

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

**This meeting will
be filmed.***



**Central
Bedfordshire**

please ask for Sandra Hobbs
direct line 0300 300 5257
date 26 May 2016

NOTICE OF MEETING

EXECUTIVE

Date & Time

Tuesday, 7 June 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
	S Dixon	– 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

All other Members of the Council - on request

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

***This meeting may be filmed by the Council for live and/or subsequent broadcast online at**

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=577>.

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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 5 April 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 July 2016 to 30 June 2017.

Decisions

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
8.	Housing Strategy 2016-2021	33 - 38
	To receive the draft Housing Strategy for consideration and recommendation to Council. Please note the appendices are to follow.	

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|-----|--|-----------|
| 9 | The Environmental Framework | 39 - 128 |
| | To review and endorse the Environmental Framework, and understand how the recent public consultation on the Environmental Framework will be used to shape policies in the emerging Local Plan. | |
| 10. | Market Town Regeneration Fund | 129 - 142 |
| | To seek Executive approval of the Market Town Regeneration Fund Programme. | |
| 11. | The Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities | 143 - 152 |
| | To inform the Executive of the challenges facing day services and to seek approval to begin an engagement process with stakeholders. | |
| 12. | Sustainable and Transformation Plan | 153 - 172 |
| | For the Executive to note the requirement for every health and care system to “come together to create its own ambitious local blueprint for accelerating its implementation of the Forward View.” | |
| 13. | 2015/16 Revenue Outturn Report | To follow |
| | To consider the 2015/16 revenue financial outturn report. | |
| 14. | 2015/16 Capital Financial Outturn report | To follow |
| | To consider the 2015/16 capital financial outturn report. | |
| 15. | 2015/16 Housing Revenue Account Financial Outturn (Revenue & Capital) | To follow |
| | To consider the 2015/16 Housing Revenue Account financial Outturn (Revenue & Capital). | |
| 16. | Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard and Tender in respect of Payment Services | 173 - 180 |
| | To explain the actions proposed to achieve practical compliance with the Payment Card Industry – Data Security Standard. | |
| 17. | Corporate Asset Management Strategy | 181 - 206 |
| | 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. | |

18. **Maintaining a Sustainable Land Holding** 207 - 212

To proposed that a policy of land acquisition is put in place that allows Central Bedfordshire Council to replenish its estate through judicious purchases of land where these fit strategically with our current estate.

19. **Commissioning of New School Places in Arlesey for September 2017** 213 - 254

To provide Executive with the outcome of the consultation by Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust (BEMAT) on behalf of 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.

20. **Tender Award for the Redevelopment of Croft Green, Dunstable** 255 - 260

Appointment of the preferred contractor for the development of 23 sheltered housing apartments and communal facilities at Croft Green, Dunstable.

21. **Tender Award for the Contract for Kitchen and Bathroom Replacements to Council Housing 2016-2020** 261 - 266

To award the 3 year contract for kitchen and bathroom replacements to Council housing.

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

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

Exempt Report

Item	Subject	Exempt Para.	Page Nos.
23.	Disposal of Land at Sorrel Way and East of Saxon Drive, Biggleswade	3	267 - 276

To seek approval to dispose of land at Sorrel Way and east of Saxon Drive, Biggleswade.

24. **Disposal of Land at Steppingly Road, Flitwick** 3 277 - 280

To seek approval to dispose of land at Steppingly Road, Flitwick.

25. **Purchase of a Regeneration Site in Leighton Buzzard** 3 281 - 286

This report seeks authority from the Executive to purchase a site in Leighton Buzzard that would enable regeneration within the town.

Exempt Appendices

Item	Subject	Exempt Para.	Page Nos.
26.	Tender Award for the Re-development of Croft Green, Dunstable	3	287 - 288
	To receive the exempt Appendix for the tender award for the re-development of Croft Green, Dunstable.		
27.	Tender Award for the Contract for Kitchen and Bathroom Replacements to Council Housing 2016-2020	3	289 - 292

To receive the exempt appendix.

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

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

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 5 April 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 E Ghent B Wells
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Apologies for Absence:	Deputy Executive Members Cllrs	Mrs A L Dodwell Ms C Maudlin
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Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	R D Berry D Bowater P Downing C C Gomm Ms A M W Graham	Cllrs	R Morris B Saunders D Shelvey 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
	Mrs C Jagusz	Committee Services Administrator
	Mr J Longhurst	Director of Regeneration and Business
	Mrs J Ogle	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
	Mrs M Scott	Director of Public Health
	Mr C Warboys	Chief Finance Officer

E/15/117. **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/15/118. **Members' Interests**

None were declared.

E/15/119. **Chairman's Announcements**

It had been announced that the route for the East West Railway would go from Bedford via Sandy to Cambridge. The Leader welcomed this announcement as it would be beneficial to Central Bedfordshire and the work of the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP).

The Leader had visited the new Flitwick Leisure Centre and commended the new facilities.

The Council was working closely with former England footballer, Rio Ferdinand's Legacy Foundation and other partners and DCLG on a project to regenerate the Kingsland area in Houghton Regis.

Stephen Catchpole had been appointed as the new Chief Executive of SEMLEP.

The Leader had visited Sandy, including Sandy Upper School and congratulated the school on their excellent exam results.

E/15/120. **Petitions**

No petitions had been received.

E/15/121. **Public Participation**

No members of the public had registered to speak.

E/15/122. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 May 2016 to 30 April 2017 be noted.

E/15/123. **Affordable Housing Guidance Note (South Central Bedfordshire)**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Regeneration that set out the proposed Affordable Housing Guidance Note. The Note provided guidance to support the determination of planning applications for those parishes in the area of the former South Bedfordshire District Council and would apply until such time as the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan reached submission stage. The proposed target for affordable housing provision in the south of Central Bedfordshire was 30% on all qualifying sites of 4 dwellings and above. On sites of 4 dwellings, one affordable dwelling must be provided.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to secure affordable housing in the southern part of its area.

RESOLVED

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

E/15/124. **Passenger Transport Strategy: Introduction of a Dynamic Purchasing Scheme and Consultation on Public Transport Proposals**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that set out the proposals for public transport, including subsidised public bus routes, community transport provision and concessionary travel, as a basis for public consultation. The report also proposed a move to a Dynamic Purchasing System to procure transport providers.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Community Services explained that the impact on the subsidised bus services would not be known until after the public consultation.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to deliver the next steps of a Passenger Transport Strategy that aimed to deliver fit for purpose transport services in a safe and effective way. The proposal to move to a Dynamic Purchasing System would provide greater flexibility within the scheme to allow providers to join and a faster tendering process.

RESOLVED

1. **that the policies relating to Subsidised Bus Services, Concessionary Travel and Community Transport, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved for public consultation; and**

2. **that the use of a Dynamic Purchasing Scheme (DPS) to procure transport providers be approved.**

E/15/125. **Local Transport Plan 4**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Regeneration that highlighted the proposal for a new Local Transport Plan (LTP), including the vision and objectives. The proposed LTP4 focussed on delivering sustainable growth which was key to securing the future prosperity of Central Bedfordshire. The three broad areas covered included:

- capacity;
- connectivity; and
- communities.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Regeneration acknowledged that the local transport network needed to take account of the local residents' requirements as well as the needs of the business community. A feasibility study would be carried out to look at the option of building a northern bypass in Biggleswade. The Highways Authority had a ten year plan that included the remodelling of the A1.

Reason for decision: To enable the production of the new Local Transport Plan. The new Plan would supplement the Local Plan to provide a strategic integrated long term vision for facilitating growth.

RESOLVED

1. **that the production of a new Local Transport Plan be approved;**
2. **that the vision and objectives of the new Plan be endorsed; and**
3. **that the timetable for its production and adoption be supported.**

E/15/126. **Commissioning of New School Places in Biggleswade and Arlesey for September 2017**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Education and Skills that sought support for proposed consultations by Biggleswade Academy Trust and the Governing Body of St Andrews Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School, Biggleswade, with a view to each expanding by 1 form of entry (30 places in each lower school year group) by September 2017.

The report also sought support for the consultation by Etonbury Academy, Arlesey, to expand by 1 form of entry (30 places in Year groups 9-11) from September 2017 to provide a total of 180 places in each Year group 5-11.

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

RESOLVED

1. that 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, be supported;
2. that 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, be supported; and
3. that the proposed 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, be supported.

The Executive then discussed the recommendations from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee concerning the development of a policy on the issue of effective and accessible "drop off" and "pick up" point at schools.

RESOLVED

1. That the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the relevant Executive Members, develop a policy on the issue of effective and accessible "drop off" and "pick up" point at schools, with the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee being updated at a future meeting.

E/15/127. **New Lower School Places in Fairfield Parish**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Education and Skills that set out the outcome of the consultation exercise for the commissioning of new lower school places within the Parish of Fairfield from September 2017. The consultation had concluded on 9 March 2016 and 16 responses had been received of which 14 respondents had supported the proposed expansion.

Reason for decision: To ensure the Council continues to comply with its legal obligation to meet the needs of a growing population.

RESOLVED

1. that the proposal of the Governing Body of Fairfield Park Lower School to permanently expand onto a second site from a 2 form 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, be approved, 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; and

2. to authorise 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.

E/15/128. **Orchard Community Building - Land East of Biggleswade**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Stronger Communities that proposed the transfer of the Orchards Community Building, Biggleswade and all future liabilities and responsibilities for it to Biggleswade Town Council.

Reason for decision: To enable Biggleswade Town Council to have full responsibility for the Community Building.

RESOLVED

that the transfer of the Orchard Community Building, Biggleswade, and all associated future liabilities and responsibilities, to Biggleswade Town Council be approved.

E/15/129. **Community Building at Marston Park**

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Stronger Communities that proposed 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.

Reason for decision: To enable the Parish Council to confirm its position to the developers to enable the community building to be built.

RESOLVED

that the transfer of the Community Building at Marston Park and all future liabilities and responsibilities for the building; the associated sports pitches and open space within Area 7 only as detailed in Drawing No. Bir.3429_24E, to Marston Moretaine Parish Council be approved.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 10.15 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated

**Central Bedfordshire Council
Forward Plan of Key Decisions
1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017**

- 1) During the period from **1 July 2016 to 30 June 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 Steven Dixon	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

- 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
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 July 2016 to 30 June 2017

Key Decisions

Date of Publication: 26 May 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.	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: Tracey Harris (Waste), Head of Waste Services, tracey.harris2@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk , Tel: 0300 300 4646, Alice Geary, Project Manager Community Services Email: alice.geary@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6970

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)
2.	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
3.	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)
4.	Integration of Health and Social Care in Central Bedfordshire -	The emerging approach to the integration of health and social care in Central Bedfordshire, including integrated health and care hubs.	2 August 2016		Open Integration of Health and Social Care in Central Bedfordshire	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 02/07/2016 to Contact Officer: Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing Email: julie.ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4221
5.	Re-procurement of Community Health Services – Children and Adults -	To consider the re-procurement of Community Health Services for Children and Adults.	2 August 2016		Open Re-procurement of Community Health Services – Children and Adults	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Health Comments by 02/07/2016 Celia Shohet, Assistant Director of Public Health Email: celia.shohet@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4578

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.	A421 Collaboration Agreement -	This report ask the Executive to approve the A421 Collaboration Agreement between CBC, MKC and SEMLEP that sets out how the parties will work together (including funding contributions) to deliver the scheme.	2 August 2016		Open A421 Collaboration Agreement	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 02/07/2016 to Contact Officer: Jade Jones, Project Manager Email: jade.jones@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5584
7.	Step Up Step down Service in Chiltern Vale and Leighton Buzzard Localities -	To agree the delivery of the Step Up Step Down Service in the Chiltern Vale and Leighton Buzzard localities.	2 August 2016	Consultation with staff who provide the service	Open Step Up Step down Service in Chiltern Vale and Leighton Buzzard Localities	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 02/07/2016 to Contact Officer: Jane Moakes, Head of Strategic Commissioning Email: jane.moakes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5441

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.	Stratton Street Railway Bridge -	Additional capital funding required to complete the reconstruction of Stratton Street Railway Bridge, Biggleswade due to adverse weather delaying site operations.	2 August 2016		Open Stratton Street Railway Bridge	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 02/07/16 to Contact Officer: Paul Mason, Head of Highways Email: paul.mason@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4708
9.	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
10.	All Age Skills Strategy -	To approve the All Age Skills Strategy.	11 October 2016		Open	Executive Member for Regeneration Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Jodie Yandall, Head of Investment and Employment Email: jodie.yandall@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6288

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
11.	Parking Strategy -	To approve the Parking Strategy.	11 October 2016		Open	Executive Member for Community Services Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Geri Davies, Principal Strategic Transport Officer Email: geraldine.davies@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4854
12.	Consultation on the Council's Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2018/19 -	Consultation on the Council's admission arrangements for the academic year 2018/19.	11 October 2016		Open	Executive Member for Education and Skills Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Jessica Mortimer Email: jessica.mortimer@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4766
13.	Determination of the Council's Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2018/19 -	Determination of the Council's admission arrangements for the academic year 2018/19.	7 February 2017		Open	Executive Member for Education and Skills Comments by 07/01/2017 to Contact Officer: Jessica Mortimer Email: jessica.mortimer@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4766

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
NON KEY DECISIONS						
14.	Children's Services Transformation Programme -	To consider a transformation programme for Children's Services.	2 August 2016		Open Children's Services Transformation Programme	Executive Member for Social Care and Housing Comments by 02/07/2016 to Contact Officer: Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services Email: sue.harrison@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4229
15.	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

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 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
17.	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

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.	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 Social Care and Housing, 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.	Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring -	To receive the quarter 1 (April to June 2016) performance monitoring report.	11 October 2016		Open Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 11/09/2016 to Contact Officer: Tobin Stephenson, Programme Manager Email: tobin.stephenson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4098

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.	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
21.	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)
22.	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
23.	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)
24.	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
25.	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)
26.	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
27.	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)
28.	Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring -	To receive the quarter 2 (July - September 2016) performance monitoring report.	10 January 2017		Open Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 10/12/2016 to Contact Officer: Tobin Stephenson, Programme Manager Email: tobin.stephenson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4098
29.	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
30.	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)
31.	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
32.	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)
33.	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
34.	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 Social Care and Housing, 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)
35.	Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring -	To receive quarter 3 (October to December 2016) performance monitoring report.	4 April 2017		Open Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 04/03/2017 to Contact Officer: Tobin Stephenson, Programme Manager Email: tobin.stephenson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4098

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 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

7 June 2016

HOUSING STRATEGY 2016-2021

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

Advising Officers: Jason Longhurst, Director of Regeneration & Business
jason.longhurst@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

John Goody, Principal Housing Officer
john.goody@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

This decision relates to a key decision

Purpose of this report

1. This report is to explain the purpose of the Strategy and sets out how the Council will use the document as a strategic framework to shape planning and housing policies and help deliver the Council's housing priorities. Executive Committee is asked to review and endorse the Housing Strategy, following feedback and changes from the recent public consultation. The Housing Strategy will be used to shape housing policies in the emerging Local Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to recommend to Council to:

1. **endorse the Central Bedfordshire Housing Strategy (Appendix 1); and**
2. **delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Business, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration, to make any future minor amendments that may be required to the Housing Strategy.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. This item was considered by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) on 17 March 2016. The Committee requested a briefing for all Member which was undertaken on the 8 April 2016.

3. Feedback from the Committee included ensuring developers meet the affordable requirements of the area because many local people would not be able to afford homes within the affordable housing bracket as a result of high prices. In response to a Member enquiry, the Executive Member for Regeneration confirmed that in relation to Council owned homes, the Council charged rents in accordance with government allowances.

Context

What is the Housing Strategy?

4. The Housing Strategy:
 - a) Sets out the Council's proposed approach to address the housing challenges that we expect to affect the area, over the next 5 years.
 - b) Outlines the main national, regional and local housing priorities that will affect Central Bedfordshire over the next five years.
 - c) Will be a document focussed on enabling housing delivery across a range of types and tenures, closely linked to and implemented through the future Local Plan.
 - d) Is an overarching Strategy that provides links and signposting to other strategies that are relevant to housing.

What the Housing Strategy does?

5. By providing an overview of the existing local evidence base, with associated strategies and plans, the Housing Strategy demonstrates how the Council will meet the range of requirements with respect to housing associated with national policy and legislation, which include:
 - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
 - Laying the Foundations: A housing strategy for England
 - Impact of the Localism Act 2011
 - Impact of the Welfare Reform Act 2012
 - Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Affordable Homes Programme 2015-2018
 - Care Act 2014
 - Emerging Housing and Planning Bill.
6. As national policy and legislation is regularly amended or reinterpreted, having an overview of this in the Housing Strategy, which can be easily updated, helps clarify the Council's understanding of what is required to meet the housing challenges the Council faces.

How will the Housing Strategy be used and next steps

7. The Housing Strategy has a number of functions, these include, but are not limited to :
 - a. Providing the strategic housing evidence base for the housing policies in the new Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire.
 - b. Interpreting what the local evidence base means with respect to national policy and clarifying how this information is used.
 - c. Providing the strategic housing direction for the Council and support for Housing Services through the delivery of homes to meet the housing needs of Central Bedfordshire.
 - d. Providing a signpost to relevant strategies with a direct link to housing.
 - e. Providing a strategic housing evidence base for other future Council plans and strategies.

Background

8. The draft strategy was developed with an initial scoping consultation undertaken by independent consultants from September to November 2015 which drew out the housing issues both nationally and locally. This was followed by a consultation internally and externally with the voluntary sector, housing associations/registered providers, care providers, social services, house builders/developers, members and other stakeholders. In October and November 2015 workshops were held with the stakeholders mentioned above to identify the key challenges and priorities which were then used to inform a first draft of the Housing Strategy.
9. Since January officers have been working with Councillors and other service areas to further refine the draft document and the action plan. This included a number of internal workshops and consultations which identified some specific issues for CBC including:
 - The need for homes for all especially more affordable rented homes and homes for key workers to help retain skills in the area.
 - The need for housing to be built in suitable and sustainable locations near transport routes.
 - More housing designed to meet the needs of the disabled and vulnerable.
 - Ensuring adequate provision of suitable accommodation for older people to meet growing needs/demands.
 - The need to deliver economic growth & reduce demand on public services & providing suitable accommodation.

These comments amongst others have been used to structure the sections/priorities and to inform the actions plan. The draft Housing Strategy document was also considered by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny on the 17 March, see comments above.

10. The public consultation commenced on the 22 April for 4 weeks, the comments received and suggested changes are detailed in Appendix 2. The results of the consultations with the public and stakeholders have therefore been reviewed and changes incorporated into the updated Strategy at Appendix 1.
11. Alongside the Strategy we have also developed an Action Plan Appendix 3, which details how the Council will deliver the priorities identified. This will enable the implementation of the Strategy to be monitored.

Council Priorities

12. The Housing Strategy supports all of the Council's priorities, with the most relevant being:
 - a. Enhancing your local community - This strategy will enable new housing to be developed in the right locations and ensure that it is high quality sustainable housing.
 - b. Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable - Ensure that housing stock helps to cater for future demands, particularly the needs of older people and vulnerable households through the provision of appropriate homes.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

13. There can be challenges in all areas of service provision and in particular in those areas where the resource is scarce and priority is being determined between competing needs. There can also be challenges concerning development plans that impact on communities. This Housing Strategy covers a wide range of areas and so the risk of challenge could be wide as a result. However the Housing Strategy is written as aims and ambitions, setting out plans for the future and work to be undertaken so that services can be better targeted and meet the needs identified. It is therefore a useful guide to decision makers and will therefore need to bear the strategy in mind as such and if this is done challenges to this strategy should be negligible.

14. It should be noted that the Housing Strategy is separate and distinguishable from the other policies and strategies it mentions such as the Homelessness Strategy, Local Plan and national policies or legislation.

Financial Implications

15. None arising directly from this report. However, there are a number of indirect financial implications as a result of the Housing Strategy. These include: demand and consequent cost to the Housing revenue account (HRA), the received commuted sums for affordable housing, demand and consequent cost of housing people in temporary accommodation, Disabled Facilities Grants, and funding from external sources such as the Homes and Communities Agency - National Affordable Homes Programme.

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 Council is strongly committed to providing everyone with the opportunity of a decent home and to providing affordable housing which meets demonstrated local needs.
17. 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 immigration mean that a substantial number of households are unable to rent or buy in the open market.
18. There are other groups who may require specialist forms of housing, including those with physical, sensory and learning disabilities. As well as requiring a percentage of homes to be built to wheelchair design standards, we will work with health and social care partners to identify what mix and location of housing is required to meet the needs of those groups.
19. There may be an impact on some vulnerable groups, which relate to the Welfare Reform Act, and the introduction of the Benefit cap. There are issues with the Spare Room Subsidy, for people who are disabled and require a carer to stay overnight and with a Domestic violence victim who requires a safe room within her home from the perpetrator.

Sustainability Implications

20. The Housing Strategy will ensure all new and regeneration schemes concerned with housing will aim to meet the highest levels of sustainability compatible with best value and technical feasibility.

Risk Management

21. Although there are no specific risks associated with the Housing Strategy itself, the development of a comprehensive strategy helps ensure that the Council is meeting its corporate objectives, meeting statutory requirements, and enables risks to be considered and addressed with appropriate mitigating actions.

Conclusion and next Steps

22. The Housing Strategy if endorsed by the Executive will provide the housing vision and priorities for Central Bedfordshire. The Strategy will be implemented in partnership with a range of internal and external partners; these are detailed in the Action Plan, Registered Providers and through the new Local Plan.
23. We will use the Strategy to inform the housing policies in the Local Plan and this together with a delivery Plan for affordable housing will provide the basis for the Council's housing vision to be realised.

Appendices (to Follow)

Appendix 1: Housing Strategy

Appendix 2: Consultation Results

Appendix 3: Housing Strategy Action Plan

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

7 June 2016

The Environmental Framework

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

Advising Officers: Jason Longhurst, Director of Regeneration & Business
jason.longhurst@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Drafting author - Laura Kitson, Green Infrastructure Co-ordinator
(laura.kitson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This report relates to a non-Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. This report provides the Committee with opportunity to review and endorse the Environmental Framework, and understand how the recent public consultation on the Environmental Framework will be used to shape policies in the emerging Local Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **endorse the Environmental Framework as technical guidance to provide an interpretation of the Council's environmental evidence base; and**
2. **delegate to the Director for Regeneration and Business, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration, the approval of any future minor amendments that may be required to the Environmental Framework.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. This item was discussed at the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 March 2016, where it was recommended that the Executive endorse the Environmental Framework as technical guidance for the provision of interpretation of the Council's environmental evidence base.

Key Points

3. The Central Bedfordshire area has valued and a very high quality environment and landscape. This is described, assessed and prioritised through the wide range of evidence studies, guidance, strategies and plans the Council (often in partnership with others) has produced. These cover on a range of specific areas, features and topics.
4. The Environmental Framework provides an overview of the existing local environmental evidence base, which is made up of studies, associated strategies and plans.
5. The Environmental Framework demonstrates how the Council meets a range of requirements associated with national policy and legislation, whilst also providing the framework for how this local evidence base can be used to inform and shape future policy and action.
6. The Environmental Framework also provides the Council with the opportunity to demonstrate the value of our environment, and set out the range of opportunities to protect and enhance it.
7. The Environmental Framework has been consulted on to support the preparation of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan. The consultation asked stakeholders for their views on how we should reflect national policy and the local evidence base in the local plan through a series of general and topic based questions.

Reason/s for decision

8. The Environmental Framework makes the wealth of environmental evidence available for Central Bedfordshire accessible. Endorsing it as technical guidance gives it a formal status. It supports sound and justifiable decision making across a range of areas, particularly development management decisions, the emerging Local Plan, and other Council plans and strategies.

Council Priorities

9. The Environmental Framework supports all of the Council's priorities, with the most relevant being:
 - a. enhancing your local community – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

10. The Environmental Framework reflects how a number of legislative and national policy requirements would be applied in Central Bedfordshire, in light of the environmental information the Council holds. The focus of this largely relates to planning policy, in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as other legal requirements detailed in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, the Climate Change Act, the Habitats Directive, the Water Framework Directive and the Flood and Water Management Act.

Financial Implications

11. The Environmental Framework does not require any budget so there are therefore no financial implications.

Equalities Implications

12. The environment is important in people's health and wellbeing. There is significant and growing evidence on the physical and mental health benefits of green spaces. Research shows that access to green space is associated with better health outcomes, and income-related inequality in health is less pronounced where people have access to green space. Access to good quality green space is associated with a range of positive health outcomes including better self-rated health; lower body mass index scores; overweight and obesity levels; improved mental health and wellbeing and increased longevity in older people.

Sustainability Implications

13. The Environmental Framework will ensure that the wealth of environmental information the Council holds is made best use of in order to deliver sustainable development.

Conclusion and next Steps

14. The Environmental Framework if endorsed by the Executive will act as technical guidance relating to the Council's environmental evidence base. This Framework informs a range of functions including strategic planning and development management. The Director for Regeneration and Business, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration, will be given the delegated authority to make any minor amendments to the Environmental Framework.

15. Comments have been sought through public consultation from key stakeholders and other environmental organisations, asking for their views on how the local evidence base detailed within the framework can be used to shape and provide the focus for future policy and action.
16. These consultation comments are being reviewed, and will be used to shape environmental policies in the new Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Environmental Framework

Appendix 2: Consultation summary

Central
Bedfordshire

great
prospects



Environmental Framework

Understanding and improving Central
Bedfordshire's environment

A great place to live and work.

Foreword

Central Bedfordshire has a high quality and much valued environmental setting. This includes a nationally significant landscape, a historic and picturesque setting and important habitats and geological features.

Over the coming decades, Central Bedfordshire faces a number of opportunities and challenges, largely brought about by the national need for growth in both housing and jobs, alongside the necessary infrastructure needed to make this sustainable.

This document, the Environmental Framework, plays an important role in summarising and interpreting the considerable body of work, in the form of various studies, assessments, strategies and guidance produced by the council. It applies the findings of this to national and local policy allowing for interpretation for how local environmental needs and issues should be interrelated with a view to also supporting economic and other growth.

By taking this enviro-economic approach, the Environmental Framework will help the Council to embrace the challenges and opportunities in faces in a truly sustainable way. This will ensuring that the area's rich environmental assets aren't just protected and enhanced, but are also used to help shape and steer growth.

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Introduction

What is the Environmental Framework?

The Council, through its activities, functions and duties has considerable scope to maintain, enhance and grow existing environmental assets and create new ones.

This is underpinned by a range of studies, evidence, guidance and strategies, each focusing on specific key aspects and issues.

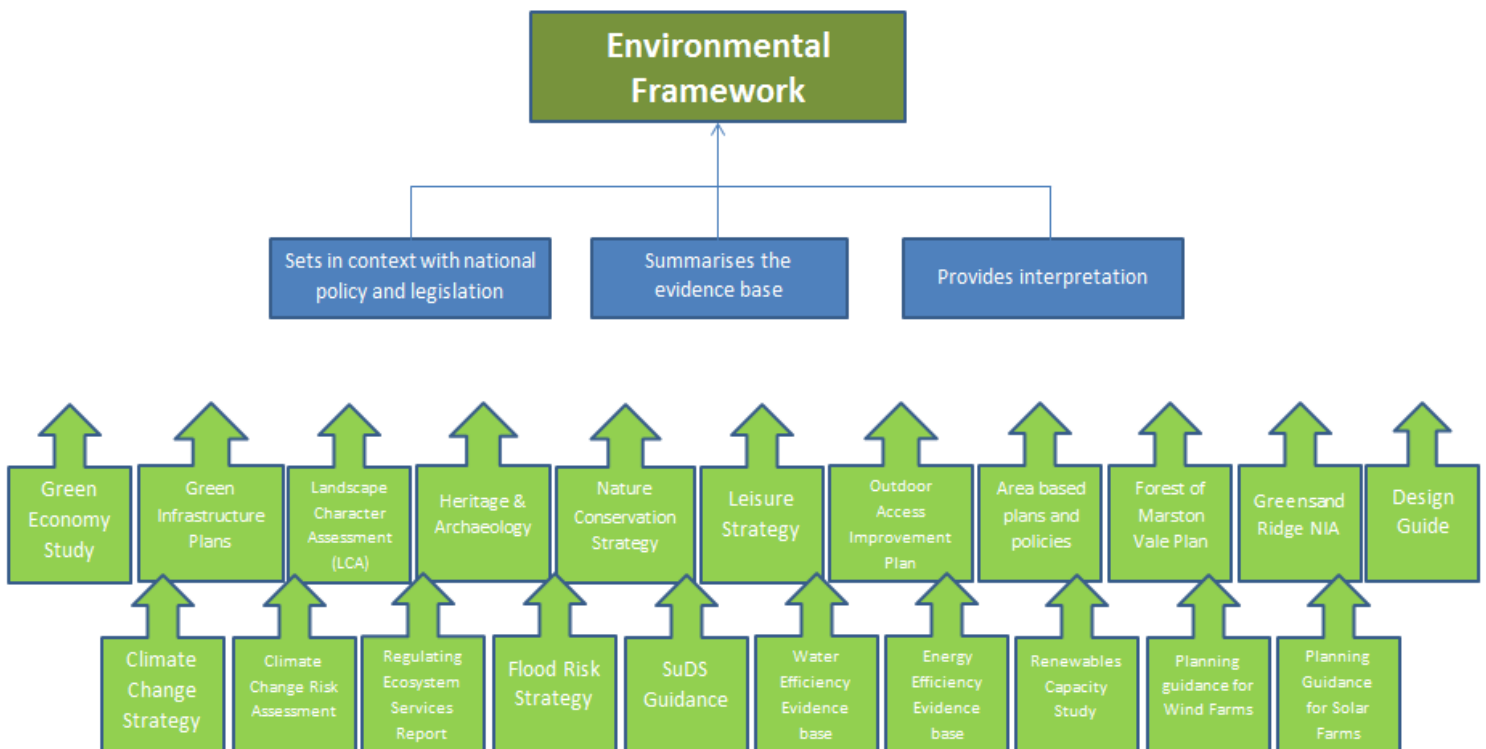
This document, the Environmental Framework, brings together this considerable volume of work, covering natural environmental enhancement and protection, sustainable resource management and the challenge of both mitigating the impact of climate change (through reducing CO₂ emissions) and adapting to the inevitable impacts.

What does the Environmental Framework do?

The Environmental Framework:

- Provides a summary of a range of existing plans, strategies, assessments and reports, covering various aspects of the environment.
- Sets these aspects of the environment in the context of relevant national policy and legislation
- Provides a summary and interpretation of key points from the various plans, strategies etc.

The studies, assessments, guidance and plans summarised in this Framework are important documents in their own right and will be used to help in determining planning applications and will shape future planning policy.



What the Environmental Framework does

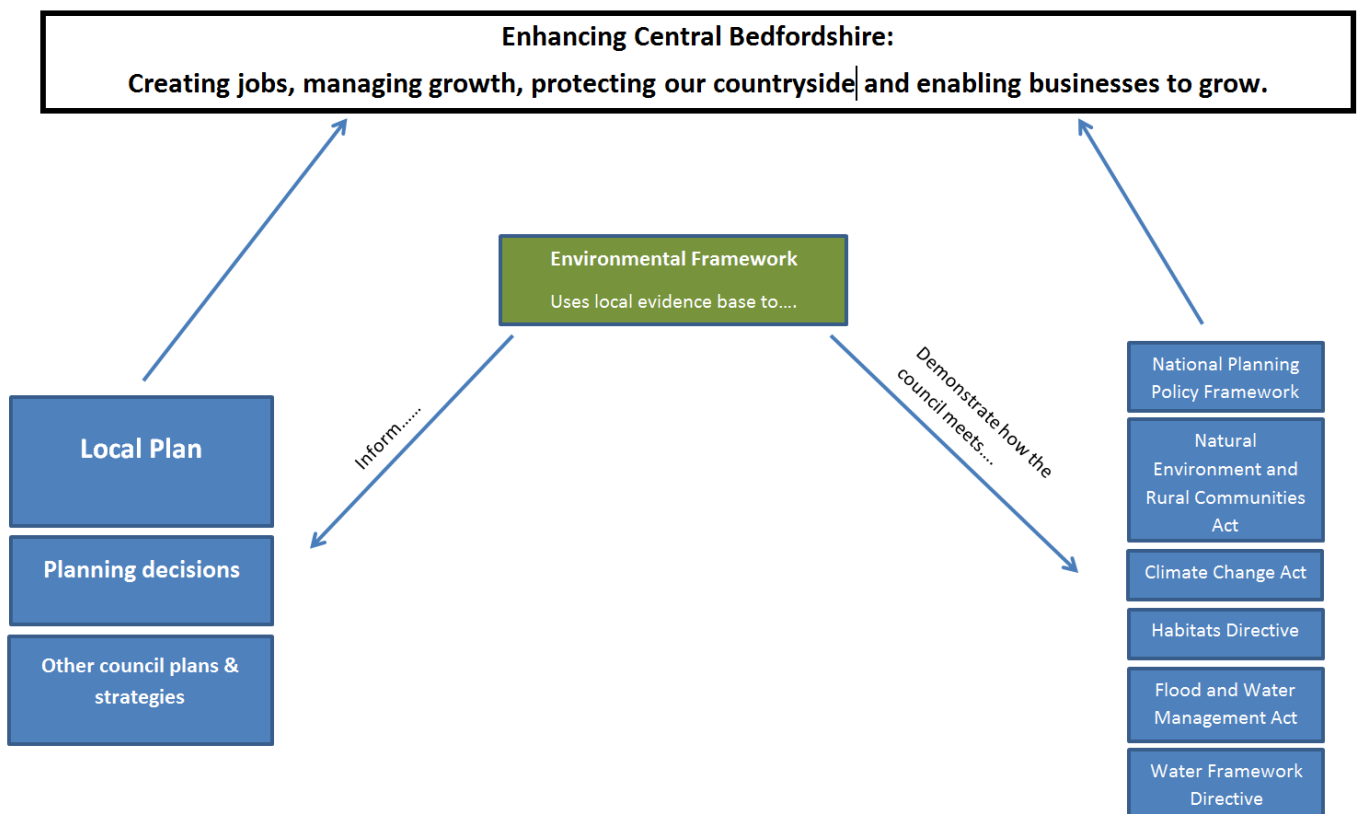
By providing this overview of the existing local evidence base, with associated strategies and plans, the Environmental Framework demonstrates how the Council meets a range of requirements associated with National policy and legislation, this includes:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act;
- The Climate Change Act;
- The Habitats Directive;
- The Water Framework Directive; and
- The Flood and Water Management Act.

How will the Environmental Framework be used?

It has a number of functions:

- Providing the environmental evidence base for the new Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire.
- Interpreting what the local evidence base means with respect to national policy and clarifying how this information is used.
- Informing development management decisions.
- Providing an environmental evidence base for other future Council plans and strategies.



How is information in the Environmental Framework used?

The Environmental Framework provides an overview of an existing evidence base. This evidence base is already in action. In a planning context, the environmental evidence base is used to inform planning decisions, both in terms of steering the location of growth, and in making decisions about individual planning applications.

It also informs the Design Guide, which has a chapter on Green Infrastructure, Climate Change Adaptation and Sustainable Buildings. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, and can be used to guide all types of development in Central Bedfordshire.

Many of the topics covered in this Environmental Framework include adopted guidance, for example, the technical guidance provided by the Leisure Strategy, the Sustainable Drainage Supplementary Planning Document, and the adopted Nature Conservation Strategy, Local Flood Risk Assessment and Outdoor Access Improvement Plan.

