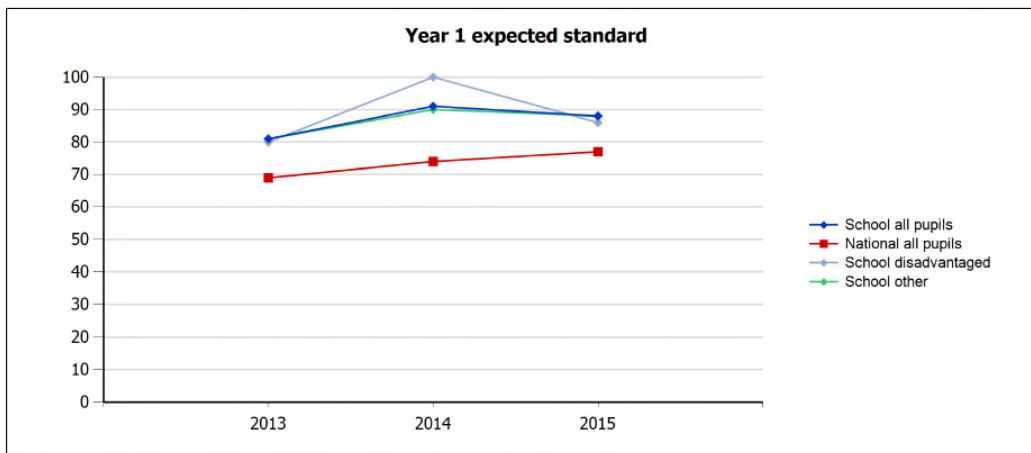
Attainment in Year 1 Phonics

Attainment in Phonics

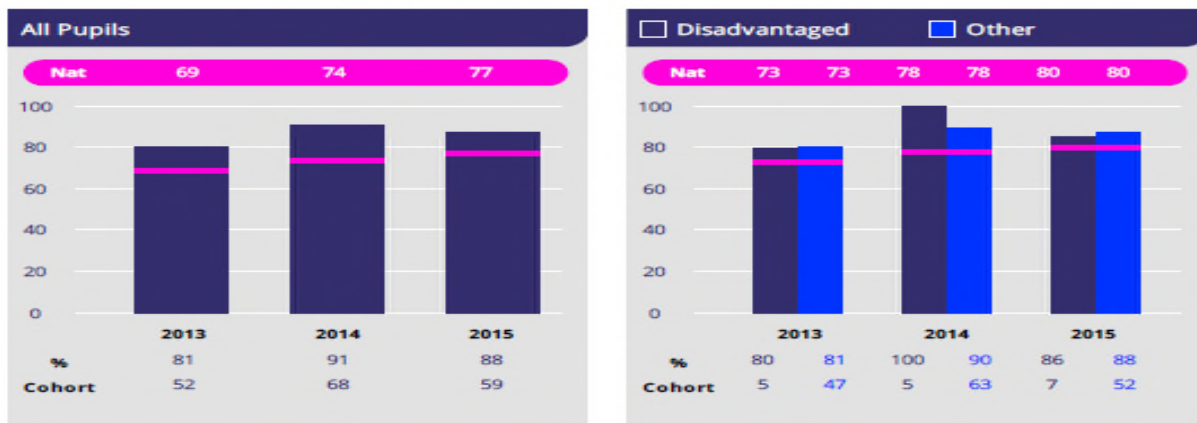


Table 4.1.1: Phonics: percentage achieving the expected standard in year one and by the end of year two – 3 year trend (Y12.PPT)

This report provides analysis of pupils reaching the expected standard over the last three years in the phonics screening check for the school and national.



