

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

**This meeting
may be filmed.***



**Central
Bedfordshire**

please ask for Rebecca Preen

direct line 0300 300 4193

date 6 August 2015

NOTICE OF MEETING

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date & Time

Thursday, 20 August 2015 10.00 a.m.

Venue at

Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

Cllrs D McVicar (Chairman), B Saunders (Vice-Chairman), D Bowater, F Firth,
C C Gomm, Ms A M W Graham, J Kane, K C Matthews, R Morris and T Swain

[Named Substitutes:

P Hollick, R W Johnstone, T Nicols, D Shelvey and I Shingler]

All other Members of the Council - on request

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS
MEETING**

***Please note that phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting. No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming.**

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AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and notification of substitute members.

2. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members any declarations of interest and of any political whip in relation to any agenda item.

3. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

To receive any announcements from the Chairman and any matters of communication.

4. **Minutes**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 June 2015 and to note actions taken since that meeting.

5. **Petitions**

To receive petitions from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

6. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

To receive any questions, statements or deputations from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of part A4 of the Constitution.

7. **Call-In**

To consider any decision of the Executive referred to this Committee for review in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.10 of Part D2.

8. **Requested Items**

To consider any items referred to the Committee at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

REPORTS

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
9	<p>Executive Members Updates</p> <p>To receive a brief verbal update from the Executive Member for Community Services and the Executive Member for Regeneration.</p>	* Verbal
10	<p>Jeans Way Bus Stop Consultation</p> <p>To receive a report regarding the outcome of the Jeans Way bus stop consultation.</p>	* 13 - 26
11	<p>Anglian Water update</p> <p>To receive an update from Anglian Water regarding water pressure and service issues within Central Bedfordshire.</p>	* Verbal
12	<p>Central Bedfordshire's Five Year Plan: 2015-20</p> <p>To receive a report regarding Central Bedfordshire Council's Five Year Plan.</p>	* 27 - 42
13	<p>Q1 Budget Monitoring Report 2015/16</p> <p>To receive a report on the relevant budget monitoring information.</p>	* 43 - 50
14	<p>EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL INVESTMENT FUNDS (ESIF)</p> <p>To receive a report on the European Structural Investment Funds.</p>	* 51 - 62
15	<p>Planning Enforcement</p> <p>To receive information regarding Planning Enforcement procedures.</p>	* Verbal
16	<p>Work Programme 2015/16 and Executive Forward Plan</p> <p>Members of the Committee will receive information regarding the Work Programme 2015/16 and Executive Forward Plan.</p>	* 63 - 66

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 18 June 2015.

PRESENT

Cllr D McVicar (Chairman)

Cllrs D Bowater
F Firth
C C Gomm
Ms A M W Graham

Cllrs J Kane
K C Matthews
R Morris

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs B Saunders

Substitutes: Cllrs D Shelvey (In place of B Saunders)

Members in Attendance: Cllrs A D Brown Deputy Executive
Member for Community
Services
T Nicols Chairman of Licensing
Committee
B J Spurr Executive Member for
Community Services
B Wells Deputy Executive
Member for Community
Services
J N Young Executive Member for
Regeneration

Officers in Attendance: Mrs E Anderson – Ecologist
Mr M Coiffait – Director of Community Services
Mr S Mooring – Environmental Policy Manager
Mrs R Preen – Scrutiny Policy Adviser

Public 1

SCOSC/15/1 Members' Interests

None.

SCOSC/15/2 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman welcomed new Members of the Committee and provided details of possible changes to Committee dates later in the year. It was confirmed that Anglian Water had agreed to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 August 2015.

SCOSC/15/3 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 March 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SCOSC/15/4 Petitions

None.

SCOSC/15/5 Questions, Statements or Deputations

None.

SCOSC/15/6 Call-In

None.

SCOSC/15/7 Requested Items

None.

SCOSC/15/8 Executive Members Updates

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities, Services, confirmed that the Highways contract was on schedule, the appointment of the successful bidder would be recommended to Executive in August 2015 and officially announced in September 2015. The new contract would commence in April 2016 in time for the new financial year.

Due to new legislation from Central Government, the Council could no longer use vehicles fitted with automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) to enforce breaches in parking regulations although limited powers with regards to parking outside of schools still remained. This would result in long term pressures regarding parking enforcement throughout Central Bedfordshire. The Council would be requesting a review of this decision via the Minister for Transport, but in the long term it was necessary for the Council to develop a full parking strategy. In light of this update the Chairman felt it was prudent to add parking pressures to the Committee Work Programme, which was endorsed by the Executive Member and Committee Members.

The Committee were informed that a restructure of house-hold waste recycling centres (HWRCs) was on schedule and that Biggleswade would be the first site developed.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities, Strategic Planning and Economic Development, informed the Committee that the Council's Development Strategy had been rejected on the grounds that the Duty to Cooperate had not been met. The Council needed to overcome these challenges in order to move the Strategy forward and further actions would be considered over the next 7 days.

Members queried the progress of neighbouring authorities' strategies and it was confirmed that many were still in the early stages of development. Central Bedfordshire Council had been the first of a group of nine authorities to submit their strategy.

Members also discussed whether this latest decision would affect the Council's existing strategies. Officers confirmed that revised figures provided by the Office of National Statistics suggested there would be an increase in the number of homes Central Bedfordshire would need to provide. It was important that the Council could demonstrate a five-year land supply, which would help to resist hostile planning applications.

SCOSC/15/9 **Q3 Performance Report**

The Committee received the Quarter three performance report for the Community Services and Regeneration and Business Directorates. The Director for Community Services highlighted several aspects of performance that included a decrease in Anti-social Behaviour and the increase in recorded case of domestic violence, due to improved data capturing techniques. It was also highlighted that more than 1,690 full-time jobs had been created by Amazon, Lockheed Martins and at Millbrook.

In light of the report Members expressed frustrations at the timing of the performance reports as the data was historic and to 'note'. Members asked that Officers produce more timely data so that the Committee had as much up to date information as possible.

A Member of the Committee asked what action was being taken to address the skills shortage within the area, with concerns that local businesses would not employ people living in Central Bedfordshire as they did not possess the appropriate skills to fill the jobs available. Members were advised that the Executive Member for Children's Services had been tasked with reviewing this to ensure that young people in Central Bedfordshire were supported to ensure when they left education they were in the best possible position to secure the jobs that were available locally.

A Member of the Committee also asked for details regarding collaboration between the police and the Council and the manner in which crime figures were shared. The Director for Community Services confirmed that the police provided the Council with the necessary data for the directorate to be able to hold them to account for performance. Members suggested that the new policing plan for Bedfordshire be presented to the Committee in due course to enable a review of arrangements for sharing data.

RECOMMENDED

- 1 that the Committee acknowledge the continuing overall strong performance in Quarter 3 and that officers further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators as appropriate.**
- 2 that the Bedfordshire Policing Plan for Bedfordshire be presented to the Committee in due course.**

SCOSC/15/10 Nature Conservation Strategy

The Environmental Policy Manager delivered a presentation regarding the Nature Conservation Strategy and outlined the aims of the strategy, the benefits of this approach and the positive outcomes for Central Bedfordshire as a whole.

In light of the presentation the Chairman suggested that the strategy may be subject to planning and development constraints and asked whether this had been considered. The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities confirmed that the Design Guide met many of the Nature Conservation Strategy's criteria.

Members also raised and discussed the following:-

- The possible benefits of verge cutting programmes, which would support an increase in pollinating insects and wildlife habitat, whilst also reducing costs. Some Members expressed concerns regarding this proposal on the grounds of road safety and whilst the Committee supported the idea in principle, it was felt that road safety should be the overriding priority when considering any reduction in the number of cuts throughout the year.
- Clarification regarding the priority listings within the report and in response the Council's Ecologist confirmed that the Biodiversity Action Plan identified action to avoid the loss of meadows as a priority but said that the maintenance of verges could help counteract this.
- The relationship between local farmers and the Council with regards to shared environmental responsibilities and although payments made to farmers from DEFRA were modest and didn't always encourage them to be as environmentally friendly as they could be, the Council worked very closely and enjoyed a strong relationship with tenant farmers and land owners.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- 1. the Committee endorse the draft document and that the Executive adopt the Nature Conservation Strategy.**
- 2. the Committee support further investigation and discussion with regards to reducing the number of grass verge cuttings, with priority being given to road safety.**

SCOSC/15/11 Work Programme 2015/16 and Executive Forward Plan

RECOMMENDED that the Sustainable Communities OSC Work Programme be agreed subject to the addition of the following items:-

- **The Council's Parking Strategy;**
- **The Highways Contract and changes to procedures under the new provider;**

- **The recent Police restructure and forward plans;**
- **Changes to the Passenger Transport provision.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.02 a.m. and concluded at 11.40 a.m.)