The details of how the topic based evidence is used are discussed in more detail throughout the Environmental Framework.

Delivering National Policy

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) notes that:

“Development plan documents must (taken as a whole) include policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.”

There is therefore a legal requirement for planning policy to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The environmental role of planning, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is in contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Environmental issues are identified in the ‘Core Planning Principles’ set out in the NPPF:

- Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);
- Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework.

There are many areas of environmental enhancement in relation to the specific topics discussed further in the rest of this Framework.

Consultation questions

Throughout the Environmental Framework, we have identified questions that we would like feedback on. The answers to these questions will help us develop environmental policies in the Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire, and identify areas where we may need to gather further evidence or information.

There are some general questions at the beginning of the Environmental Framework, and then questions relating to specific topics.

Not all of the topic sections have consultation questions. This is not because we don't think that these topics are important. There are a number of reasons why we are not specifically seeking input. It may be that national policy hasn't changed recently in relation to these topics, so policy approaches in the previous Core Strategy or withdrawn Development Strategy are still valid. Alternatively, some topics may not have specific policies in the Local Plan, but information may be used to assess how appropriate sites are for development.

However, if you have comments on any areas not covered by the topic specific consultation questions, the last question provides the opportunity to make any other comments.

Question 1 – How to evaluate environmental value

The NPPF notes that the allocation of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value.

- How should the environmental value of land across Central Bedfordshire be assessed?
- Are there some elements of environmental value more important than others?
- Are there elements of environmental value that we have not assessed in this Environmental Framework?

Question 2 – Improving environmental standards and green features in development

As a council, we are keen to embrace innovation and ensure that development delivers the best outcomes for Central Bedfordshire. A key challenge is working with developers to deliver projects that go beyond the minimum statutory environmental standards. We would therefore like to get your views on:

How do we encourage development to deliver to a higher environmental standard and what information, policy and guidance would support this?

What “green” features would you most like to see in new developments? (Pick up to three)

- Solar panels on roofs
- Green/brown roofs (roofs with plants / habitats on top)
- Green walls (walls with plants)
- Large trees in public spaces / streets
- Garden trees
- Rainwater collection and reuse
- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)
- Other (please specify)

Why is the environment important for Central Bedfordshire?

The importance of the environment to Central Bedfordshire’s residents

Central Bedfordshire’s environment is key to its identity and widely valued by our residents, visitors and businesses. The varied and contrasting landscape, ecology and settlement pattern contributes to the much valued character and nature of the area.

The Central Bedfordshire residents survey (September 2014) asked residents about what the most important things are in making somewhere a good place to live. The response to this highlights just how important accessing the environment and visiting green spaces is to Central Bedfordshire’s residents. Country parks, open spaces and rights of way are the third most cited aspect of what makes somewhere a good place to live.

This is underlined by seeing what other aspects are less cited (figure 1); for example, Country Parks, open spaces and rights of way are cited more frequently than education, and health services, challenging assumptions of what people consider important, and what are generally considered as funding priorities.

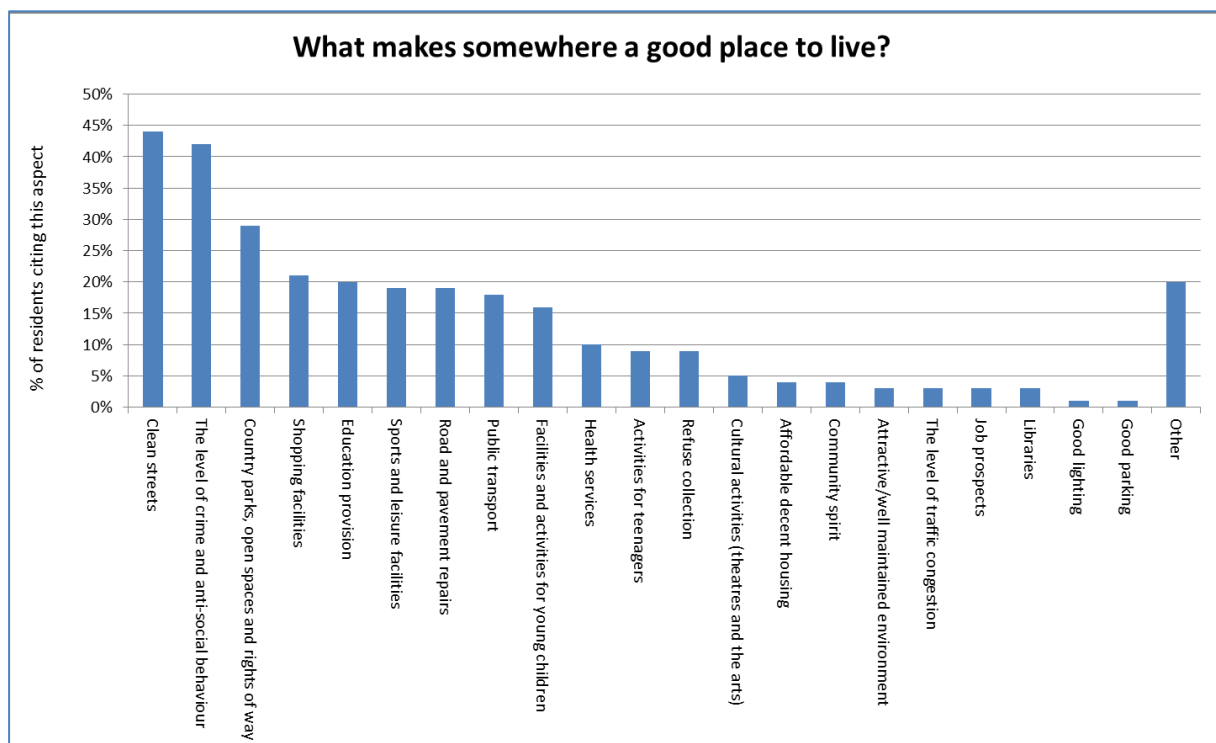


Figure 1 - Information from Central Bedfordshire Residents Survey, September 2014



Country Parks, open spaces and rights of way are the third most cited aspect of what makes Central Bedfordshire a good place to live – above education and health services.

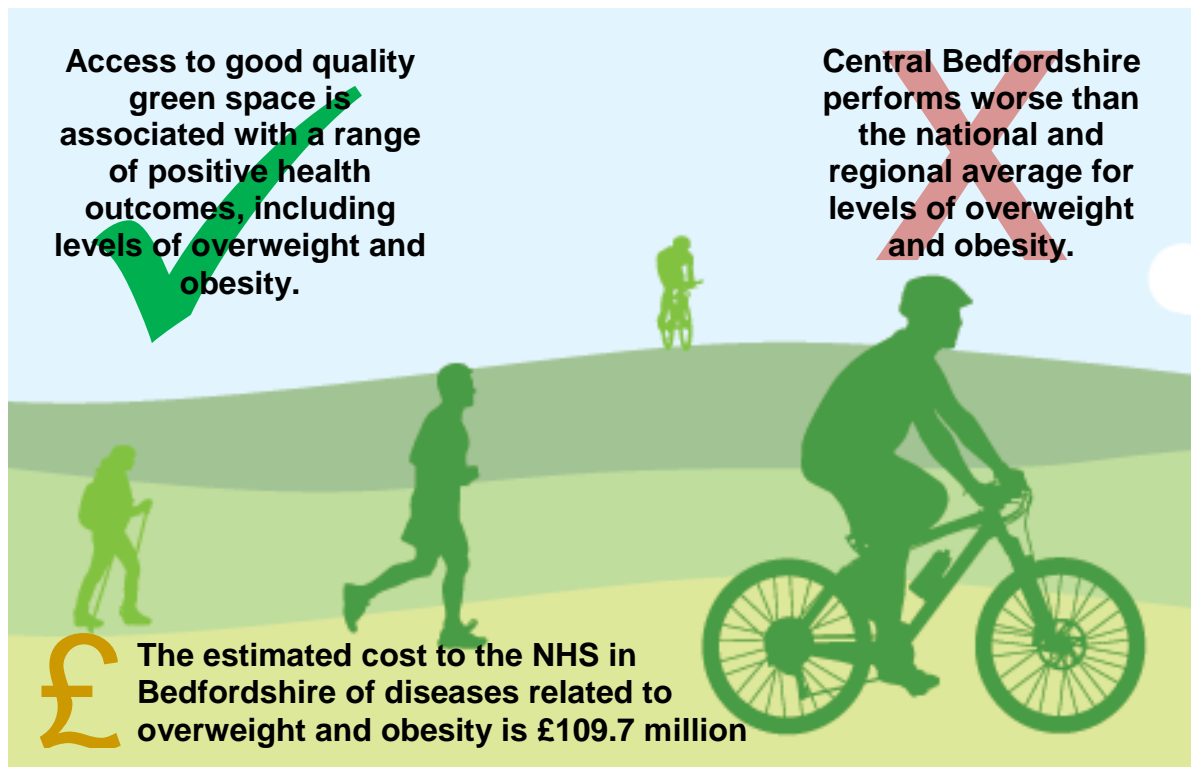
The environment is also important in people's health and wellbeing. There is significant and growing evidence on the physical and mental health benefits of green spaces. Research shows that access to green space is associated with better health outcomes, and income-related inequality in health is less pronounced where people have access to green space.

Access to good quality green space is associated with a range of positive health outcomes including better self-rated health; lower body mass index scores; overweight and obesity levels; improved mental health and wellbeing and increased longevity in older people.¹

Within Central Bedfordshire, obesity is a public health indicator where Central Bedfordshire is worse than the national and regional average. The estimated cost to the NHS of diseases related to overweight and obesity for 2015 across Bedfordshire is £109.7million.

As a public health authority, Central Bedfordshire Council has a duty to take steps to improve the health of its population, and enhancing and improving access to the environment is a tool to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

¹ Improving access to green spaces; Public Health England and UCL Institute of Health Equity; September 2014



Access to good quality green space is associated with a range of positive health outcomes, including levels of overweight and obesity.

Central Bedfordshire performs worse than the national and regional average for levels of overweight and obesity.

£ The estimated cost to the NHS in Bedfordshire of diseases related to overweight and obesity is £109.7 million

The Importance of the environment for Central Bedfordshire's businesses

The environment is similarly important to Central Bedfordshire's businesses. The Business Survey (September 2014) asks business in Central Bedfordshire to rate the perceived best things about their location. A 'nice area / surroundings / environment' is the third most cited positive thing about a Central Bedfordshire location.

Similar comparison to how the environment rates against other aspects is enlightening; it is more cited by businesses than ease of access to customers, convenience for employees, or proximity to other businesses or clients. This underlines just how important the environment is to attracting and retaining businesses.



Businesses cite a 'nice area / surroundings / environment' as the third most positive thing about a Central Bedfordshire location, above ease of access to customers, convenience for employees, or proximity to other businesses or clients.

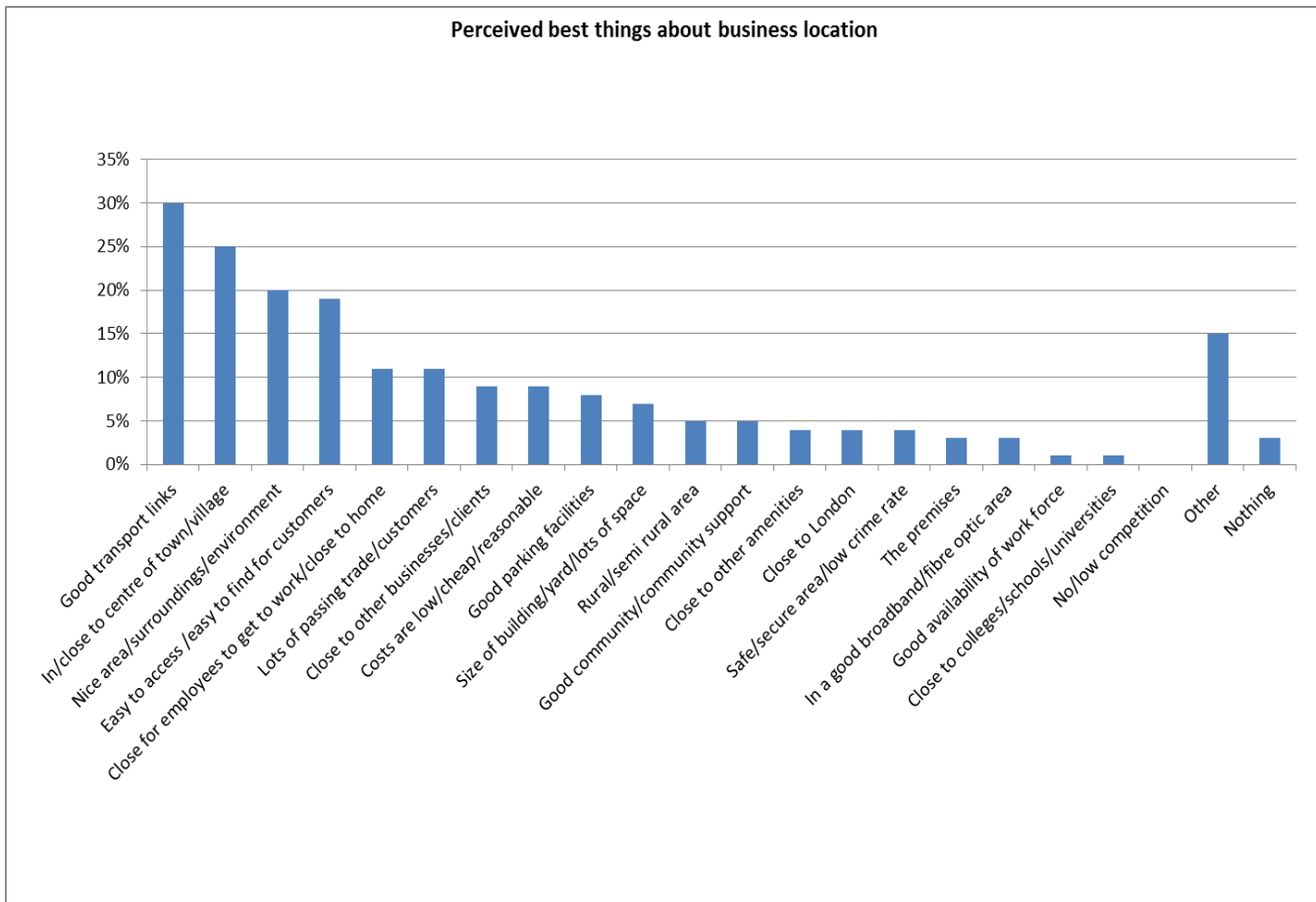


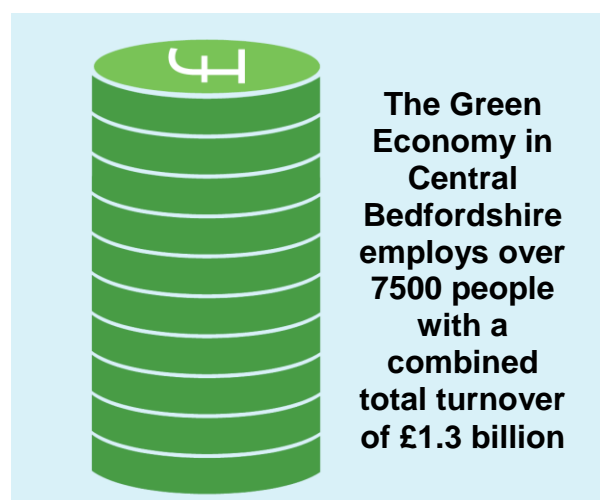
Figure 2 - Information from Central Bedfordshire Business Survey, September 2014

These survey results highlight just how important the environment is in terms of its strengths and selling points as a business location, and the quality of life for local residents.

The importance of the Green Economy

The quality of the environment is not only an important factor for businesses choosing to locate in Central Bedfordshire, but it also plays a key role in the types of businesses that make up the local economy and provide local employment through taking an active part in the local Green Economy.

The 2015 study “Maximising the potential of the Green Economy” highlights that there are a number of significant businesses, which have a vested interest or operate within the green economy.



In total, 224 companies were identified, employing over 7500 people with a combined total turnover of £1.3 billion.

In our area the Green Economy is diverse, encompassing a wide range of

businesses operating across a range of sectors.

Jobs are based across the range of sectors, with education and research and development being key areas.

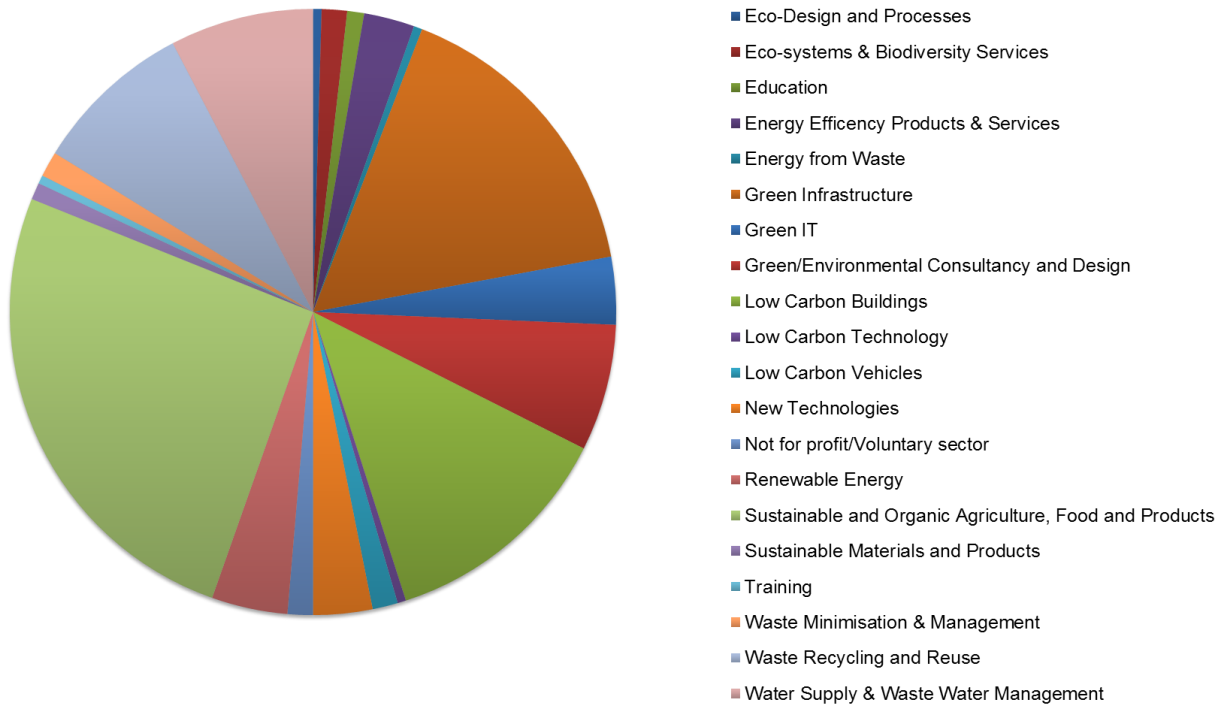


Figure 3 - Proportion of businesses operating in the Green Economy in Central Bedfordshire

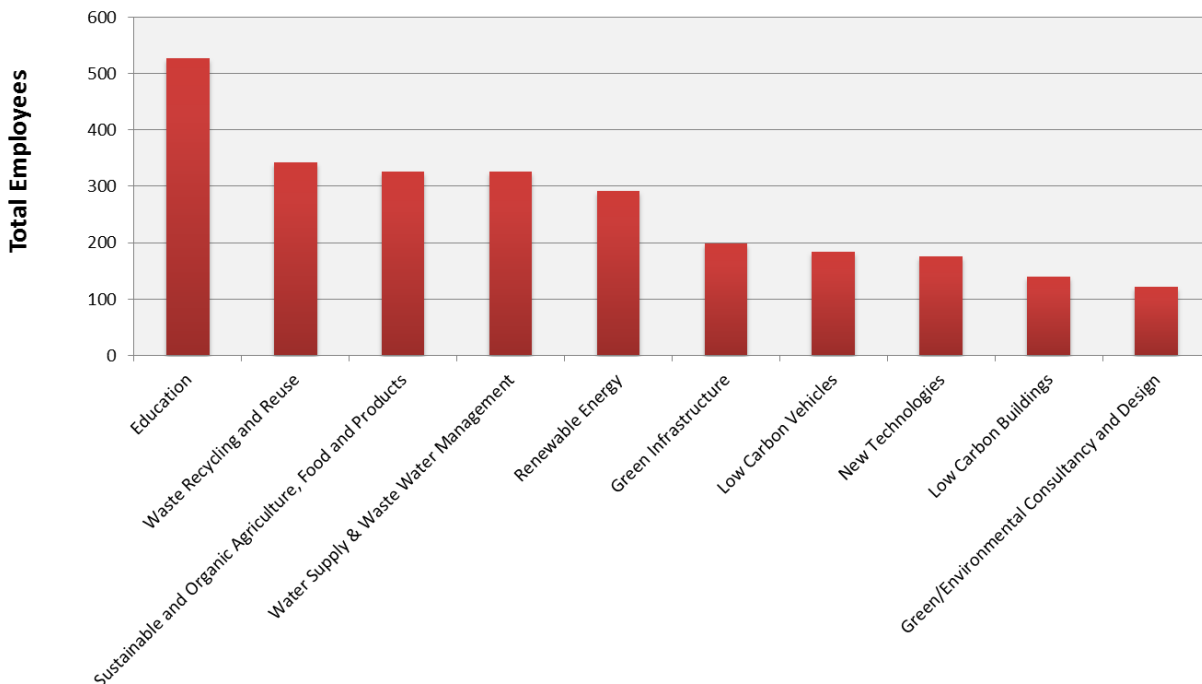


Figure 4 - Modelled number of employees per Green Economy sector

Question 3 – Reflecting the importance of the environment in planning policy

How should the importance of the environment to Central Bedfordshire's businesses and residents be reflected in the future Central Bedfordshire Plan?

- Integrating environmental considerations across all relevant policies (e.g. locations for growth, site allocations)
- Having specific environmental policies
- A combination of the above approaches

Central
Bedfordshire

great
prospects



The natural environment and setting

Environmental Framework



Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure (GI) is the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect villages and towns. Individually, these elements are GI assets, and the roles that these assets play are GI functions.

When appropriately planned, designed and managed, the assets and functions have the potential to deliver a wide range of benefits – from providing sustainable transport links, allowing access to the natural environment, facilitating benefits to physical and mental health, as well as mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change.

What national policy says

National planning policy (as set out in NPPF paragraphs 109 to 119) details the expectations of what Local Planning Authorities should do in relation to green infrastructure through the planning process and in determining planning applications. It states that:

“Local planning authorities should set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.”

The local evidence base

Green Infrastructure (GI) plans are based on the spatial analysis of existing assets for protection, and identification of opportunities to buffer, extend and create new resources. 'Green infrastructure' covers biodiversity, landscape, the historic environment, access and accessible green space.

With regards to Central Bedfordshire, GI plans exist on a number of scales. These include (ranging from large scale to smaller scale):

- The strategic level Green Infrastructure Plan, covering the whole of Bedfordshire,
- District level green infrastructure plans, which cover the former district authority areas of Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire, as well as Luton.
- Parish and community green infrastructure plans.

The approach to these plans is similar, but the difference is in the level of detail, and the level of community involvement which increases to the smaller scale plans, and the strategic overview, which decreases for the smaller scale plans.

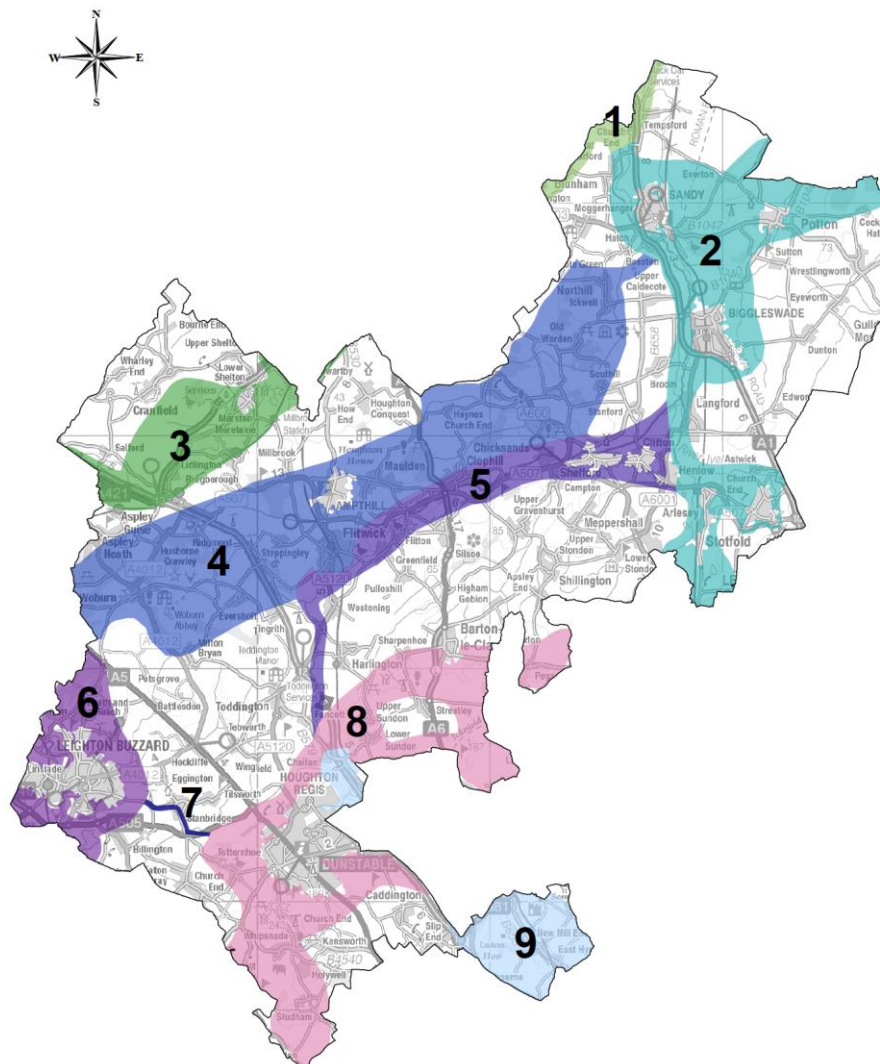
What the evidence base shows

The Strategic GI plan identifies priority corridors, which create a strategic green infrastructure network.

These corridors highlight areas where investment and project delivery can make most impact in securing multi-functional green infrastructure.

The strategic green infrastructure corridors in Central Bedfordshire are:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Lower Great Ouse River Valley | 5. Flit Valley |
| 2. Ivel River Valley | 6. Ouzel River Valley |
| 3. Bedford to Milton Keynes
(Marston Vale) | 7. Leighton Linslade to Dunstable |
| 4. Greensand Ridge | 8. The Chalk Arc |
| | 9. Upper Lea River Valley |



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Central Bedfordshire Council.

Figure 5 - Strategic scale green Infrastructure corridors

The District GI plans use the strategic GI plan as a basis, with additional areas identified where there are concentrations of green infrastructure opportunities at a more local level (e.g. around the urban centres).

There is therefore much overlap in the areas identified as priorities, but with more detail provided on assets and opportunities.

Areas identified as priorities at this level are:

- The Forest of Marston Vale
- The Ivel Valley
- The Greensand Ridge
- The Flit Valley
- The Southern Clay Ridge and Vale
- The Chilterns
- The Ouzel Valley
- The Chalk Arc
- Leighton Linslade to Dunstable
- The Upper Lea River Valley

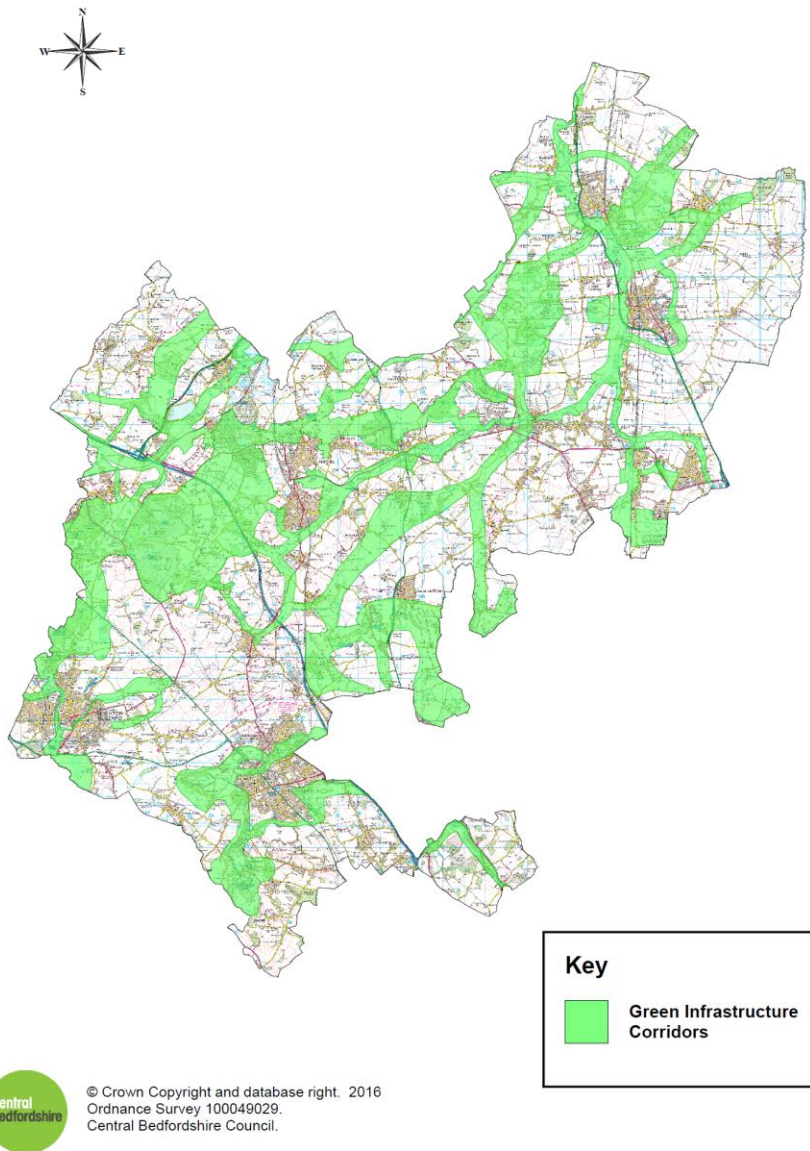


Figure 6 – ‘District’ scale green infrastructure corridors.

The parish/community GI plans show aspirations for enhancing green infrastructure at a community level. They have been carried out in areas where planned growth is taking place, to ensure that local aspirations for environmental enhancements can be evidenced, to ensure that improvements to the local environment are identified alongside development opportunities.

How this information is used

The green infrastructure plans identify existing green infrastructure assets and opportunities for enhancement. This information can help inform strategic planning decisions, as part of the process for identifying appropriate locations for growth, and the infrastructure required to support growth. It can also be used to inform planning decisions to evaluate the impact of proposed developments on the green infrastructure resource, and inform how development can be planned to deliver identified aspirations for green infrastructure enhancements.

Further information about the plans can be found here:

- [Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan](#)
- [Mid Bedfordshire Green Infrastructure Plan](#)
- [Luton and South Bedfordshire Green Infrastructure Plan](#)
- [Parish and Community Green Infrastructure Plans](#)



Landscape

The United Kingdom is a member of the “European Landscape Convention” which came into force in 2004. The Convention promotes multifunctional landscapes, the management of valued features and the positive management of change through the creation of new landscapes. It defines landscape as:

“An area as perceived by people... our living, natural and cultural heritage, be it ordinary or outstanding, urban or rural. Landscape must be recognised for its own value as well as being an integrating element for other resources.”

What national policy says

Landscape policy has a long history stemming from the National Parks Act 1949. This enabled the designation of “Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty” (AONBs) such as the Chiltern Hills, to protect the nation’s finest countryside.

Since the 1990s the holistic approach to land management has been based on the objective study of landscape character, which also includes public perception. This approach places a value on all landscapes and puts people at the heart of landscape.

An understanding of how the landscape has evolved and how one landscape is different from another and engenders a sense of place can be used to inform strategies for enhancement.

The NPPF contains core planning objectives that recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside as well as policies for the protection of National Parks and AONBs. The NPPF also recognises the importance of appreciating and strengthening landscape character across rural and urban areas.

The NPPF requires local planning authorities to work across administrative boundaries to deliver strategic planning priorities which include:

- the conservation and enhancement of the landscape (paragraph 156)
- sustainable development to be well sited and of a good design quality that responds to local character (paragraph 58)
- protection and enhancement of valued landscapes (paragraph 109)
- mitigation of adverse effects through good design (paragraph 65)
- development which connects people and place and which is integrated into the environment (paragraph 61).

Natural England promotes strategic landscape conservation and enhancement through policies contained in the Natural Character Area (NCA) profiles. These profiles provide a detailed summary of landscape character, assess landscape change and describe how the landscape functions in terms of agriculture, forestry and wider ecosystem services.

Four NCAs are found in Central Bedfordshire:

- [87: East Anglian Chalk](#)
- [88: Bedfordshire Claylands](#)
- [90: Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge](#)
- [110: Chilterns](#)

Landscape scale restoration at the regional scale, to conserve or restore traditional landscapes and enhance biodiversity, receive the greatest funding support. This includes through the Heritage Lottery. Examples in Central Bedfordshire include support for restoration of parkland, chalk downland and the Greensand Ridge.

The Local Evidence Base

The key evidence base is the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). Updated and revised in 2015, it replaces the assessments undertaken for the former Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire areas.

The LCA provides an objective study of the diverse landscape in Central Bedfordshire. It describes 38 distinctive landscape character areas, providing a strategy and guidelines to manage change, help integrate development and promote design which respects the key characteristics of the locality, as well as promoting appropriate land management. The LCA also provides some evidence of what is perceived and valued locally.

The LCA has been undertaken at the scale of 1:25,000. More detailed landscape assessments have also been undertaken at the 1:10,000 scale:

- [The “Chalk Arc” – a landscape sensitivity study of the urban fringe landscape north of Dunstable and Houghton Regis \(2007\)](#)
- The “Aspley Guise “Triangle” Landscape Assessment (2007) – a study of the landscape between Cranfield and Aspley Guise.

Studies of particular landscape types

A more detailed study of the Greensand Ridge is being undertaken to support the Heritage Lottery Living Landscapes “Secrets of The Sands” project, which will be available in 2016.

Central Bedfordshire contains 13 Registered Parks and Gardens. A study of parklands across Bedfordshire, carried out in 2011, has assessed these in relation to habitat.

What the evidence base shows

The LCA highlights the variety of landscapes present, with often a distinctive change between the landscape types e.g. between the escarpment and the surrounding vales. The LCA also lists the threats to landscape character through incremental change such as through the loss of small scale traditional features such as pastures within or on the edge of settlements or urbanisation through highway improvements. It also highlights the scope for green infrastructure to integrate development and the opportunities to strengthen landscape character.

The previous Character Assessments contained judgements on the condition of the character areas with the conclusion that all but three were in decline or declining. Assessment of landscape change and condition will be undertaken as part of the Landscape Strategy which will update these judgements.