Phonics Year 1 % of pupils that met the expected standard

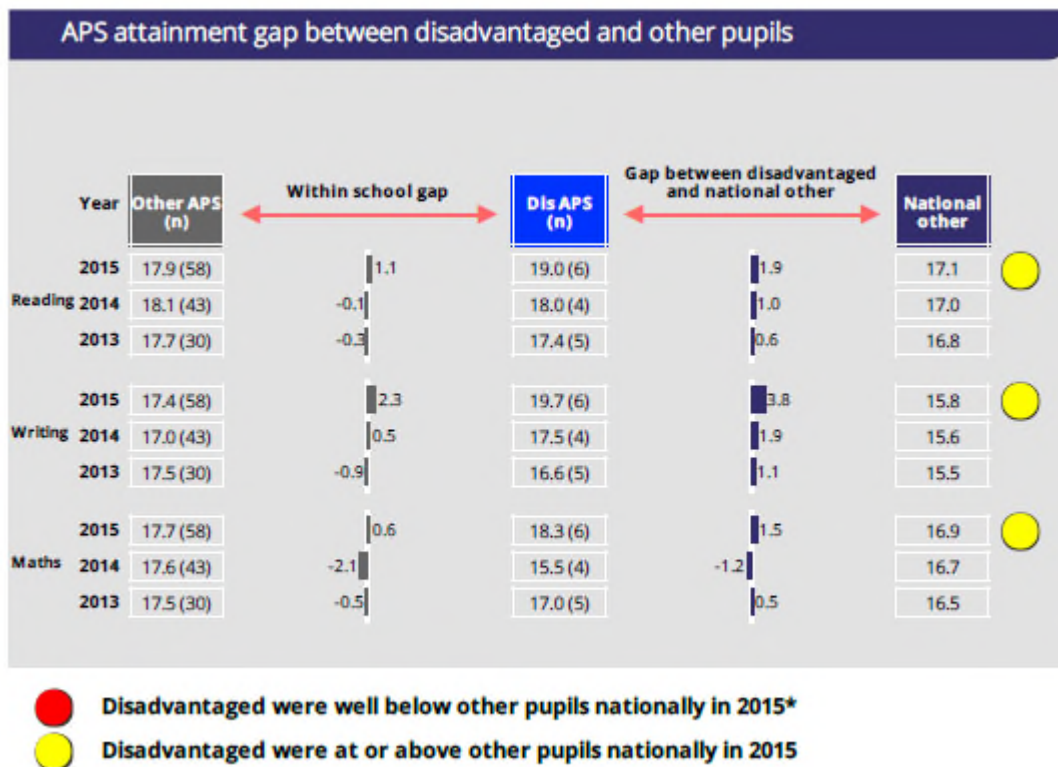


A 3 year trend shows that our year 1 pupils are exceeding the National Standard for phonics at the end of Year, including the disadvantaged groups of pupils as well. We have a 3 year trend of 100% of pupils attaining at year 2 this standard.

End of KS1 data

All Subjects	2013	2014	2015
Cohorts	35	47	64
School	17.5	17.5	17.8
National	15.8	15.9	16.1
Difference	1.7	1.6	1.7
Significance	Sig +	Sig +	Sig +
Reading			
Cohorts	35	47	64
School	17.7	18.1	18.0
National	16.3	16.5	16.6
Difference	1.4	1.6	1.4
Significance	Sig +	Sig +	Sig +
Writing			
Cohorts	35	47	64
School	17.3	17.0	17.6
National	14.9	15.1	15.3
Difference	2.4	1.9	2.3
Significance	Sig +	Sig +	Sig +
Maths			
Cohorts	35	47	64
School	17.5	17.4	17.8
National	16.1	16.2	16.4
Difference	1.4	1.2	1.4
Significance	Sig +	Sig +	Sig +

Disadvantaged pupils do very well at our school



End of year data at our exit point of Year 4

The graphs below show the prior attainment in terms of Key Stage 1 average points score, of pupils studying at Key Stage 2 in your school in 2014/2015. This has been broken down by year group. The graphs also show the national picture for maintained mainstream schools (the national average displayed beside each graph is based on matched pupil records from the 2015 National Pupil Database, and is not the same as the average score of all pupils who took the tests). When interpreting the charts the level of coverage should be taken into account.

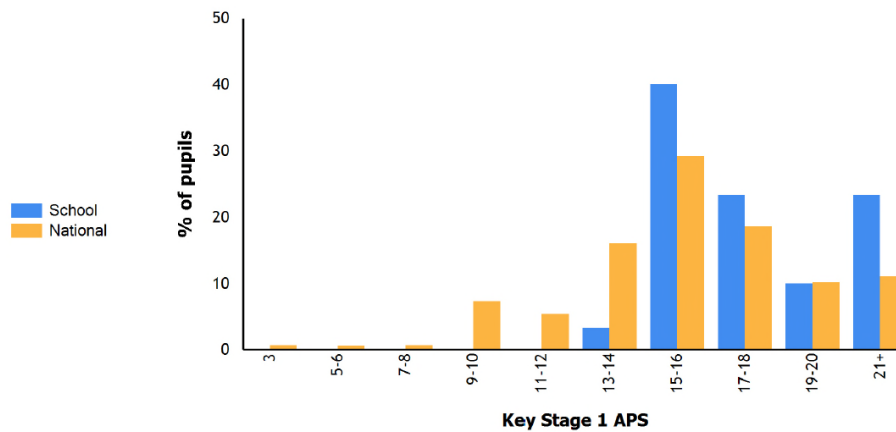
Average points score at KS1

NC Year starting Sept 2014	School	National	Difference	Sig	% Coverage
Year 4	17.7	15.8	1.9	Sig+	100.0
Year 3	17.7	16.0	1.7	Sig+	100.0