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Central Bedfordshire Council

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20th August 2015

JEANS WAY BUS STOP

Advising Officer: Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services
marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Steve Lakin, Principal Highways Officer
steve.lakin@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Purpose of this report:

To report the results of the consultation on the provision of a new busway stop to the rear of properties at Jeans Way in Dunstable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

1. Note the positive result of the recent public consultation and give its approval to the construction of a new stop on the Luton and Dunstable guided busway at Jeans Way in Dunstable.

Background

1. On 3 July 2014 Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Councils were advised that their joint bid for Local Growth Funding (LGF) to enhance the busway corridor had been successful. The bid, submitted under the title 'Smarter Routes to Employment', committed both authorities to the delivery of a suite of improvements to the busway including the provision of new bus stops. Implementation of the improvements has commenced with the majority of the works on track to be completed by the autumn of 2015.
2. The South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP), as coordinators of the LGF programme, were advised that a final decision on the construction of a new bus stop at Jeans Way in Dunstable would

be taken by Central Bedfordshire Council members following a public consultation exercise.

3. The consultation was undertaken during May and June 2015. Some 490 households in reasonably close proximity to the proposed new stop received a questionnaire to complete and an invitation to attend a public meeting on 26th June 2015. The questionnaire was simultaneously made available on line. Some 282 people completed questionnaires with a strong response from residents of Jeans Way.

Consultation Outcome

4. Over 71% of the respondents to the consultation welcomed the provision of a stop at Jeans Way. This positive balance was also reflected among the 44 local residents who attended the public meeting. A breakdown of the results against each of the consultation questions is provided at Appendix A.
5. In their responses residents raised a number of issues and concerns about the new stop, most particularly the risk that it would serve to attract people to the area to 'park and ride'. A summary of the issues raised through the consultation and comments as to their salience and mitigation is provided at Appendix B. For example, at the public meeting a commitment was made to actively monitor the impact of the stop on the demand for on-street parking within the locality and to introduce measures if these were required.
6. The three companies who operate services on Busway have expressed their support for the new stop. The Wildlife Trust, who are the stewards of Blows Downs, were also consulted and raised no objection.

Council Priorities

7. The Local Growth Funded investment in the busway corridor supports the council's priority of improving transport infrastructure.

Legal Implications

8. The stop will be constructed on land in the ownership of Luton Borough Council.
9. Central Bedfordshire's Planning department have advised that, as the works do not extend beyond the Limits of Deviation, planning permission is not a requirement.

Financial Implications

10. The construction cost of the stop is estimated to be £182,000. These costs will be met from the Local Growth Fund allocation.

11. The maintenance of the stop will be funded from existing budgets, the cost of which is shared between the two authorities.

Equalities Implications

12. The provision of the stop is part of a programme of works to improve the accessibility of the busway corridor. The stop itself utilises a design that has been subject to detailed usability assessment and mirrors other stops along the busway corridor.

Risks

13. There is a risk that the provision of the bus stop will adversely impact on the local community for example by attracting additional on-street parking in the vicinity. This risk has been mitigated by considering how the reasonable concerns of local residents can be addressed, for example by the introduction of appropriate parking restrictions on Jeans Way.

Conclusion and next Steps

14. Subject to the Committee's approval, construction of the new stop is scheduled will commence in September 2015 with works taking around four weeks.

Appendices

A: Consultation Results Summary

B: Consultation Issues Summary

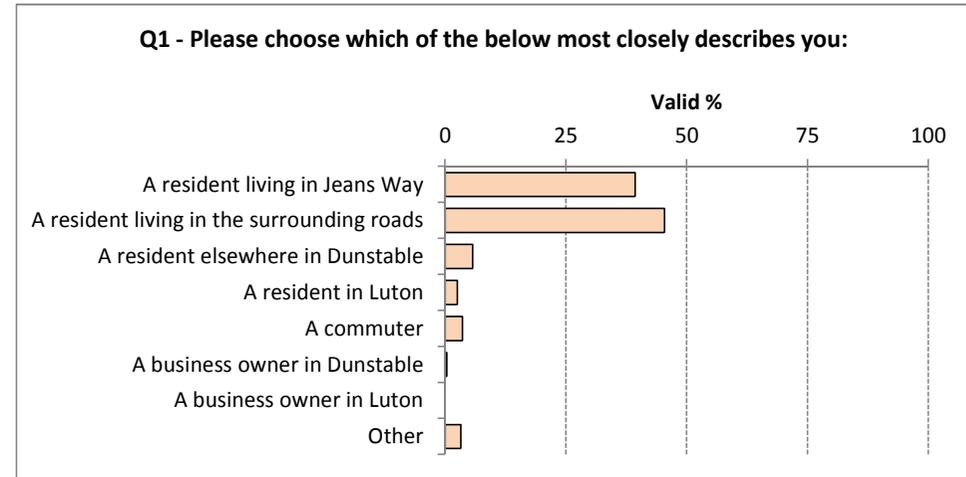
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Jeans Way Bus Stop Consultation: Results Summary

Appendix A

Q1 - Please choose which of the below most closely describes you (please select one option):

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	A resident living in Jeans Way	110	39.0	39.3
	A resident living in the surrounding roads	127	45.0	45.4
	A resident elsewhere in Dunstable	16	5.7	5.7
	A resident in Luton	7	2.5	2.5
	A commuter	10	3.5	3.6
	A business owner in Dunstable	1	.4	.4
	A business owner in Luton	0	0.0	0.0
	Other	9	3.2	3.2
	Total	280	99.3	100.0
	Missing	2	.7	
Total	282	100.0		

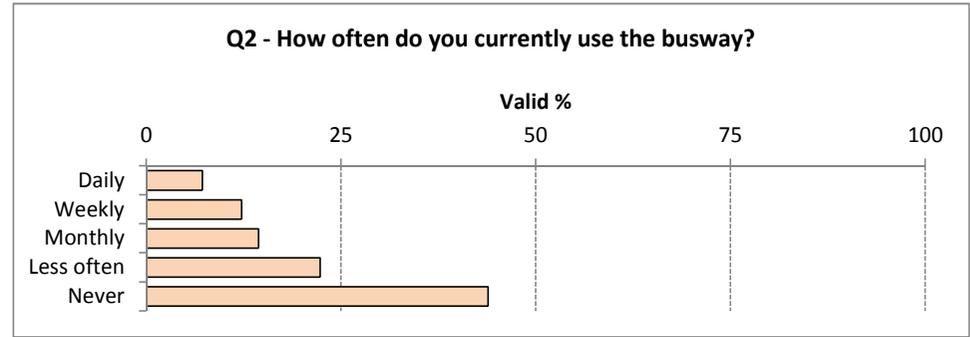


Q1a - If other, please specify: (open-ended)

	Frequency	
Valid	A regular busway user	1
	A resident of Clifton, Bedfordshire	1
	bus user	1
	Dunstable Town Councillor	1
	Why is Houghton Regis not listed in these choices!!! I am a resident of Houghton Regis.	1
	Total	5
Missing	277	
Total	282	

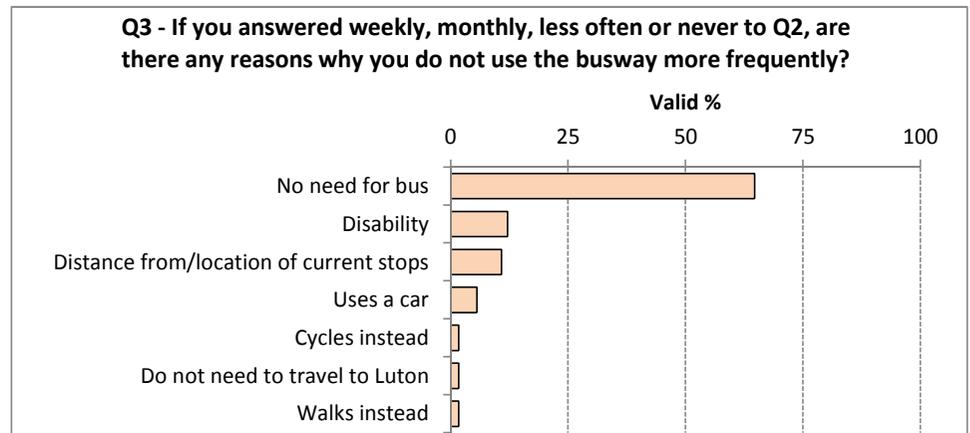
Q2 - How often do you currently use the busway? (please select one option)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Daily	20	7.1	7.2
	Weekly	34	12.1	12.2
	Monthly	40	14.2	14.4
	Less often	62	22.0	22.3
	Never	122	43.3	43.9
	Total	278	98.6	100.0
Missing		4	1.4	
Total		282	100.0	