How this information is used

The LCA provides a good high-level overview of landscape type and character for Central Bedfordshire. This information is used to inform scheme design, planning decisions and to mitigation negative impact of development on the landscape.

There is scope to take a more proactive approach, building on the LCA and the guidance contained for the NCAs to inform a more proactive plan for conservation and enhancement.

This also highlights the need to review the LCA regularly and at a finer scale, particularly for areas that, in the future, face the potential for rapid change brought about through growth and new development.

The platform of understanding, provided by the LCA, also provides a future opportunity to gain a better understanding about what is valued, in landscape terms, by the public and why. This can be achieved through contact with Parish Councils and community groups and lead to an evidence base which includes photographic records of key features and views. This approach can also identify key detractors within the area. This process can support Neighbourhood Planning and link to Green Infrastructure Plans.

More information

[Central Bedfordshire Council Landscape Character Assessment](#)

Question 4 – Landscape designations

National policy says that the planning system should protect and enhance valued landscapes. Central Bedfordshire has part of a nationally designated landscape (the Chilterns), but we do not have local landscape designations.

- Should we define what a valued landscape is?
- Should we designate locally valued landscapes?
- Should designations include different standards for development to areas not designated for landscape value?
- Should designations have an emphasis on limiting development or be orientated more towards requiring additional landscape enhancement?
- Or should we rely on the Landscape Character Assessment to inform landscape enhancement and development decision making?



Tranquillity

Tranquillity attracts people to visit an area. Visual and audible tranquillity encourage participation in the natural environment, improves physical and mental health, largely due to stress reducing effects of peace and quiet. This 'attractor' in turn supports local businesses and local economies.

Finding tranquillity is not reliant on large scale land or seascapes; relative tranquillity can be found in small pockets within a busier mass.

The Campaign for the Protection of the Rural Environment (CPRE) have commissioned a number of studies and produced maps assessing what constitutes tranquillity, the benefits and impact of change.

From CPRE surveys, tranquillity is defined by seeing and hearing natural landscapes, and natural features including:

- Seeing natural woodland, stars at night, rivers and the sea.
- Peace and quiet, hearing wildlife, bird song and the sound of water.

Negative impacts on tranquillity are highlighted in CPRE surveys as:

- Traffic and transport, transport corridors
- Light pollution
- Urban areas, large numbers of people
- Pylons and power lines, masts and wind turbines

Policy Overview

This aspect of landscape character is recognised in the NPPF, paragraph 123, where Local Authorities are given the power *to: "identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason"*.

Local Evidence Base:

CPRE have produced a nationwide study of "intrusion" which involved comparative studies of the impact of development between the 1960s, the 1990s and 2007. This showed that over two-thirds of Central Bedfordshire is considered to be disturbed by intrusive development or noise.

Since over 70% of people are reported as valuing tranquillity most in the countryside and cite it as a key factor in their reasons for their visits, safeguarding tranquillity must be seen as priority not only in terms of landscape quality but also for health and the rural economy.

Mapping of tranquillity has also been carried out. The CPRE mapping represents assessment of 44 different factors relating to tranquillity based on 500m area squares.

The CPRE studies and mapping relating to Central Bedfordshire show the road corridors are key factors in reducing tranquillity; the M1 corridor, A6, A505, A507 and A600 are particular detractors to tranquillity.

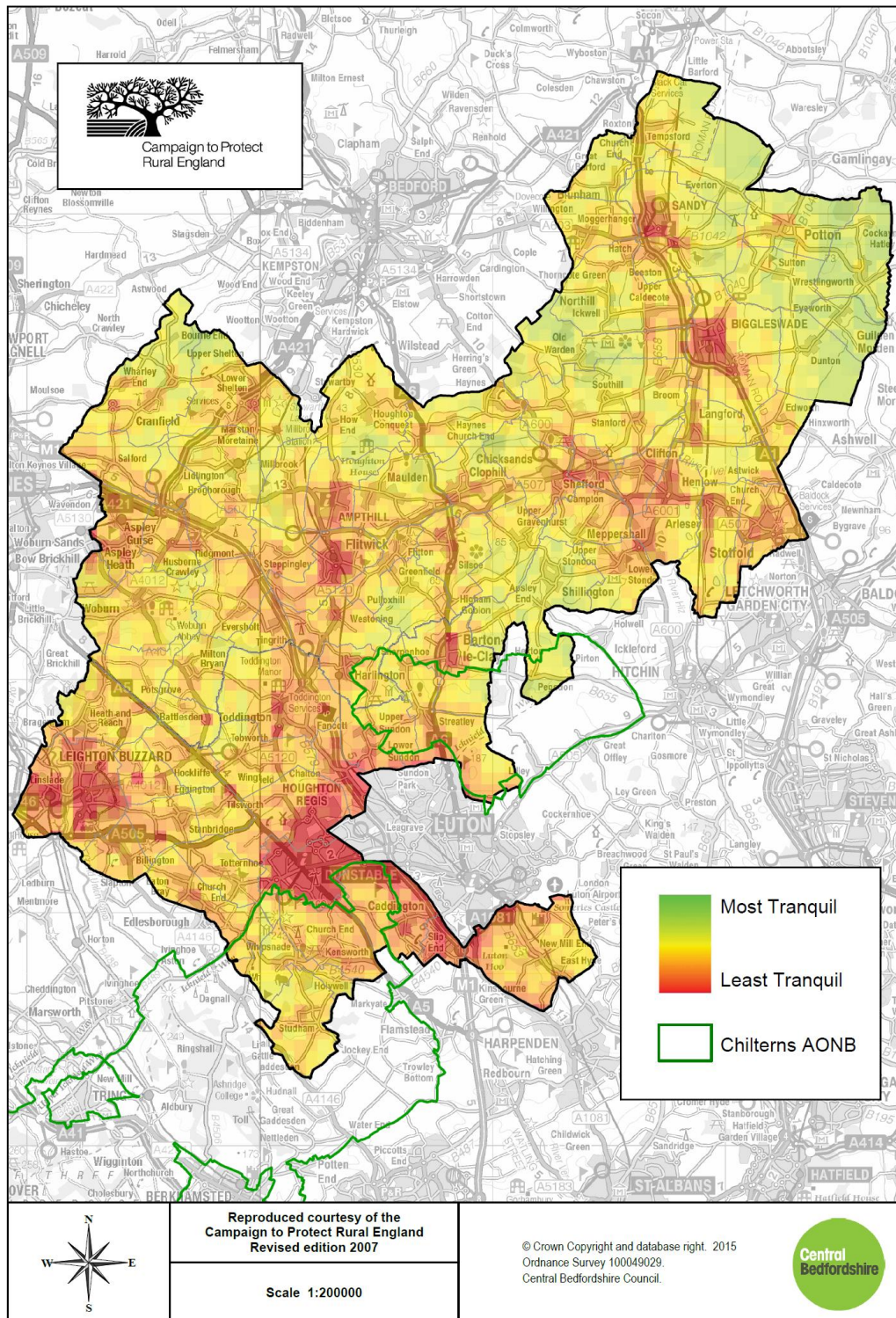


Figure 7 - Tranquillity across Central Bedfordshire

This map shows that the most extensive areas of tranquil countryside in CBC are in pockets along the Greensand Ridge extending from Haynes through to Potton and Wrestlingworth, in the clay vales to the east of Potton, and the Cranfield clay hills.

There are limited tracts of relative tranquillity close to urban areas, such as north of Luton and north of Leighton Buzzard, which are highly significant in terms of the contrast in experience and enjoyment of the landscape from adjoining urban areas.

Useful links:

www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/tranquil-places

Question 5 – Mapping tranquillity

Paragraph 123 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and protect areas that are valued for their tranquillity. The CPRE have produced tranquillity studies at a national scale.

- Should we include a policy on protecting areas of tranquillity?
- If more detailed tranquillity mapping surveys were carried out for Central Bedfordshire, what scale should these focus on?
- Are there particular areas / locations you consider should be mapped and potentially receive extra protection via policy?



The Historic Environment

As well as being indispensable to the study of history and archaeology, the historic environment is vital to our understanding of how our society and our landscape have developed over time.

Its contribution to modern life is immense, ranging from shaping and defining the places we live in, enhancing the quality of life, providing opportunities for recreation, as well as contributing significantly to environmentally led regeneration, employment and economic growth.

Policy Overview

The NPPF defines the historic environment as:

“all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.”

All buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest are referred to as “heritage assets” by the NPPF.

Heritage assets include **Designated Assets**:

- Listed Buildings
- Scheduled Monuments
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Registered Battlefields
- Protected Wreck Sites
- Conservation Areas
- World Heritage Sites

Heritage assets also include **Non-Designated Assets** and these are sites/monuments/buildings/landscapes identified by the Local Planning Authority as important, (including assets identified on local lists). The extent, nature and character of non-designated heritage assets are often defined in the **Historic Environment Record (HER)**.

Section 12 of the NPPF deals with the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Key themes in section 12 are that Local Planning Authorities should recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource and that they should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.

Local Evidence Base

The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to maintain or have access to up-to-date information about the historic environment and Central Bedfordshire Council maintains a Historic Environment Record (HER). The Historic Environment Record contains details of all known archaeological sites, historic buildings and historic landscape features within the area.

The HER comprises a computer database; GIS information, written and printed documents, plans, illustrations, aerial and other photographs. The whole resource is

available for use by all. In addition, the Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service (BLARS) contains a large collections of archival material associated with Bedfordshire and Luton. BLARS is also publicly accessible.

What the evidence base shows

Central Bedfordshire has a unique and diverse historic environment. The Historic Environment Record has over 11,000 entries and is constantly being updated. Central Bedfordshire has 1909 Listed Buildings, 84 Scheduled Monuments, 60 Conservation Areas and 13 Registered Parks & Gardens.

How the information is used

The Historic Environment Record is the main source for identifying Heritage Assets for inclusion in Heritage Statements that are submitted as part of planning applications. These Heritage Statements show the potential impact of development proposals on heritage assets.

More information

Further information on Central Bedfordshire's historic environment and its management can be obtained from the Council's webpages below:

[Archaeology](#)

[Historic Environment Record](#)

[Listed Buildings](#)

[Conservation Areas](#)



Biodiversity

Central Bedfordshire's geology and surrounding landscape means that there are already many high quality wildlife habitats close to where people live and work, as well as scope for further enhancement. This provides many benefits such as regulating environmental functions like air pollution, to providing a positive 'sense of place' and promoting health and wellbeing.

Policy overview

International

The United Kingdom is one of 192 governments that signed up to the Aichi Targets during the 10th meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan during October 2010. These 20 Targets aim to halt the loss in biodiversity worldwide by 2020. Within the targets there are a range of challenges, from protecting our best habitats and rarest species, to restoring the services our natural environment provides and tackling climate change.

The EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy outlines a long-term vision of ensuring that by 2050 European Union biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides are protected, valued and appropriately restored.

National

The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (July 2012) describes how the Aichi Targets will be implemented across the UK and is underpinned by a Biodiversity Strategy for each Country. In England this is *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services* (August 2011).

Just before England's Biodiversity Strategy was published the Government also produced The Natural Choice – Natural Environment White Paper (June 2011). These two documents together set out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy until 2020. The mission for the Strategy is:

“To halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.”

Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (“conserving and enhancing the natural environment”), demonstrates the Government's commitment to sustainable development and the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. In accordance with paragraph 109, the planning system should “...contribute to, and enhance, the natural and local environment by:

- *Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
- *Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;*

- *Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.*
- *Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability and*
- *Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate”.*

The NPPF also requires policies to reflect the strength of protection according to the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated conservation sites and to map components of local ecological networks for habitat restoration or creation, and states that planning permission for development that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats should be refused.

Local Evidence base

The Bedfordshire & Luton Biodiversity Forum has done valuable work mapping the opportunity areas which have the greatest potential for enhancing, restoring and creating priority habitats. This work, contained in *“Rebuilding Biodiversity in Bedfordshire & Luton”* (2006) has also informed the production of the various Green Infrastructure Plans across Central Bedfordshire.

Phase I Habitat Surveys for the whole county were undertaken in 1987-1989. This is a widely used method to relatively quickly record the vegetation types which are found in an area. This county wide phase 1 survey has not been repeated since but a rolling programme of surveys of a small number of sites is ongoing under the umbrella of the Bedfordshire Wildlife Working Group. In the late 1990s guidelines, based on nationally agreed principals, were developed for recognising County Wildlife Sites (CWS).

It is important to keep the information used in the CWS system up-to-date. Since 1990 41 additional CWS have been designated in Central Bedfordshire and there have been modifications to the boundaries of others. There have also been more specialist surveys conducted to broaden our knowledge about some of the sites. The survey information which underpins the CWS system is held for the CWS Panel by the BRMC.

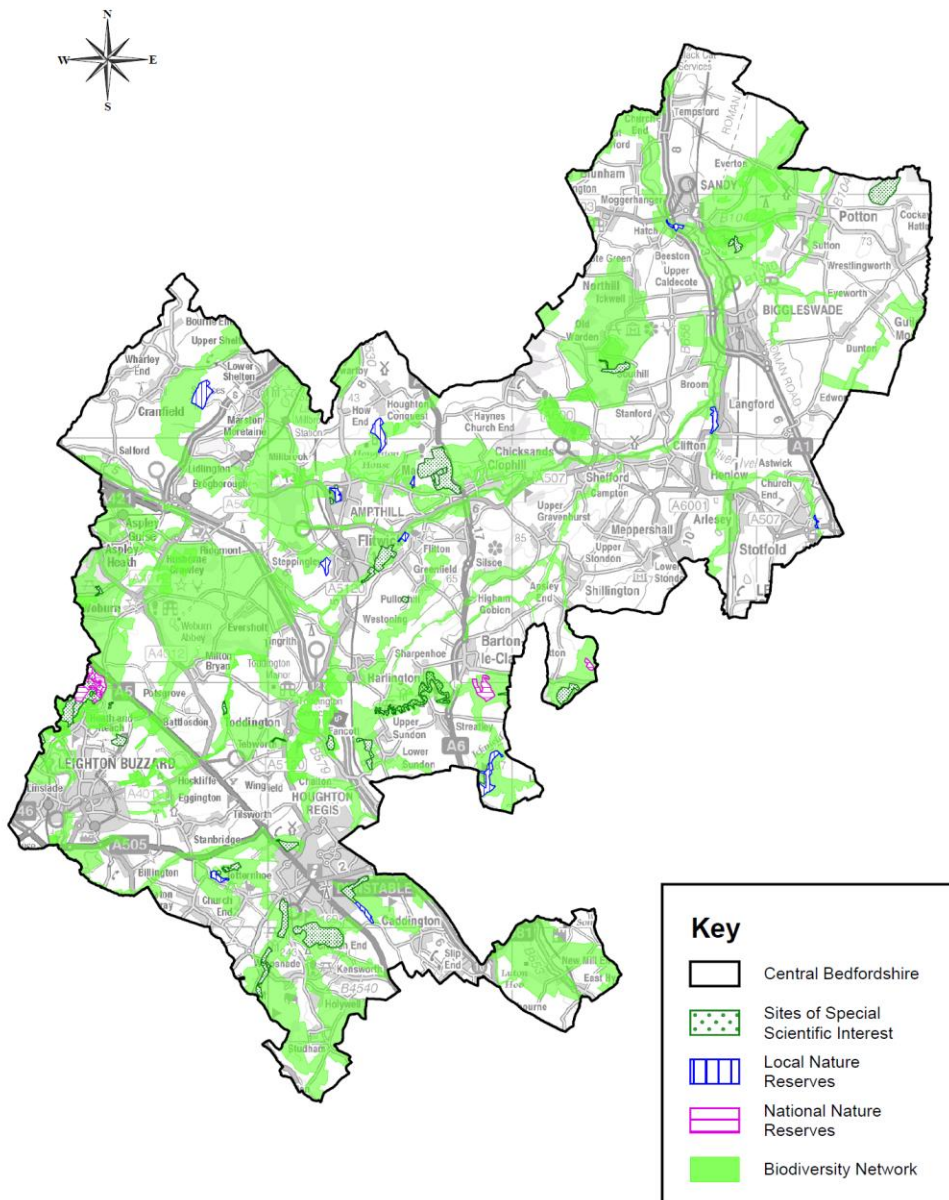
In 2013/14 the funded a CWS survey update of 38 sites in the area. As of October 2014 Central Bedfordshire has 259 CWS within its boundary (of which 8 are ‘shared’ with Bedford Borough Council and 5 ‘shared’ with Luton Borough Council)

What the evidence base shows

Compared to the national average, a lower percentage of Central Bedfordshire is covered by ecological designations. One of the most serious problems facing biodiversity is the continued fragmentation of habitats, including migration and feeding corridors for birds and bats, many of which have become isolated islands surrounded by intensively farmed agricultural land, development and busy transport routes. Not only does isolation critically reduce genetic diversity and hence chances for long term survival, it also makes habitats more susceptible to the effects of climate change as species cannot easily adapt, for example by migration.

The Local Biodiversity Action Plan, the Landscape Character Assessments and the Green Infrastructure Plans together provide a detailed framework and strategy designed to address the problems facing biodiversity in Central Bedfordshire.

Within the locality some areas are designated as being of particular importance for biodiversity and geology/geomorphology. They include 32 nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) such as Dunstable Downs, Flitwick Moor and Sandy Warren. There are also three National Nature Reserves (NNRs) at King's Wood near Heath and Reach, Barton Hills and Knocking Hoe near Shillington. Additionally there are also 12 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and numerous County Wildlife Sites. There are also Local Geological Sites. There are no internationally designated sites in Central Bedfordshire.



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Central Bedfordshire Council.

Figure 8 - Statutory designated sites for biodiversity

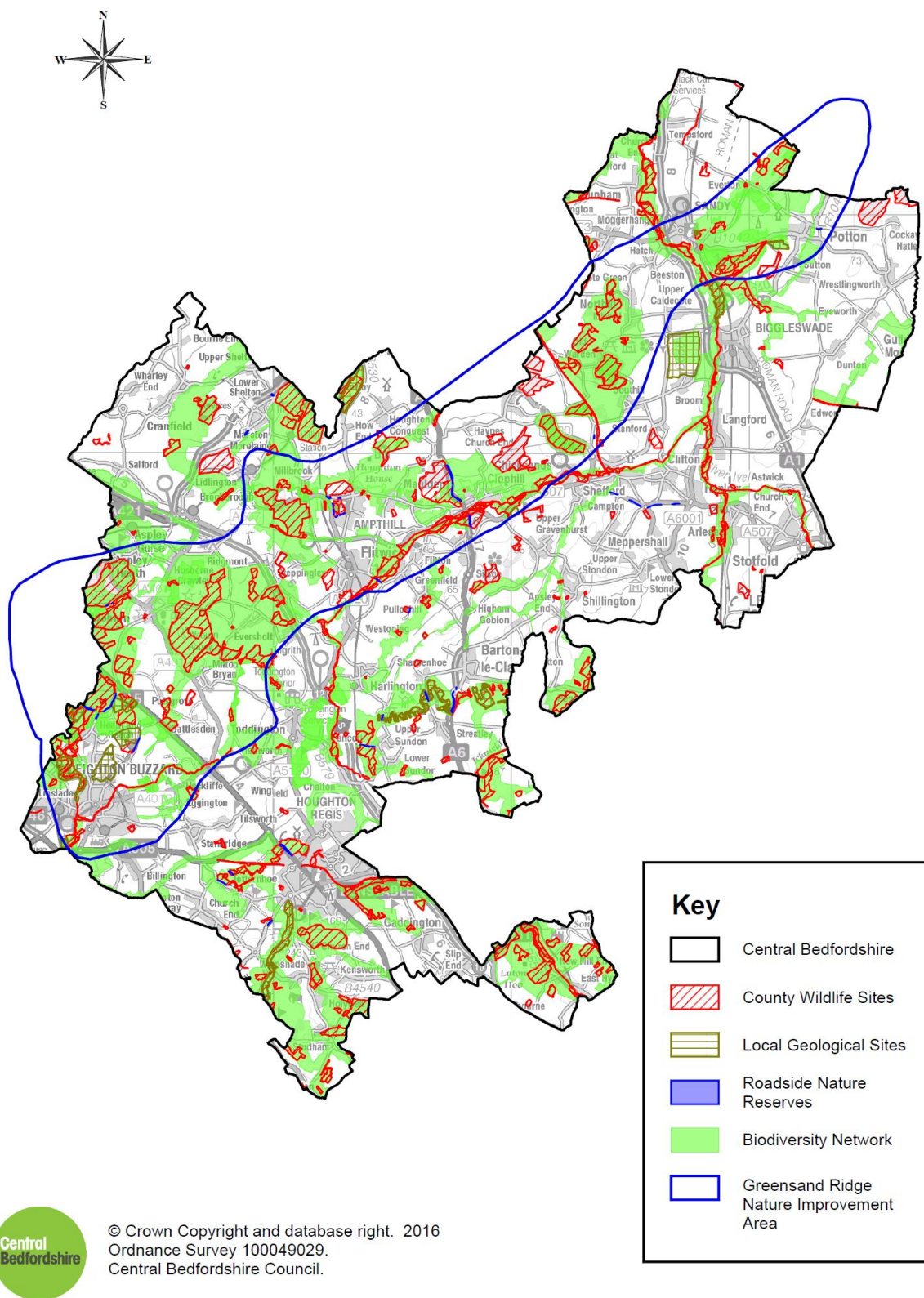


Figure 9 - Non statutory designated sites for biodiversity

Central Bedfordshire contains a variety of habitats and species which are recognized in Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 as of “principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity”. As part of this Act, Local Authorities are expected to contribute towards protecting and enhancing the listed habitats and species as part of their ‘Biodiversity Duty’. About 107 species of ‘principal importance’ have been recorded in Central Bedfordshire. Habitats found in Central Bedfordshire include a range of rare grassland habitats, traditional orchards, lowland heath and wetland habitats, such as wet woodlands.

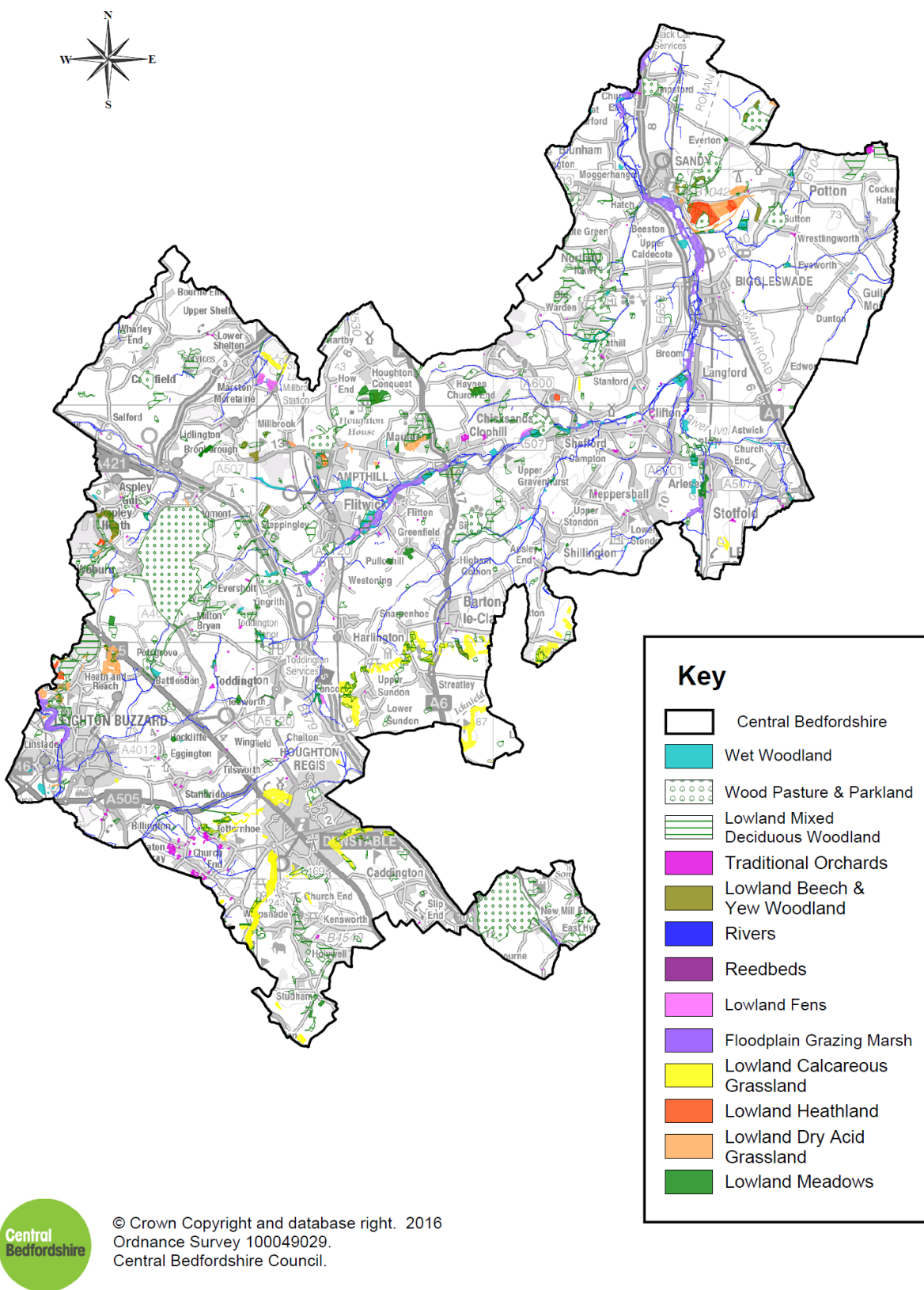


Figure 10 - Habitats of principal importance

The 18 habitats shown in the table below are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act as of “principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity” and are found in Central Bedfordshire:

Habitat of “Principal Importance for the Purpose of Conserving Biodiversity”	
• Lowland dry acid grassland	• Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
• Cereal field margins	• Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land
• Floodplain grazing marsh	• Ponds
• Hedgerows	• Purple moor grass and rush pastures
• Lowland beech and yew woodland	• Reedbeds
• Lowland calcareous grassland	• Rivers
• Lowland fens	• Traditional orchards
• Lowland heathland	• Wet woodland
• Lowland meadows	• Wood-pasture and parkland

As well as being important for biodiversity these habitats are also valued by people. They allow Central Bedfordshire’s residents to experience nature within their landscape, for example seeing the beauty of flower-rich grasslands in spring or the changing seasons in Central Bedfordshire’s woodlands. Research has shown that access to such areas improves people’s health and wellbeing.

The Nature Conservation Strategy, adopted October 2015, has been developed to identify the overall aims, objectives and priorities for the conservation of biodiversity in Central Bedfordshire and bring them together within a single document and acts as a reference document for anyone working within Central Bedfordshire. The aims of the Strategy are as follows:

- To identify and protect species and habitats across Central Bedfordshire and ensure their management is correct.
- To identify and promote opportunities for enhancing the wildlife resource of existing areas and for the provision of additional wildlife habitat.
- To protect and enhance the biodiversity network across the urban area including stepping stones and linear habitats.
- To identify and monitor Central Bedfordshire’s natural resources and the policy background to nature conservation in a single subject document and to provide a framework for the activities of the Council, local groups and other organizations.
- To generate interest in biodiversity and the environment and to encourage community involvement in the creation and management of sites. Also, to make areas of wildlife interest accessible to all people within Central Bedfordshire.

How the information is used

This information is used to inform broad policy decisions (such as indicating preferred locations for growth), and support planners and developers in assessing and making development proposals. By identifying existing biodiversity assets and mapping opportunities for enhancing, restoring and creating networks of priority habitats, this information can be used to avoid harm, and inform how net biodiversity gains can be delivered through development.

More information

[Central Bedfordshire Council Nature Conservation Strategy](#)
[England's Biodiversity Strategy](#)

Question 6 – Biodiversity

The Council wants to promote the creation of a biodiversity network to include the protection and enhancement of sites.

- How could we improve and extend the networks of habitats through development?
- Are there particular sites that could contribute to that network?

Are there aspects of the environment or ecosystem service that are particularly under threat, either in general, or in specific locations in Central Bedfordshire?



Trees

Trees are important. They contribute to the environment by providing oxygen, storing carbon, improving air quality, improving the local climate, conserving water, preserving soil, and supporting wildlife. They help shape the landscape, character and identity of the area. They provide raw materials for construction, fuel for heating and fruits to eat.

Policy Overview

Ancient woodland, aged and veteran trees are all referenced in the NPPF, which states that: “...development that would result in the loss or damage to ancient woodland, and the loss of aged or veteran trees outside ancient woodland would be unacceptable, unless the need for and benefits of the development clearly outweighed the loss”.

Trees are also protected through tree preservation orders (TPOs). TPOs protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands from being cut down, lopped, topped, uprooted or wilfully damaged or destroyed. Trees in Conservation Areas are similarly protected.

Local context

Within Central Bedfordshire, trees are an important part of local character. Concentrations of ancient woodlands and plantations (e.g. along the Greensand Ridge) are particularly distinctive and urban and hedgerow trees contribute a range of benefits. Central Bedfordshire is a lightly wooded area with around 7% woodland cover, significantly less than the national average cover of 10%, with many woodlands under threat from a lack of management and indirect pressure from development. Local long term initiatives aim to increase understanding and management of woodlands as well as promote tree planting include the Marston Vale Community Forest and the Working Woodlands Centre on the Greensand Ridge.

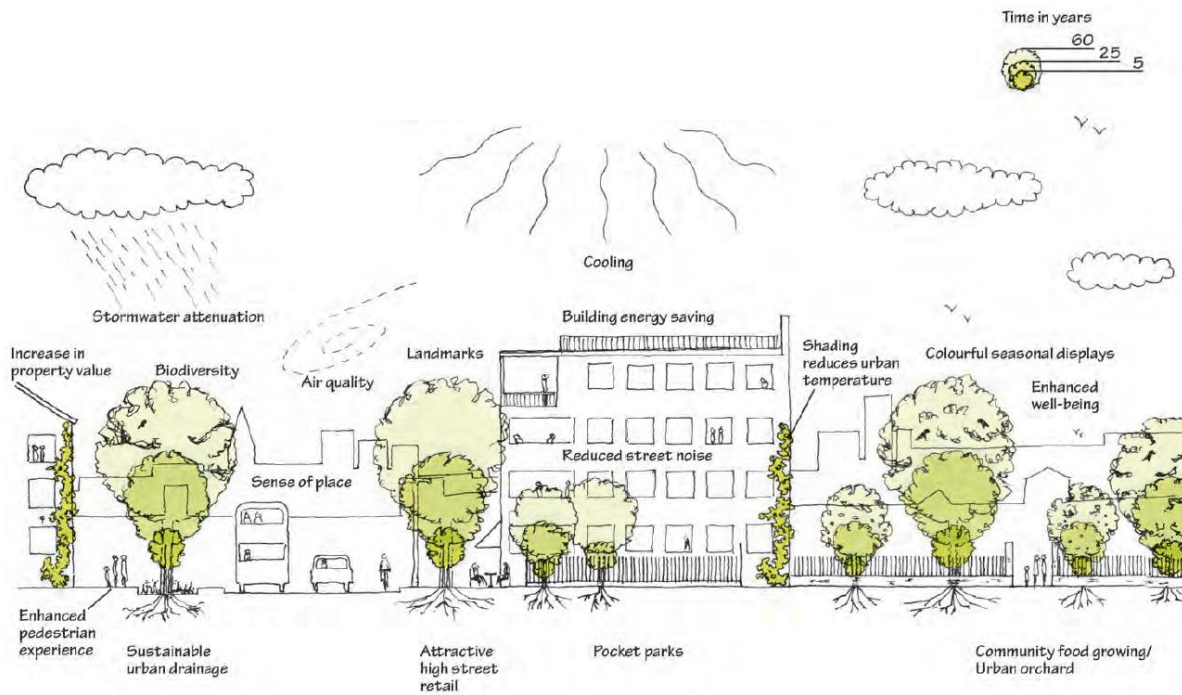


Figure 11 - The benefits of trees in towns

There are a number of challenges facing trees and woodlands across Central Bedfordshire.

Over the past two decades there has been an increase in the number of pests and diseases. These cause the loss of mature trees and reduce the ability of new trees to establish themselves. These pests and diseases will inevitably affect Central Bedfordshire's tree populations. Ash and Oak trees, which are the main canopy trees of many of our woodlands and feature heavily as hedgerow trees, are both being affected by specific diseases. This is resulting in their premature death and loss of mature trees from the area. Natural regeneration of woodland and trees are also being affected by high numbers of introduced deer species and other mammals which reduce establishment rates and quality of our woodland trees. Extreme weather events, such as high winds and droughts also pose a threat.

Planting of trees in inappropriate locations (e.g. lacking space to grow to their full potential size – both roots and canopy) can also be perceived as causing problems with roads and properties, which can lead to poor tree health, or the inappropriate management and removal of trees, if the benefits and the risks are not properly assessed.

To maintain the quality of woodland and trees across Central Bedfordshire, a range of trees need to be managed and planted. These need to be appropriate to the base soil type and their position in the urban or rural environment. The trees need to be grown from a diverse seed source to ensure resilience to current and future pressures.

How we will use this information

In order to plan and manage trees across Central Bedfordshire the Council will produce a Tree Strategy. The scope is to be determined, but could include the use of trees in new developments, management of street trees and protected trees, as well as use of the Council's estate to maintain and increase tree cover. This will respond to the recommendations made by the Independent Panel on Forestry, which seeks to increase

woodland cover whilst stimulating employment linked to woodland management and products. The eventual aim will be to ensure we have a full understanding of the tree resource across Central Bedfordshire, and a strategy for protecting, enhancing, extending and managing this resource.

Question 7 – Trees

Where should we target more tree planting?

- Specific local places
- More trees planted in town centres / existing urban areas
- Tree planting at a landscape scale in rural areas

Integrating existing trees, hedgerows and shrubs can provide quality, mature landscape settings to new development.

What are the key issues to accommodating existing trees, hedgerows and planting structures in development?

How should we mitigate the potential effect of tree diseases on the landscape?



Recreational Open Space

Open spaces for recreation underpin people's quality of life. If planned for properly it can deliver a range of benefits, such as supporting an urban and rural renewal with local networks of high quality and well managed open spaces, providing opportunities for recreation and to enhance the visitor economy. This in itself can play an important role in the regeneration of the economies of rural areas. Recreational open spaces also have a significant role in promoting and delivering health and well being, supporting healthy living and preventing illness through exercise and easy access to the countryside.

Policy Overview

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 73) recognises the importance of access to high quality open spaces, and opportunities for recreation in terms of the important contribution they make to health and well being. On this basis, local policy is required to be based on robust and up to date assessments of the need for open space, sports and recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision. Assessments need to identify specific needs and qualitative and quantitative deficiencies or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area, and use this information to assess what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.

Paragraph 74 states that existing open space, sports and recreational land should not be built on, unless it is clearly surplus to requirements, it would be replaced by equivalent or better provision, or in some cases alternative provision.

On this basis, the Council has prepared a Leisure Strategy which addresses the provision of new or improved sport, recreational open space and leisure facilities in Central Bedfordshire. This sets the overarching principles by which the Council will seek to improve existing facilities or create new ones in association with new housing development.

Local evidence base

The Leisure Strategy adopts a holistic approach to the provision of sport, leisure and recreation facilities across the Council's area. The aim of the Strategy is to assess current facilities and services, estimate future demand and thereby create a strategy which will assist the authority to deliver and facilitate good quality, sustainable, demand-led facilities and services.