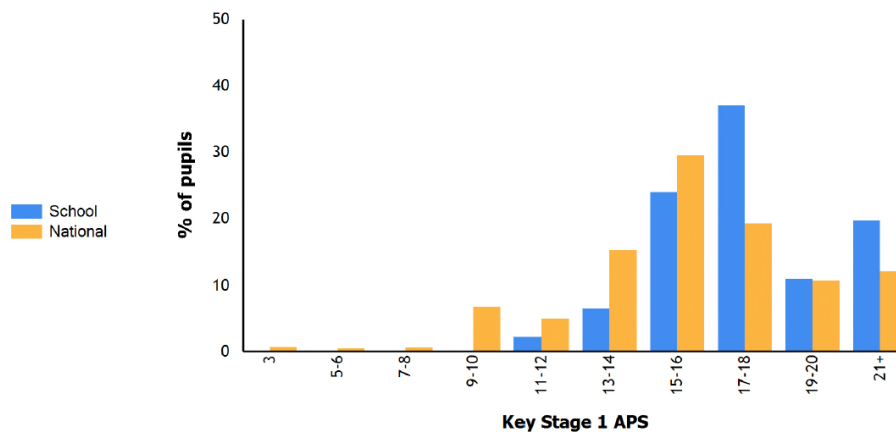
% by Prior Attainment Band

	School			National		
	Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High
Year 4	0.0	60.0	40.0	12.9	58.5	28.5
Year 3	0.0	56.5	43.5	11.8	57.9	30.3

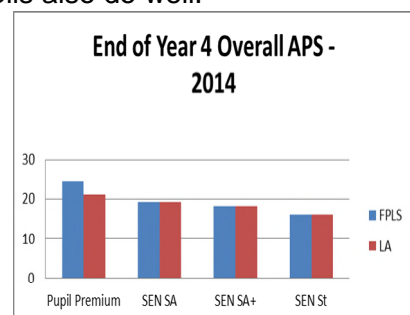
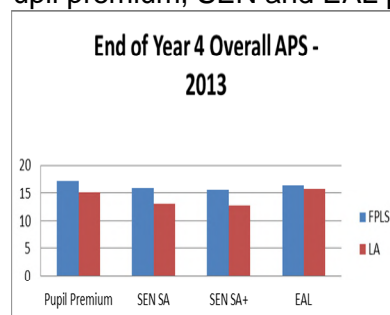
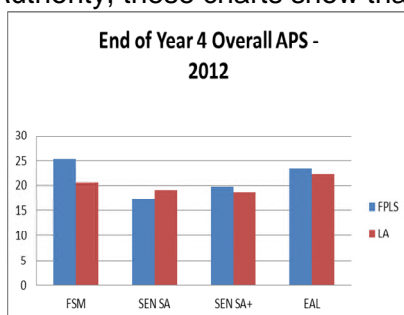
Year 4 in September 2014



Year 3 in September 2014



Our 3 Year Trend show that our pupils attain well at our school exit point compared to the Local Authority, these charts show that Pupil premium, SEN and EAL pupils also do well.



Our (SEF) School Evaluation judgements and desk top review of data show that we have sustained our Ofsted outstanding status since 2012, year on year. This was further validated on the 2.3.16 by a recent external view confirming the Heads and Leaders judgements.

SEF Context and characteristics of the school for 2014-2015 & 2015-2016	
Ofsted areas	Outstanding
The Quality of Leadership and Management of the school	Outstanding
The Behaviour and Safety of Pupils in the school	Outstanding
The Quality of Teaching in the school	Outstanding
Achievement of Pupils	Outstanding
Effectiveness of EYFS Provision	Outstanding
Overall Effectiveness	

The School Development Plan clearly articulates how the school focuses on continuous improvement, sustaining high expectations and high standards for all.

2015-2016

Priorities	Monitoring
To manage change and sustain whole school outstanding standards in line with the educational climate	SLT learning walks completed – feedback reports to all staff – actions taken for impact / linked to staff appraisal targets and pay related CPD – High quality T&L for all staff School Improvement Partner external visit to validate school judgments – 1.3.16 – judged to be outstanding and no inconsistencies seen across the school, all T&L good or better Close tracking of data shows that pupils are on target to reach aspirational targets
To raise the profile of SPAG in our wider curriculum in line with national curriculum requirements.	SLT learning walks completed – feedback reports to all staff – actions taken for impact / linked to staff appraisal targets and pay related CPD related to SPAG – up skill all staff Staff agenda items to up level staff and monitoring states that lesson observed and book scrutiny that outcomes are High SPAG evident through all learning tasks and through the wider curriculum Governor learning walks completed and evidence showed that literacy has been maintained as a High profile and that SPAG is being taught creatively by all Close tracking of data shows good attainment and on track for target setting
To raise the quality of computing T&L through the phases. To ensure that ICT is further integral and embedded into whole school practices as a “FE	SLT learning walks completed – feedback reports to all staff – actions taken for impact / linked to staff appraisal targets and pay related CPD related to Computing and IT – up skill all staff Staff agenda items to up level staff and monitoring states that lesson observed and book scrutiny that outcomes are High IT evident through all learning tasks and through the wider curriculum Governor learning walks completed and evidence showed that computing has been maintained as a High profile and that IT devices are being used across the school to enhance learning IT infrastructures in place to be improved for a 2FE to enable IT to be more enhanced across the school and enable better learning opportunities for pupils