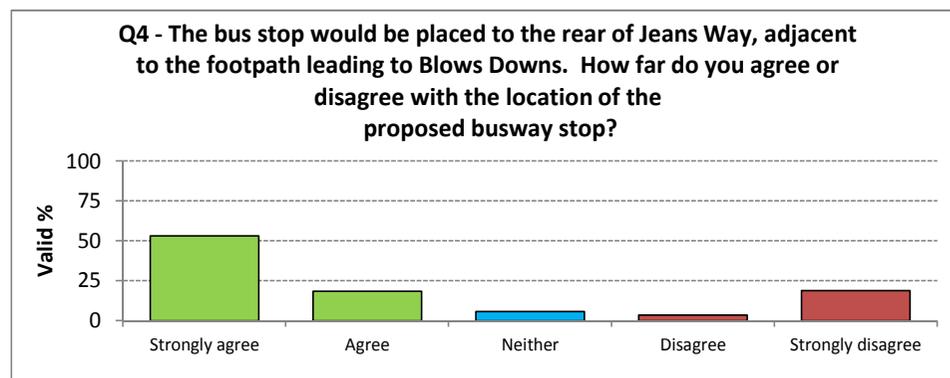
Q3 - If you answered weekly, monthly, less often or never to Q2, are there any reasons why you do not use the busway more frequently? (open-ended)

Analysis of repeat themes		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No need for bus	150	53.2	64.7
	Disability	28	9.9	12.1
	Distance from/location of current stops	25	8.9	10.8
	Uses a car	13	4.6	5.6
	Cycles instead	4	1.4	1.7
	Do not need to travel to Luton	4	1.4	1.7
	Walks instead	4	1.4	1.7
	Total no. of responses	232	82.3	
Missing		50	17.7	
Total		282	100.0	



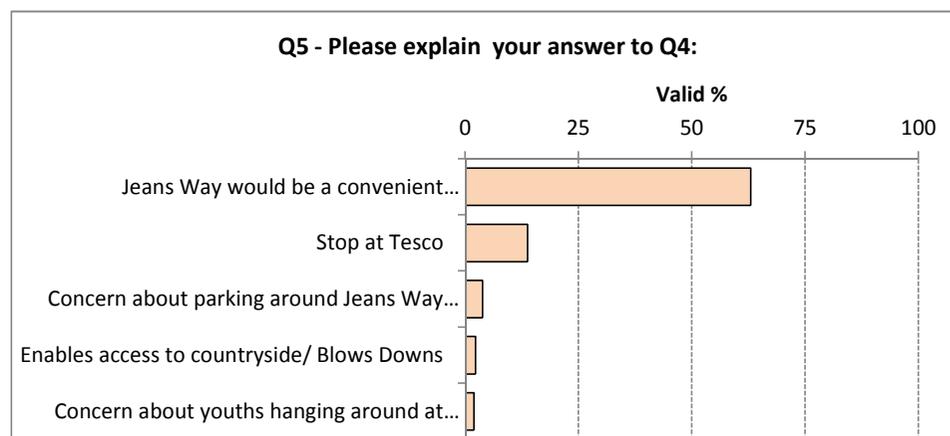
Q4 - The bus stop would be placed to the rear of Jeans Way, adjacent to the footpath leading to Blows Downs. How far do you agree or disagree with the location of the proposed busway stop? (please select one option)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Strongly agree	149	52.8	53.2
Agree	52	18.4	18.6
Neither	16	5.7	5.7
Disagree	10	3.5	3.6
Strongly disagree	53	18.8	18.9
Total	280	99.3	100.0
Missing	2	.7	
Total	282	100.0	



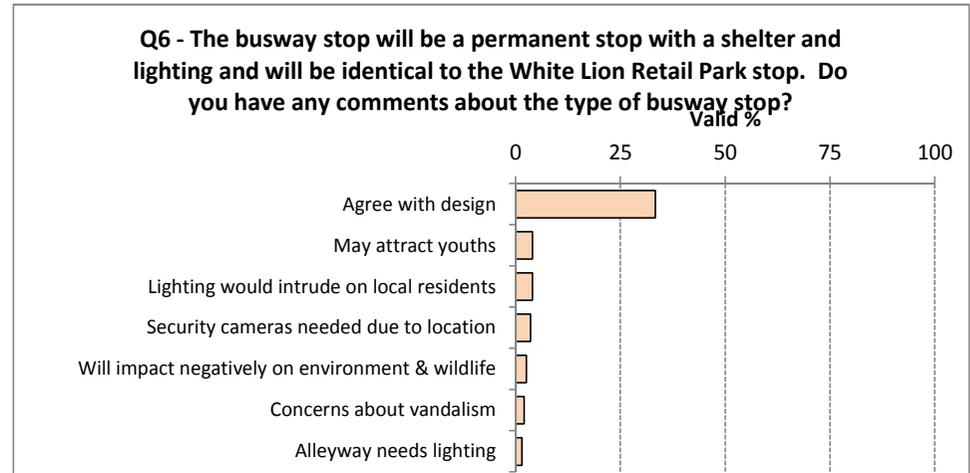
Q5 - Please explain your answer to Q4: (open-ended)

Analysis of repeat themes	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Jeans Way would be a convenient stop/easy access for residents	165	58.5	63.0
Stop at Tesco	36	12.8	13.7
Concern about parking around Jeans Way as a result of the stop	10	3.5	3.8
Enables access to countryside/ Blows Downs	6	2.1	2.3
Concern about youths hanging around at stop	5	1.8	1.9
Total no. of responses	262	92.9	
Missing	20	7.1	
Total	282	100.0	



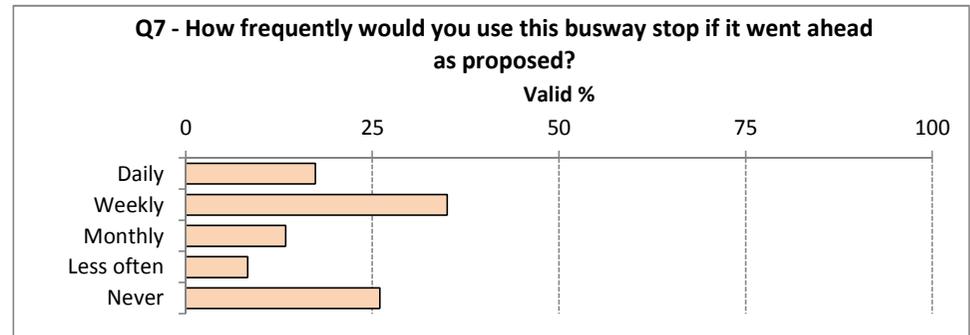
Q6 - The busway stop will be a permanent stop with a shelter and lighting and will be identical to the White Lion Retail Park stop. Do you have any comments about the type of busway stop? (open-ended)

Analysis of repeat themes		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Agree with design	66	23.4	33.3
	May attract youths	8	2.8	4.0
	Lighting would intrude on local residents	8	2.8	4.0
	Security cameras needed due to location	7	2.5	3.5
	Will impact negatively on environment & wildlife	5	1.8	2.5
	Concerns about vandalism	4	1.4	2.0
	Alleyway needs lighting	3	1.1	1.5
	Total no. of responses	198	70.2	
	Missing	84	29.8	
Total	282	100.0		



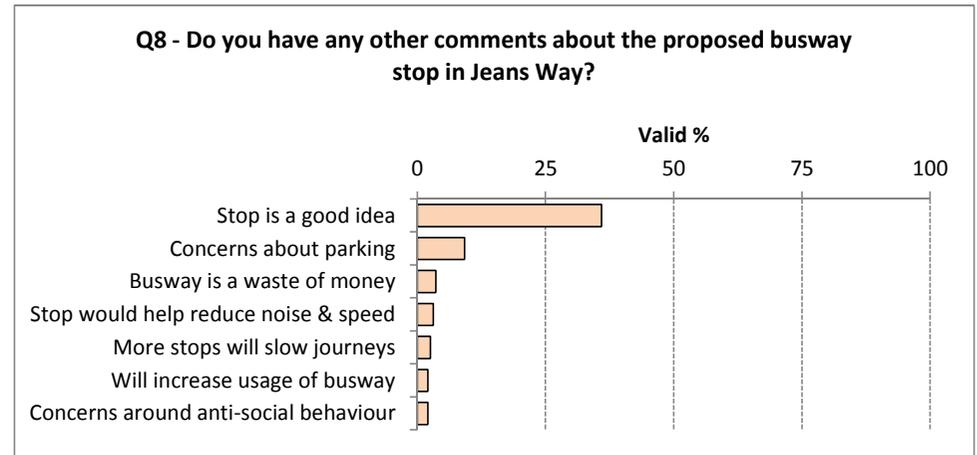
Q7 - How frequently would you use this busway stop if it went ahead as proposed (please select one option)?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Daily	48	17.0	17.3
	Weekly	97	34.4	35.0
	Monthly	37	13.1	13.4
	Less often	23	8.2	8.3
	Never	72	25.5	26.0
	Total	277	98.2	100.0
Missing	5	1.8		
Total	282	100.0		