Chapter 2 of the Leisure Strategy details the Recreation and Open Space Strategy for the Council. It is based on the assessment of current facilities and future requirements, and establishes a set of local standards for the nine open space typologies. The approach is based on identifying and reporting the views of residents and key stakeholders in relation to open space in Central Bedfordshire. It outlines the current provision of each type of open space; sets local standards for the provision of open space; and outlines the priorities for the future delivery of each type of open space to meet current and future need, taking into account the impact of the proposed population

growth. The standards set the baseline requirement for the provision of on-site open space facilities, or off-site contributions for the larger, more strategic typologies.

What the evidence base shows

The Leisure Strategy has identified existing and future deficiencies in facility provision to meet the needs of Central Bedfordshire residents and seeks to address these by securing the provision of new facilities or contributions from development to provide new, or improve existing facilities in areas of need.

In addition to protecting existing open space assets, the Leisure Strategy also identifies what needs to be delivered by new developments in order to meet open space needs. These requirements are set out in the table below:

Type of Open Space	Local Standard per 1000 pop.(ha.)	Accessibility	Site Content / Quality
Strategic Sites			
Countryside Recreation	3.19	20 minute drive time	Size: average 45 hectares, appropriately located for the local catchment, predominantly natural landscape, may have DDA access audit, toilets, café or visitors centre, play equipment, parking etc.
Urban Parks	0.39	15 minute walk time for Major and Minor Settlements and; 20 minute drive time for Large and Small Villages	Size: min. 5 hectares, appropriately located for the local catchment, offering a range of activities and events, landscaped with ornamental planting which reflects the character / history of the local area/town, toilets, refreshments, seating, play facilities, lighting etc.
Informal Recreation			
Informal Recreation Areas	2.6	10 minute walk time for major settlements or; 10 minute drive time for small villages	Size: approx. 1 hectare, appropriately located for the local catchment, formal recreation area offering a variety of facilities for different age groups such as formal sports pitches/courts/changing facilities, play provision, DDA compliant access, parking etc.
Local Recreation			

Type of Open Space	Local Standard per 1000 pop.(ha.)	Accessibility	Site Content / Quality
Large Formal Recreation Areas	1.20	10 minute walk	Size: relevant to location/size of site, appropriately located for the local catchment, predominantly natural space, links with rights of way network, DDA compliant access, parking etc.
Small Amenity Spaces	0.55	5 minute walk	Size: min. 0.2 hectares of functional recreation space, appropriately located for the local catchment, seating, signage, safe paths, no formal facilities
Facilities for Children and Young People			
Facilities for Children	0.11	10 minute walk	Size: relevant to location/size of site, local catchment facilities, formal play facilities for 3-14+yrs, seating, signage, fencing where appropriate, etc.
Facilities for Young People	0.05	10 minute walk	Size: relevant to location/size of site and local catchment facilities, located to allow surveillance but not disturb residents, accessible by bicycle with storage, formal age-appropriate play/ recreation facilities, signage, DDA etc.
Allotments			
Allotments	0.37	10 minute walk	Size: approx. 0.25 hectares (i.e. 10 standard sized plots) appropriately located for local catchment, accessible via roads/ paths, DDA access, parking, one shed per plot, mains water, toilet and washing facilities etc.
Cemeteries / Burial Grounds			
Cemeteries	N/A	N/A	Parish specific

How this information is used

The Leisure Strategy was adopted in March 2014 as Technical Guidance and is a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Further information about the Recreation and Open Space Strategy can be found here

- [Overview of the Leisure Strategy](#)
- [Recreation and Open Space Strategy Part 1](#)
- [Recreation and Open Space Strategy Part 2](#)
- [Appendices to the Recreation and Open Space Strategy](#)

Question 8 – Protecting recreational open spaces

The Leisure Strategy standards are based on an evaluation of recreational open space sites that exist at the time of the survey. It is therefore important that these open spaces are protected

The NPPF protects existing open space and, unless it is shown to be surplus to requirements, it would be replaced by at least equivalent provision, or replaced by alternate provision which is needed more than the open space lost.

We would expect this protection to cover open spaces identified in the Leisure Strategy, and those created through subsequently built developments.

- Do you think that existing open spaces are adequately protected?
- If not, should we designate open space sites identified in the Leisure Strategy as 'Local Green Spaces? This would provide them with special protection as spaces that are particularly important to local communities, and would prevent them being developed except in very special circumstances.
- For sites that are not identified in the Leisure Strategy, how best should local communities identify open spaces in their area which are priorities for protecting or improving?
- Should we use the new 'Local Green Space' designation to protect these sites?



Outdoor Access

Policy Overview

Paragraph 73 of the National Planning Policy Framework recognises that access to high quality open space and opportunities for recreation make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space and recreation and opportunities for new provision.

In addition, paragraph 75 says that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to the rights of way network.

Local Evidence Base

The Outdoor Access Improvement Plan (OAIP) provides the policies and actions to deliver countryside access and community involvement for the period up to 2031. The Plan recognises that there may not be enough resources to deliver all elements at once and so we will seek to prioritise projects and work creatively to seek other ways of funding in order to deliver on our aims.

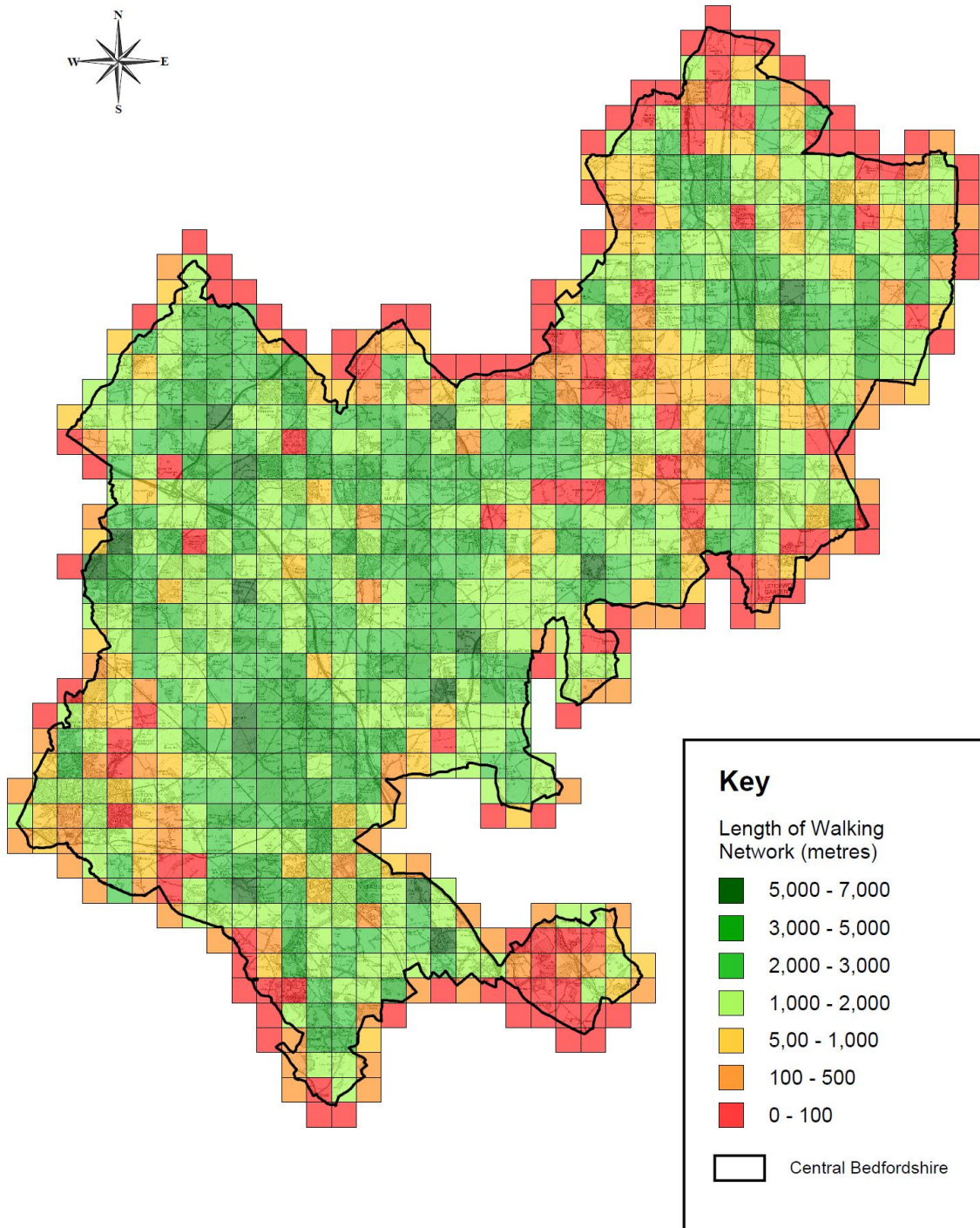
What the evidence base shows

An associated Action Plan that brings specific projects and a suite of overarching aims for the lifetime of the OAIP, these being;

- A well maintained path network
- A better defined and recorded network
- A well connected network
- A more accessible network
- Well managed countryside spaces
- Commons, village greens and access areas will be legally defined with people understanding their rights
- More people volunteering
- Increased local Council involvement in countryside sites and rights of way management and development
- The Council will contribute to supporting the rural economy
- More people have quality information and are aware of countryside access close to them
- Support and provide environmental education opportunities
- Countryside spaces and Rights of Way will facilitate play, health and physical activities
- The quantity and quality of public rights of way and greenspaces meet the needs of current and future communities

Network Available to Walkers

The map below shows that the network available to walkers is generally good with significant lengths of interconnected Rights of Way available around a number of key settlements.



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Ordnance Survey 100049029.
Central Bedfordshire Council.

Figure 12 - Amount of Rights of Way

How this information is used

The OAIP, alongside the Leisure Strategy and Green Infrastructure Plans, is used to plan, deliver and manage countryside access and greenspace in Central Bedfordshire. The OAIP will also facilitate our residents and visitors to Central Bedfordshire explore and understand Central Bedfordshire's countryside as well as get involved in the stewardship of outdoor access.

More information

[2013-2031 Outdoor Access Improvement Plan](#)



Local environmental initiatives

Across Central Bedfordshire (and extending into neighbouring areas), there are a number of strategic scale projects to protect, enhance and create environmental benefits and assets. They include the protected landscape of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the habitat networks of the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area, and the environmentally led regeneration projects of the Forest of Marston Vale and the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park.



Chilterns AONB

The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers 324 square miles of countryside, stretching from the River Thames in southern Oxfordshire up through Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire to Hitchin in Hertfordshire. It is one of 38 AONBs in England and Wales. Its designation as an AONB in 1965 recognised that the Chiltern Hills contain some of the finest landscapes in the country which are worthy of protection at the highest level. Central Bedfordshire contains part of the north-eastern end of the AONB.

Policy overview

The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 115 states that “great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB, which with National Parks, have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.”

Local information

The Chiltern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was designated in 1965 to protect and conserve scenic beauty and to encourage the understanding and enjoyment of the area’s special qualities. The remit was widened with the formation of the Conservation Board to encompass the support for the rural economy, including tourism and recreation. The AONB in Central Bedfordshire extends over 5,800 ha, with the elevated landforms of the chalk escarpments contrasting with the chalk valleys south of Luton and Dunstable and the clay vales to the north and west.

The Board produces a rolling Management Plan and monitors its implementation. Conservation of the landscape is a key priority, with Policies covering local distinctiveness, planning and development, habitat management, and the pressures arising through climate change.

Central Bedfordshire Council has Board Membership and is a signatory to The Management Plan in recognition of its duty to conserve and enhance the AONB.

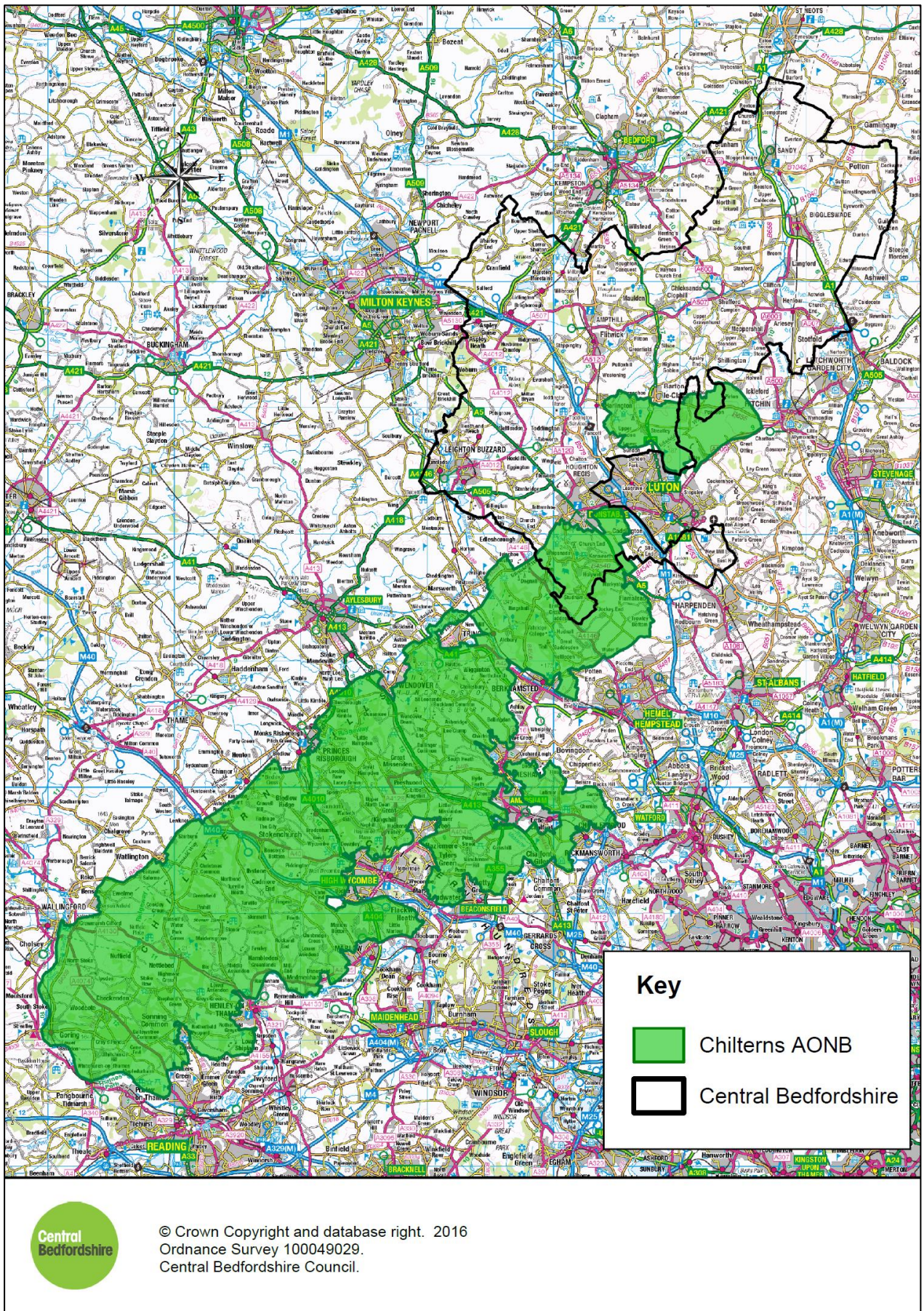


Figure 13 - The Chilterns AONB

More information

- [Chilterns AONB Website](#)
- [Chilterns AONB Management Plan](#)
- [Chilterns State of the Environment Report](#)

Question 9 – Managing the Chilterns and their setting

What issue regarding the landscape of the Chilterns is of most concern to you?

How can the impact of recreational activities in the Chilterns be managed whilst urban growth and populations increase?

The AONB Board has produced guidelines to safeguard the “setting” (i.e. the area immediately around, but not within) of the AONB. Should we try to define and map this zone, bearing in mind the impact will vary depending on the type and scale of development proposed?



Greensand Ridge NIA

The Greensand Ridge is a distinctive 'island' of significantly wooded sands and sandstone that rises prominently above the surrounding clay vales. With a toehold in both Buckinghamshire and Cambridgeshire, and stretching over 45km, the vast majority of the 273km² of this attractive landscape is in Central Bedfordshire. It has been recognised as a locally designated Nature Improvement Area (NIA) by Central Bedfordshire Council and the Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership.

Policy overview

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 157) states that Local Plans should contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, and supporting Nature Improvement Areas where they have been identified. It also provides the opportunity for specifying the type of development that may be appropriate in Nature Improvement Areas.

Over recent decades 60% of the species found in the UK have declined. Even those which were once common are vanishing (State of Nature Report, 2013). A step-change is required to halt this loss and reverse the prospects for nature in the UK. In June 2011 the Government published The Natural Environment White Paper: *The Natural Choice – Securing the Value of Nature*.

This was informed by England's Biodiversity Strategy (Biodiversity 2020: *A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services*, August 2011) and the Lawton Report: *Making Space for Nature*.

All three documents focus on the need to create bigger, better and more joined up spaces for wildlife whilst reconnecting people with nature. They also contain plans to achieve this; reversing the loss of biodiversity and creating the step-change which is needed.

One of these plans, announced in The Natural Environment White Paper, is the creation of Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs). These are large (10,000-50,000 hectares/100-500km²) discrete areas, which are set up where the opportunities and benefits for biodiversity are greatest and operated by local partnerships with a shared vision for the natural environment.

Local information

The varied geology of the Greensand Ridge has created a distinctive mosaic of habitats and land uses. However, this character has been eroded over time by changes in agricultural and forestry practices and the impact of people. Although core biodiversity hotspots still exist, they have become increasingly smaller and more isolated. Small isolated populations are more vulnerable to local extinction than larger, well-connected ones.

If sites are larger or connected to other sites in the vicinity, species extinctions are less likely to occur. The Greensand Ridge has rich wildlife sites with many opportunities to expand, buffer and connect them across the landscape.

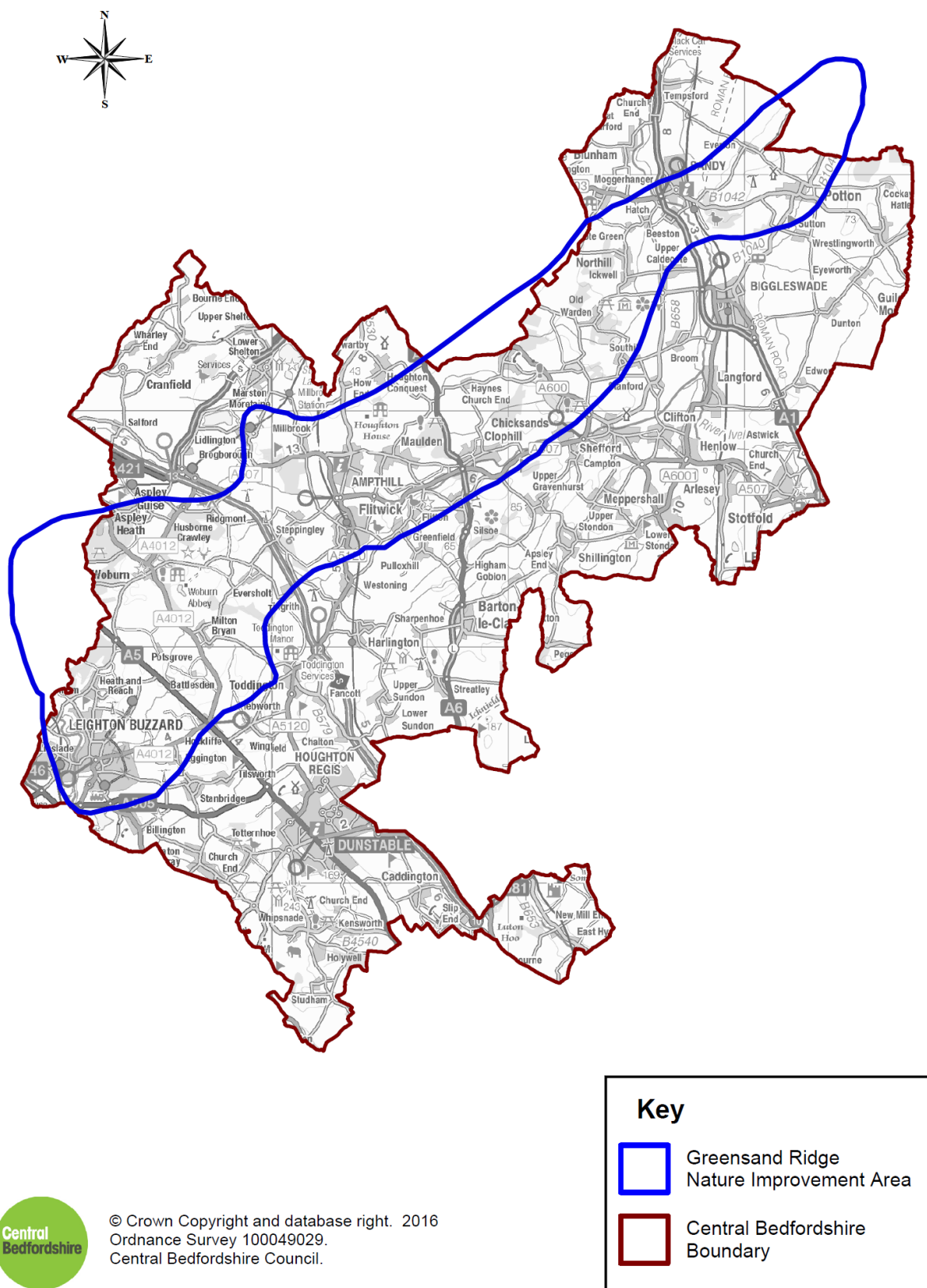


Figure 14 - The Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area

Objectives for the Nature Improvement Area

The following objectives have to be set for the Greensand Ridge NIA:

- Strengthening the ecological networks of the Ridge in line with Biodiversity Action Plans for the key habitats through improving, enhancing and buffering existing sites and working with land owners and managers to 'join the dots' in the wider countryside;
- Bring invasive and non-native species populations under control where these pose a threat to important species or habitats;
- Achieve 'good' ecological status for the rivers and streams within the NIA, working with the Environment Agency and others through Catchment Partnerships;
- Enhance public awareness of the NIA, its biodiversity and the wider benefits it brings;
- Providing opportunities for people to access and experience the best the Ridge has to offer in terms of its wildlife, habitats and landscape, in a sympathetic and sustainable way;
- Ensure that growth and development in and around the Ridge makes a real and lasting contribution, supporting, valuing and benefiting the natural environment and achieving a net gain in biodiversity by 2020.

Question 10 – Habitat protection and enhancement across the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area

Should we specify the types of development that are appropriate within the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area?

If so, which types of development do you think would / would not be appropriate within the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area, and why?

Alternatively, should development within the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area be required to meet different standards of habitat protection / enhancement to the rest of Central Bedfordshire?

If so, what should these requirements be?



Forest of Marston Vale

The Forest of Marston Vale was designated as one of England's twelve Community Forests in 1991. Creating the Forest of Marston Vale is about using trees and woodlands to repair a damaged landscape, addressing the effects of the brick making industry, which had flourished for over a hundred years between Bedford and Milton Keynes.

Policy overview

The Forests for the Community programme, which consists of 12 Community Forests in England of which the Forest of Marston Vale is one, was established by the then Countryside Commission and the Forestry Commission in partnership with a wide range of local partners.

Each Community Forest has a non-statutory plan, approved by Government, which describes the proposals for developing each forest over the next 30 years and which guide subsequent implementation.

Local information

The Forest of Marston Vale was designated in the 1990s to aid regeneration of a landscape degraded by brick-working and landfill but also identified for major growth. The key target is to increase woodland cover from 3% to 30% by 2031 but the vision for the forest includes a mix of landscapes including wetland and pasture supporting creating a landscape of opportunity for recreation as well as appropriate development.

The Forest of Marston Vale Trust is responsible for creating the forest in partnership with the community. Woodland cover has increased significantly in the core of the Vale with woodland cover at around 10%, with major new woodlands at Brogborough, Cranfield and Houghton Conquest.

The Forest of Marston Vale area is important for informal recreation, having an extensive network of rights of way which link the Vale to the adjacent clay ridge and greensand escarpment. The former brickwork lakes are a major feature of the Vale, forming attractive expanses of open water or a rich mosaic of fen and open water depending on the site.



Figure 15 – The Marston Vale Community Forest area

More information

- [Forest of Marston Vale Trust Website](#)

Question 11 – Increasing woodland cover across the Forest of Marston Vale

How should planning policy ensure that development contributes towards achieving 30% woodland cover?



Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park

The Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park is a strategic project to link the main UK waterway network with the Fens waterways of East Anglia. As a new waterway, it can provide benefits for the 21st century. It will provide an attractive location for business, a setting for housing, a space for recreation and healthy living, on and off the water. It will be an ecologically rich corridor, not necessarily with the 'hard edges' associated with traditional waterways. It will provide a tourism destination, like the Falkirk Wheel, and, importantly, as a new Waterway, its development has been, and will be shaped by communities.

Central Bedfordshire Council is part of a Consortium of eight organisations that have agreed to work together to help deliver the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park.

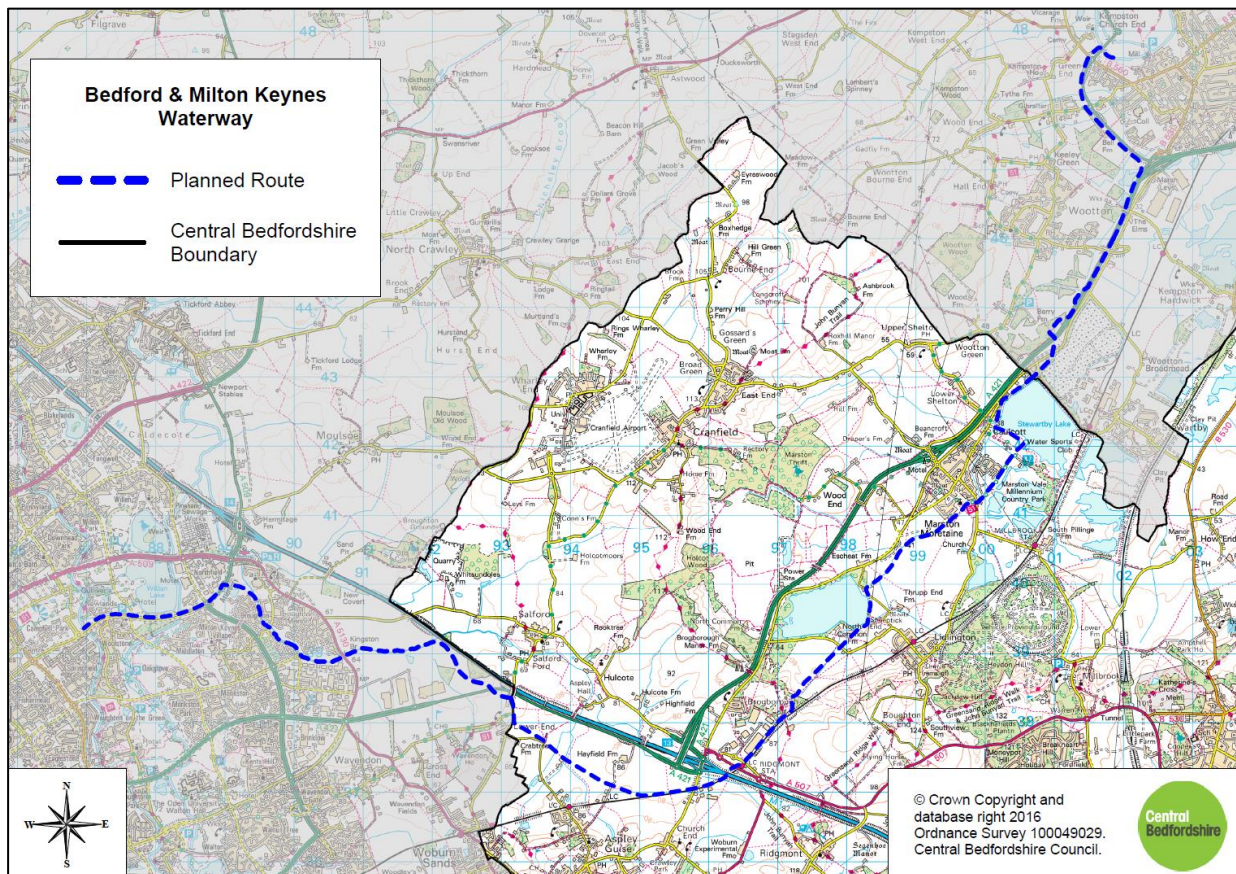


Figure 16 - Route of the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park

More information:

- [Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park Consortium Website](#)

Central
Bedfordshire

great
prospects



Climate change and sustainability

Environmental Framework



Climate change

Section 19 (1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places a statutory requirement on local planning authorities to have policies that ensure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

Section 10 of the NPPF states local authorities to should "*adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change and water supply and demand considerations*".

This has to be done in line with the provisions and objectives of the Climate Change Act (2008).

The Climate Change Act 2008 sets out a legally binding target for the UK to reduce carbon emissions by 80% by 2050 from 1996 baseline levels.

The above requirements are fulfilled by the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment and the National Adaptation Programme Report respectively.

To inform and support the Council in fulfilling its duties, a suite of studies, guidance, plans and strategies to gather evidence and to inform the Council's policies on climate change adaptation and mitigation have been compiled.

The Central Bedfordshire Council Climate Change Strategy

Policy context

Like all other Local Authorities, the Council recognises that it has a key role to play in reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change – both as community leaders and through the services we provide.

The Council is also a considerable consumer of energy and a direct source of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions through our activities and buildings. As the climate changes, Central Bedfordshire will not be immune to the impacts that a changing climate will have and will need to act now to adapt and manage risks to service delivery, the public, local communities, local infrastructure, businesses and the natural environment.

In May 2010 the Council adopted its first Climate Change Strategy. This document details how Central Bedfordshire Council is going to address the issues raised by climate change, clarifies our ambition and the drivers for action.

More information

- [Central Bedfordshire Council Climate Change Strategy](#)

Question 12 – Climate change priorities

Are there any particular climate change mitigation or adaptation actions the Council should concentrate on?

Local Climate Change Risk Assessment

Changing weather patterns are and will have serious impacts on the local environment and residents. It impacts on how and what services are needed and when. It is also recognised that there are geographic areas as well as residents in our communities, which are more vulnerable to the impacts of extreme and unpredictable weather.

Policy context

The NPPF places the requirement on local planning authorities to adopt proactive strategies to adapt to climate change in line with the objectives of the Climate Change Act (2008). What this involves and what areas are vulnerable are further clarified through the national Climate Change Risk Assessment.

Local Evidence Base

In 2012, the Council commissioned LDA Design to conduct the Central Bedfordshire Local Climate Change Risk Assessment (LCCRA). The aim of the LCCRA was to define and understand risks and opportunities specific to Central Bedfordshire from climate change.

The LCCRA provides an evidence base which connects an understanding of existing vulnerabilities to extreme weather with climate change projections and a spatial understanding of the impacts and consequences for development, service delivery and the community.

What the evidence base shows

The LCCRA uses a Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP) methodology to identify the current weather related impacts for the Central Bedfordshire area. It looked at impacts and frequency of weather events to help develop understanding of what consequences events have had on residents and on the local authority and the likely impact if frequency or severity increases.

The LCCRA used national and local evidence to identify and prioritise risks, these include:

- Water resources
- Overheating
- Flooding
- Subsidence
- Risks to the natural environment, including loss of habitat

The local dimension of risks within each of the five categories were assessed including potential consequences and financial implications and was carried out in line with the methodology defined in the national Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) as far as practicable.

A key issue that was highlighted is that Central Bedfordshire is, and will be, affected by serious water stress and a high risk of drought resulting in water shortages, particularly in light of the future being growth planned for in the area.

To compensate for increasing water demand and to lower the risk of water shortages the study recommended setting a higher water efficiency standard in all new development as planning policy requirement.

		Wet	Mid	Dry
Anglian	2020s	156	-32	-237
	2050s	-114	-417	-715
	2080s	-321	-528	-740

Figure 17 - The impacts of climate change alone on water supply surplus/deficit (MI/d) in each UKCP09 scenarios in Anglian river basin region

How this information is used

The LCCRA provides a robust local level evidence base that will be used to help shape future policy and better manage risk. This includes:

- Allocation of development sites; protection and enhancement of the natural environment; and policy supporting delivery of climate resilient new development;
- The Council’s Climate Change Adaptation Plan: managing risk to authority services and directing investment through corporate strategy;
- The Local Resilience Forum: contributing new evidence to emergency planning through the Bedfordshire and Luton Community risk Register.

The study is used as evidence for need of application of the higher water efficiency standard and inclusion of climate change adaptation measures to manage climate change risks, such as overheating of buildings and Urban Heat Island Effect affecting Central Bedfordshire. The information will be used to assess development’s ability to adapt to changing climate and inform planning decisions.

More information

[Central Bedfordshire Local Climate Change Risk Assessment \(Adaptation Evidence Base\)](#)

Question 13 – Risks to Central Bedfordshire from climate change

What are the biggest risks to Central Bedfordshire from climate change?

How should we manage these risks through the Local Plan?



Ecosystem services

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment describes ecosystem services as services provided by the natural environment that benefit people and are grouped into four categories:

- Provisioning services: we obtain products from ecosystems such as food, fibre and medicines.
- Regulating services: we benefit from the results of ecosystem processes such as water purification, air quality maintenance and climate regulation.
- Cultural services: we gain non-material benefits from our interaction with the natural environment such as education and wellbeing.
- Supporting services: functions that are necessary for the production of other ecosystem services from which we benefit, such as soil formation and nutrient cycling.

What the Local Evidence Base says

The Council worked with Cranfield University to explore regulating ecosystem services, with a particular focus on soil carbon storage and sequestration, soil erosion and water quality.

The effect of a range of land use changes, such as urban development, agricultural management and habitat creation and enhancement were mapped to explain and identify spatial effects of land use change on these regulating ecosystem services.

Soil carbon

Different land uses are associated with different soil carbon densities:

Land use	Soil carbon storage (t/ha)
Urban	67
Arable	149
Pasture	171
Woodland	187

Soil texture also has a direct influence on soil carbon storage; soils with a high clay content have higher levels of soil organic carbon than those with a high sand content. Soils that are seasonally wet peat to loam (e.g. the peat lands north of Biggleswade) showed exceptionally high carbon content. Above ground stored carbon in vegetation makes a relatively small contribution to carbon storage. Woodlands are most effective at carbon storage.

Urban developments in any part of the county inevitably result in losses of soil organic carbon (SOC). Some areas showed significantly higher losses than others, depending on the land use and the soil type. Arable areas were estimated to lose 20-90 t/ha, whilst woodlands lose 50-110t/ha for all soil types except peat which loses significantly more at 110-160t/ha.

Implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan habitat enhancement would result in a net gain in soil carbon. The greatest gains are predicted on arable areas north-east of Milton Bryan and close to the A5 junction with Sheep Lane. Other areas which could potentially give high soil carbon gains when forested include the area between Cranfield and Marston Moretaine, Cockayne Hatley, and south of Linslade.