Fairfield Park has a strong vision and clear aims:

Aims & Values

Fairfield Park Lower School provides **all** children with the opportunity to **enjoy** learning and achieve their **very best**, in a **safe, secure, and supportive** environment. Our school will set **high expectations** for **all** learners to achieve **high standards**.

Our school helps children to become **healthy** and **confident** individuals, as well as **team players** and leading into **responsible citizens** for the future. We will encourage all children to be **creative, enquiring, active, eco friendly, valued, and skilful** through a **diverse** curriculum.

Our school **community** will support **all** children and adults into becoming **lifelong learners** and **respect** each other's **talents and achievements**. We aim to work in **partnership** with the community of which we are a part. We will **embrace** new **technologies** and constantly **strive** for improvement for the future of **all** our learners.

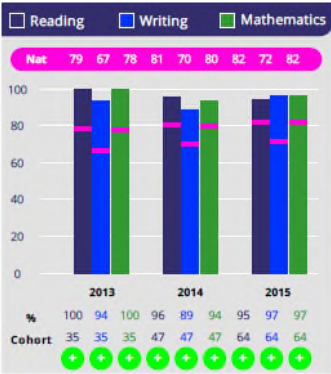
	<p>The Headteacher and Governing Board have considerable experience of working with the LA on expansions to the existing school - The Pre School build in 2009, the archaeological dig of the grounds which removed a large area of play space and two phases of development to grow from the one to the current 2 form entry from 2012 – 14 which was very complex and intrusive. This provides very clear evidence not only that the Head and Governing Board can manage major build and development but can ensure the safety and well being of children and staff and maintain very high standards and outcomes during very difficult development.</p> <p>The Governing Board is strong and experienced with members drawn from a broad spectrum of the local community. Several members live on the development and have a very good understanding of local issues.</p> <p>The Headteacher has already been involved in feasibility studies with the local authority and prospective builders.</p>
4	<p>The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities</p> <p>Fairfield Park Lower School is a founding partner of the Teaching School with the Head playing a major role in its development. The Deputy helped establish and recruit the team of SLEs. The school continues to be involved in SCITT recruitment and training, moderation and assessment. The school has been recognised as a potential lead school should there be any Ofsted downgrade to the current Teaching School.</p> <p>The Headteacher is Chair of the First Alliance local Heads group. She provides a venue for high quality, cost effective, training opportunities for Heads and staff, attracting key speakers of National repute. She also established a local Heads development group. She has been a strong advocate of improving transition and raising standards through improved collaboration with the local cluster of schools.</p> <p>As an NLE and SIP she has provided support to a number of schools in the last 4 years.</p> <p>The Chair of Governors is a member of several CBC committees including the Schools Forum and technical sub groups for High Needs and Early Years, The Children's Safeguarding Board, The Partnership Vision for Education Board and sub group for School Readiness.</p> <p>The school actively encourages the development of staff. The Headteacher is a strong advocate for staff development and every opportunity is taken to develop our own middle leaders, HLTAs and other support staff. The current deputy is an internal appointment and we have just appointed a SCITT trainee who began as a Learning Support Assistant, as a full time class teacher.</p>
5	<p>The ambition to achieve a single phase of education 0 -19 and reduce school transfer points</p> <p>The school has provided Nursery classes since it opened and has worked in partnership with Poppyfields to offer preschool for 2 -3 year olds and wrap around care. The transition from Early Years is well managed although a small number of children join us in Reception not having attended our nursery. The new expansion will provide this integrated approach which we believe is essential to the ethos and success of the school.</p> <p>Poppyfields is housed in a separate purpose built building in the grounds which has been used overtime to provide additional nursery classes and various community services like the Children's Centre. We have always aimed to maximise provision for the community as the development is located some way from the main population hub.</p> <p>The Headteacher has always collaborated with the local pyramid of schools and since having Key Stage 2 children in Years 3 and 4, this has been a real focus to support high standards and successful transition. This is always an area for much debate with the mid Key Stage transfer to the middle school. The 4 local lower school Head teachers have an agreed aim to continuously improve this especially in the light of the very rapid growth and many changes taking place at the middle school; the heads are currently working on a KS2 working agreement to improve KS2 outcomes for CBC and reduce the current transition impact on the standards agenda.</p>