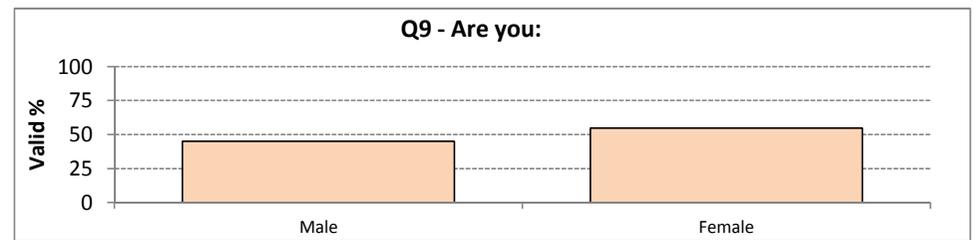
Q8 - Do you have any other comments about the proposed busway stop in Jeans Way? (open-ended)

Analysis of repeat themes		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Stop is a good idea	70	24.8	35.9
	Concerns about parking	18	6.4	9.2
	Busway is a waste of money	7	2.5	3.6
	Stop would help reduce noise & speed	6	2.1	3.1
	More stops will slow journeys	5	1.8	2.6
	Will increase usage of busway	4	1.4	2.1
	Concerns around anti-social behaviour	4	1.4	2.1
	Total no. of responses	195	69.1	
Missing		87	30.9	
Total		282	100.0	



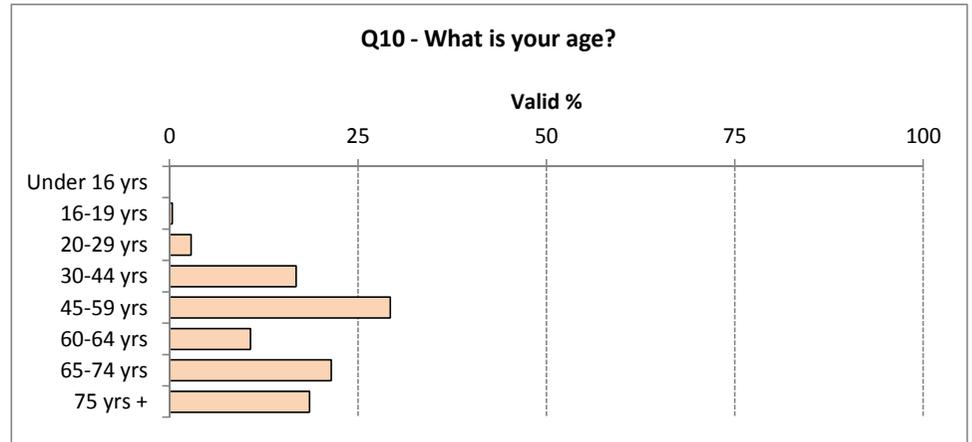
Q9 - Are you: (please select one option)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Male	124	44.0	45.3
	Female	150	53.2	54.7
	Total	274	97.2	100.0
Missing		8	2.8	
Total		282	100.0	



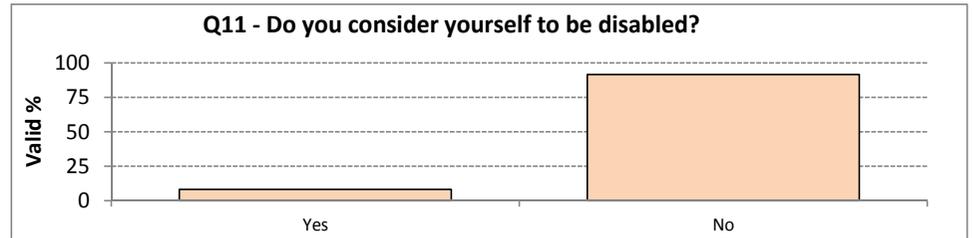
Q10 - What is your age? (please select one option)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Under 16 yrs	0	.0	.0
	16-19 yrs	1	.4	.4
	20-29 yrs	8	2.8	2.9
	30-44 yrs	47	16.7	16.8
	45-59 yrs	82	29.1	29.3
	60-64 yrs	30	10.6	10.7
	65-74 yrs	60	21.3	21.4
	75 yrs +	52	18.4	18.6
	Total	280	99.3	100.0
Missing		2	.7	
Total		282	100.0	



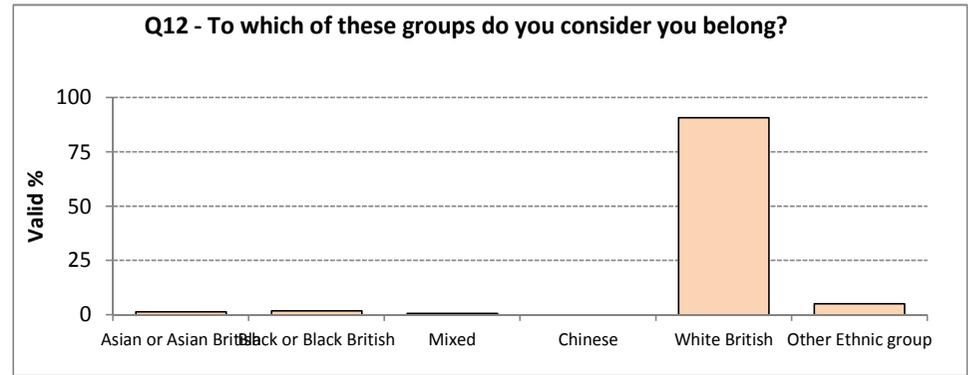
Q11 - Do you consider yourself to be disabled? (please select one option)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	22	7.8	8.2
	No	246	87.2	91.8
	Total	268	95.0	100.0
Missing		14	5.0	
Total		282	100.0	



Q12 - To which of these groups do you consider you belong? (please select one option)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
Asian or Asian British	4	1.4	1.5
Black or Black British	5	1.8	1.8
Mixed	2	.7	.7
Chinese	0	.0	.0
White British	248	87.9	90.8
Other Ethnic group	14	5.0	5.1
Total	273	96.8	100.0
Missing	9	3.2	
Total	282	100.0	



Q12a - If other, please specify:

	Frequency
Valid	
English	4
English , white	1
Irish	1
Italian born with British citizenship	1
White	1
white english	2
White other	1
Total	11
Missing	271
Total	282

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Jeans Way bus stop consultation – summary of issues and responses

Issue raised	Response
<p>The stop will attract people to park their cars in the vicinity and ride into Luton. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weekday commuters - Weekend shoppers / football fans - People wishing to avoid Luton airport parking charges <p>The introduction / enforcement of parking restrictions at White Lion Retail park will exacerbate this issue.</p>	<p>While parking was originally a concern for other locations with stops on the busway, such as Portland Ride, it has not materialised as an issue.</p> <p>The project team do not foresee Jeans Way being any different to other stops. However, to allay concern the level of demand for on street parking in the vicinity of the stop will be actively monitored. Should this monitoring reveal there to be a problem then appropriate restrictions will be introduced following a process of consultation with local residents.</p> <p>The funding needed to introduce parking restrictions will be ring-fenced.</p>
<p>Buses using the corridor along Jeans Way already create a noise disturbance for residents. This will worsen as buses decelerate to use stop and then accelerate away.</p>	<p>A trial designed to reduce the noise generated from the wheels as they run over the gaps between concrete beams is currently underway. If this is successful it will be rolled-out across the busway where properties nearby are affected.</p> <p>To inform the consultation, consultants AECOM assessed how noise levels are affected by buses slowing down and accelerating away from stops. The results of this work show that there will be no discernable impact on the level of noise disturbance for properties at Jeans Way.</p>
<p>Stop will add to the light pollution in what is a sensitive area.</p>	<p>Bats forage along the busway corridor through Blows Downs and for this reason the design for the stop does not include additional street lighting.</p> <p>Some light is needed in the bus shelters for CCTV to operate effectively. Anything above this 'base level' shelter lighting can be carefully controlled using sensors.</p>
<p>The stop will attract additional antisocial behaviour.</p>	<p>This has not proved to be the case elsewhere along the busway. Whilst there have been incidents of vandalism, including recent damage to the shelter at White Lion Retail, this has been relatively rare. In the most recent case the culprits were quickly arrested thanks to the CCTV footage.</p> <p>The CCTV cameras covering the bus stop are monitored by the Luton Borough Council Control Centre which operates 24/7.</p>
<p>The construction of the stop will cause a disturbance for the residents of Jeans Way.</p>	<p>The stop will take between four and six weeks to build and the work will be scheduled so as to cause minimal disturbance or disruption to local residents or passengers using busway services. Access to the site will be from Station Road with construction vehicles using the emergency access track. The majority of work will happen during normal weekday daytime hours and any night-time working kept to a minimum.</p>
<p>The stop will adversely affect local house prices.</p>	<p>The evidence from research into the provision of new stops elsewhere suggests the reverse, that the advantage the stop brings will boost local house prices.</p>
<p>The provision of a stop at Jeans Way was previously consulted upon and rejected.</p>	<p>A number of people have asked that the two authorities reconsider their decision now that the Busway is open.</p> <p>The provision of a stop has the support of the three</p>