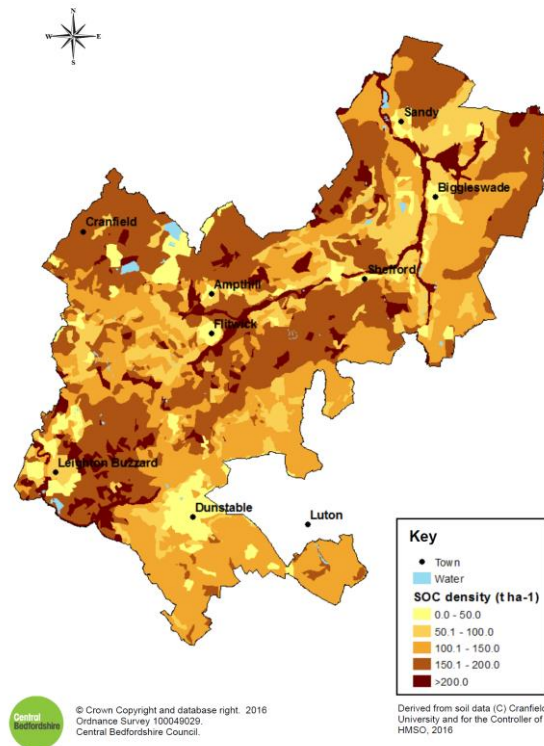


Figure 18 - Current soil carbon storage in Central Bedfordshire

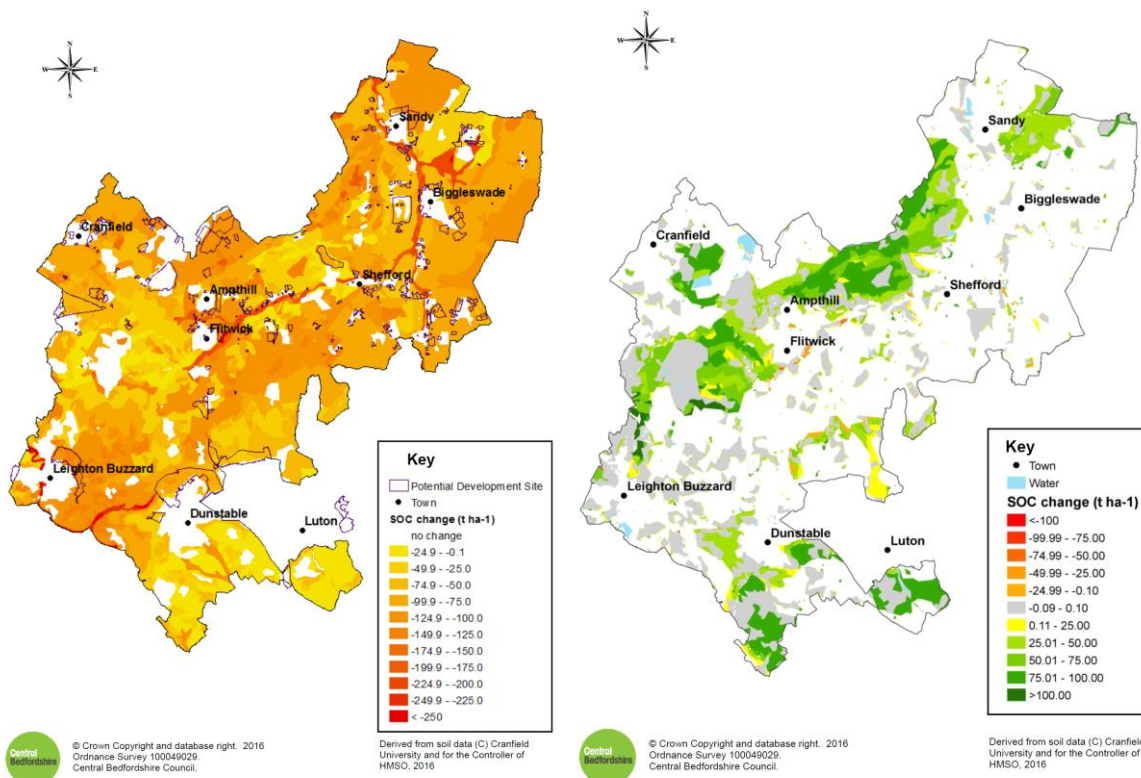


Figure 19 - How development would affect soil carbon storage

Figure 20 - How implementing the Biodiversity Action Plan would affect soil carbon storage

Soil erosion

Water runoff rates are strongly linked to soil erosion. Land use changes affect soil erosion by altering runoff patterns. Urban developments on steep slopes with high permeability have the most negative effects on soil erosion, whereas covering these areas with woodland or permanent grassland is preferable in terms of reducing soil erosion. Changes to woodland have the most noticeable positive effect of the various land use change scenarios.

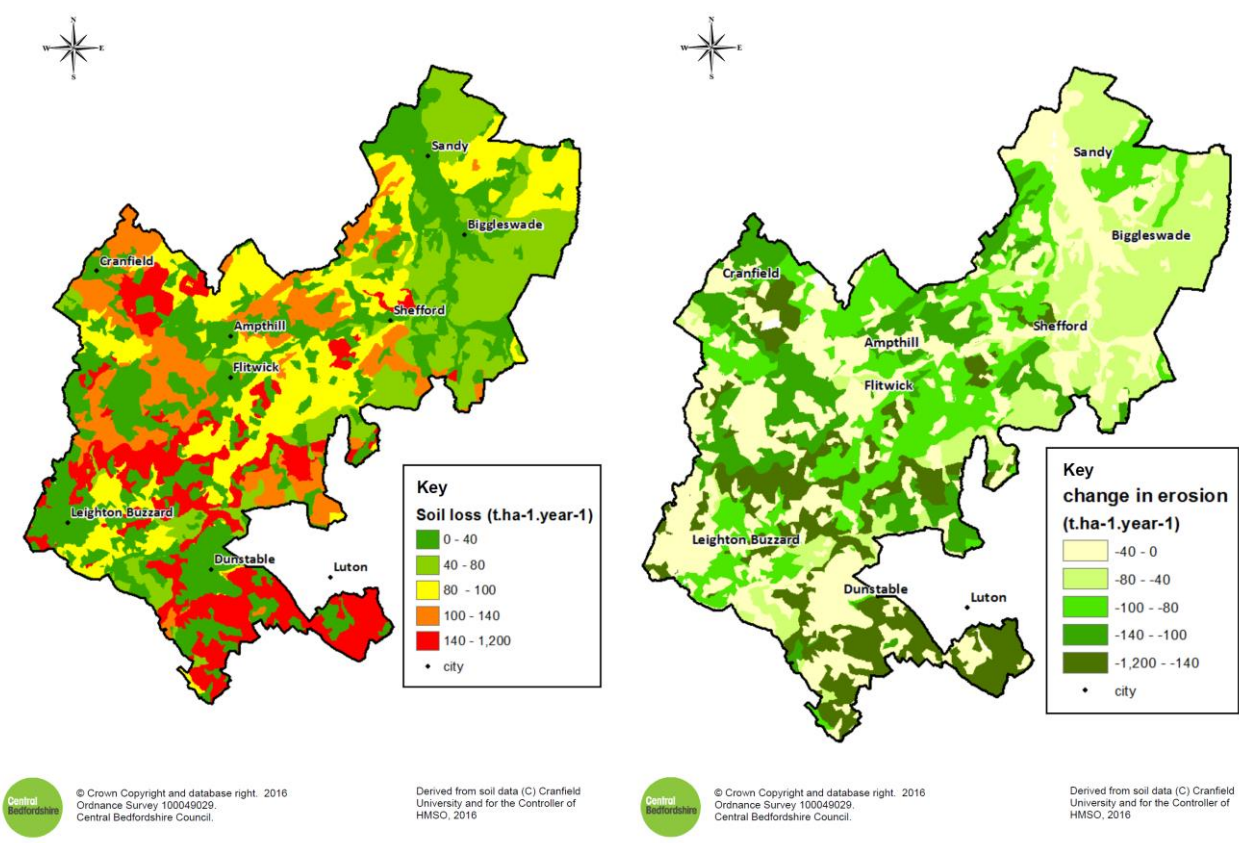


Figure 21 - Current patterns of soil erosion

Figure 22 - How land use change to woodland would affect soil erosion

Water quality

Diffuse pollution through overland flow and leaching was assessed. Urban development generally increased water pollution risk, and is best prioritised on arable land, whereas woodlands are the least suitable for development in that this leads to increased risk of harm to water quality. Changing arable land to pasture or pasture land to semi-natural vegetation and woodland decreased pollution risk.

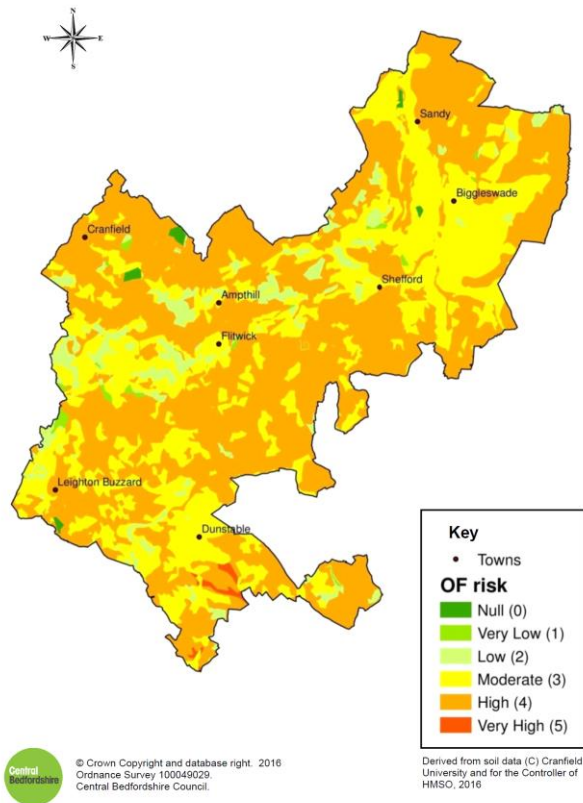


Figure 23 - Current risk to water quality from overland flow

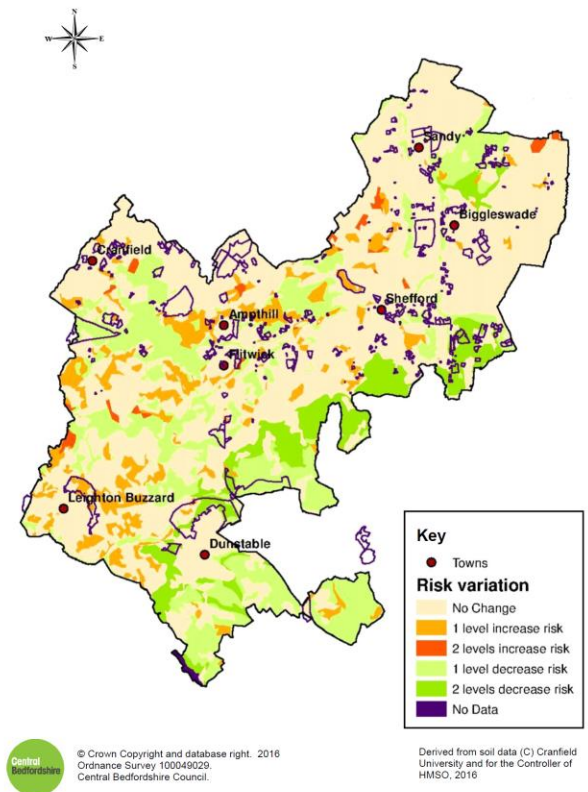


Figure 24 - Effect of land use change to urban on water quality risk from overland flow

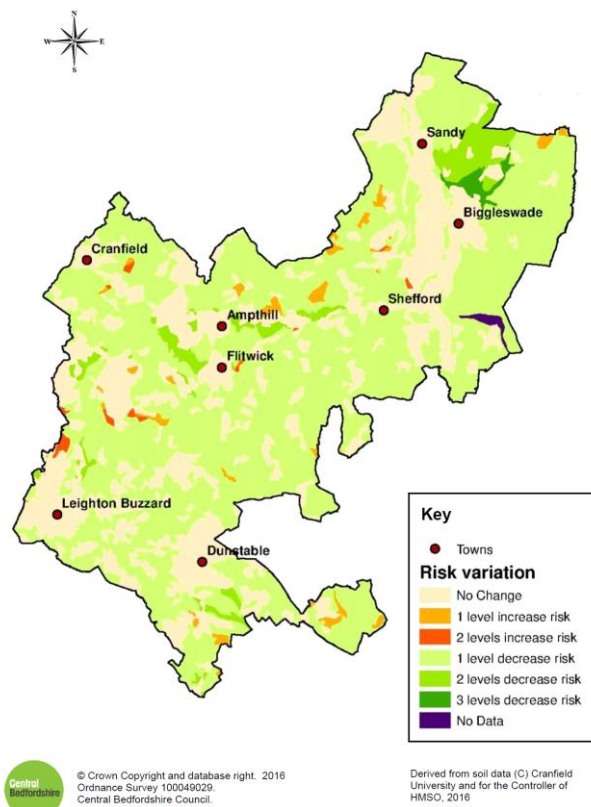


Figure 25 - Effect of land use change to pasture on water quality risk from overland flow

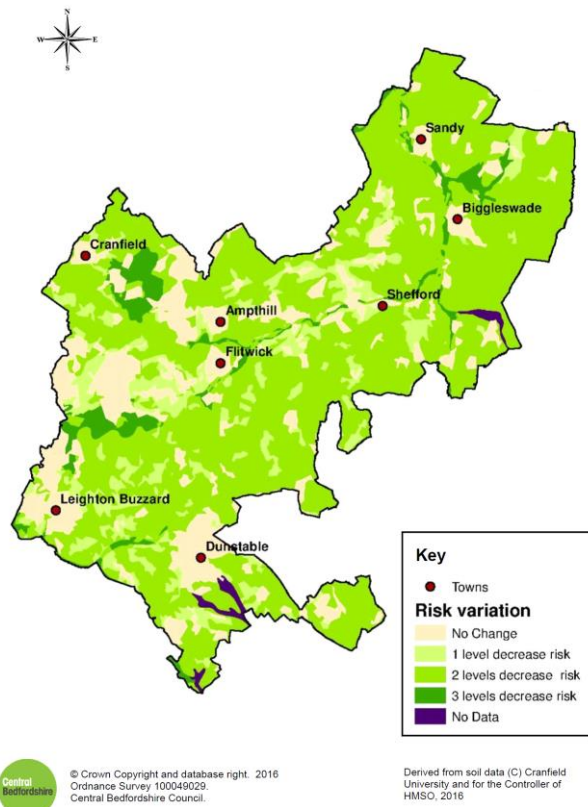


Figure 26 - Effect of land use change to woodland on water quality risk from overland flow

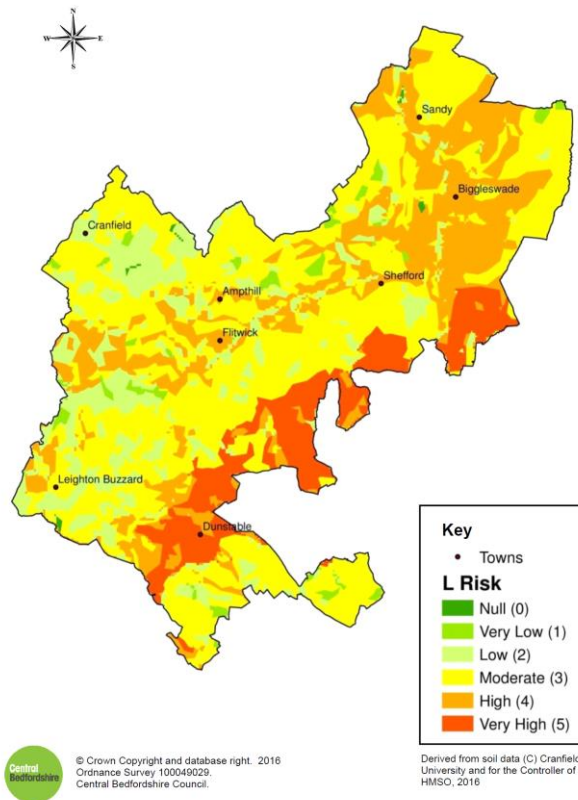


Figure 27 - Current risk to water quality from leaching

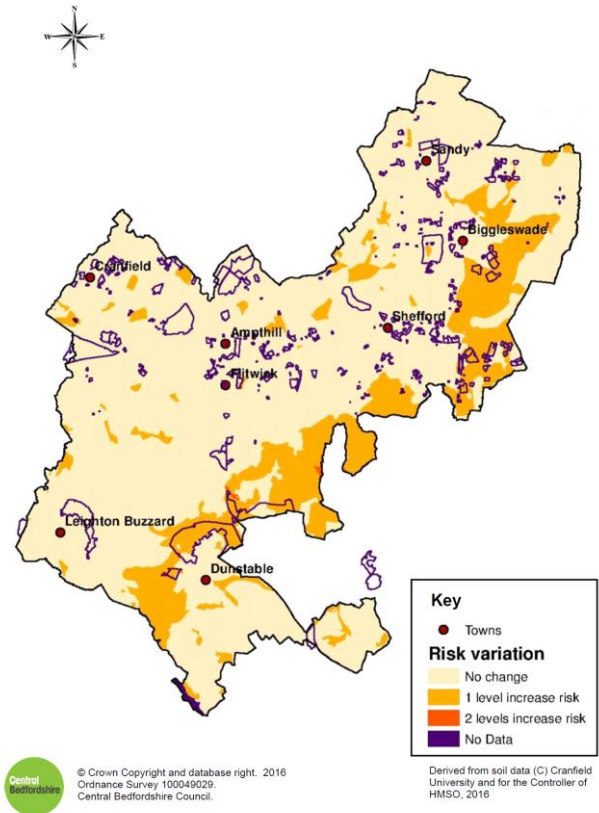


Figure 28 - Effect of land use change to urban on water quality risk from leaching

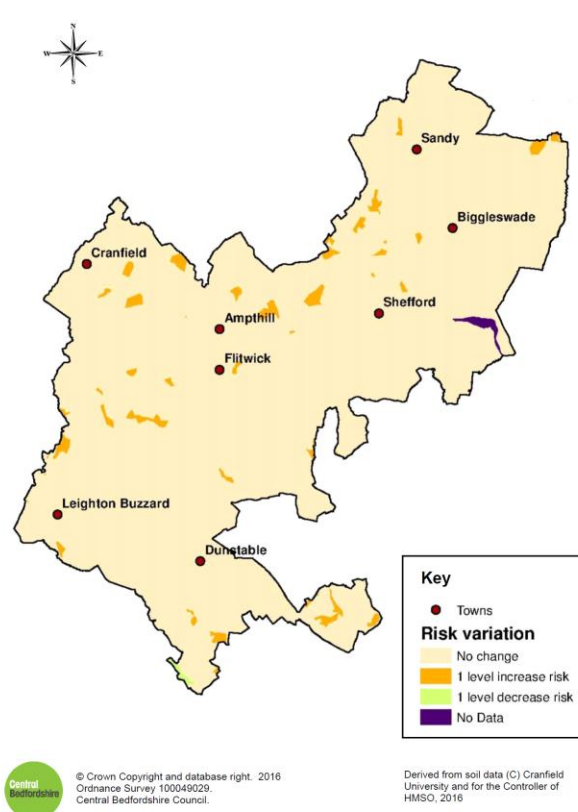


Figure 29 - Effect of land use change to pasture on water quality risk from leaching

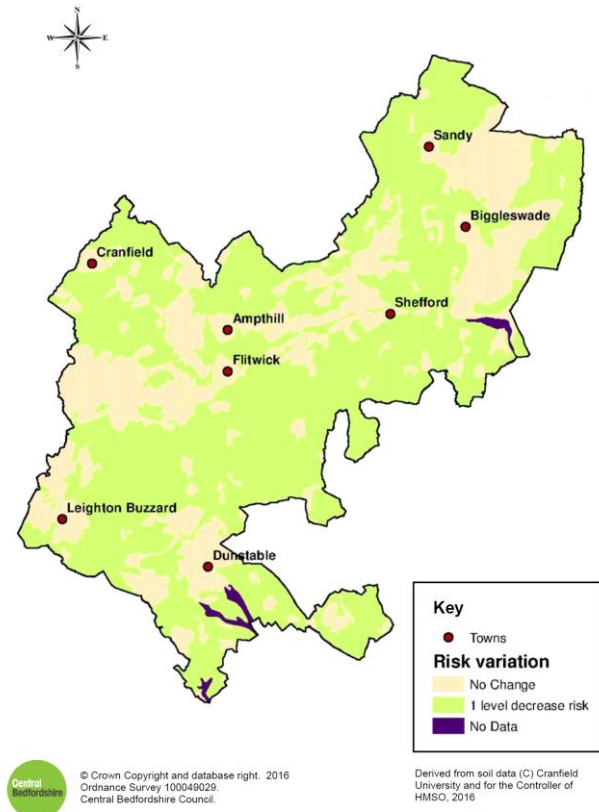


Figure 30 - Effect of land use change to woodland on water quality risk from leaching

How this information is used

The project represents one of the first attempts to bring together soil and land use information for a unitary authority area, with the aim of describing the effects of land use and management options on soil carbon, runoff and soil erosion. As such it serves as a useful spatial evidence base to identify the effect of proposed land use land management changes on some key regulating ecosystem services.

More information

- [Ecosystem Services Report](#)
- [Ecosystem Services Report Appendices](#)



Flood risk

Policy Overview

Paragraph 94 of the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk and water supply and demand considerations. Mechanisms for avoiding inappropriate development in areas of risk of flooding are set out, in terms of applying the 'Sequential Test' (a sequential, risk based approach to the location of development), a strategic flood risk assessment to support the Local Plan, and the 'Exception Test' where the application of the Sequential Test is not possible.

What the evidence base shows

The Council became a Lead Local Flood Authority in 2010 and as such was required to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (adopted by the Council in 2014). The Strategy provides a framework for how the Council will manage local flood risk and draws links with spatial planning so that future development does not increase flood risk to people and property. It discusses how different types of flooding can affect Central Bedfordshire, including how risk may change in the future as a result of climate change. It also identifies areas 'at risk' of flooding from watercourses, surface water and groundwater.

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy identifies the following objectives:

- **Partnership Working:** Establish and maintain effective partnerships within our own organisation, with other Risk Management Authorities, with our neighbouring Lead Local Flood Authorities and with our local communities.
- **Flood Risk and Development:** Ensure that development looks to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding and that all development uses SuDS as normal practice, and where appropriate safeguard land which is needed for current and future flood management.
- **Local Flood Risk:** Develop a greater understanding of local flood risk by identifying where assets may influence the impact of local flood risk, how local flood risk may change in the future and improve local knowledge and recording of flooding incidents.
- **Delivery:** Establish processes to enable identification of priorities, sources of funding and schemes so that we meet our objectives.
- **Resource:** To take a collaborative approach, working more effectively as an authority and with our partners, to reduce flood risk and where appropriate seeking opportunities for packaging work. We will aim to use all available resources and funds in an integrated way to support our priority of achieving efficiency savings.
- **Local Communities:** Limit the effect of flooding on people's normal way of life by taking action with our partners to minimise the impact of local flood risk on our communities and environment, engaging with and empowering affected communities and ensuring that we provide clear and useful information to enhance our local communities' preparedness and resilience to local flood risk.

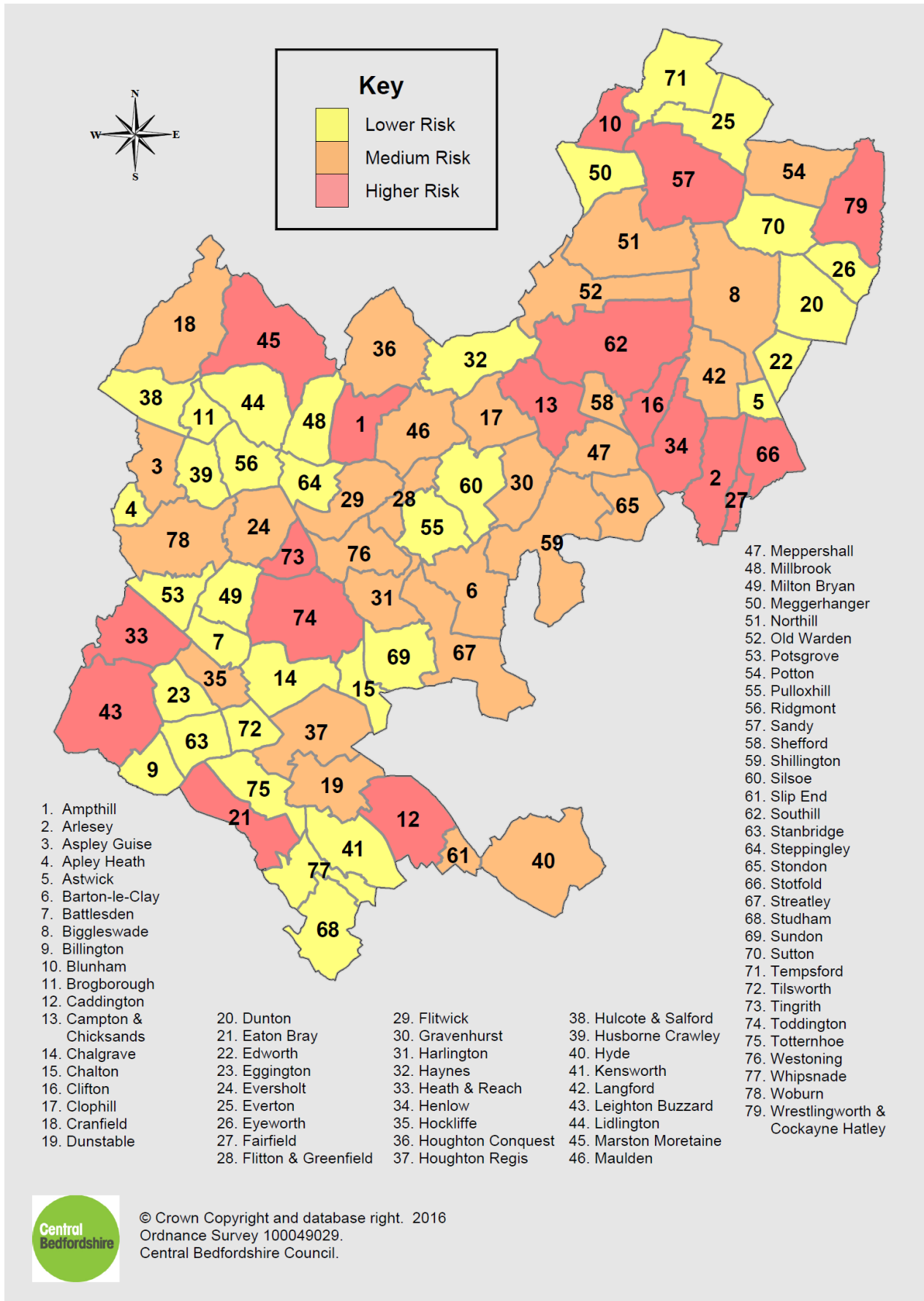


Figure 31 - Parish Assessment of Local Flood Risk

How this information is used

The strategy includes policies to manage flood risk from all sources that can be adopted in the local plan. These will promote the strategic allocation of land and of buildings within the development boundary to reduce flood risk, promote sustainable drainage and improve water quality.

More information

- [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy](#)

Question 14 – Prioritising actions for flood risk management

What should be the Council prioritise with regards to managing the risk of flooding now and in the future – (tick up to 5)

- Improved understanding of the risk to Central Bedfordshire from flooding
- Forecasting of extreme events, such as community warning systems
- Ensuring sustainable drainage solutions on new developments
- Delivering new flood defences and community level projects
- Maintaining the council's existing drainage assets
- Ensuring proper management of private drainage assets
- Closer working with partner organisations such as the Environment Agency to provide a joined up approach
- Attracting external funding
- Protecting and enhancing the natural water environment
- Reducing loading on public sewers
- Supporting communities and giving them the tools to protect themselves
- Focus on high risk areas only
- Do nothing differently than the Council already does
- Other (please specify)



Sustainable Drainage

National Policy

Paragraph 103 of the NPPF promotes the delivery of Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) for the management of surface water in all new developments.

The 2014 [Written Ministerial Statement](#) makes clear that the Government's expectation is that sustainable drainage will be provided in new developments wherever this is appropriate and that these must comply with the [National Technical Standards](#) for the design, maintenance and operation of a surface water drainage system. It sets out that in considering planning applications Local Planning Authorities should: consult the relevant Lead Local Flood Authority on the management of surface water; satisfy themselves that the proposed minimum standards of operation are appropriate; and ensure through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations that there are clear arrangements in place for ongoing maintenance over the lifetime of the development.

Following this, the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 was amended making Central Bedfordshire Council in its capacity as Lead Local Flood Authority, a statutory consultee on surface water management drainage issues for all new major developments.

By working with natural processes through the use of SuDS, flood risk management can provide environment benefits that could help to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive by reducing pollution and improve water quality and obligations of the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive.

Local Policy

The Council has developed SuDS Guidance, adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This SPD looks at Central Bedfordshire's patterns of geology, topography, water resources, rainfall patterns, water features, flood risk patterns and landscape character. It includes a series of local requirements for SuDS, to ensure that they not only reduce the risk of surface water flooding, but deliver a range of wider environmental and amenity benefits.

In addition to this, in order to be made valid, any application submitted for a major development, as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 must include an appropriately detailed Surface Water Drainage Strategy under the Council's latest Local Validation List.

What the evidence base shows

The SPD identifies ten local requirements to ensure that SuDS are designed to deliver maximum benefits, and improve the character of the surrounding environment. Planning applications will be expected to show how they meet these requirements. These requirements are:

1. Plan in SuDS from the start
2. Replicate natural drainage
3. Water re-use first

4. Enhance biodiversity
5. Focus on multi-functional uses
6. Minimise carbon and waste in SuDS
7. Design for easy access and maintenance
8. Linked design through every scale
9. Place making through SuDS design
10. Surface conveyance over pipes

The Guidance reviews the unique landscape, topography and geology characteristics that impact on the way SuDS are designed. It identifies four zones across Central Bedfordshire, based on drainage and environmental characteristics. For each of these areas, characteristic features and SuDS standards are identified.

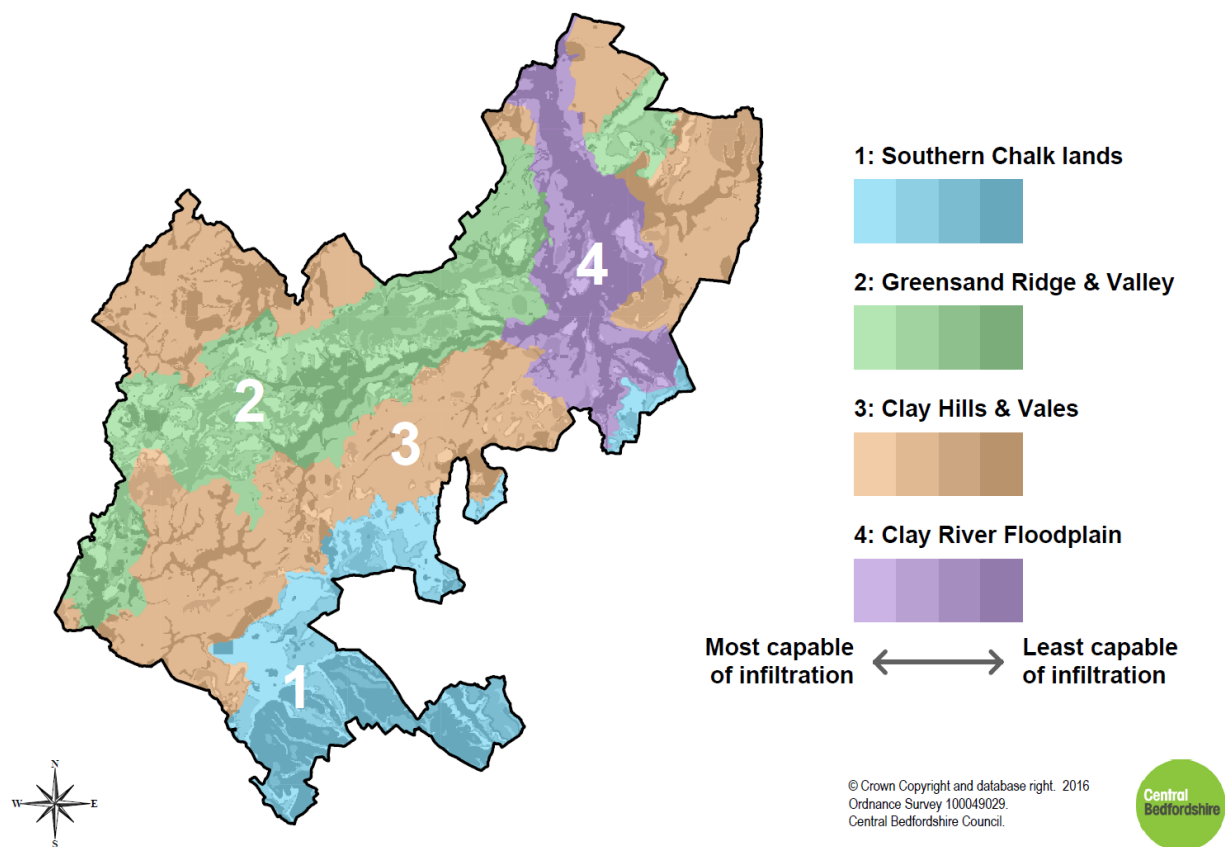


Figure 32 -SuDS zones in Central Bedfordshire

How this information is used

The Sustainable Drainage Guidance is adopted as a SPD, and is therefore a material consideration in planning decisions. In order for planning applications to be valid, they must include an appropriately detailed Surface Water Drainage Strategy.

More information

- [Central Bedfordshire Sustainable Drainage Guidance \(Supplementary Planning Document\)](#)
- [Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems \(March 2015\)](#)
- [The CIRIA SuDS Manual \(C753\)](#)
- [BS8582 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites.](#)

Question 15 – Use of sustainable drainage systems

National Policy requires Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as standard in major developments (for example, 10 homes or more).

- Should CBC require SuDS as standard in all developments (i.e. minor and major, residential and commercial)?

Should SuDS be used to provide more than just flood risk management? For example, to clean runoff water from developments, and provide amenity and biodiversity benefits.



Water efficiency

Water efficiency

National policy overview

Paragraph 94 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local authorities must adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change; this includes taking full account of water supply and demand considerations.

The 2015 review of Housing Standards resulted in setting National Technical Standards for water efficiency in residential developments. There are two standards set for water: a minimum water efficiency standard of 125 litres per person per day and a higher standard of 110 litres per person per day. The higher standard can be required by the local authorities through their planning policies where a clear local need can be demonstrated.

Local policy overview

The Local Climate Change Risk Assessment concluded that Central Bedfordshire is, and will be, affected by serious water stress and high risk of drought causing likely water shortages. In order to compensate for the inevitable increase in demand that future growth will bring and therefore lower the risk of water shortages the Council will seek a higher water efficiency standard in all new development as a future planning policy requirement.

Local evidence base

The Council worked with the consultants Artesia to establish the range of technologies that can be installed in new homes and retrofitted in existing homes to help conserve water and achieve the higher water efficiency standard. This study was conducted before the Housing Standards Review when local authorities could set water efficiency standards prescribed by the Code for Sustainable Homes and sought of viable delivery of Code level 5 water standard of 80 litres per person per day.