	<p>Collaboration on shared curriculum , expectations, progress and ethos are still areas for further development as the middle school is currently very pre occupied with growth and change.</p> <p>It seems likely that some of our ex pupils will remain at the middle school for their secondary education rather than moving onto the upper school. There is some disquiet amongst parents about the changes taking place at the middle / upper schools which will need to be addressed; they will need some reassurance of the strategic picture of continual growth up the chain. A greater focus is needed on improving KS2 outcomes and transition points, Heads in the local Etonbury and Samuel Whitfield Academy pyramid are working together to eliminate transition impact, increase accountability and begin to try and find better solutions that have greater impact. Heads meet regularly and have close working relationships.</p>
6	<p>The need to support the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).</p>
	<p>Fairfield Park aims to provide all children with a lifelong love of learning. Staff have high expectations and children are encouraged to achieve their very best. Outcomes are very good especially in Year 4. This should have a positive impact on their aspirations and future learning post 16.</p> <p>The exciting rich curriculum provides many opportunities for this. There is a wide range of after school clubs which we would aim to replicate as soon as numbers make this viable, such as football, rugby, karate, gym, tri-gold, trampoline, yoga, netball, archery, tennis, dance, music, drama, Lego, film, science, craft, Spanish, French and cookery.</p> <p>Fairfield Park works closely with the local catchment Upper school and these pupils support learning through our project weeks such as Engineering week, attending and delivering learning sessions to our pupils. Offering aspirations to our pupils of staying on in education to attain professional jobs.</p> <p>Redborne pupils attend and support on the Sports programme agenda and are role models to our pupils of future sporting opportunities, as well as 2 male sports apprentices currently working with our children in the classroom and out of school activities.</p>
7	<p>To seek opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.</p>
	<p>Fairfield Park Lower School has been built to a very high design specification dictated by the local framework. All decisions to develop the grounds have been subjected to very specific planning requirements. Great care has always been taken to maintain a very high quality building and children are taught to respect and look after their resources. The specialist facilities like the Dance Studio, ICT room and community spaces are particularly good. The Early Years areas are excellent in size and provision. Corridors feature interesting artefacts and children's work which stimulate and inspire. Displays are very high quality and children's work is valued and beautifully presented and displayed throughout the school.</p> <p>The Headteacher has been in post since before the school opened in 2007 and has been instrumental in developing a very clear vision with her team and the Governing Board. This has resulted in a very high quality learning environment inside and outside with all areas of the school well resourced, equipped and maintained. Classrooms are very bright and attractive. Learning Bays have been created to provide excellent space for small group work and nurture.</p> <p>Outside play areas have been thoughtfully developed to provide excellent opportunities for creative play. The employment of 2 Sports Apprentices has enhanced lunchtime and after school provision. These have been further enhanced in 2015-2016 with the support of the parents, PTA and fund raising and have purchased an additional climbing frame and outside amphitheatre with PA system.</p> <p>The school has been well used by the local community since it opened as then there was no other provision. Currently there are a number of community lettings. We would aim to replicate this approach at the new school. We have first hand experience of supporting new residents and creating community cohesion by making facilities available. Our website and lettings policy promotes community cohesion and we received an 'outstanding' status for this in our first Ofsted in 2009 under the Framework of</p>

	Community Cohesion and the Councils Light House award for our comprehensive extended services provision. This ethos has been at the heart of our development and growth and this will be replicated on the 2 nd provision, especially as there is a probability of no community centre in any initial plans.
8	<p>To promote the diversity of provision offered in Central Bedfordshire to increase opportunities for parental choice</p> <p>We have always aimed to provide places for our local community. Expanding our provision onto a second site with a purpose built 2 form entry school built at the same time as the houses should ensure that children living in those homes will be able to attend their local school situated within walking distance.</p> <p>Central Bedfordshire has a comprehensive system of education providing educational opportunities for all its pupils and the Council recognises, supports and encourages the need for a diverse range and ethos within the schools in the area to provide opportunities for parental choice.</p> <p>The Central Bedfordshire geographical area comprises only co-educational schools and the majority of schools are based on a three tier system of education although schools are encouraged to consider alternative models of leadership, governance and school organisation to achieve the Council's overarching aim of raising standards.</p> <p>The Council's aim is to create a more diverse school system offering excellence and choice, where each school has a strong ethos and sense of mission and may act as a centre of excellence in particular areas or offer specialist provision in order to meet the aspirations of parents, help raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps.</p>
9	<p>To support vulnerable learners in Area Special Schools and integrate appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within mainstream schools</p> <p>We have excellent provision for all our vulnerable groups provided by qualified, experienced well trained staff which will be available to all new pupils</p> <p>Our Ofsted report highlights that All pupils attain well and there are no groups that are not achieving or progressing well.</p> <p>KS1 thresholds show that All pupils are significantly performing well and that disadvantaged pupils are well above the National Standard for reading, writing and maths over a 3 year trend and in a majority of disadvantaged pupils are also above the national standard as well and are achieving a level 3 at the end of KS1. (see charts below)</p>