Jeans Way bus stop consultation – summary of issues and responses

	operators who run services along the busway, none of whom expect to change their timetables to accommodate the additional stops planned.
Other locations for the stop should be considered.	All potential locations for stops have been considered. The Jeans Way location has several advantages in respect of the size of the catchment it serves and the existing pedestrian linkages and crossing point.
The provision of new stops will delay bus journeys, negating one of the key design objectives and benefits of the busway.	The delay to journeys from the new stops will be minimal and will not affect advertised timetables.
The authorities need to address existing issues, particularly noise disturbance first before doing further work.	The authorities continue to investigate how the noise generated from the gaps between the beams can be dampened and has recently started a trial using a thin ‘shim’ that it is hoped will reduce reverberations.
The cost of the stop would be better invested improving local roads.	The money for the stop has been provided by central government in the form of a grant and has to be spent on improvements to the Busway. If it is not spent on the new stop then it would be invested on the access track.
The stop will adversely affect Blows Downs, an area of outstanding natural beauty.	Blows Downs is a beautiful area of Dunstable. With a new stop the expectation is for an increase in visitors to the Downs. Both authorities are indebted to the Wildlife Trust for their excellent stewardship of this valuable green area. The Downs are a protected reserve and the Trust will work to reduce the impact from an increase in visitors.
Buses frequently exceed the speed limit at Jeans Way. There is a risk that the stops will make it riskier for people to cross the busway.	All operators have been advised that they must obey the speed limit and that if necessary authorities will work with the police on enforcement action. The stop has been designed to ensure pedestrian safety is not comprised and the existing gate arrangement will be retained.
The alleyway that provides access to the Downs is narrow and suffers from dog fouling	While the alleyway is not ideal it is adequate. It is popular with dog walkers who use the Downs and the issue of dog fouling is one that the authority will look to address.
The stop will attract youths to gather at night, which can be intimidating for other people.	This is not the experience elsewhere on the busway and it is likely that the presence of the CCTV cameras will serve to deter anti social behaviour in the vicinity of the stop.
Operators should be encouraged to run evening services along Luton Road (outside the busy hour period where this road is congested) to reduce the level of noise disturbance to residents.	This is a decision for the individual operators to make. All have indicated that they are happy with the level of growth in the patronage of their busway services and will be looking at opportunities to add to these, as has been the case recently with the Arriva service to Leighton Buzzard and Aylesbury. There was a concern that services elsewhere would suffer when the busway opened. This has not happened in practice.

Central Bedfordshire Council

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 August 2015

Central Bedfordshire's Five Year Plan 2015-20

Advising Officers: Deb Broadbent Clarke, Director of Improvement and Corporate Services (deb.broadbent-clarke@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)
Georgina Stanton, Chief Communication Officer
(georgina.stanton@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Purpose of this report

1. To invite feedback from the Committee on the emerging five year plan for Central Bedfordshire Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider and provide feedback on the proposed framework for the plan including high level outcomes and proposed programmes of work.

Issues

Corporate Planning within Central Bedfordshire

1. The election of a new Administration in May 2015 creates an opportunity to review of the Council's existing priorities.
2. These were articulated in the Council's previous Medium Term Plan and were collectively designed to ensure Central Bedfordshire remains a great place to live and work.
3. Activity in pursuit of these priorities has been rigorously monitored and performance is reported quarterly to the Executive under the three categories of People, Place and Making it Happen (organisational development).

4. Progress on Place measures – has included:

Securing the funding and support for major infrastructure developments including the A5-M1 link road, roll out of superfast broadband, development of the economy through the growth of existing companies and relocation of new businesses within the area.

Development of new community based services including a new Leisure Centre in Flitwick, major refurbishment of Leisure and Library services in Dunstable and investment in independent living schemes across Central Bedfordshire.

5. Progress on People measures has included:

A growth in customer satisfaction with the Council (from a baseline of 35% to 73%), which is likely to have been influenced by enhanced perceptions of Value for Money.

Improved educational outcomes for children and young people in Central Bedfordshire and increasing levels of dignity, choice and control for vulnerable adults as services become less institutional and more personalised.

6. Progress on organisational development measures has included:

A drive for efficiency in order to maintain front line services from reductions and protect council tax payers from increases in their charges for Central Bedfordshire Council services. More than £80m has been saved through efficiency measures since the Council was created.

A New Five Year Plan

7. In order to build on the progress the Council has achieved in the past and maintain the momentum of improvement, a process for developing a refreshed five year plan is proposed..
8. Attached at (Appendix A) is a set of slides which outline the approach for the development of the plan which includes:
9. The purpose of the plan
10. The context for its development
11. Provisional outcomes related to community resilience, jobs and prosperity, education and skills, character of place, protecting the vulnerable, health and housing, value for money and becoming a more responsive Council.
12. Proposed refinement of these outcomes and core programmes of activity.

Developing the Plan

13. Members of the Committee are invited to contribute to the development of the plan in giving their feedback on the proposed approach.
14. Other stakeholders who will be engaged are:
15. Central Bedfordshire Council staff – a representative sample of employees from all services and at all levels will be invited to participate in a series of engagement sessions on the plan.
16. Partners including Town and Parish Councils, neighbouring local authorities, the NHS, business community, emergency services and advocacy groups will also be engaged through either individual or group meetings.

Finalising the Plan

17. Following the engagement exercise, it is expected that a revised and more fully developed plan will be considered by Executive on 6 October and recommended to Full Council for approval on 19 November 2015.

Council Priorities

18. In 2012, the Council confirmed its priorities within the previous corporate plan.

These were:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.
 - Improved educational attainment.
 - Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
 - Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport.
 - Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries.
 - Value for money – freezing council tax.
19. The election of a new Council in May 2015, has prompted a review of progress against the plan and these priorities. Subject to further engagement and consultation with Members and stakeholders, the revised plan will include amended priority outcomes. Were this to be approved by Council they would replace those listed above.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

20. There are no legal implications in developing the five year plan.

Financial Implications

21. Once a refreshed plan is adopted, the future Medium Term Financial Plan will become the financial expression of what the Council aspires to achieve through the priorities and targets set out in the five year plan.

Equalities Implications

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

Conclusion

23. The development of the next five year plan is an important process. It will allow the Council to clearly articulate what it is seeking to achieve between now and 2020. It will form the basis of our core programme of activity against which performance will be measured.

24. The Council will be held accountable by its success or failure to deliver against the plan by the public, stakeholders and staff.

Appendices

The following Appendix is attached:

Developing our vision for the next five years – 2015 – 2020
Powerpoint Presentation

Background Papers

1. The following background papers, not previously available to the public, were taken into account and are available on the Council's website:

Delivering our Priorities – the previous Medium Term Plan of Central Bedfordshire Council.

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Developing our vision for the next five years

Overview and Scrutiny Committees
August 2015

Purpose of the Plan

- To articulate the work that is most important for us to deliver – our priorities
- To shape the activity plans we will deliver – our programmes
- To allow us to measure and monitor how effective we are – our performance measures

So that we can be held to account by our customers and stakeholders.

It needs to be clear, concise and focused.

Key Drivers:

- Demographics – the growing and changing nature of our population
- Customer feedback – perceptions of the Council and the area
- Technology – potential for our organisation and our communities
- Economics – the continuing drive for efficiency and effectiveness
- Legislation – changing responsibilities and opportunities

Early thinking on outcomes:

<p>For our communities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building resilience • Jobs and prosperity • Character of place 	<p><i>Our communities will be sustainable and resilient places.</i></p> <p><i>We'll have thriving local economy, supported by great infrastructure, so that all our residents can enjoy prosperity.</i></p> <p><i>The character of Central Bedfordshire will have been preserved alongside positive progress and development.</i></p>
<p>For our customers:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and skills • Protecting the vulnerable • Health and housing 	<p><i>Our residents, regardless of their age or life stage, will have opportunities to learn, develop and flourish.</i></p> <p><i>Those who are vulnerable no matter what their age, health or wellbeing, will have the care, support and protection they need.</i></p> <p><i>The wellbeing of residents will be improved by their access to good housing and health services</i></p>
<p>For the Council:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money • A responsive Council 	<p><i>Our customers will feel that the Council offers them value for money because of its continuing focus on cost effectiveness and efficiency.</i></p> <p><i>We will enhance the way the Council works to improve customer experience and satisfaction.</i></p>

Developing our approach:



Developing our approach:

Outcome:	Programmes:	Focus:
Resilient Communities	Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Infrastructure and Action • Volunteering • Devolution
Prosperous and Well Educated Residents	<p>Tackling Barriers to Prosperity</p> <p>Education, Skills, Business Growth and Prosperity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport/Childcare/Skills • Delivering our vision for education • Supporting new and existing businesses
Sustainable Growth and Heritage	<p>Transport and Infrastructure Plan</p> <p>Growth/Heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road/Rail/Broadband • Enabling Development including: • Market towns • Commercial and retail sites • Countryside and heritage

Developing our approach:

Outcome:	Programmes:	Focus:
Sustainable Growth and Heritage	Development Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority deliverables for: • Chiltern Vale • Ivel Valley • Leighton Buzzard • Mid Beds
Taking Care of the Vulnerable and Promoting Independence	<p>Independent Lives</p> <p>Healthy Lives</p> <p>Reducing Childhood Vulnerability</p> <p>Reducing Adult Vulnerability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info & Advice/Care and Support/Housing • Prevention • Early identification • Effective management • Targeted early interventions: • Poor parenting • Exploitation • Abuse • Safeguarding and early interventions • All vulnerable groups including those who are poor, marginalised and isolated.