What the evidence base shows

The study provided information on a range of technologies which can be used in new build and retrofit projects. These technologies included efficient fittings, rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling systems. It showed that 110 litres per person per day can be easily achieved using water efficient fittings only and to achieve this standard there is no need for installation of more expensive water recycling systems.

The study contains a water calculator which can be used by anyone interested in water efficiency and seeking information on how to measure water consumption in new build, extension or refurbishment projects.

How this information is used

This study can be used as technical and financial viability evidence for requiring the higher water efficiency standard within all new developments. The information included within the study provides practical solutions to achieving the higher water efficiency standard and is used to inform planning decisions in assessing the compliance of development with the higher water standard.

Question 16 – Reducing water use

Central Bedfordshire is in area of a high water stress and at risk of water shortages; should new development be water efficient?

Should new development achieve water efficiency standard going beyond the Building Regulations?

If so, which water efficiency standard should we use?

- a) Minimum standard of 125 litres per person per day; or,
- b) Higher standard of 110 litres per person per day?



Energy and buildings

National Policy Overview

The NPPF in paragraph 95 requires local authorities to set requirements for a building's sustainability in a way that is consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy and to adopt nationally described standards.

The Government's review of Housing Standards recommended the removal of local authorities' ability to set energy efficiency standards that are higher than those prescribed by the Part L of the Building Regulations. The Deregulation Act 2015 has a provision to amend the Planning and Energy Act 2008 and remove local authorities' ability to set planning policy requiring a higher energy efficiency than the Building Regulations. The commencement of the amendment has not yet been announced, but it is expected to be enacted in the near future. The Act's provision for planning policy to require a proportion of the development's energy demand to be delivered from renewable and low carbon sources, or connection to a district heating network, remains unchanged.

The new Part L of the Building Regulation enforces a fabric first approach set by the zero carbon homes policy. The regulations ensure that a building's energy demand is minimised through energy efficient fabric, minimising thermal bridging and increasing airtightness before deployment of the low and zero carbon technologies.

These changes to the Building Regulations mean that new homes are built with more thermal insulation and to improved standards of airtightness. This approach reduces the heating demand of new dwellings but can lead to an increased risk of overheating and a greater need to ensure that good levels of ventilation are provided. The recent research, drawn on by the Committee on Climate Change's Adaptation Sub-Committee, estimates that up to 20% of homes in England may already be overheating, even in cool summers (Adaptation Sub-Committee, 2014). Overheating affects both new and existing homes (especially smaller properties and single aspect flats) and has negative impacts on the health and well-being of occupants, particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly. The impacts of overheating will become greater as outdoor temperatures rise due to climate change, and population demographics change with a larger proportion of elderly people.

Overheating of homes leads to increased energy demand for comfort cooling that in turn causes higher carbon dioxide emissions that reinforces climate change. Well insulated homes reduce energy demand for heating through gas (with lower embodied carbon) but potentially use energy from the electricity grid for cooling (with higher carbon embodied energy) for cooling. Grid electricity has much higher carbon emissions than gas per kWh of energy used. Installation of renewable energy technologies that produce electricity can help to offset the additional carbon emissions caused by use of comfort cooling equipment.

Renewable energy technologies installed to deliver improvements over the target emissions rate set by the Building Regulations can provide a 'safety net' for the developer to counter the performance gap between designed and actual emissions of a building.

The Zero Carbon Hub, working with the National House Builders Council (NHBC) Foundation and Building Research Establishment (BRE), has reviewed the performance gap evidence and identified a number of reasons that contribute to this. These are varied, and range from communication issues between designer and construction teams, insufficient skills or quality of workmanship to substitution of specified materials and changes to construction details.

Local evidence base

The Council commissioned Cutland Consulting Limited to undertake a feasibility study of delivering residential development that contributes to carbon emission reduction to mitigate climate change.

The first study was done in May 2013 to provide evidence for a carbon dioxide emissions reduction policy. The baseline for reduction was set at target emission rate specified by the 2010 Approved Document L1A of the Building Regulations.

The second study was undertaken in June 2014 following proposed changes in national policy on zero carbon homes. This work assessed the deliverability of a proposal that 10% of dwelling's energy demand should be met by renewable or low carbon sources. The baseline for this study was determined by the 2013 revision to Approved Document L1A.

How this information is used

This information is used to inform planning decisions on the inclusion of renewable energy within new developments. It provides evidence about the technical feasibility and economic viability of most commonly used renewable energy technologies.

Question 17 – Energy efficiency in new developments

Should new development be energy efficient and deliver carbon emissions reductions?

National policy allows councils to set targets for renewable energy generation from new developments; should the Council be flexible and allow carbon emission reduction through both energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies?



Renewable energy generation

Renewable energy generation covers a range of sustainable energy sources which cannot be depleted. National policy promotes and supports the development and deployment of appropriate renewable energy generation in the most suitable places. The Government is committed to generating 15% of energy from renewable sources by 2020 (through the European Renewable Energy Directive).

This in turn supports the commitment made in the Climate change Act (2008) to reduce green house gas emissions by 34%, from 1990 levels, by 2020 and 80% by 2050.

The Central Bedfordshire Residents Survey of 2013 shows a high level of support for renewable energy generation amongst residents in Central Bedfordshire, with photovoltaic solar panels (PV) being the most popular and windfarm developments within Central Bedfordshire being supported the least.

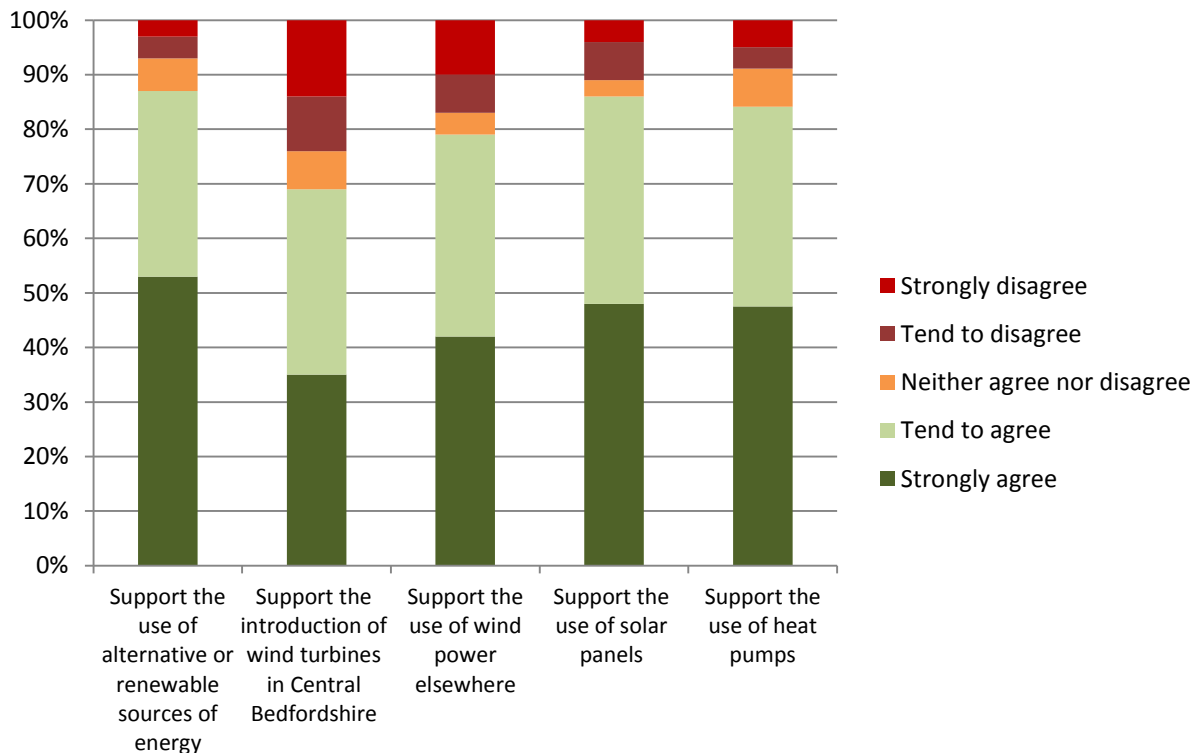


Figure 33 - Public perceptions to renewable energy technologies (2013 Central Bedfordshire Residents Survey)

National Policy Context

The Government's *Renewable Energy Roadmap (2011)* states that a diverse mix of energy generation technologies, including renewable energy technologies, should be encouraged to meet the UK's decarbonisation targets, whilst also protecting consumers against rising energy prices and ensuring that 'the lights stay on'.

Section 10 of the NPPF places a responsibility on local planning authorities to plan positively for renewable energy as all communities should contribute to the increase in the use and supply of renewable energy.

When planning for renewable energy, the Council has followed the approach set out in the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure and relevant sections of the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy Infrastructure.

Further guidance on planning policy for renewables is included in the 'Planning practice guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy' (2013) and in guidance issued by the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) on community engagement for Wind Farm Developers (2013).

Since 2015 greater emphasis has been placed on community consultation, especially in relation to windfarm developments. This states that planning permission shouldn't be granted unless the developer can demonstrate that they have properly consulted the local communities affected by the proposed development, and that the communities concerns have been listened to and addressed.

The UK Solar PV Strategy Part 1: *A Roadmap to a Brighter Future* (2013) recognises the role of solar PV technology in contributing to the diversification and decarbonisation of the UK's energy mix and sets principles for the deployment of the technology in the UK. Part 2 (2014) sets the UK Government's ambition to strengthen support for well-sited and well-designed PV installations, particularly on domestic small-scale roof-top projects and mid-size projects on commercial and industrial rooftops. This has been further supported by extending a threshold for roof-top mounted PV as permitted development from 50kW to 1MW from 15th April 2015.

Local Policy

The Council has produced a series of renewable energy planning technical guidance notes in order to provide a steer and to assist developers and communities in bringing forward their development ambitions in the most appropriate and acceptable way.

These focus on ensuring that planning applications for the most appropriate and effective renewable technologies are targeted to the most suitable places in Central Bedfordshire. They aim to help ensure that the area can contribute towards the delivery of national targets for carbon reduction and the deployment of renewables, whilst at the same time protecting and enhancing all of the local features and assets that make Central Bedfordshire such a great place to live and work. To date technical guidance notes have been produced for Wind Farm and Solar Farm developments.

The guidance notes have been adopted by the Council as Technical Guidance for Development Management purposes. These guidance documents do however provide a more detailed understanding of how aspects, such as landscape, should be considered. These aspects have been identified in the national planning document '*Planning practice guidance for Renewable and low carbon energy*' and therefore the Council's technical guidance note should be considered as providing local clarification to some of the issues raised in this practice guidance, which itself would be a material consideration.

Local evidence base

In March 2014, the Council also commissioned consultants LDA Design to undertake a Renewable Energy Capacity Study for Central Bedfordshire. This considered the scope for the deployment of a full range of renewable energy generation technologies in Central Bedfordshire when taking into consideration constraints such as grid connection and capacity, radar, the cumulative impact of development and landscape impact. This also looked at a range of scenarios which included the impacts of the expected growth in Central Bedfordshire.

What the evidence base shows

The study provided an indication of potential renewable energy development in Central Bedfordshire:

- Solar farms present a significant opportunity and are likely to be one of the least constrained and least difficult to develop from the large scale technologies;
- Wind energy also appears to have the potential to be developed further;
- Building-integrated renewables could offer significant capacity at the small/micro-scale if effectively encouraged;
- There are opportunities for the Council to get directly involved in renewable energy development on its own land and buildings.

Renewables can offer an attractive return to investors, although admittedly since early 2016 and the change to the incentive systems (such as the feed-in-tariff) this is less certain.

This could enable the Council to develop low carbon generation projects to a scale that is necessary to meet the demand from new development, however there are many uncertainties and potential limitations, including the viability of the support price, and eligibility of renewable generation technologies for subsidies.

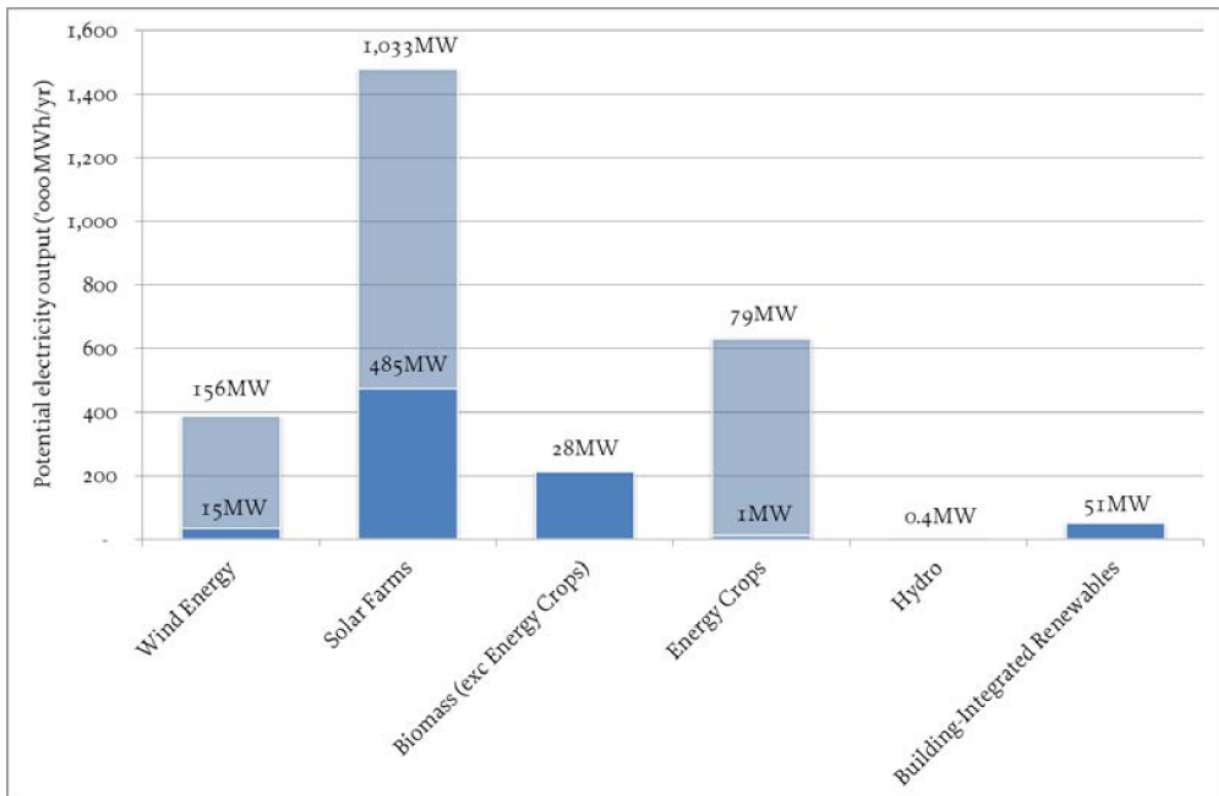


Figure 34 - Total potential capacity for electricity generation in Central Bedfordshire

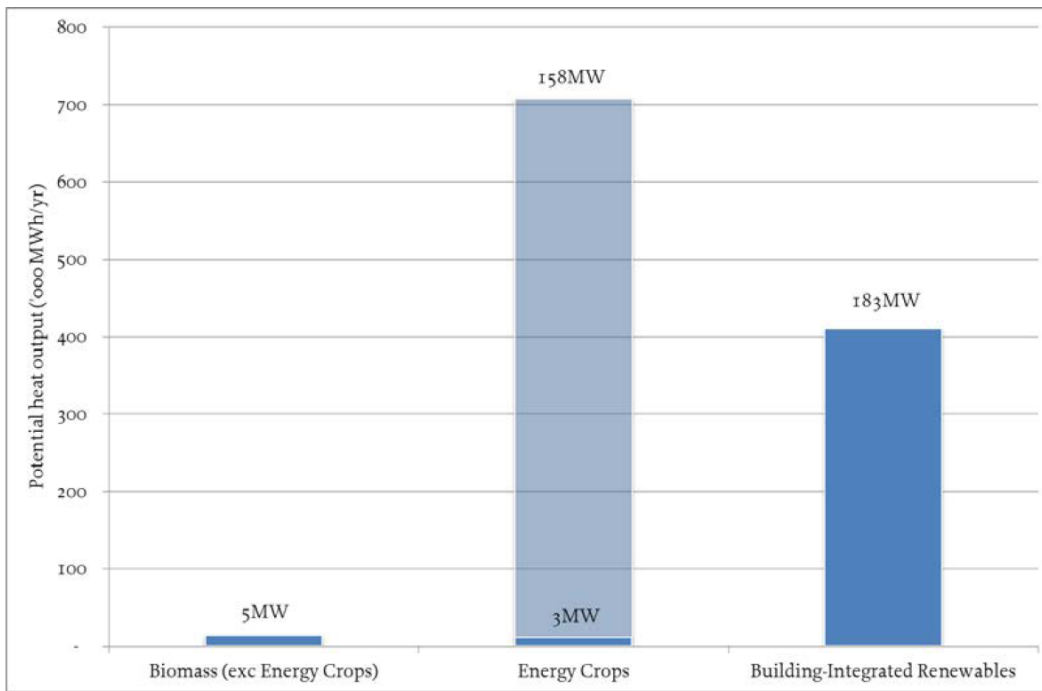


Figure 35 - Total potential capacity for heat generation in Central Bedfordshire

Grid capacity is a key factor for new power generation projects. Limited capacity can be a major constraint on development, along with distance from the nearest point of connection, making development unviable in some locations. UK Power Networks publish a map which provides a snapshot of current capacity, but this is a constantly changing picture and cannot be used to predict future grid capacity.

The business as usual scenario explored in the Renewables Capacity Study (based on current deployment rates) shows that a reasonably good amount of renewable power could come online by 2031, estimated at around 357MW.

In theory, if Central Bedfordshire's proportionate contribution to the legally-binding national target of 80% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050 was to be delivered solely by renewables, this amount would have to be doubled to 713MW. This is roughly equivalent to the lowest estimate of total capacity for renewables in the Central Bedfordshire area.

How this information is used

This information helps demonstrate our progress with regards to the delivery of renewables schemes, and highlights future opportunities for renewable energy generation.

More information:

- More detail about what the guidance notes cover and how they fit in to national and local planning policy is covered in the '[Renewable Energy Guidance Note – Introduction](#)'
- [Guidance Note 1 - Wind energy development](#)
- [Guidance note 2 - Solar farm developments](#)
- [Renewables Capacity Study for Central Bedfordshire](#)

Question 18 – Generating renewable energy in Central Bedfordshire

Which renewable technology do you think is best for Central Bedfordshire?

- a) Wind farms
- b) Solar PV farms
- c) Solar PV on commercial roofs
- d) Solar PV on domestic roofs
- e) Solar thermal
- f) Wood fuel
- g) Anaerobic digesters / biogas
- h) Other technologies, please specify?

Question 19 – Any other comments

Do you have any other comments about this Environmental Framework and its contents?

Contact us...

by email: environmental.policy@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

on the web: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

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

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Appendix B

Environmental Framework Consultation Summary

1. Overview

- 1.1. The Environmental Framework has been consulted on to support the preparation of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan. The consultation asked stakeholders for their views on how we should reflect national policy and the local evidence base in the local plan through a series of general and topic based questions.
- 1.2. The consultation ran for six weeks from 9th March to the 20th April 2016. Over forty responses were received from a range of stakeholders. This included the key statutory bodies, such as the Environment Agency and Natural England, developers, residents and other organisations, like the Forest of Marston Vale Trust and CPRE.

2. Overview of key trends

- 2.1. The Environmental Framework covers a broad and diverse range of environmental issues and subjects; therefore we invited consultees to respond only in relation to those areas they were interested in.
- 2.2. Questions, which are shown at the end of each chapter in the current version of the Environmental Framework, were designed to give us an indication of stakeholder preference to various approaches, as well as gather more in depth comment and opinion for further analysis.
- 2.3. The feedback received highlight further areas which it felt should be more fully considered. They also indicated preferred approaches in relation to issues such as tranquillity and the use of different standards for conservation in different areas. This opportunity was also used to canvass opinion on preferred approaches to renewable energy and other green technologies, particularly in relation to sustainable building methods.

3. Next steps

- 3.1. The responses are currently being reviewed with the following action to be taken.
 - Where there are issues of clarity highlighted with regards to the Environmental Framework itself, these will be rectified in the document itself.
 - Comments relating to each topic area will be collated, considered and used, alongside the evidence of summarised in the environmental framework itself, to shape and inform the approach taken to the range of environmental policies to be included in the new Local Plan. These will then be subject to further consultation (as part of the Local Plan itself) as part of the local development framework.
 - Once finalised and tested through examination, the Environmental Framework document will be further update to reflect this local policy. At this time how environmental policy is incorporated into other areas of the council's duties (such as highways) will also be highlighted.

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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

7 June 2016

Market Town Regeneration Fund (MTRF)

Report of Cllr Richard Wenham, Executive Member for Corporate Resources (richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) and Cllr Nigel Young, Executive Member for Regeneration (nigel.young@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officers:

Jason Longhurst, Director of Regeneration and Business
(jason.longhurst@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. To seek Executive approval of the Market Town Regeneration Fund (MTRF) Programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. note the progress on the MTRF programme and MTRF Assessment Panel recommendations;
2. provide approval to enter into the funding agreements with eight Town Councils (Ampthill, Dunstable, Flitwick, Houghton Regis, Leighton Linlade, Potton, Sandy, Shefford), to enable the MTRF scheme to commence and projects to begin delivery;
3. approve the new £1M High Street Improvement Scheme of the MTRF programme being developed by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and delivered by the Town Councils;
4. delegate decision making on individual awards under the High Street Improvement Scheme to the Director of Regeneration and Business, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration and Executive Member for Corporate Resources; and
5. delegate to the Director of Regeneration and Business, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, the ability to re-allocate funding within the MTRF to effectively manage programme spend.

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. The MTRF has not been considered by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee due to the timings of the meeting cycles. However, prior to the launch of the MTRF programme all ward members in eligible market towns were invited to meetings to find out more about the MTRF as well as being invited to the formal launch of the MTRF programme. The Executive Member for Corporate Resources has been actively involved in the assessment of MTRF bids.

Background

3. In February 2015 Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) approved £4.25M of capital funding to support an exciting new regeneration programme, the MTRF, with the objective of enhancing our market towns' vibrancy and promoting their wider role in shaping and supporting economic growth, particularly supporting those areas facing pressures of population growth. The priority was those market towns facing opportunities and economic challenges from growth and change. However, we were open to smaller bids from any market town that could demonstrate a strong economic impact of their project proposals.
4. In October 2015 the £4M MTRF bidding round was opened up to Town Councils to submit bids in conjunction with local businesses and the wider community that demonstrated a comprehensive approach to making better places; unlocking barriers to growth and creating economic uplift that improves the quality of local life. These approaches in turn address the need to maintain and create vibrant, attractive places that underpin good growth and address interrelated challenges of accommodating new homes and changes in the economy while nurturing businesses and enhancing civic life.
5. All bids were expected to, as a minimum, match pound for pound the level of investment sought from the MTRF with capital or revenue match funding and meet the published MTRF criteria which included ability to deliver by end March 2018.
6. A total of 11 bids, requesting £5.34M, were submitted by the 29 February 2016 deadline. Bid sizes varied from £0.015M to £1.384M. With match funding totalling £5.73M the total package of bidding activity came to £11.07M.
7. In line with the bid criteria the types of activities included within the bids were:

- **ENABLING GROWTH:** Including key infrastructure improvements; support for regeneration activities; adding value to existing and planned projects
- **SHOP FRONTS AND SCHEMES:** Including shop front and signage improvement; living over the shop schemes; improving retail skills, marketing and visual merchandising; vacant shop initiatives
- **ADJUSTING PLACES:** Including improving public realm; enhancing environmental quality and accessibility; improving the balance of road space use; addressing parking issues; improving transport facilities as well as, lighting and street furniture; restoring and enhancing buildings and other structures
- **NURTURING STREET LIFE:** Including actions to encourage more street activity, such as attractive, vibrant and active markets; night time economy; events, marketing and promotions; best use of cultural, heritage and other assets and their environs; on-street information and way-finding
- **SUPPORTING BUSINESS GROWTH:** Including support for start ups, existing and growing businesses; inward investment, retail, promoting tourism, supporting residents into training and employment
- **WORKING TOGETHER:** Including collaborative partnership approaches that coordinate and enhance the market town offer; opportunities for apprenticeships, work experience or collaborations with local skills and employment providers such as the colleges, university and Jobcentre Plus; community and stakeholder engagement

8. The outcomes being delivered would be:

- Delivery of elements of Market Town masterplans
- Increase in footfall and retail spend
- Reduction in vacant retail units
- Increase in skills and employment opportunities
- Levering public/ private sector investment
- Improved community and/ or cultural facilities
- Improved infrastructure, including public spaces

Assessment of Bids and Panel Recommendations

9. The MTRF Assessment Panel, chaired by the Director of Regeneration and Business and consisting of specialist officers across CBC and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources reviewed all bids against the published assessment criteria, outlined below. In addition the bids were assessed by an independent external assessor.
10. The assessment criteria were:
 - i. Clear project details – location, initiatives and objectives.
 - ii. Fit with the MTRF – geographic suitability, deliverability within two year timescale, potential for business growth and economic benefit , improvements to quality of place, collaboration and support, fit with CBC priorities.
 - iii. Economic uplift – addressing market failure and/or local challenges unlocking barriers to growth in the area.
 - iv. Measuring success - targets, outputs, baseline data.
 - v. Return on investment – match funding and added value.
 - vi. Delivery – clear milestones and within funding period.
 - vii. Clear risk analysis, governance and evaluation.
 - viii. Collaboration and support - a good level of political and community momentum with evidence of stakeholder engagement, including local businesses.
11. On the 19 April 2016 all Town Councils were advised of the Assessment Panel recommendations to Executive subject to further due diligence work where required. As a result of this further work the MTRF Assessment Panel are making the below recommendations to Executive:
 - i. To partially support eight bids from Ampthill, Dunstable, Flitwick, Houghton Regis, Leighton Linlade, Potton, Sandy and Shefford. This totals a MTRF investment of £2.46M and will lever approximately £2.9M in match funding from Town Councils and local partners. Details on the recommendation for each town can be found in paragraph 12.
 - ii. For CBC to develop an area-wide High Street Improvement Scheme that is delivered by Town Councils. This forms a new strand of £1M investment from the MTRF leveraging over £650K match funding. The High Street Improvement Scheme will fund up to 60% of required works with 40% from private/ other public

sector sources. Seven Town Councils identified some kind of High Street Improvement Scheme within their bid and a number of Town Councils expressed an interest in a Central Bedfordshire wide High Street Scheme being developed and administered by CBC working alongside Town Councils. Details on the High Street Improvement Scheme can be found in paragraph 15.

- iii. To not support three bids from Arlesey, Biggleswade and Stotfold. The bids from Arlesey and Stotfold could not be supported as the activities outlined within the bids did not meet the published criteria of the MTRF bidding round. The bid from Biggleswade Town Council could not be recommended due to the bid being conditional on a CBC asset being released. This asset forms an integral part of future regeneration plans and maximising use of CBC assets within the town.
- iv. To not support a number of common areas identified within several bids. Notably roll out of Wi-Fi in town centres due to significant coverage of 3 and 4G and BT Openzone and investment in new or existing Town Council websites as these were determined to be business as usual.

Town Council Recommendations

12. Below summarises the Assessment Panel recommendations for each town, more detail is available in Appendix 1:

Town Council	MTRF Bid	Recommended MTRF Funding	Recommended Match Funding
Ampthill	£0.074M	£0.042M	£0.064M
Arlesey	£0.099M	-	-
Biggleswade	£1.015M	-	-
Dunstable	£1.384M	£0.610M	£0.935M
Flitwick	£0.945M	£0.920M	£0.920M
Houghton Regis	£0.248M	£0.212M	£0.226M
Leighton Linslade	£0.447M	£0.160M	£0.160M
Potton	£0.470M	£0.098M	£0.098M
Sandy	£0.555M	£0.355M	£0.355M
Shefford	£0.091M	£0.066M	£0.185M
Stotfold	£0.015M	-	-
Total	£5.343M	£2.463M	£2.943M

13. For the schemes recommended above work continues to develop detailed costings and delivery milestones that will feed into the CBC capital business case and funding agreement detailed for each Town Council. The final level of match funding to be provided will be detailed in these agreements, along with how it will be evidenced.

14. Delivery will be monitored on a quarterly basis. Baseline information and monitoring of footfall, vacant units, business surveys and wider measures on the health of Market Towns will be collated to measure the impact of the MTRF programme.

High Street Improvement Scheme

15. Seven Town Councils identified some kind of High Street Improvement scheme within their bid that focused on improving shop fronts, tackling vacant retail units, upper floors and immediate streetscape. The level of detail, scheme development, engagement of businesses and level of investment varied significantly.
16. In response to the above the Assessment Panel has recommended £1M be set aside for the High Street Improvement Scheme of the MTRF in order to deliver a co-ordinated programme with economies of scale achieved by CBC designing the overall programme and undertaking procurement of architects and design and build services for the whole area.
17. The High Street Improvement Scheme will build on national best practice that has been proven to:
 - Reduce commercial vacancy rates
 - Increase inward investment
 - Increase business turnover
 - Increase town centre footfall
 - Create and secure jobs
 - Positively change visitor satisfaction
 - Support independent businesses mitigating the effects of out-of-town shopping
 - Add value by stimulating private investment that would not otherwise be levered in the absence of a scheme
18. Shops and landlords in Market Town will be able to apply for funding through participating Town Councils. Businesses will be required to provide 40% match funding up front, with the remaining 60% cost of works coming from the High Street Improvement Scheme. Individual businesses will be able to access up to £20k, but more may be available in exceptional circumstances, up to £50k if the investment enables the rejuvenation of parades or groups of connecting businesses for maximum impact and those businesses at gateways or key focal points will be given priority. For example, a project costing a total of £33k would require a £13.2k contribution from the business and would attract up to a £19.8k grant from the High Street Improvement Scheme. In an exceptional case if a project cost £83k the contribution from the business would be £33.2k, with up to £49.8K grant from the High Street Improvement Scheme.

19. Town Councils will promote the scheme and engage local businesses to take them through the process. Businesses will complete a simple expression of interest form, which will be screened for fit before the appointed architect works with them to design and cost the improvements that will need addressing. The design contractor will use the 'Design in Central Bedfordshire' guide to develop the brand identity, look and feel of each business; including colour scheme and business language. This will feed into a simple business plan that will set out how the intervention will improve the business and provide additional outputs for the business and town.
20. The business plan will then be assessed by a local town based scoring panel using transparent scoring criteria to determine businesses selected for support and investment. CBC will review all recommendations to ensure affordability within overall funding envelope. Should more bids come forward than can be funded funding will be allocated based on prioritised lists from local scoring panels.
21. CBC will issue a grant agreement to the business and as part of the grant businesses will be expected to feed into our evaluation to measure the success of the scheme. The grant agreement will protect any investment CBC makes and prevent any alterations within a certain period of time period.

Reason for Decision

22. 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. The value of the MTRF requires Executive approval to agree the MTRF High Street Improvement Scheme and enter into funding agreements with Town Councils.

Council Priorities

23. The MTRF contributes to making Central Bedfordshire a great place to live and work through the specific priorities of "Enhancing Central Bedfordshire" and delivering "Great Resident Services".
24. The MTRF enhances Central Bedfordshire as a great place to live by improving infrastructure, enabling our Market Towns to thrive and prosper, with improved town centres and facilities that maintain and retain the character of Central Bedfordshire that is so cherished by its residents. The MTRF also supports the delivery of great resident services by improving the appearance of our Market Towns.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

25. Grant funding agreements with the Town Councils will be required to enable delivery. Such agreements which will be approved by Legal Services will be consistent with the Executive recommendations and based on the content of Town Council's bids and subsequent due diligence work. These agreements will detail the terms of the grant funding, including expenditure evidence, delivery milestones and clawback.
26. Businesses participating in the High Street Improvement element of the MTRF will receive a grant agreement from CBC approved by legal services detailing eligible assets under this grant and the eligible value of the grant for each asset.

Financial Implications

27. The total budget for the MTRF is £4.25M for the period 2015/6 to 2017/18. This was approved by Executive and Full Council in February 2015.
28. Subject to Executive approval £2.46M will be allocated to eight Town Councils, with a further £1.0M allocated to the High Street Improvement Scheme. Up to £0.25M is earmarked to cover MTRF project manager, legal services and other specialist support.
29. It is proposed that the remaining £0.54M be held until all capital business cases are developed and signed off to ensure sufficient funding is available, it will be used to cover costs that may be incurred as a result of additional works required through CBC contractors and may be required to provide additional CBC staff resource to support delivery with Town Councils. Any additional funding will be subject to similar matching requirements. The budget breakdown is shown below:

MTRF Budget (£4.25M)	Activity
£2.46M	Funding Agreements to Town Councils
£0.54M	Held pending completion of due diligence work, completion of business cases and/ or need to cover additional CBC contractor works to support scheme implementation. Funding not required will be re-allocated in line with delegations outlined in this paper

£1.0M	High Street Improvement Scheme
£0.25M	Project management, specialist support such as legal

30. The MTRF steering group, chaired by the Director of Regeneration and Business will review programme performance and spend and ensure the programme budget is effectively managed. Following the development of detailed scheme costings and the finalisation of business cases there may be an opportunity to review funding allocated to the High Street Improvement element, or open up the opportunity of a further targeted bidding round.

Procurement Implications

31. All procurement undertaken by Central Bedfordshire Council will be in accordance with the Council's Procurement Rules and the guidance contained in the Council's Procurement Toolkit.
32. All procurement undertaken by Town Councils will be undertaken in compliance with European Union and national legislation.

Equalities Implications

33. 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.
34. Through the MTRF programme we will ensure the needs of all potential beneficiaries are considered at project design stage in order that the programme is appropriately delivered and provision is responsive to the needs of all communities where relevant.
35. Town centre locations should be designed to be accessible for all modes of travel and buildings themselves should allow level access to cater for all users. Easy access to and circulation within shops is important to everyone, including people who use wheelchairs; those who cannot walk easily, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, people who are blind or visually impaired and to the elderly, children, and people with pushchairs, prams or trolleys.

Risk

36. The effective delivery of the MTRF programme requires us to enforce robust approaches to risk management in order to minimise risks of poor performance, lack of delivery and reputational damage. A risk register will be maintained and have a supporting risk strategy.

Any potential risks in the project will be managed through the project management approach – including the steering group, project sponsor, programme manager and regular reviews of the risk register. Risks will be clearly identified with the appropriate ownership agreed for effective management. The documents will be live and updated regularly. Project management arrangements will include robust scrutiny to ensure expenditure is in accordance with the funding agreements.

Sustainability Implications

37. The MTRF programme 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.
38. The MTRF programme encourages innovative approaches to growth and development which consider environmental impact.

Human Resources

39. The programme requires the recruitment of 1 full time equivalent (FTE) fixed term member of staff to assist with project management including processing of claims, management of funding agreements and co-ordination of the High Street Improvement Scheme. All other staff involved are existing staff from the Business and Investment service area, Enabling Delivery Team and wider colleagues from Community Services as required on specific schemes.
40. The costs of the 1 new FTE will be met from the MTRF programme. It is estimated that the cost of the project manager including on-costs to March 2018 is approximately £0.05M per annum. Up to £0.25M has been set aside to cover staffing, legal advice and other external expertise to support delivery of programme.