The national standard of an Expected level of a level 2B:

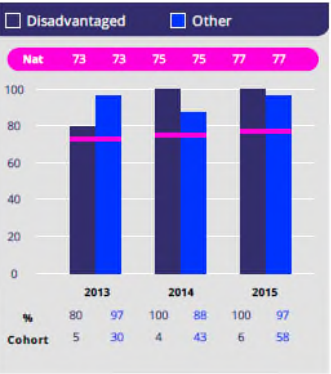
% attaining level 2B+ (All pupils)



Reading



Writing

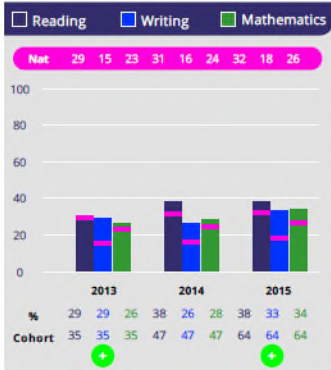


Mathematics

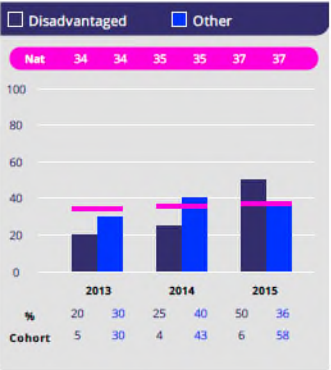


The national standard of an Above Expected level of a 3

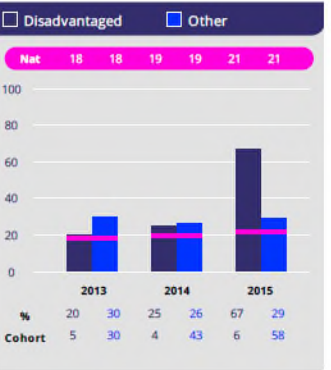
% attaining level 3+ (All pupils)



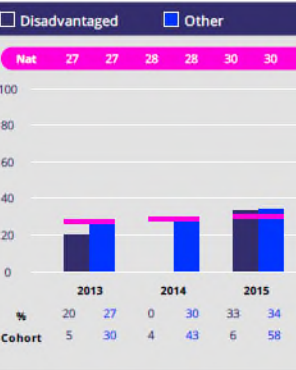
Reading



Writing



Mathematics



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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

5 April 2016

Orchard Community Building - Land East of Biggleswade

Report of Executive Member for Stronger Communities, Councillor Andrew Turner (andrew.turner@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk); and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, Councillor Richard Wenham (richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officer Marcel Coiffait Director of Community Services (marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk); and Peter Fraser, Head of Partnerships, Community Engagement and Youth Support (Peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This report relates to a key decision

Purpose of this report

1. To seek a decision on the transfer of the Orchard Community Building, Biggleswade and all future liabilities and responsibilities for it, to Biggleswade Town Council

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. **approve the transfer of the Orchard Community Building, Biggleswade, and all associated future liabilities and responsibilities, to Biggleswade Town Council.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. The decision must be taken at the Executive on 5 April and cannot be delayed until a later meeting due to the imminent completion and transfer of the building from the developer consortium Martin Grant Homes and Taylor Wimpey.

Background

3. The Orchard Community Building was completed at the end of January 2016 and is part of the Kings Reach development on land east of Biggleswade, providing 1,450 dwellings.

The Section 106 Agreement for the development required the Consortium comprising Martin Grant Homes and Taylor Wimpey to provide a community building and a commuted sum to assist with future management and maintenance responsibilities. The commuted sum will be agreed between the developer and the future owner and is expected to cover the cost of employing a caretaker over 4 years. The Community Building will be offered to Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) to accept on its own behalf or on behalf of another public authority, which may include the Town Council. The offer remains open for a period of 3 months from the date of receipt of the Offer Notice.

4. The building has been built in accordance with the uses specified including :
 - Sports hall (including store)
 - Community hall and kindergarten / nursery
 - Keep fit facility
 - Office space
 - Flexible /multi – use space
5. During construction of the community building a temporary facility was put in place to host a number of community activities. These activities are keen to transfer to the new facility.
6. The building achieved 'Practical Completion' on the 18 December 2015. Full certification, including Building Regulations and Test certificates, will be contained within the Operation and Maintenance (O & M) manuals. These will be ready when the building is handed over.
7. The asset value of the building i.e. what it would cost to reinstate the building is £985,000.