Developing our approach:

Outcome:	Programmes:	Focus:
Efficient and Responsive Council	Customer Insight and Satisfaction Value for Money Mobile, Flexible and Paperless	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Channel improvement and shift• Culture• Resident behaviour change• Council systems and staff behaviours <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commercialisation (trading, fees and charges, NNDR)• Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technology• Accommodation• Flexible working

Key Issues:

- Are the we focusing on the right things:

Priorities?

Programmes?

What next?

- Consideration of all Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Engagement with key stakeholder groups
- Revised presentation to Executive - October
- Full Council consideration – November
- Delivery programme under development to launch once approved.

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee August 2015

Budget Monitoring Q1 – June 2015/16

Revenue –Community Services

Key points to note (see full reports for details):

- The 2015/16 forecast outturn is to underspend by £6K
- The Year to Date spend is underspent by £3K
- June outstanding debt (over 1 month days is) £293K

Revenue -Community Services

Division	Approved Budget	Forecast outturn for year	Forecast variance for year (-under) / over spend	Forecast variance after use of earmarked reserves (-under) / over spend
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Community Services Director	396	396	0	0
Highways & Transportation	12,316	12,316	0	0
Environmental Services	23,880	24,898	1,018	(6)
Community Services	36,592	37,610	1,018	(6)

Capital - Community Services

Forecast variance for the year £3,551K underspend
 - main variance is Dunstable Leisure and Library scheme, South Depot & HWRC redevelopment.

Year to date variance £243k ahead of profile
 - main variance Flitwick Leisure Centre

Directorate	Full Year		
	BUDGET	FORECAST	VARIANCE
	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
	£000	£000	£000
Enviromental Services	15,416	9,611	(5,805)
Libraries	148	148	0
Leisure	10,638	10,111	(527)
Transport	25,238	28,019	2,781
Community Services	51,440	47,889	(3,551)

Revenue – Regeneration and Business

Key points to note (see full reports for details):

- The 2015/16 forecast outturn is to underspend by £32k
- The Year to Date spend is under spent by £368K
- June outstanding debt (over 1 month days is) £2,841K

Revenue – Regeneration and Business

Division	Approved Budget	Forecast outturn for year	Forecast variance for year (-under) / over spend	Forecast variance after use of earmarked reserves (-under) / over spend
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Director	463	463	0	0
Business and Investment	932	1,057	125	(6)
Planning	3,417	3,594	177	(26)
Regeneration & Business Support	4,812	5,114	302	(32)

Capital - Regeneration

Forecast to over spend by £454K in year

Overspend £802k on Broadband – which is acceleration of 2016/17 spend to 2015/16.

Underspend £335k on Market Towns Programme and Development Site Promotion

Directorate	Full Year		
	BUDGET	FORECAST	VARIANCE
	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Regeneration	1,355	1,809	454

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Central Bedfordshire Council

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE

20 August 2015
6 October 2015

EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL INVESTMENT FUNDS (ESIF)

Advising Officer: Jason Longhurst, Director of Regeneration and Business
Jason.longhurst@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Drafting Officer: Ingrid Hooley, Project Manager
Ingrid.hooley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. To provide a comprehensive overview of the funding opportunities available through the European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF).
2. To inform on the ESIF bids under development by Central Bedfordshire Council.
3. To set out the recommendations in taking this forward to the Executive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Support the approach to bidding for ESIF funds, maximising opportunities by working with partners in the South East Midlands and beyond, and identifying appropriate match funding to support this.
2. Recommend that Executive give approval for Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) to continue to act as lead partner for bids under the ESIF programme, specifically a £3.9m ERDF bid and an ESF bid of approximately £16.8m, including match funding over three year programme periods.
3. Recommend that Executive give delegation to the Director of Regeneration and Business and the Section 151 Officer to proceed with the development and submission of the ERDF and ESF bids, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration and the Executive Member for Education and Skills. If successful, the final approval to enter into the Bid Agreements will be with the Executive.

Background

4. In the context of shrinking budgets and meeting the needs of our residents and businesses in Central Bedfordshire, it is important to maximise wider opportunities such as tapping into external funding.

5. A new European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) programme has been announced by central Government, covering the period of 2014 to 2020. These funds aim to increase social and economic prosperity and to reduce disparity, creating a more competitive, prosperous and inclusive economy.
6. The funds offer the opportunity for Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) to provide additional support for:
 - residents to move into employment or to progress up the career ladder by developing their skills;
 - businesses to tap into well skilled local residents, meeting business skills gaps;
 - economic growth through promoting business innovation and development.
7. Funding has been allocated across the UK against each Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area, and Central Bedfordshire falls within the South East Midlands LEP (SEMLEP). The South East Midlands LEP (SEMLEP) has been given an ESIF allocation of c£79 million for delivery over the 6 year period, comprising three ESIF funding streams:
 - **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)** £37.6m managed by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG);
 - **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)** has an indicative budget of up to £4.3m managed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
 - **European Social Fund (ESF)** £37.6m managed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
8. The 'Calls' for bids will be announced over throughout the 6 year period, most likely to clustered around 2015 for the first round of 3 year projects, and then in 2018 for the second round of 3 year projects.
9. CBC has been working closely with SEMLEP on the ESIF funding programme. This paper sets out an overview of the opportunities for CBC in relation to the various funding streams and more specifically the two bid proposals relating to the ERDF and ESF Local Call, details of which are set out in this paper.
10. CBC is in a strong position to act at the lead partner in particular funding strands of the ESIF programme. CBC has expertise and experience through leading previous ESF co-financing. It also delivers the Bedfordshire Adult and Community Learning Service and therefore carries the necessary reputation, experience and expertise to act as a reputable lead body.

11. Continuing as the lead body allows CBC to further build its expertise in bidding for and delivering funding, an area that will become more significant as Government budgets are cut and there is an increased reliance on other funding sources. It also places CBC in a strong position for future debates on skills devolution.

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

12. CBC has submitted a £2m ERDF outline application which if approved will be required to be developed into a detailed bid. This builds on our existing successful Innovation Bridge project which ends in August 2015, a partnership with the University of Bedfordshire which delivers innovation and research support to local businesses to grow.
13. In order to provide the wider support offer that businesses are seeking, the bid expands the Innovation Bridge project to deliver across a broader geographic area including SEMLEP, the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP and the North Anglian LEP. If successful around 350 businesses will be supported and over 60 new businesses created, the current programme supported 45 businesses.
14. The bid is a partnership between Central Bedfordshire Council (as the lead partner) and the University of Bedfordshire, Anglia Ruskin University and University Campus Suffolk. ERDF requires 50% match funding which will be delivered through university staff time and through a Grant element of the project where a business who requires the Grant must match this themselves. The total project value including match funding is therefore £3.9m. If successful, CBC will administer the project, the cost of which will be covered by the ERDF funds.
15. If successful, this project will form a key tool in our Business Support Package for Central Bedfordshire businesses to grow and prosper. Bidders will be informed in August as to whether we will be invited to submit a full application. It is anticipated that successful full applications will be announced in late autumn/winter 2015.

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

16. This funding stream is open directly to businesses and business start ups themselves. It is only open to farmers, those in farm households and rural small and micro businesses. Grants range from £35k to £155k and all projects are required to create 2 jobs. CBC is promoting the programme and there are opportunities to get involved in future funding calls that will focus on tourism, food and drink and rural economies. CBC aims to tie it in to some of our Food Enterprise Zone development work. It will offer opportunities for supporting activities such as Farmers' Markets.

European Social Fund (ESF)

17. SEMLEP has apportioned the ESF funds to be delivered through two approaches, broken down into smaller funding 'lots' throughout the 6 year programme. While competition will be fierce and in some instances national providers sought, CBC will still explore opportunities and potentially bid with other SEMLEP partners. CBC will engage with all successful bidders across to ensure local opportunities are maximised.
18. The two approaches are:
 - a) £19.9m allocated through three 'Opt In' national bodies (Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Big Lottery) who will provide their own match funding before opening up the fund for organisations to bid to;
 - b) £13.7m allocated through an '**Open Call**' approach where any organisation can bid for directly, but must provide their own match funding;

A £4m pot has also been allocated to Community Local Led Development in Corby and Luton.