Conclusion and next Steps

41. The MTRF Programme is an exciting new programme that provides significant opportunities to rejuvenate our Market Towns with CBC and Town Councils working together to deliver agreed priorities. By the end of June the intention is to issue funding agreements to Town Councils and to launch the High Street Improvement Scheme.

Appendices

42. Summary of Town Council bids and recommended funding.

Background Papers

43. None.

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Appendix 1

Summary of Town Council Bids and Recommended Funding

Town	Summary of activity in MTRF Bid	Total MTRF bid	Recommended Activity	Value of Recommended MTRF Activity	Total Match Funding	Activity Not Recommended
Amphill	Enhancing "experience Ampthill" by developing a Heritage Trail, improving signage , expanding annual events, public Wi-Fi in Town Centre, Town Centre website, research to boost local accommodation, food and tourism	£0.074M	Heritage Trail, Signage & Events	£0.042M	£0.064M	Wi-fi, website
Arlesey	Regeneration of Town Centre, including feasibility study to identify better land usages and facilities, enhancement of Community Centre, a local transport initiative, CCTV and average speed cameras, expansion of the Christmas Lights project	£0.099M	-	-	-	CCTV cameras, speed cameras, Christmas lighting
Biggleswade	Improved Market Square, supporting diversification of town centre retail and leisure offer, plus enabling expansion of charter market, alongside improvements to public facilities and overall town setting.	£1.015M	-	-	-	Market square renewal
Dunstable	Improved Town Centre, building on from de-trunking - particular emphasis on physical appearance and cleanliness, architectural lighting, areas focusing on parks, historic houses, enhanced town signage and shop fronts.	£1.384M	New entrance to Priory Gardens & feasibility for Priory House restoration (£0.06M) Additional Town Centre Cleaning (£0.08M) Lighting - architectural (£0.06M) New splash park and café (£0.275M) Re-furbished Quadrant Centre entrances & facilities (£0.065M) Improved signage (£0.07M)	£0.610M	£0.935M	Multi Use Games Area, Town centre wifi, Purchase and reinstatement of retail unit, Internal restoration of Priory House
Flitwick	Support and revitalise Town Centre, rejuvenating the High Street - improving community facilities, car parking and accommodation for older people, plus linking improvements to CBC's proposed Transport Interchange.	£0.945M	High Street / Station Rd enhancement (£0.9M) Enhanced library service (£0.02M)	£0.920M	£0.920M	Wi-fi, website

Appendix 1

Summary of Town Council Bids and Recommended Funding

Houghton Regis	To enhance the town centre offering through improvements and developments to environment, developing markets, and supporting businesses, plus introducing Town Centre Wi-Fi.	£0.248M	Signage, Market renewal, public realm works, retail schemes	£0.212M	£0.226M	Town Team
Leighton Linlade	To enhance and expand the visitor experience for tourism, shopping and day / night leisure activities, in order to increase economic potential through attracting greater footfall through improved market offer, signage, lighting, pigeon management, relocation of taxi rank and wifi.	£0.447M	Signage, Lighting & Market improvements.	£0.160M	£0.160M	Relocation of taxi rank, pigeon management, wifi
Potton	Improving the Market Sq. and retail offer, supported by lighting, signage, shop fronts improvements, awning improvements, increasing number of B&B beds and linking to the Mosaics Heritage project led by Sandy.	£0.470M	Cycling racks, car park.	£0.98M	£0.098M	Retail unit, website
Sandy	Enhancing town centre by improving signage, street furniture and paving. Also developing a mosaic trail across Sandy, Potton and Biggleswade to enhance visitor experience, and to join the 3 centres.	£0.555M	Signage, market improvements, re-surfacing. Mosaic trail.	£0.355M	£0.355M	Wi-fi
Shefford	Enhancement to the town's public realm by improving business fronts, modernising the business offer, modernising the public toilets, improving the promotion of the town, plus tourism attractions, enhancing Dover's Spinney, and investment to boost the volume and quality of the charter market.	£0.091M	Public realm, signage, market stalls, Spinney mmgt.	£0.066M	£0.185M	
Stotfold	Increasing parking provision for Community Building	£0.015M		-	-	Car Park
Grand Total		£5.343M		£2.463M	£2.943M	

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

7 June 2016

The Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities

Report of Executive Member for Social Care and Housing, Cllr Carole Hegley, carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Advising Officers: Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing, julie.ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk and Tim Hoyle, MANOP Head of Service, tim.hoyle@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk, Tel: 0300 300 6065

This report relates to a Key Issue

Purpose of this report

1. To inform the Executive of the challenges facing day services and to seek approval to begin an engagement process with stakeholders. This process will result in a proposal for the shape of day services for older people and disabled adults that will then be the subject of a formal consultation prior to being presented to a future meeting of the Executive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **authorise the commencement of Stage 1 of the process to improve the day offer for older people and adults with disabilities as set out in paragraphs 31 to 34 of this report; and**
2. **request that a report is presented to a future meeting detailing the outcome of the processes, set out in paragraphs 31 to 34 of this report, and requesting approval of the future offer.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. The item has not been considered by Overview and Scrutiny at this stage. It is envisaged that the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee(s) will have the opportunity to consider and comment on the outcome of the processes, set out in paragraphs 31 to 34 of this report, and their views would form part of a future report to the Executive.

Background

3. Since its inception the Council has been developing its offer to vulnerable people and has focussed on delivering personalised, good quality outcomes for residents.

4. As part of this there has been considerable investment by the Council and housing associations in housing with support for older people and adults with a learning disability in new buildings with modern facilities.
5. At the same time the Council has taken the opportunity of investments by independent organisations in the development of new care homes for older people to re-provide places, replacing older homes with ones with up to date accommodation and facilities.
6. Based on forecasts for demand the agreed programme of delivery of improved accommodation is set to widen and gather pace, with a target set for completion at the end of 2020. This approach combines the use of the Council's capital investment and land assets with other public and private sector investment to deliver new schemes in a way that most effectively uses Council resources. At the same time the programme is delivering benefits to the population along with operational efficiencies in the delivery of care and support services.
7. As this programme proceeds it is becoming clear that another aspect of the Council's offer for older people and disabled adults would also benefit from the development of a similar strategic programme of improvement. This is the area of day opportunities for disabled adults and older people. To commence this process the Council now proposes to work with its customers and other stakeholders to help determine the shape of services in the future.
8. The names and locations of the Council-run centres are shown in Diagram 1¹. The centres in grey provide support for older people and adults with a physical disability. The centres in white provide support for adults with learning disabilities.

The current day offer for Older People and Adults with a Physical Disability

9. The Council currently supports older people and adults with a physical disability at four large day centres. These centres were designed and built 40-50 years ago to fulfil very different purposes from the ones they do today. They were in effect social clubs for newly-retired people who made their own way to them. They acted as a place to meet with friends, play snooker, engage in crafts such as pottery and basket work, and other social activities. They were open to all and were widely used in the evenings by other community groups.
10. Since their inception the needs of the customers have changed significantly and all who now attend are assessed to have eligible care and support needs. The centres currently support some 300 older people each week, with about 120 people attending on any given day. Customers attend a centre on an average of two days per week.

¹ Note that the small day centre for older people at Greenacre is in the process of being transferred to Priory View as part of the programme to close Greenacre and its management will be provided by Houghton Regis Day Centre

This represents an occupancy rate of our centres for older people of around 65% although the physical capacity of the buildings is considerably greater than this.

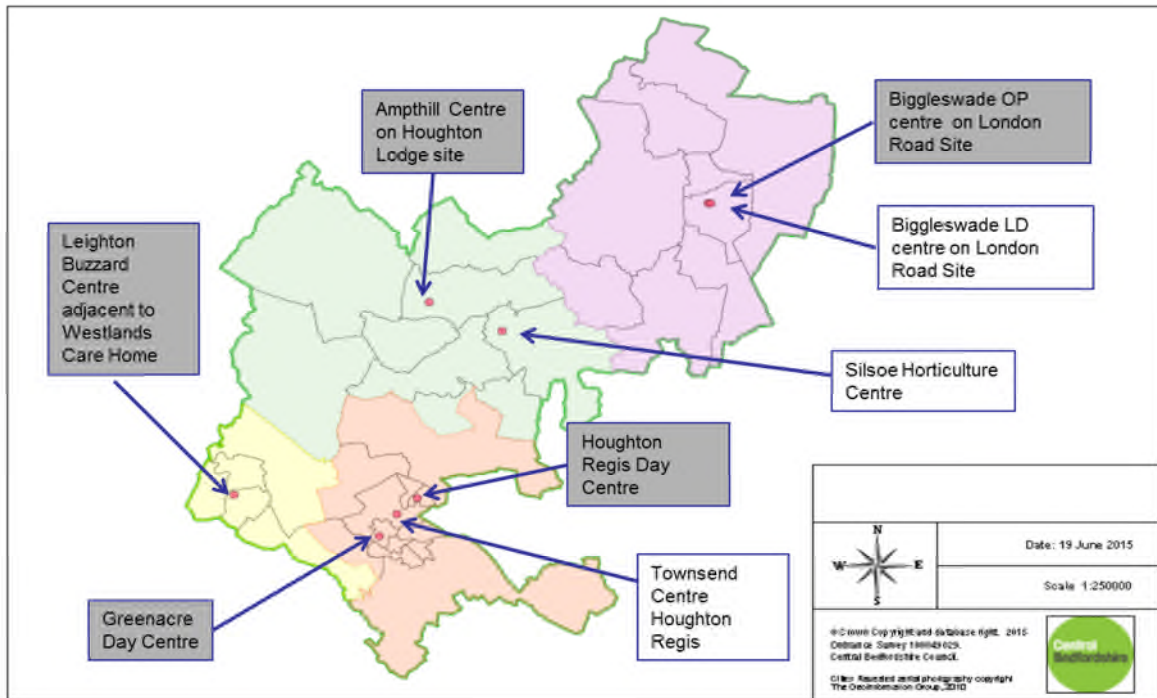


Diagram 1 – Locations of Council-run day centres

11. Of the current customers, at least 50% are looked after by family carers and day care acts as valuable respite for these carers, which supports them to continue in their caring role.
12. Over 50% of customers have been diagnosed with dementia and a further 10% are very physically frail. This has implications for the design of the physical space to be dementia friendly with suitable facilities to meet increasing care needs. The current buildings do not provide this.
13. Approximately 20 working-age adults with physical disabilities also attend these centres.
14. The average age of customers has increased with 80% aged over 75 and 16% over 90.
15. Because of increasing care and support needs all customers receive specialised transport to enable them to attend the centre and this is provided by the Council's Fleet Transport service.
16. The locations of the centres mean that many customers have long journey times to get to and from centres and this can be a cause of discomfort to more frail people.
17. This has implications for the location of future centres in order to minimise length of journeys.

The current offer for adults with a Learning Disability

18. The Council operates three centres to support adults with a learning disability. Two were originally designed as 'adult training centres'. The third is Silsoe Horticultural Centre which offers activities around its market gardening facilities.
19. When first set up young adults with a learning disability often started to attend a centre after school or college came to an end. The expectations of this customer group have changed over the years and younger adults now expect, and the Council has assisted them, to access a different offer which is personalised to their individual needs and aspirations. Many choose to access community based services (such as colleges, supported employment and sports) and receive the support they need from other providers or through direct payments. As a consequence, attendances at the centres have been decreasing year on year.
20. The three centres currently support around 110 customers. In total they have places for up to 230 people per day. In 2015/16 the average daily attendance was 80 customers representing an occupancy rate of 35%.
21. Because of the changes to expectations, set out in paragraph 19, the age profile of current customers is increasing. The majority have been attending for over 5 years and over 50% live at home with parents, many of who are themselves approaching or past retirement age. Because of the original purpose of the centres the expectation of many existing customers and their parents is that of attending a centre each weekday.
22. About 20% of current customers also have high care and support needs which require specialist equipment to be in place such as hoists and bathing equipment.
23. About 70% of current customers use the specialist transport provided by Fleet Transport to get to and from centres; the remainder using external contracted services or making their own way.

Issues common to all centres

24. Most of the buildings that house our centres are reaching the end of their useful life. Their size and age mean that they are expensive to heat and have significant repair and maintenance costs. They generally have an institutional and somewhat unwelcoming appearance. Although they have received some adaptations over the years to meet the increasing needs of customers they do not meet the standards that are found in more modern facilities.
25. The centres are operational each weekday with customers in attendance from around 10:30 am to 3:30 pm. There is the potential to make services available outside these hours to include evenings and weekends, although the demand for such services is not known.
26. Most centres are also hired out to a relatively small number of other community-based organisations during the evenings and at weekends and the needs of these groups needs to be taken into account in developing the future offer.

The wider context

27. Central Bedfordshire's population is growing and changing. Over the next 7 years, the population is expected to grow by 12.5% to 287,000. The forecast predicts that over 54,000 of these residents will be aged over 65 and over 7,000 will be over 85. In addition, numbers of younger adults with a disability are expected to increase, due to increased survival rates at birth and improvements in medical treatment.
28. This means that in general there is growing demand on adult social care and health services. Despite this the demand for day centre support is not growing. The Council needs to improve its day offer to meet modern expectations of our customers as well as supporting those for whom day centre type of care and support is the best service.

Proposed approach to developing the future day offer

29. The Council intends to undertake a review of all the day services for adults with a disability and older people with the intention of shaping future services based on the principles set out in this report. A two-stage approach is envisaged:
 - a) Stage 1 – Customer and stakeholder engagement. We want to develop a clear statement of the purposes of the day services that the Council will offer in the future and how this will be delivered.
 - b) Stage 2 – Transition to the new day offer. We will review each of the current day centres in light of the future offer to determine what changes, if any, need to be made as well as developing new day services that may be needed.

The Council intends to fully involve current customers, family carers, other relatives and stakeholder groups in both stages. Where customers need assistance to participate this will be provided.

30. It is envisaged that prior to the commencement of Stage 2, a report will be brought to the Council's Executive detailing the outcome of Stage 1 and requesting approval of the future day offer.
31. The first part of Stage 1 will consist of a series of events where discussions will be facilitated with current customers, their carers, staff and wider partners and potential future customers to find out what they value about current services, what could be improved and what their ideas are for the future. This input will be collated and used to shape the future offer. This approach is often referred to as 'co-production'.
32. During this process customers and their relatives will be supported to participate in a way that best suits them. This could be through one-to-one discussion, as part of a small group, or as part of a larger group. Independent advocacy support will be available for all who need it. It is intended that engagement will take place in an atmosphere that aims to provide all participants with support and reassurance.

33. Although our approach entails working with customers, relatives and other stakeholders to develop the future offer, it is possible that at the outset some people will have concerns about the implications of this process and the Council's overall intentions. In order to address this issue it is proposed that information be provided to any interested party to explain the scope of the review and how we plan to involve people in it. This information is set out in Appendix 1.
34. It is planned to commence Stage 1 following approval by the Executive. This is likely to take between three and six months. It is expected that it will result in the draft document detailing the future offer. This document would then be subject to a formal consultation process which will again involve customers and stakeholders, the outcome of which would be reported to a future meeting of the Executive.
35. It is expected that the future meeting of the Executive would also approve arrangements for Stage 2 including the details of the approach to be taken and the likely timescales. It is currently envisaged that Stage 2 would involve a review of each centre and how the future offer can best be applied to the services it provides and the people who attend. As with Stage 1 it is envisaged that we will actively involve customers and other stakeholders and this would be followed by a formal consultation about its future.
36. During both stages it is acknowledged that staff who are employed in centres have important contributions to make both as a source of ideas for the future offer and also as part of the process of facilitating involvement of customers. In addition to this staff would be consulted separately about any proposals that would significantly affect their employment.

Council Priorities

37. The proposed action supports all the Council's priorities, listed below:
 - Great resident services
 - Protecting the vulnerable; improving wellbeing
 - Creating stronger communities
 - A more efficient and responsive Council.

Corporate Implications

38. No additional corporate implications have been identified in the drafting of this report.

Legal Implications

39. The Care Act 2014 confers on the Council the duty to meet the care and support needs of eligible people either by commissioning services from independent organisation or by providing the service directly. The Council's day services form part of this provision.

40. Where a Council is contemplating changes to care and support services it has a public law duty to consult with those who would be affected and there is clear guidance and precedent about how consultation should be conducted and the part they would play in future decision-making.

Financial and Risk Implications

41. There are no financial implications arising from the decision to engage with customers and stakeholders and to carry out a subsequent consultation. The costs associated with this process will be met from existing budget provision.
42. No significant risks have been identified. A project management approach will be taken to the engagement and consultation process and this will include the identification, assessment, mitigation and management of risks associated with the activities.

Equalities Implications

43. 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 Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to:
 - c) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people.
 - d) Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups.
 - e) Encourage people to participate in public life or other activities where participation is low.
44. Public bodies must be able to demonstrate that consideration of this legal duty has been engaged during all stages of the decision making process from beginning to end and that decision makers are aware of their legal obligations. Decision making must be exercised “in substance, with rigour and with an open mind.”
45. Before coming to any decisions about the future shape of the services under consideration the Council will undertake an equality impact assessment and will demonstrate appropriate consideration of any adverse impacts that have been identified and ways in which these can be mitigated or minimized.

Implications for Work Programming

46. As stated elsewhere in this report it is expected that Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee will wish to consider the future offer before it is agreed by the Executive.
47. As stated elsewhere in this report it is expected that following the conclusion of Stage 1 a further report will be presented to the Executive with the outcome of the engagement and consultation processes and requesting approval of the future offer and review programme.

Conclusion and Next Steps

48. As set out in this report there are several drivers for the proposed review and significant benefits to be delivered. These include:
 - a) More flexible services which offer a variety of day services aligned to what our customers need and value, and which help them achieve their individual goals and aspirations.
 - b) Improved outcomes for existing and future customers.
 - c) More effective use of council resources.
49. The next steps will be to undertake the detailed design of Stage 1 and commence the engagement with customers, their relatives and other stakeholders.

Background Papers

50. None

Appendix

51. Appendix 1 – Consultation Process

Appendix 1

Improving the Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities

Central Bedfordshire Council are engaging with customers, family carers and other stakeholders to develop a plan to improve the day services we offer older people and adults with disabilities.

We will be talking to customers over the coming weeks to enable the people who attend centres, along with their relatives and carers, to help shape future services.

We know that when councils make announcements like this people can get concerned that the services they rely on may be changed or withdrawn so before we start we want to be clear with you what our intentions are:

We will continue to offer day services

- We know that day services make an important contribution to meeting the care and support needs of customers, and we want these to continue.
- If you are assessed as eligible for a day service, you will still receive one.

We want to improve our day offer

- We want our day offer to deliver better outcomes for the people who use them – more of the things they value and that help them achieve their individual goals and aspirations.
- We think that day services in the future should be more personalised – tailored to people's individual needs.
- We think that in the future we can offer day services that are more integrated with other types of community facilities.

We want to develop new services with you

- We want customers, their carers and families to help shape future services and to be involved in the whole process as partners.
- As well as this everyone will have the chance to have their say on all proposals we develop before they are finalised and put into practice.

We want to deliver better value for money

- Current services are too tied to old-fashioned, institutional buildings that are increasingly not right for the people who use them.
- We want to focus resources more on providing good care and support and less on running unsuitable buildings.

No decisions have been made

- We will not make any changes to services until everyone who wants to has had their say and the future offer is agreed.
- We will not make any decisions or changes to your individual care and support without involving you and your family/carers first.

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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

7 June 2016

Sustainability and Transformation Plan 2016-2020

Report of Councillor Maurice Jones, Executive Member for Health
(Maurice.Jones@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officers: Richard Carr, Chief Executive
(richard.carr@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This report relates to a non Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. For the Executive to note the requirement for every health and care system to: “come together to create its own ambitious local blueprint for accelerating its implementation of the Forward View:” The NHS Shared Planning Guidance for 2016/17- 2020/21, published on the 22nd December 2015, requires local areas to produce a five year, place-based Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP).
2. STPs will cover the period between October 2016 and March 2021.
3. The report also seeks the endorsement of the Executive for the emerging STP Plan for the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Footprint.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **note the requirement for a place-based health and care Sustainability and Transformation Plan; and**
2. **to endorse the approach to developing the Sustainability and Transformation Plan for the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Footprint.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

4. This item has not yet been to Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny. It will form part of a report on our emerging approach to integration of health and care services in Central Bedfordshire.

Background

5. The chancellor announced a national Sustainability and Transformation Fund of £2.1bn of which £1.8bn relates to the Sustainability funding to bring the NHS provider trust sector back into financial balance. This fund will grow from £2.1bn in 2016/17 to £2.9bn in 2017/18, rising to £3.4bn in 2020/21, with an increasing share of the growing fund being deployed on transformation.
6. The transformation funding is to support delivery of the Five Year Forward View (FYFV), set out in the NHS Shared Planning Guidance, published in December 2015. It will be used to fund initiatives such as the expansion of new care models, primary care access and infrastructure, technology roll out, and to drive clinical priorities such as diabetes prevention, learning disability, cancer and mental health.
7. The Planning Guidance asks every health and care system to come together to create their own ambitious local blueprint for accelerating implementation of the Five Year Forward View (5YFV) by developing Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs).
8. These STPs are intended to be place-based, multi-year plans built around the needs of local populations and are seen as a means to build and strengthen local relationships, enabling a shared understanding of local issues and challenges, defining the ambition for 2020 and the concrete steps needed to get there.
9. To do this, local health and care systems have been asked to work together in STP “footprints”. There are 44 of these in England. Central Bedfordshire is part of the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Footprint.
10. The STP will be an umbrella plan and will bring together local place-based plans to address the health and care triple aim as set out in the Five Year Forward View:
 - The health and wellbeing gap;
 - The care and quality gap; and
 - The finance and efficiency gap.
11. Development of a STP also provides an opportunity for a whole system approach to addressing the wider determinants of health, such as housing, economic development and education. It will foster greater collaboration between the NHS and local government, with patients and the public kept at the centre.

Content of STPS

12. Sustainability and Transformation Plans cover all areas of CCG and NHS England Commissioned activity including specialised services. It must also cover better integration between health and social care services have a strong focus on prevention and reflect local Health and wellbeing strategies.
13. A critical element of the STP is that the plan demonstrates system wide local sustainability which spans providers and commissioners. STPs will become the single application and approval process for being accepted onto programmes with transformational funding from 2017/18 onwards.
14. The STP does not substitute for local leadership or responsibility of the health and social care agenda and the emerging priorities reflect those areas where significant benefits are expected through collective action by bodies operating across Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes.

For more information on the emerging STP for Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes please see Appendix A.

The full STP will be submitted on 30 June.

Reason/s for decision

15. STPs are an opportunity to develop a local route map to an improved, more sustainable health and care system. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 introduced significant new responsibilities for local government for Public Health and as system leader or place shaper in Health and Wellbeing Boards. STPs are a whole systems plan which requires system leadership to develop a shared vision to reduce inequalities in health, improve the quality of care and create a sustainable health and care system.

Reason for urgency

16. The need to bring the paper to the Executive at this point is to ensure that the Council is aware of the STP and emerging local priorities for the health and care system over the next five years. The STP will be submitted in June 2016.

Council Priorities

17. The proposed action supports the Council's priorities, listed below:
 - promote health and well being and protect the vulnerable

Legal Implications

18. CBC is acting in accordance with NHS Shared Planning Guidance in engaging in the process for the preparation of the STP”

Financial Implications

19. The Sustainability and Transformation Plan must set out how the health and care system will achieve financial balance over the next 5 years and will form the basis of the application process to access transformational funding for 2017/18 onwards.
20. Currently, the Better Care Fund holds a pooled budget of £20.5m across Central Bedfordshire’s health and social care system for 2016/17. A risk sharing agreement setting out how financial risks are shared across the whole system has been agreed.

Equalities Implications

21. 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.
22. The STP aims to address the whole health and care system to enable a rebalancing towards prevention, early intervention; supporting independence and wellbeing. A whole systems focus, with engagement of the local communities will help to deliver improved clinical outcomes and patient experiences.

Conclusion and next Steps

23. Local authorities have a key role to play in shaping the future of health and social care in their areas and need to ensure that they have meaningful input to the STPs. Health and care systems have been asked to come together to create their own ambitious local blueprint for implementing the 5YFV, covering Oct 2016 to Mar 2021.
24. Local Health and care partners made an initial submission of the BLMK STP in March 2016. It detailed the governance arrangements, preliminary analysis of the health and wellbeing, care and quality, finance and efficiency (triple aim) gaps and emerging priorities. A further checkpoint submission was made in April 2016. The final submission is in June 2016.

25. NHS England will assess each STP. Plans of the highest standard will gain access to transformation funding from April 2017.

Appendix

Appendix A – Additional information on the emerging draft STP.

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Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Sustainability and Transformation Plan



Developing the Sustainability and Transformation Plan for Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Footprint

May 2016

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Background: The Five Year Forward View



The [NHS Five Year Forward View](#), published in October 2014, considers the progress made in improving health and care services in recent years and the challenges that we face leading up to 2020/21. These challenges include:

- the **quality of care** that people receive can be variable
- **preventable illness** is common
- growing demands on the NHS means that local health and care organisations are facing **financial pressure**
- the **needs and expectations of the public are changing**. New treatments options are emerging, and we rightly expect **better care closer to home**.

There is broad agreement that in order to create a better future for the NHS, all those with a stake in health and care must **make changes to how we live, how we access care, and how care is delivered**.

This doesn't mean doing less for patients or reducing the quality of care provided. It means **more preventative care**; finding **new ways to meet people's needs**; and identifying ways to **do things more efficiently**.

For the NHS to meet the needs of future patients in a sustainable way, we need to **close the gaps in health, finance and quality of care** between where we are now and where we need to be in 2020/21.

Introducing the BLMK STP



The 2016/17 NHS shared planning guidance outlined a new approach to help ensure that health and care services are planned by place rather than around individual institutions

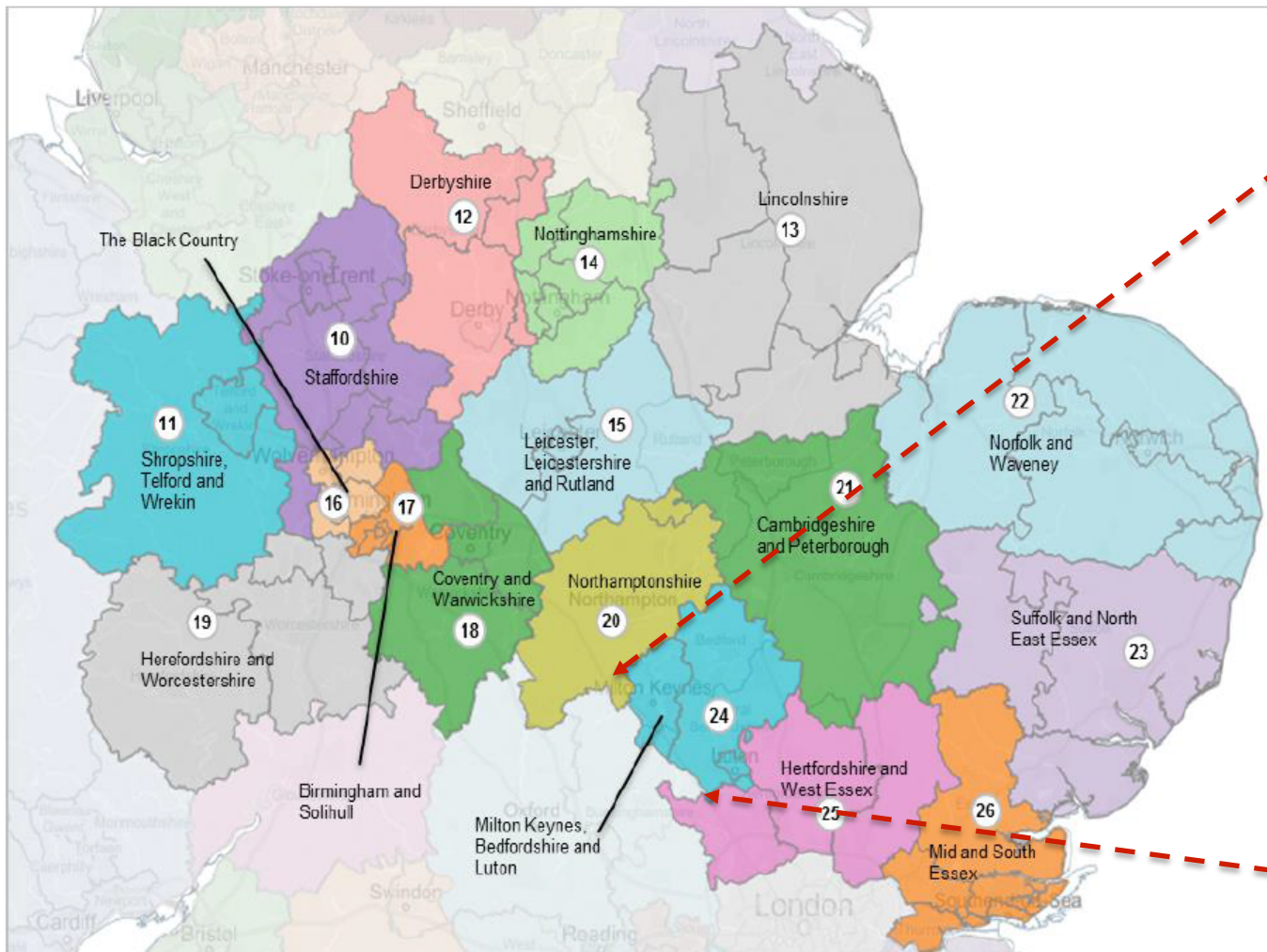
As in previous years, NHS organisations are required to produce individual operational plans for 2016/17. In addition, every health and care system will work together to produce a multi-year (2016/17 to 2020/21) **Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)**, showing how local services will evolve and become sustainable over the next five years – ultimately delivering the *Five Year Forward View* vision.

To do this, local health and care systems have been asked to work together in STP “footprints”. There are 44 of these in England.

The health and care organisations within these geographic footprints will now work together to:

- ◆ Improve their population’s **health and well-being**
- ◆ Address challenges in the **quality of care**
- ◆ Keep local **finances** in balance

Introducing the STP – Midlands & East region



44 STP 'footprints' in total in England – ours is Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes (BLMK)

BLMK STP is led by Pauline Philip, CEO of the L&D University Hospital NHS FT

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How the footprints were formed

Footprints are local geographic areas where people and organisations have agreed to work together to develop robust plans to transform the way that health and care is planned and delivered in for their populations over the next five years. The STPs are a means to help deliver the Five Year Forward View vision of better health and wellbeing; improved quality of care, and stronger NHS finance and efficiency by 2020/21.

In developing the footprints, the following issues were taken into account:

1. **Geography** - including patient flow, travels links and how people use services
2. **Scale** - the ability to generate solutions which will deliver sustainable, transformed health and care which is clinically and financially sound
3. **Fit with footprints of existing change programmes and relationships**, such as Vanguard areas and Devolution areas
4. **The degree of existing and future challenges** across the footprint
5. **Leadership and capacity** to drive change

How the footprints will be managed locally



STP footprint leads

Each footprint has been asked to set out governance arrangements for agreeing and implementing their STP. Footprint leads include NHS provider chief executives, CCG accountable officers, Local Authority senior leaders, and clinicians – recognising the need for local systems to work in partnership.

The role of footprint leads

Footprint leads will be responsible for convening and chairing system-wide meetings, facilitating the open and honest conversations that will be necessary to secure sign up to a shared vision and plan.

This is a new kind of leadership role, working across organisational boundaries. Footprint leaders will help to build consensus and ownership in their communities for their local plans, driving improvements in care quality, health and wellbeing, and finance and efficiency.

Name of Footprint:	Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes (BLMK)
NHS England region:	NHS England, Midlands & East
Nominated lead of the footprint	<p>Pauline Philip Chief Executive Officer Luton & Dunstable University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</p>
Organisations within BLMK STP footprint (i.e. the 16 partner organisations sitting as part of formal STP governance apparatus):	<p>The CCGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS Bedfordshire CCG • NHS Luton CCG • NHS Milton Keynes CCG <p>The four local councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedford Borough Council • Central Bedfordshire Council • Luton Borough Council • Milton Keynes Council <p>The three acute hospitals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedford Hospital NHS Trust • Luton & Dunstable University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust • Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust <p>Other significant NHS providers into the BLMK footprint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambridgeshire Community NHS Trust • Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust • East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust • East London NHS Foundation Trust • East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust • South Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust • South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust

BLMK four themes and nine work work streams

In developing its draft plans, BLMK has identified four themes and nine work streams:

Theme 1: Public Health Initiatives	Theme 2: Point of Care Initiatives	Theme 3: Supporting and Enabling Initiatives	Theme 4: Overhead Reduction Initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WS1: Illness and disease prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WS2: Primary, community and social care• WS3: Urgent and emergency care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WS4: Workforce• WS5: Shared patient care record, digitisation and communications• WS6: New models of care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WS7: Clinical support services• WS8: Back-office support services• WS9: Estates and estates management

Theme 1: Public Health Initiatives:

WS1: Illness and disease prevention

Develop an STP-wide prevention plan, operating across physical, mental health and social care, supporting greater levels of self-care and personalisation

Focusing on prevention with agreed priorities and action for each organisation, clearly set out in an integrated prevention plan supported by data on local health needs and the health outcomes to be achieved.

Improving healthy life expectancy and reducing demand on health resources through prevention, early intervention and improved management of health conditions – focused on four chronic diseases (cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory diseases and diabetes)

Increased patient involvement and self-management

Harnessing the impact of social marketing campaigns on prevention; focusing on what people can do to reduce risks to health; and signpost people to services that could support them in improving their health, wellbeing and independence

Theme 2: Point of Care Initiatives

WS2: Primary, community and social care

Develop cost effective and clinically sustainable delivery models of primary, community and social care across the STP footprint (working in parallel with other strategic reviews and partnerships)

Introduce Care Co-ordination Centres (a single point of access for all out of hospital referrals/ services); wrapping community and social care services around primary care clusters, whilst maximizing patients' independence and self care; developing new models of primary care

WS3: Urgent and emergency care

Develop an STP-wide urgent and emergency care plan, to deliver the priorities set out in NHS England's urgent and emergency care review, including:

Integrated access hub for electronic triage

Clearer integration of urgent primary (GP or other community provider) and secondary (hospital) and mental health care

Enhanced co-ordination of care through the development of an STP footprint Shared Care Record, complementing existing provider records systems

Proactive shared care planning for patients at risk of exacerbation of chronic disease

Theme 3: Supporting and Enabling Initiatives

WS4: Workforce capacity and skills mix

Undertake co-ordinated work with Health Education England to address workforce challenges that are common across the STP footprint (e.g. where there are clinical skills or staff shortages)

WS5: Shared patient care record, digitisation and communications

Support information interoperability and information sharing across providers and to enable investment in tele-health and tele-care that both maximises productivity of scarce clinical resource and keeps people living independent lives longer.

WS6: New models of care

Explore opportunities for new models of care

Theme 4: Overheads Reduction Initiatives:

WS7: Clinical support services

Examine opportunities for developing integrated clinical support services such as pathology, imaging and other diagnostics in the light of new models that will require more direct access and point of care delivery

WS8: Back-office support services

Examine opportunities for sharing back-office functions and improving productivity across all STP partners more generally – referencing Lord Carter's NHS productivity analysis

WS9: Estates and estates management

Examine opportunities for unifying estates plans and sharing physical facilities across STP partners

Engagement and involvement



All STP partner agencies are involved in the development of plans within the nine work streams.