Options

8. The S106 Agreement provides for two options regarding the ownership of the community building. It is 'offered' to CBC, which CBC may accept on its own behalf **or** on behalf of another statutory or public authority (which may include the Town Council).

Option 1: Transfer to the Town Council. Under this arrangement the Town Council would have full responsibility for the building and all ongoing maintenance liabilities.

Option 2: Transfer to CBC. Under this arrangement CBC would own the building but could lease it back to the Town Council or contract with a commercial operator to run it. The conditions of the lease would determine the responsibility for future liabilities.

9. CBC has 3 months from receipt of the offer to accept (or not) the building and a further 2 month period after that within which to execute the transfer.

Recommended decision

10. It is proposed that the building is accepted on behalf of Biggleswade Town Council for the following reasons:
- The working assumption, based on the history of discussions between the developer consortium, Biggleswade Town Council and CBC was that the ownership and management of the Community Building and commuted sum would be transferred to the Town Council.
 - Biggleswade Town Council has established a Community facilities group and has been involved in discussions with the developer on the community building since 2011. As such, they have been able to influence plans and layout to meet local needs and expectations.
 - The Town Council resolved to adopt the Orchard Community Building on land south of Potton Road Biggleswade at its meeting on 15 December 2015. The Biggleswade Joint Committee has also endorsed the transfer of the community building to the Town Council.

Council Priorities

11. The recommendation above meets the Council priorities listed below:
- ***Enhancing your local community – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.***
Accepting and transferring the community building to Biggleswade Town Council for it to be used as a town asset and a focal point for new and existing residents, thereby helping to create a sustainable community.
 - ***Promote health and well being and protect the vulnerable***
The new building is multi purpose and includes space for keep fit and other sports as well as provision for multiple faiths and worship it has the potential to be a community hub for the delivery of other services.
 - ***Creating stronger communities***
The new building strengthens the community offer to local residents and surrounding villages. Transfer of the facility to the Town Council demonstrates our commitment and investment in communities doing more for themselves.

Corporate Implications

12. The Town Council may require some initial support from CBC to ensure the building is properly snagged and all appropriate documentation in place at transfer/handover.

Legal Implications

13. The offer, transfer and ongoing liabilities for the Community Building will be governed by the Section 106 Agreement.

Financial and Risk Implications

14. One of the options for decision is the opportunity for CBC to take on a new asset worth circa £1m. However, the ability to realise this value is limited and it comes with ongoing maintenance and running costs in the long term, which are best managed by the Town Council. There are no specific costs for CBC in agreeing to accept the community building on behalf of the Town Council.

Equalities Implications

15. 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. The development of the multi purpose community building at Biggleswade will create a variety of positive opportunities for local residents and the wider community to engage. Furthermore the transfer will strengthen local capacity in the community to do more.

Implications for Work Programming

16. There are no implications for further work programming once the building has been transferred.

Conclusion and next Steps

17. The new development in Biggleswade will provide 1,450 new homes. The Town Council's aspiration is that the new community building will provide a focal point for new and existing residents to come together and encourage community cohesion. To support this, the community building needs to be seen as a local asset.
18. Agreement to transfer the Community Building to the Town Council would be in alignment with the Stronger Communities priority in the Council's 5 year Plan.

Appendix

19. None

Background Papers

20. None

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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

5 April 2016

Community Building at Marston Park

Report of (Executive Member for Stronger Communities, Councillor Andrew Turner (andrew.turner@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk); and Executive Member for Corporate Resources Councillor Richard Wenham (richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

Advising Officers: Director of Community Services, Marcel Coiffait (marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk); and Peter Fraser, Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement, peter.fraser@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

This report relates to a key decision

Purpose of this report

1. To seek a decision on the transfer of the Community Building at Marston Park, Marston Moretaine when built, and all future liabilities and responsibilities for it, to Marston Moretaine Parish Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. **approve the transfer of the Community Building, at Marston Park and all future liabilities and responsibilities for it; the associated sports pitches and open space within Area 7 only as detailed on Drawing No. Bir.3429_24E, to Marston Moretaine Parish Council.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. The decision must be taken at the Executive on 5 April and cannot be delayed until a later meeting due to the developer Barratt Homes requiring Marston Moretaine Parish Council to sign an agreement confirming it to be the end user, prior to construction.

Background

3. A new Community building is planned as part of the development at land east of Bedford Road, Marston Moretaine, known as Marston Park. Construction is planned to start before 100 residential units are occupied. This is likely to be April 2016.