Opt Ins

19. It is likely the Opt In Calls will be dominated by national organisations bidding across several if not all LEP areas, offering efficiencies in national delivery programmes. CBC will explore opportunities for bidding, but it is likely that the real opportunities will be through the Open Call, detailed below.
20. The SFA Opt In bidding details and timeframes are still to be announced. Bid priorities will be around higher level skills development, redundancy support, apprenticeship support for SMEs and the management of a community grants programme.
21. The DWP Opt bidding details and timeframes are still to be announced. Although it is anticipated that national providers will be preferred, Milton Keynes is exploring leading a SEMLEP wide Local Authority bid for this funding, again enabling Local Authorities to have more influence over local delivery. Priorities are still being negotiated but likely to be aligned with Job Centre Plus activities and focussed on employment support. Competition for this funding area will be extremely fierce. CBC will align with Milton Keynes' leadership on this bid.
22. The Big Lottery Opt In is targeted at delivery through Voluntary and Community Sector organisations with the priorities of reducing worklessness, debt advice and money management addressing financial barriers to work, and self employment initiatives.

The 'Open Call' opportunity for CBC

23. It is anticipated that an Open Call of £8.4m will be announced in September 2015. The Call requires delivery over a three year period with 50% match funding. Priorities are:
- Access to employment for job seekers and inactive people;
 - Sustainable integration into the labour market of young people;
 - Social Inclusion;
 - Enhancing equal access to lifelong learning; and
 - Improving the labour market relevance of education and training systems.
24. A SEMLEP-wide consortium approach is encouraged and this is a prime opportunity for the Local Authorities to bid, enabling a more effective and focused programme which is often not achieved when delivered through national providers.
25. With our expertise and experience in previous ESF delivery, CBC is stepping forward as the lead partner to bid for this funding, pulling together a consortium of the 11 SEMLEP Local Authorities. As the lead partner CBC will support the delivery and performance management of the programme, ensuring that it meets ESF criteria. The administration cost of being the lead partner will be covered by the ESF funds and is anticipated to be between 9-15% depending on current discussions with the Local Authorities on the level of their support need.
26. Match Funding must be provided by each Local Authority involved in the Open Call bid. The total programme value including match funding will therefore be £17m across the SEMLEP area. Consequently CBC council departments are exploring what activities currently delivered could be eligible for use as match funding and what gaps in provision could be explored as part of the ESF delivery.
27. The funding is allocated on the basis of population and deprivation for each Local Authority (the indicative funding is set out in the Table below in paragraph 27). Most of the Local Authority Consortium partners are coming in with projects less than the proposed figures as they are unable to identify the amount of match funding required.
28. CBC has a notional allocation of £987,898 of funding over the three years to support employability and skills programmes across the Central Bedfordshire. This amount could increase if the other Local Authorities do not request their full allocation. CBC and Bedford are confident on our ability to identify match and consequently we will still bid to the full availability of £8.4m ESF.
29. ESF notional funding allocations:

Local Authority	ESF Funding	
	% of allocation	Allocation
Aylesbury Vale	3.4%	£285,830
Bedford	11.7%	£983,387
Central Bedfordshire	11.8%	£987,898
Cherwell	4.1%	£348,430
Corby	4.2%	£354,000
Daventry	1.8%	£150,718
Kettering	3.6%	£301,488
Luton	26.3%	£2,209,210
Milton Keynes	20.0%	£1,679,931
Northampton	11.4%	£960,214
South Northamptonshire	1.7%	£138,896
ESF Open Call Total	100.0%	£8,400,000

Reasons for decision

30. The current and future funding opportunities provide excellent opportunities to support residents and businesses. They cover CBC and the whole of the South East Midlands (SEM) area, with the potential to extend beyond the borders of the SEM area, particularly in relation to the ERDF bid.
31. Including match funding, the current funding bids under development are for programme values of £3.9m for the ERDF Innovation Bridge bid and £16.8m for the ESF Local Call. If successful, both programmes will commit CBC to the ESIF funding criteria and have implications on the Council which are described further in paragraphs 33 to 66.

Council Priorities

32. If successful, the proposed funding bids will support business growth and enhance our local communities.
33. The ERDF programme will focus on business innovation a key growth generator.
34. The ESF programme will deliver employment and skills support services to the following vulnerable groups:
 - ESA and inactive benefit claimants, which includes individuals with learning disabilities, mental health conditions, and physical disabilities;
 - Over 50s;
 - Women;
 - Looked After Children;
 - Migrant communities;
 - Gypsy and traveller communities;

- in certain areas, vulnerable young people such as gang members and NEETs, and those at risk of becoming such;
- Work force progression and those looking to develop specialist skills in our growth sectors.

Corporate Implications

35. We are committing CBC as lead body to delivering two ESIF programmes with a total value of £20.7M over 3 years. This will include funding for additional resource requirements such as staffing and infrastructure, estimated at between 9% and 15% of the total funding including match, subject to negotiations with partners. The whole programme will have a positive impact on CBC budgets and enable the authority to meet some important needs of its disadvantaged communities and of business growth. The following paragraphs provide more detail:

Legal Implications

36. The Council's Executive Arrangements and Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 confirm that key decisions must be taken by the Council's Executive.
37. Service level agreements with Local Authority delivery partners should be approved by legal services and such agreement must be consistent with the content of the Council's bid and terms of the grant funding agreement. This should help the Council avoid the risk of clawback of grant funding.
38. In the event that the Council, or delivery partners, engage private partners for the delivery of services, the terms of such engagement must comply with the requirements of the grant funding agreement and a procurement process must be followed in accordance with the Council's contract standing orders and Public Contracts Regulations 2015 if applicable. All contracts should be approved by legal services.
39. The Council is subject to the requirement to obtain best value in any procurement process because it is a best value authority for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1999. The Act requires the Council to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. To this end, the Council must be satisfied that its procurement processes achieves best value in terms of price and quality.
40. The Council is required under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 to consider the following in respect of procurements that are subject to the EU procurement regime:

- a) How what is proposed to be procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area; and
- b) How, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement.

These criteria will be given due consideration in any procurement process.

Financial Implications

41. The current team managing the ESF and ERDF programmes from the previous funding round have worked closely with the Finance Team to establish systems and protocols to ensure match funding can be properly evidenced and claimed, and that expenditure is ESIF eligible. These systems will be reviewed and worked upon in readiness for a new programme across the SEMLEP area. Without the proper systems in place this will put the ESIF programmes at risk therefore systems need to be in place before funding is accepted.
42. Match funding for the programme is being identified within existing budgets across CBC. There is no commitment to provide funds in excess of this other than for administrative costs which are 100% recoverable from the programme.
43. The programme bids are including additional funding to cover the costs of a dedicated External Funding Finance Manager which is proposed to sit within the corporate Finance team within the overall delegation of the Section 151 Officer and play a pivotal role in the overall management of the ESIF programmes.
44. As the lead contractor for both ESF and ERDF applications, CBC will need to ensure adequate cash flow as there may be a delay in receiving funding from DWP/ DCLG for payment of claims. It is likely we will have to operate on a cash flow basis of no more than 2 quarters in arrears. Further work is being undertaken to model the cash flow requirements based on accurate forecasting from delivery partners.

Procurement Implications

45. There is potential to develop a dynamic purchasing system for the whole programme to streamline procurement, speed up the process and ensure all tender opportunities follow ESIF eligibility requirements.
46. All procurement will be undertaken by Central Bedfordshire Council in accordance with the Council's Procurement Toolkit and Procurement Rules. Where there is a conflict between these rules and procedures and the ESIF Procurement Guidance CBC will ensure that the ESIF rules are followed.

47. The ESIF regulations have greater requirements to adhere to, than our corporate process. ESIF regulations require additional levels of publication of any tendering opportunities for example within the CBC procurement rules we are only required to obtain three quotes for a tender of between £2,000 and £20,000. Under ESIF regulations we are required to widely publicise the tendering opportunity so while not current CBC protocol any ESIF tenders or tenders where we are using identified match funding, must be published on our website for any potential bidder to see.
48. Experience from the previous European Funded projects delivered by CBC has provided several guiding principles for this as follows:
 - All contracts are advertised openly on the Central Bedfordshire Council procurement web pages, using the Intend procurement system where the value of the contract indicates that this is appropriate;
 - All bid submissions are evaluated in an open and transparent manner by a team of evaluators using the Central Bedfordshire Council procurement toolkit and seeking guidance on EU principles where required; and
 - Contract management and initiation takes place in accordance with the Council's procurement team and legal team who have experience of EU procurement standards and requirements.