4. The S106 Agreement details that the community facility shall comprise:
 - A sports hall
 - Kitchen
 - Store facility
 - Office
 - Indoor sport changing facilities
 - Outdoor sport changing facilities
 - Foyer / reception area
 - Indoor / Outdoor toilet facilities
 - Referee changing room
 - Equipment not exceeding £5,000
5. It is to be used for the purposes of meetings, exhibitions, functions, recreational, leisure, sport and other facilities for the local community and local groups. The Parish Council also proposes to base its office at the new building thereby providing easier and better access to services for local residents.
6. Part 8 of the S106 Agreement also refers to a Community Facilities Bond. The developer requires that this is signed by the Parish Council confirming it will be the end user, prior to commencing the construction of the community building.
7. The estimated build costs are £1.3million and this includes all externals and car park provision.

Options for consideration

8. There are 3 options outlined in the S106 Agreement for the future management and operation of the community building: Transfer to the Parish Council.
9. Transfer to Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) for £1 together with a five year warranty against building defects.
10. Continued management by the developer.

Option 1: Transfer to the Parish Council. Under this arrangement the Parish Council would have full responsibility for the building and pitches and all ongoing maintenance and liabilities. The Parish Council intend to use office space in the new building and would be on site to manage hiring and day to day use of the facility as well as the pitches.

Option 2: Transfer to CBC for £1 and five year warranty against building defects. Under this arrangement CBC would own the building but could lease it to the Parish Council or contract with a commercial operator to run it. The conditions of the lease would determine the responsibility for future liabilities.

Option 3: Management by the developer: Under this arrangement it is likely that the current owners (the developers) would contract the management of the facility to a Management Company.

Recommended decision

11. It is recommended that the building be transferred to the Parish Council for the following reasons:
- The working assumption, based on the history of discussions between the developer Barratt Homes, Marston Moretaine Parish Council and Central Bedfordshire Council, was that the ownership and management of the Community Building would be transferred to the Parish Council.
 - Barratt Homes (the developer) requested that the Parish Council give consideration and confirm its position in relation to taking on responsibility/management of the new community building and sports pitches. At its meeting on 15 March 2016 Marston Moretaine Parish Council resolved that the *Parish Council agrees in principle to accept the transfer of the community building, associated sports pitches and open space within Area 7, but excluding the play areas, as detailed on Drawing No. Bir.3429_29E, subject to:-*
 1. *Central Bedfordshire Council's approval of the transfer, and*
 2. *Receipt of a satisfactory development agreement relating to the transfer and construction of the community building, associated sports pitches and open space within Area 7, but excluding the play areas, as detailed on Drawing No Bir.3429_29E.*
 - Whilst CBC could accept the building on its own behalf, this comes with ongoing management, maintenance and running costs which are best managed by the parish council.
 - The Parish Council has taken advice from the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) regarding their plans to manage and run the building as a sole trustee. In addition, the Parish Council commissioned BRCC to prepare a Business Plan to ensure the financial viability of the new facility once it is operational.

Council Priorities

12. The recommendation above meets the CBC priorities listed below:

Enhancing your local community – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.

Accepting and transferring the community building to Marston Moretaine Parish Council for it be used as a local asset and a focal point for new and existing residents, thereby helping to create a sustainable community.

Promote health and well being and protect the vulnerable

The new building is multi purpose for sport and community activities. It has the potential to be a community hub for the delivery of other services.

Creating stronger communities

The new building strengthens the community offer to local residents and surrounding villages. Transfer of the facility to Marston Moretaine Parish Council demonstrates our commitment and investment in communities doing more for themselves.

Corporate Implications

13. The Parish Council may require some initial support from CBC to ensure the building is properly snagged and that all appropriate documentation is in place at the point of transfer/handover

Legal Implications

14. The offer, transfer and ongoing liabilities for the Community Building will be governed by the Section 106 Agreement

Financial and Risk Implications

15. One of the options for decision is the opportunity for CBC to take on a new asset worth circa £1m. However, the ability to realise this value is limited and it comes with ongoing maintenance and running costs in the long term, which are best managed by the Parish Council. There are no specific costs for CBC in agreeing to accept the community building on behalf of the Parish Council.

Equalities Implications

16. 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. The development of the multi purpose community building at Marston Moretaine will create a variety of positive opportunities for local residents and the wider community to engage. Furthermore the transfer will strengthen local capacity in the community to do more. Advice will be provided highlighting ways in which accessibility for disabled people can be enhanced.

Implications for Work Programming

17. There are no implications for further work programming once the building has been transferred.

Conclusion and next Steps

18. The new development at Marston Park will provide 480 new homes. The Parish Council's aspiration is that the new community building will provide a focal point for new and existing residents to come together and encourage community cohesion. To support this, the community building, needs to be seen to be a village asset that thrives on local resident volunteer input.
19. The transfer of the asset to the Parish Council aligns closely with our priority for Creating Stronger Communities, whereby people are engaged in their local community assets; creating greater resilience and building community spirit. As such, an acceptance and transfer of ownership on behalf of and to Marston Parish Council is appropriate.

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