Equalities Implications

49. 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.
50. The programmes are targeted to create positive change within some of our most deprived communities. The programme will provide additional employment and skills support to some of our most vulnerable groups and as such is specifically targeted to address inequalities in the labour market.
51. To follow ESIF requirements all projects must adhere to European Equalities and Diversity requirements which mean:
 - No beneficiaries are excluded from participation in the ESIF programmes on the grounds of their protected characteristics;
 - The needs of all potential beneficiaries are considered at project design stage in order that the service is appropriately delivered;

- Services are responsive to the needs of all communities where relevant; and
- Support is targeted towards under-represented communities where relevant.

Risk

52. A full risk analysis is being completed as part of the bid development CBC as lead body will need systems and contracts in place to ensure risks are mitigated and possibilities of claw back by DWP are closely managed, ensuring failure to deliver or incorrect claims are identified quickly and project managed effectively.
53. A risk register will be maintained and have a supporting risk strategy. These will be reviewed at the regular steering group meetings, risks clearly identified with the appropriate ownership agreed for effective management. This will include the risks identified in this report and through the thorough risk analysis that will be completed as part of the bid submission process. The documents will be live and updated regularly.
54. There is reputational risk to CBC if the programmes fail to deliver and we fail to claim the fully allocated amounts of ESIF. In order to mitigate this risk, significant work is already being undertaken across directorates and with the corporate teams to build on the expertise and capacity established through the successful delivery of the 2007-2014 ESF programme. Expertise has shown that through robust monitoring of funding claims and ensuring compliance with the ESIF regulations the risks of underspend and clawback can be successfully mitigated. It is proposed that the programme has dedicated resource embedded within the Council to ensure the robustness of the funding.
55. If a clawback situation arises with a partner, we will ensure it is passed to the correct deviating delivery partner through a formal SLA. We are working with IT on identifying necessary databases and systems and with Legal and Finance on ensuring correct agreements, systems and processes are in place.
56. As well as ensuring our external agreements with Delivery Partners are robust we must have commitment and understanding from our internal departments participating and benefiting from receipt of ESF. Support will be provided to delivery partners in delivery of the ESF programme through directly funded resource. This support will be calculated on a risk basis in terms of delivery partner expertise in delivering ESF and size of budget allocation.
57. Ultimately we look for senior management commitment to enforcing robust approaches and maximising the funding opportunities offered

through this ESF call, minimising risks of poor performance, lack of delivery and potential claw back.

58. There is also a risk of needing to cover redundancy payments for staff contracted to wholly deliver the ESF programme. This is currently being researched with DWP to clarify the position and then options will be explored if necessary regarding recruitment solutions and project management resources.

Sustainability Implications

59. The ERDF and ESF programmes will meet the key objectives of CBC's Sustainable Development Policy:
 - Social progress that recognises the needs of everyone;
 - Effective protection of the environment;
 - Prudent use of natural resources; and
 - The maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.
60. The ERDF programme includes a focus on low carbon SME support and encourages innovative approaches to growth and development which consider environmental impact.
61. Additionally as highlighted in the Equalities paragraphs 47 through 49 the programmes support our most deprived areas and disadvantaged communities, addressing the social elements of sustainable development.
62. As the lead authority, CBC's Sustainable Development Policy will apply to all partners and ensure that sustainable development covers the three areas of economy, society and the environment, across the whole of the SEMLEP area.

ICT

63. Due to the scale of the projects, particularly the ESF programme, the need to have a central Management Information System to manage project and programme delivery is critical.
64. The system needs to be able to be accessed by multiple external delivery partners across a wide geographical area for both ERDF and ESF.
65. This system and access will need to be stable, comply with data protection and allow for meaningful data to be analysed ensuring the smooth monitoring of delivery and performance.
66. ESF in particular will require CBC to have to upload participant data to DWP on a quarterly basis.

67. Initial dialogue is already underway with ICT colleagues to examine options to build on the existing MIS used by the Regeneration and Business Directorate for the management of Skills Funding Agency Funding data which is compliant with ESIF regulations.

Human Resources

68. A budget will be developed to cover the cost of staff recruitment, salary and on-costs, ICT staff needs, evaluation and ICT systems to provide dedicated resource to the management of the programmes. All costs to administer the partnership programme and meet ESIF requirements will be included. It is estimated that at least 4 to 5 FTE new staff will be required and costs will be met from the ESF and ERDF programme funding.

Conclusion and next Steps

69. Bidding into the ESIF programmes offers CBC both additional funding for its own employment support activities and strategic positioning. It provides an in-depth opportunity to look at economic growth across Central Bedfordshire and beyond into the whole of the SEMLEP and wider area and to work with key influential partners.
70. Working in partnership within and outside of the CBC itself has encouraged synergy and development of shared approaches. It has also created closer working with the Universities, important partners in future innovation and growth.
71. If the recommendations are agreed, CBC will continue with the bid development with subsequent full bids submitted to the Managing Authorities DCLG and DWP. If these are approved we will return to Executive with more detail on the programmes themselves and for approval to accept the offers, enter into contracts with the delivery partners and proceed with delivery of the programme priorities.

Appendices

72. None

Background Papers

73. None

Meeting: Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date: 20 August 2015
Subject: Work Programme 2015 – 2016 & Executive Forward Plan
Report of: Chief Executive
Summary: The report provides Members with details of the currently drafted Committee work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.

Contact Officer: Rebecca Preen, Scrutiny Officer
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The work programme of the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee will contribute indirectly to all 5 Council priorities. Whilst there are no direct implications arising from this report the implications of proposals will be details in full in each report submitted to the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. that the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
 - (a) considers and approves the work programme attached, subject to any further amendments it may wish to make;**
 - (b) considers the Executive Forward Plan; and**
 - (c) considers whether it wishes to add any further items to the work programme and/or establish any Task Forces to assist it in reviewing specific items.**

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

1. Attached is the currently drafted work programme for the Committee.
2. The Committee is now requested to consider the work programme attached and amend or add to it as necessary.

Overview and Scrutiny Task Forces

3. In addition to consideration of the work programme, Members may also wish to consider how each item will be reviewed i.e. by the Committee itself (over one or a number of Committee meetings) or by establishing a Member Task Force to review an item in greater depth and report back its findings.

Executive Forward Plan

4. Listed below are those items relating specifically to this Committee's terms of reference contained in the latest version of the Executive's Forward Plan to ensure Members are fully aware of the key issues Executive Members will be taking decisions upon in the coming months. The full Executive Forward Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at the link at the end of this report.

Ref	Issue	Indicative Exec Meeting date
1.	Nature Conservation Strategy	6 October 2015
2.	Plan-making Programme for Central Bedfordshire	6 October 2015
3.	European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF)	6 October 2015
4.	Environmental Enhancement Strategy	1 December 2015
5.	Central Bedfordshire Permit Scheme	1 December 2015
6.	Adoption of Community Infrastructure Levy and Planning Obligations Strategy	12 January 2016
7.	Passenger Transport Strategy	12 January 2016
8.	Housing Strategy for Central Bedfordshire	9 February 2016
Non Key Decisions		
9.	Stratton Business Park Local Development Order and Food Enterprise Zone	6 October 2015
10.	Community Safety Partnership Priorities 2016 - 2017	9 February 2016

Conclusion

- 5 Members are requested to consider and agree the attached work programme, subject to any further amendments/additions they may wish to make and highlight those items within it where they may wish to establish a Task Force to assist the Committee in its work. This will allow officers to plan accordingly but will not preclude further items being added during the course of the year if Members so wish and capacity exists.

Appendix – Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.

Background reports:

Executive Forward Plan (can be viewed at any time on the Council's website) at the following [link:- http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=577&RD=0](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=577&RD=0)

Appendix A – SC OSC Work Programme 2015/16

OSC Date	Report Title	Description
29 October 2015	South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership	To receive a presentation as previously requested by Members
29 October 2015	Police restructure update	To receive information regarding the recent restructure within the Bedfordshire Police Service
29 October 2015	Parking strategy	To receive a report regarding the Council's Parking Strategy
29 October 2015	Highways Contract	To receive information regarding to procedure changes and impact of the new Highways contract 2016
29 October 2015	Passenger Transport provision	To receive information regarding changes to the passenger transport provision
29 October 2015	Environmental Enhancement Strategy	To receive a report regarding the environmental enhancement strategy
29 October 2015	Fees and Charges 2016	To receive a report from the Fees and Charges Task Force
10 December 2015	Draft Capital Programme 2016/17-2019/20	To receive a report on the Draft Capital Programme 2016/17-2019/20
10 December 2015	Draft Budget and MTFP 2016/17	To receive a report on the Draft Budget and MTFP 2016/17
10 December 2015	Draft Budget for the Housing Revenue Account	To receive a report on the Draft Budget for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Service)

10 December 2015	CIL	To receive a report on CIL
14 January 2016	Draft Budget	To receive a report regarding the Draft Budget
14 January 2016	Draft Fees and Charges	To receive a report regarding Draft Fees and Charges
14 January 2016	Housing Strategy	To receive a report on the Council's Housing Strategy
14 January 2016	Community Safety Partnership Priorities 2016-17	To receive a report regarding the Council's Community Safety Partnership Priorities 2016-17