The STP will engage widely, through its member organisations, with staff, patients, patient advocacy and representative groups and the wider public as it develops

The first task for the STP is to submit its plans for sustainable and transformative health care across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes to NHS England and NHS Improvement by 30 June. Those plans, which will be at high level and subject to much wider local engagement as they are agreed in principle and developed, will then be discussed and approved by national regulators

Once the plans are agreed in principle by the regulators they will be published.

The STP is developing an engagement strategy to ensure local communities have the opportunity to get involved in and shape the work of the STP as it develops.

Next steps:

What	When
Publication of agreed footprints, plus further support for STP footprints on how to analyse their local gaps in quality, health and finance	March 2016
Work with footprints on gap analysis	Throughout March 2016
Footprints to make a short submission to national bodies setting out: 1. Governance arrangements (including lead) 2. Emerging priorities for action	15 April 2016
Regional development days for STP footprint leads	Late April/Early May 2016
Each footprint to submit their STP to the national bodies	30 June 2016
Series of regional conversations between national bodies and footprints	Throughout July 2016

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

7 June 2016

Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard and Tender in respect of Payment Services

Report of Cllr Richard Wenham, Executive Member for Corporate Resources (richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officers: Chief Information Officer (stephan.conaway@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk), Chief Finance Officer, (charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk), Director of Improvement and Corporate Services, (deb.broadbent-clarke@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk); and Ralph Gould, Head of Financial Control, ralph.gould@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk, Tel: 0300 300 6779

This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. To explain the actions proposed to achieve practical compliance with the Payment Card Industry – Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS).
2. Ensure best value is obtained from the suppliers of systems that enable the Council to obtain and process electronic payments from local taxpayers, tenants and other service users.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **authorise the Chief Information Officer and Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to make contract awards in respect of the tender for payment services.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

3. The implementation of the Council's IT strategy to deliver digital transformation across the Council's services was reviewed at the 15 December 2015 meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members commented on the need to ensure that all customers should have a range of choices to transact with the Council. Members also expressed a desire to ensure security and cost savings remained a focus for the Council. The financial impact of increases in the costs associated with taking payments by debit and credit cards were detailed in the draft Budget 2016/17 and Medium Term Financial plan which were considered by the Corporate Resources O&S Committee on 2 February 2016 and subsequently approved by the Council.
4. The security requirements relating to the PCI-DSS are one element of the overall Council's IT security and transformation activity and as such it is not proposed to take this report to the Corporate Resources O&S. However, the overall IT Strategy is subject to ongoing review by the Corporate Resources O&S and a report on digital transformation, with a focus on IT security and cost saving measures, is to be made to the 28 June 2016 meeting of that Committee.

Background information

5. Taxpayers and service users expect to be able to make payments to the Council by credit or debit card. Various systems from external suppliers are needed to capture and process card payments. Where any organisation takes payment by debit and credit cards, the companies issuing the cards require the organisation to comply with the Payment Card Industry – Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS).
6. Annually the Council collects 140,000 payments paid by either credit or debit cards. In line with the national picture the vast majority of transactions relate to Visa Debit cards (83%). A similar number of transactions, made predominantly by Housing tenants and Council tax payers, are processed at Post Offices and other retail outlets using customer payment cards which are issued by a service provider on behalf of the Council. Whilst the processes for credit and debit card transaction are subject to PCI-DSS requirements the customer payment cards are not within the scope of the card industry requirements.
7. The compliance and operational issues related to modern payment methods apply to varying extents across the Council. Any changes in processes and suppliers will impact to some extent on all Council Directorates. Facilitating convenient and modern ways to collect income is important for service users, tenants and taxpayers.

The provision of the various payment options involves back office support and expenditure on service providers as well as external and internal assurance and compliance activities. New payment methods are continually being implemented, such as mobile banking applications for smart phones, and Council services aspire to provide a wider range of payment options, such as collecting mobile payments in the Housing service.

PCI – DSS Compliance

8. The PCI-DSS, currently comprising 12 requirements and over 200 controls, is intended to ensure that any Card Holder Data obtained to effect a payment is secure. The card companies can impose fines for non compliance with the PCI-DSS and can prevent an organisation accepting cards. The Council, supported by an independent security assessor, carries out an annual self assessment of PCI –DSS compliance.
9. The IT and Finance services have been identifying options to de scope as much of the payment processes as is reasonably practical from the Council's obligations under PCI-DSS. The approach identified is judged to be the most cost effective way to address PCI –DSS compliance. The objective is to ensure that, reflecting service requirements, as much as possible of the Council's payment transactions are processed by systems and third parties that are assessed as fully compliant with the current PCI-DSS.
10. The table overleaf identifies the current position by payment channel (internet, telephone etc.) and indicates the options to either work towards full PCI-DSS compliance for the specific channel or de scope from the requirements by processing on third party systems. The majority of credit and debit card transactions (76%) are processed through payment services provided by a third party that are currently assessed as fully PCI-DSS compliant, specifically via the internet and touch tone telephone.
11. The other two payment channels involve either officers taking payment details over the telephone and accessing a third party system to progress the payment or the use of Chip and Pin card reading devices. To achieve and maintain full PCI-DSS compliance in respect of telephone transactions would require significant expenditure. Chip and Pin readers process a small number of transactions but are important payment options within specific services such as Registrars. The Chip and Pin machines currently in operation are not assessed as fully PCI-DSS compliant.

12. **Payment Transactions 2015**

Type	2015 volume %	Processed within a fully compliant PCI-DSS environment	Options to de-scope PCI-DSS / achieve compliance
Internet via the Council Website	47	Yes	Currently de-scoped
IVR (Interactive Voice Response) telephone transaction touch tone	29	Yes	Currently de-scoped
MOTO (Mail Order Telephone Order) transactions where the cardholder is not present	22	No	Seek to Identify a cost effective and timely solution through a tender process. Any solution should meet both service and PCI-DSS requirements.
Chip and Pin Machine	2	No	Point-To-Point Encryption (P2PE) solution via upgrade with current supplier or source alternative provision

Transaction Costs for Debit and Credit Cards

13. The largest cost element of the card processing activity relates to transaction costs associated with the different types of cards. The transaction costs are currently charged monthly by the supplier of the payment service system and reflect a bundle of related costs. The bundled transaction costs include charges from the card scheme providers (e.g. VISA and MasterCard), the company processing the transactions (the Merchant Acquirer -e.g. Worldpay) and the Payment Service Provider (Capita). The most significant element of the overall transaction cost is the 'interchange fee' which is levied by the Card Company on the Acquirer.
14. In March 2015 Visa changed the interchange charge in respect of Non-Commercial Debit cards from a flat rate per transaction to a percentage of each transaction, subject to various caps. The overall impact of the changes increased the total annual transaction costs paid by the Council from £50k to £95k and the financial pressure of £45k was reflected in the 2016/17 Budget and MTFP.

Procurement Requirements

15. Contracts with the relevant service providers were entered into on the creation of the Council and have not been subject to any market testing since the original five year contract periods expired. The contracts have been extended on an annual basis.
16. Subjecting the current contracts to competition will present an opportunity to prove best value and allow suppliers to reflect pricing to the Council in line with a 4 to 5 year contractual commitment.

Reason for decision

17. The overall value of potential contracts arising from the Payment Services tender could exceed the £200,000 criteria for a Key decision. The Executives' approval to delegate authority to award any relevant contracts arising from the tender is requested to ensure that Council officers can progress any new arrangements in a timely manner.

Council Priorities

18. The proposed actions will contribute to the development of a more efficient and responsive Council that operates systems and processes that meet customer requirements are secure and comply with external (PCI-DSS) requirements.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

19. In line with the Council's Procurement rules participation in the payment service framework tender will market test existing service providers and facilitate compliance with PCI-DSS requirements. Whilst none of the individual existing service suppliers are paid in excess of the £200,000 annual criteria for a Key Decision, the overall annual tender value given the number of Lots could exceed £200,000. This report requests that the Committee authorise the Chief Information Officer and Chief Finance Officer to make any contract awards in respect of the tender for payment services.

Financial and Risk Implications

20. In total the annual cost of providing the various payment methods outlined above is approximately £250,000 per annum which reflects a number of suppliers' transactions costs, system licences and system upgrades.
21. The cost of achieving full PCI –DSS compliance is difficult to quantify, particularly as the technology and compliance requirements continue to change. The cost to the Council, relative to the small number of

payment transactions involved, of achieving full PCI-DSS compliance under the current service arrangements is judged as being prohibitively expensive. As outlined above the IT and Finance service have been identifying options to ideally de-scope payment channels from the PCI-DSS or where this is not practical, work towards compliance within existing budgets.

22. This area is subject to significant and rapid changes in technology, compliance requirements, transaction charges and payment methods. The Council's preferred payment method for taxes, rents and other services is Direct Debit and this option is promoted extensively. Overall payments by card comprise less than 10% of all payments received by the Council but are important methods for services to collect income, particularly in respect of often hard to collect amounts. Withdrawing any of the card payment methods from the Council's services would potentially impact on reputation, cash flow and cost especially if other methods of payment were used, such as cheques.
23. The issues outlined above are common to all local authorities and there are many options available to provide payments services. Shropshire Council has arranged a payment services tender framework which will invite tenders under an OJEU procedure for a series of Lots intended to elicit solutions for the varying requirements of local authorities. By participating in the initial tender with Shropshire Council all the Council's existing contracts will be market tested and it is anticipated that a range of alternative payment service options can be considered that could progress the PCI-DSS strategy and the overall Digital Transformation plan.
24. Eight Lots will be included in the Invitation To Tender of which responses to the six Lots as listed in the table overleaf could in some combination, subject to evaluation, meet the Council's various requirements.
25. **Payment Services Tender - Relevant Lots**

Lot	
1	Merchant Accounts
2	Payment Gateway Service
3	Maximum de-scoped card acceptance service
5	Customer Payment Cards
7	IVR – Telephone Touch tone
8	Intelligent automated payment systems

26. A Payment Services procurement framework has been developed by Shropshire Council and a specialist card processing advisory service

with the initial set up costs met by Shropshire Council. Authorities participating in the initial Invitation to Tender contribute a participation fee of £500 and 20% of any actual savings achieved over current arrangements during the life of any contracts awarded. The invitation to tender was published in May 2016 and it is anticipated that results will be available during July 2016.

27. The Council's business requirements are to both progress PCI-DSS compliance and to offer a cost effective up to date range of ways to make payments to the Council. The framework as developed is the only current payment services framework that could meet the Council's requirements. The anticipated savings on existing arrangements are estimated by the Finance service to be in the order of 15% which under the framework would mean gross savings of approximately £30k p.a. before payment of £6k p.a. under the terms of the framework.
28. Identifying suitable opportunities to de scope PCI-DSS obligations as far as is practically possible would reduce the risks of financial penalties or withdrawal of services by card companies. The requirements for internal IT and Finance resource and specialist advice to complete ongoing PCI-DSS compliance assessments would also be reduced in line with the extent of the PCI-DSS de-scoping achieved.

Equalities Implications

29. The 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.
30. The Council currently offers a wide range of ways for taxpayers, tenants, customers and other service users to make payments. The proposed actions are intended to improve efficiency without reducing the number of payment options.

Implications for Work Programming

31. There are no implications on the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or further reports which might be considered by Members.

Conclusion and next Steps

32. It is recommended that the Executive Committee delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer and Chief Information Officer in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources to make contract awards in respect of payment services following the completion of the payment services tender.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 7 June 2016

Corporate Asset Management Strategy

Report of Cllr Richard Wenham (Executive Member for Corporate Resources), Richard.Wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk and Cllr Steven Dixon (Deputy Executive Member for Corporate Resources) Steven.Dixon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Advising Officers: Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services, Marcel.Coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk and Steven Girling, Assistant Director Assets, Steven.Girling@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk, Tel: 0300 300 5246

Purpose of this report

1. To present the Corporate Asset Management Strategy and to seek approval from executive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **Approve the Corporate Asset Management Strategy [CAMS].**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. This report was presented to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 May 2016 for review. The Committee recommended:
 - That the Committee endorse the document for Executive approval.
 - The inclusion of a Member communication protocol within the strategy in order to facilitate clear understanding of the direction of travel at all stages.
 - That individual elements of the strategy be considered at the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees and included within work programmes accordingly.

Reason/s for decision

3. The CAMS sets out how we, as a council will manage, develop and utilise our property and land assets portfolio to ensure that it makes an increasingly significant contribution to the successful delivery of the councils strategic priorities, vision and values over the next four years.

4. The purpose of the CAMS is to establish how the council's asset portfolio will become better aligned to support the delivery of our corporate aims and objectives, whilst ensuring that land and building assets are structured to support the best interests of the organisation.

Council Priorities

5. Indicate how the proposed action supports at least one of the Council's priorities, listed below:
 - Enhancing Central Bedfordshire
 - Great resident services
 - Improving education and skills
 - Protecting the vulnerable; improving wellbeing
 - Creating stronger communities
 - A more efficient and responsive Council.
6. The aim of the CAMS is to promote the best use of the council's assets for service delivery, delivery of an optimum return from our commercial and agricultural investments, and to facilitate regeneration and development. Clearly this cannot be achieved in every case, in some cases service delivery and optimising return may be incompatible. Projects will be assessed on a case by case basis with the best fit for delivery of our council priorities being adopted.

Corporate Implications

7. This strategy will have an impact on all of our property assets, as such its wider implications for the delivery of services by CBC need to be borne in mind and facilitated.

Legal Implications

8. None other than referred to in the Strategy.

Financial and Risk Implications

9. None other than referred to in the Strategy.

Equalities Implications

10. 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. The Asset Management Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to using its land and property assets in a corporate manner which realises their optimum benefit to the community and represents value for money.

11. This could include positive equality impacts such as:
 - Developing Community Hubs to bring together services and meeting spaces for customers and the public, incorporating a variety of uses and enabling good service delivery; and
 - Bringing together health and social care services incorporating GPs, Social workers and Community clinics
12. Where appropriate, the Council will use its surplus land and property assets to contribute towards corporate objectives for regeneration across the region.
13. The Council will also consider the disposal of land and property assets to community groups where they develop a proposal and raise capital to bid for an “asset of community interest”.

Implications for Work Programming

14. None.

Conclusion and next Steps

15. In conclusion it is requested that the Executive accept and adopt the Corporate Asset Management Strategy document as presented.

Appendices

The following Appendix is attached:

Corporate Asset Management Strategy [CAMS]

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Central Bedfordshire Council

Asset Management Strategy

Foreword

Draft

Cllr Richard Wenham

Executive Member for Corporate Resources

Cllr Steven Dixon

Deputy Portfolio Holder

It gives us great pleasure to present Central Bedfordshire Council's Asset Management Strategy.

This Strategy document sets out how we, as a Council, will manage, develop and utilise our property and land assets portfolio to ensure that it makes an increasingly significant contribution to the successful delivery of the Council's strategic priorities, vision and values over the next four years.

The Council has made considerable progress towards establishing a solid and sustainable foundation for the management of our land and property assets, however, we acknowledge that we are only part way through the journey towards excellence. This strategy sets out how we will continue on this path.

Our Asset Management Strategy recognises the benefits that can be achieved by looking holistically at our asset portfolio and embeds this approach across four defined geographical quadrants of Central

Bedfordshire (based upon Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group Localities). This approach has been used to promote collaboration, both internally between Services, and externally with other stakeholders, to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery. This quadrant approach will be articulated in greater detail via a series of specific quadrant assets plans and a specific plan for the Council's farms estate.

This strategy is framed in an increasingly challenging financial context that demands we achieve more from the assets we own. During the Strategy implementation period the Council has assumed capital receipts of £33.5 million within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (or the benefit in kind) and it expects to deliver a major schools re-provision and replacement programme requiring capital investment of some £93 million.

Finally, the Council has begun the process to rationalise its office accommodation to reflect changing requirements; a rationalisation enabled by the promotion of new, more flexible ways of working and delivery of frontline services. This work will continue and will deliver a more efficient and effective operational portfolio.



Councillor Richard Wenham
Executive Member for Corporate Resources

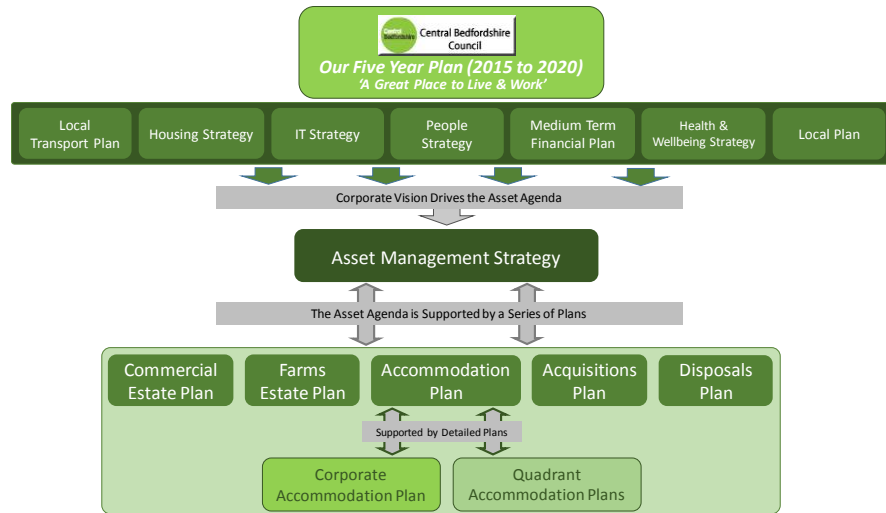


Councillor Steven Dixon
Deputy Portfolio Holder

Introduction

This document, Central Bedfordshire’s Asset Management Strategy (AMS), is part of a new suite of documents developed by Central Bedfordshire Council (the Council), to establish and articulate its holistic approach to asset management.

The purpose of this AMS, and supporting documents, is to establish how the Council’s asset portfolio will become better aligned to support the delivery of our corporate aims and objectives, whilst ensuring that land and building assets are structured to support the best interests of the organisation.



The AMS is laid out in five sections as described below:

- **Context and Purpose** – Laying out the Council’s approach to asset management

- **Central Bedfordshire** – Five Year Plan – Setting the AMS in context
- **The Asset Management Strategy** – Establishing the aim, purpose and objectives of the AMS
- **The Council’s Property Portfolio** – Details the Council’s property portfolio and relevant strategies and policies
- **Summary** – Details the review process for the plan
- **Appendix A – Governance and Review**



Marcel Coiffait
 Director of Community Services
 Central Bedfordshire Council

1. Context and Purpose

Overall Aim

- 1.1. Central Bedfordshire's Asset Management Strategy (AMS) establishes the high-level strategic framework for the effective management of the Council's assets portfolio for the next five years. It will guide future strategic property decisions to ensure the Council's property portfolio is managed efficiently and sustainably, whilst providing suitable flexibility for it to adapt to future demands.
- 1.2. Further, as the financial environment becomes increasingly challenging, innovative and better use of Council assets assumes greater importance for funding service responsibility and Council ambition.
- 1.3. The AMS sets out how the Council's mixed portfolio of assets and property will support the delivery of the organisation's key strategic objectives as reflected in the Council's **Five Year Plan (2015 to 2020)**, the financial challenges presented in the **Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)** and the demands of other associated Business and Service Strategies. The obligation is reflected in the following aim

'To promote the best use of the council's assets for service delivery, deliver an optimum return from our commercial and agricultural investments, and facilitate regeneration and development'

- 1.4. The scope of the AMS extends across all of the Council's owned or leased (with management accountability) land and property assets, other than Council housing and highways which are addressed in their own dedicated strategies.
- 1.5. The Council's property and asset portfolio is likely to change significantly in the coming years as the organisation responds to changes in its sector, its own size, demand for its services and the way by which services are delivered. These changes will impact the size, composition, use and the cost of running and maintaining the portfolio. The principles set out in the AMS form the basis on which implementation plans will be developed and progressed into delivery.
- 1.6. The AMS cannot be static but is instead a "live" and interactive document that will be reviewed annually to coincide with budget setting and a continued drive to enhance the management of the Council's corporate assets.

2. Central Bedfordshire – Five Year Plan

- 2.1. This section provides the background to the region, the Council’s corporate objectives, as set out in the Five Year Plan (2015 to 2020), and how these impact on the priorities for the Council’s assets.

About Central Bedfordshire

- 2.2. Lying within the East of England region and with a population of 250,000, Central Bedfordshire is located on the northern fringe of London and borders other regional groupings such as East Midlands, South East and Eastern Regions. Recent population growth has put pressure on the existing transport infrastructure and there is an increasing demographic profile of elderly and very elderly residents.
- 2.3. There is an international airport at Luton and excellent North to South road and rail links. East to West travel is more difficult, with an ongoing concern of the Council, and its residents, that the area is seen as a place to travel through or commute from, rather than to stay and work in.
- 2.4. The Council has an emerging local plan supported by local Masterplans and Development Briefs to highlight and inform future development in the region.
- 2.5. Central Bedfordshire Council has statutory and other obligations to deliver various functions and services within the council area. These include education, transport, planning, social care, libraries, waste management, refuse collection, Council Tax collections and

housing. How the property portfolio will play a vital role in the provision of these services is the key output of the AMS.

Five Year Plan 2015 to 2020

- 2.6. The Council’s vision, priorities and values set out what it wants to achieve as a Local Authority over the period to 2020 and how it aims to accomplish its key aspirations. Together, they capture the long term aspiration for the authority and drive the work of the entire Council.

The Council’s Vision

- 2.7. The Council’s vision states its overall desire for the type of place it wants Central Bedfordshire to be:

“A Great Place to Live and Work”

- 2.8. This vision encompasses all members of the resident and business community regardless of age and extends to the role of the Council as a decision maker and enabler. By the year 2020, Central Bedfordshire will be a place offering opportunity for all and where people help each other and themselves. Residents of all ages will aspire to build successful lives to create strong and self-sustaining communities.

The Council’s Priorities and Programmes

- 2.9. The Council’s priorities and programmes drive how the organisation will focus its efforts to ensure that the vision is

achieved. These priorities are fully articulated in the five-year plan

A Great Place to Live and Work					
Enhancing Central Bedfordshire	Delivering Great Residents' Services	Improving Education and Skills	Protecting the vulnerable, promoting well being	Creating stronger communities	An efficient and responsive Council

2.10. It is clear that the Council's asset portfolio has a major role in the delivery of each one.

The Council's Values

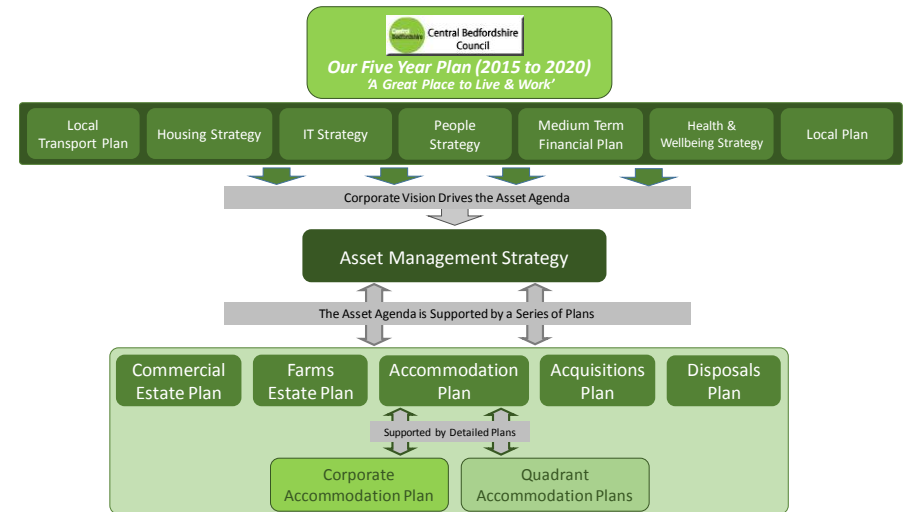
2.11. The Council's values describe the type of organisation it aspires to be and the principles that will guide it to achieve the vision and priorities and make clear how the Council will work and interact with customers, members and each other.

2.12. The Council's values are:

- **respect and empowerment** – all people will be treated as individuals who matter to the Council;
- **stewardship and efficiency** – making best use of the resources available;
- **results focused** – focused on delivering the outcomes that make a tangible difference to people's lives; and
- **collaboration** – work closely with colleagues, partners and customers to deliver on these outcomes.

Key Plans and Strategies

2.13. These priorities are being driven forward across the five year period through a series of strategies, as demonstrated in the diagram below.



2.14. The Council's asset base needs be an effective tool in driving forward the Council's Five Year Plan and all of the strategies that interpret this, as such the following strategies interact strongly with this document

- People Strategy;
- Local Transport Plan;
- Housing Strategy;
- IT Strategy;
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy;

- Local Plan; and
- Medium Term Financial Plan.

Financial Expectations

- 2.15. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) sets out the financial framework for the next four years and underpins the implementation of all of these strategies. It has a direct influence on the objectives and delivery of core services, and as a result the assets required to facilitate service delivery.
- 2.16. The Council has an ambitious capital programme and seeks to generate significant capital receipts through the identification and disposal (or remodelling) of assets and properties which are not fit for purpose, central to service delivery or are under or sub-optimally utilised.
- 2.17. Significant revenue savings are also sought from the continued rationalisation of accommodation, reduced lease and maintenance costs, improved financial returns from commercial properties and increased rental income.
- 2.18. The Council's capital programme budget is £284m over the next four years. Of this total, £121m will be funded by the Council itself through a combination of receipts generated from the sales of Council assets and increased Council borrowing. In the financial year 2016/17 it is assumed that the Council will generate £10.5m from capital receipts and increase borrowing by £26.5m.
- 2.19. The Council's capital programme creates a financial pressure for its revenue budget, not just as a result of the cost of repairing and maintaining assets but also the financing cost of loans/debt taken to invest into the asset portfolio. In 2016/17, 7.3% of the Council's revenue budget goes towards financing the capital programme. This is expected to grow to 10% by 2019/20.

3. The Asset Management Strategy

Why produce an Asset Management Strategy?

- 3.1. An AMS is a key document of relevance to all employees, partners and stakeholders of the Council, including Members, the general public, and other relevant public sector and partner organisations.
- 3.2. It is a reference point for and to be used by all stakeholders to support, inform and underpin all future decisions related to the Council's assets.
- 3.3. Property and land are expensive to procure, run and maintain. As such, careful management is required to ensure best value is achieved with regards use, maintenance and financial return, especially when budgets are under ever increasing pressure.
- 3.4. Effective asset management, whilst a desired outcome per se, is a key enabler for the delivery of the Council's strategic, service and financial objectives. Further, it helps to make certain that the Council's property assets are both fit for purpose and meet the needs of Council staff, service users and all that use them or rely on them.

What is the purpose of the Asset Management Strategy?

- 3.5. The primary purpose of an AMS is to enable the alignment of the Council's land and property portfolio with its core strategic and service objectives. The AMS also ensures that the portfolio is

structured in the best interest of the Council, whilst remaining compliant with legislative requirements.

- 3.6. An AMS provides the template and framework for how the Council will seek to utilise and manage its land and property assets as a corporate resource.

The Asset Management Strategy Objectives

- 3.7. As previously stated above, the Council's overriding aim for its asset base is:

'To promote the best use of the Council's assets for service delivery, deliver an optimum return from our commercial and agricultural investments, and facilitate regeneration and development'

- 3.8. Eight asset management objectives reflect this aim:

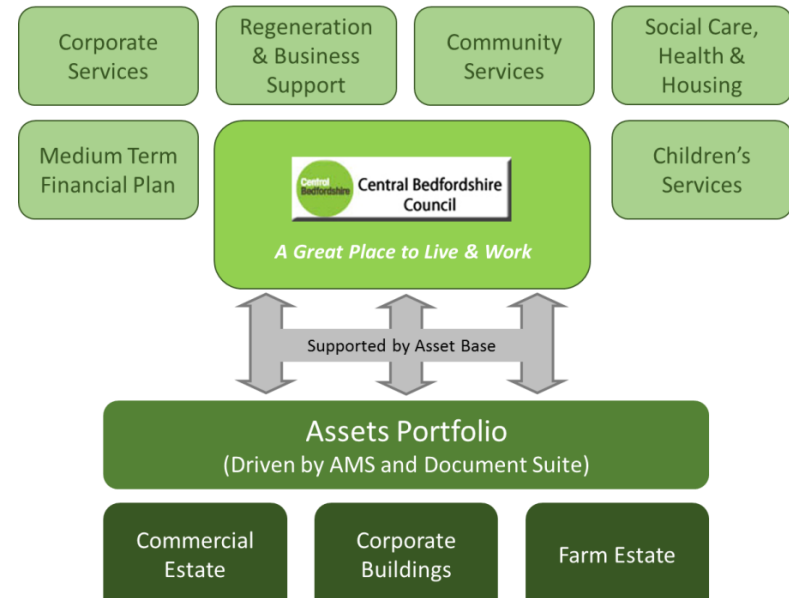
1. Develop a five-year vision and strategic approach to managing the Council's property assets that supports the Council's Corporate Plan;
2. Review and revise the Council's operational estate to optimise ways of working, optimise operational space, achieve revenue savings and focus on service provision;
3. Ensure that operational properties are appropriately located, fit for purpose, provide flexible accommodation, in good

condition, within an efficient cost envelope that is appropriately accessible to customers;

4. Deliver cost effective and efficient acquisition, disposal and management of property and land to meet safe service delivery, community benefit and investment needs;
5. Maximise the delivery of capital returns from the disposal of property and land to support the Council’s capital programme (this may include the Council acting as a promoter and/or developer of its sites in order to maximise receipts and income);
6. Where appropriate utilise assets to kick start, enhance or underpin economic regeneration;
7. Actively consider and implement innovative use of assets to address specific financial, housing, service and development challenges. Building on innovative models being developed across the local government sector; and
8. Maximise revenue income from the rents, leases and ‘traded’ services.

The Council’s approach to managing its assets

- 3.9. The AMS communicates a framework for a strategic approach that will secure the operational and financial benefits of an effective property estate, support the provision of services using industry best practice and secure the maximum benefit for the local economy. This is further illustrated in the diagram below.



How can the Council’s assets help to deliver its strategic and asset management objectives?

- 3.10. The Council’s strategic objectives, set out in part above, will mean that the scope of the Council’s property assets and how they are used will need to change. The Council owns an extensive estate and this is a key resource in driving the financial resilience and stability of the Council. Assets also retain the potential to be a key catalyst in delivering required change in the constantly evolving local government sector. Through more effective, innovative and efficient use of these assets the Council can

achieve change and deliver financial benefit from making the more of what it owns.

- 3.11. The benefit of an effective AMS is that it minimises the Council’s exposure to inappropriate land and property costs, thereby enhancing the overall financial position of the Council and enabling retention and improvement of the services provided to the local community.
- 3.12. It also provides the ability to exploit opportunities for specific service delivery benefits delivered through assets and by applying the AMS. These include:
- **Corporate Approach** – Property assets must be treated as a corporate and community resource and their future planned with the Council’s partners;
 - **Better alignment of accommodation needs** with service need and service plans through focusing on asset fitness for purpose, availability and cost;
 - **Flexibility provided by the assets** in terms of the working environment, layout and ‘sweating’ available space;
 - **Space that enables balanced and efficient use of resources** in both operation and maintenance of the assets;
 - **Exploited opportunities to co-locate agencies/stakeholders** with like service provision or customer base; and
 - **An integrated programme management approach to service delivery** ensuring holistic decision making, identifying

interdependencies and optimising opportunities for joint delivery and collaboration.

- 3.13. In addition to the service delivery benefits, a number of key financial benefits will also accrue as a result of applying the AMS:
- **Targeted disposals** – the realisation of capital receipts from unsuitable/surplus property;
 - **Lease terminations** – cessation of leases where the associated assets, accommodation or land is no longer required, relieving pressure on revenue budgets;
 - **More efficient building use** – better space planning and co-location opportunities will also result in both per capita and actual cost savings through the “*Working Smarter*” programme;
 - **Efficient capital expenditure** – a closer link between proposed premises usage in the medium to long term and capital investment in property. This allows scarce corporate resources to be better targeted to meet objectively prioritised service needs;
 - **Reduced running costs** – A reduction in the overall property running costs resulting from rationalisation of the estate. Better procurement of maintenance costs and cost increase amelioration arising from carbon reduction programme;
 - **Service Changes** – As service needs adapt we may be able to realise property efficiencies and capital receipts;

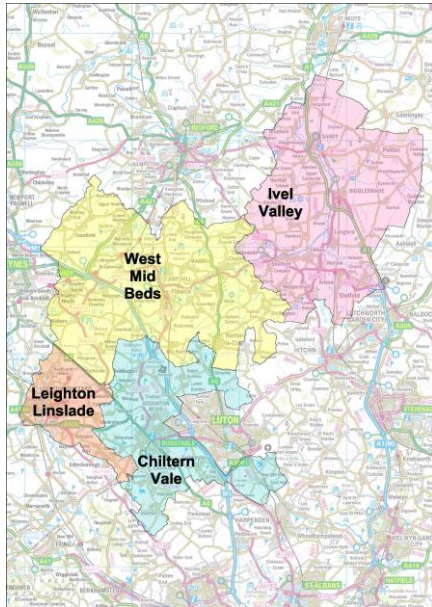
- **Community Self-help** – Encouraging self-help through joint and community use of assets, to expand community resilience through transfer of assets to community groups or town / parish council; and
- **Reduced construction costs** – Better development of design briefs, more closely aligned to needs and objectives, coupled with partnering procurement arrangements.

Asset Management Framework

- 3.14. Given the size, scale and complexity of the Assets Portfolio, the Council has developed a framework for the AMS in relation to its core service areas, cross service activities and the Council’s Farms Estate.
- 3.15. In order to consider our assets in a reasonable scale and scope the AMS will focus on the importance of closer integration and partnership working with health providers, the AMS will focus on four “Quadrants” or regions based on BCCG Localities:
- Ivel Valley (Biggleswade and the A1 corridor);
 - West Mid Beds (Flitwick & Ampthill);
 - Chiltern Vale (Dunstable area) and
 - Leighton Buzzard
- 3.16. This AMS sets out the Council’s approach to developing the aligned programme of actions for each year and capturing this within Quadrant based asset plans, and a separate but

complementary Farms Estate Plan. By considering all of its land and assets collectively within a defined geographic area, the Council is implementing a discreet and manageable solution for managing its portfolio. This solution will help to ensure effective and efficient use of the portfolio, and that it remains fit for purpose and fully aligned to both the needs and priorities of Council services and those of the Council’s partners.

- 3.17. However, there is a risk that by splitting portfolio management by geography that sub-optimal actions are taken on the basis that they best suit that area regardless on their impact elsewhere. As such, the Assets Team will assume a “One Council” oversight responsibility to ensure this risk is suitably mitigated.
- 3.18. These will be delivered through Quadrant Accommodation Plans (QAPs). These are illustrated in the map below on page 11.



3.19. In addition, two further plans will be developed specifically addressing the following areas:

- Corporate Accommodation Plan;
- Commercial Estate Plan; and
- The Farms Estate.

3.20. An Assets Group has been established within the Council that carries operational responsibility for the development and implementation of the AMS and the plans that hang off it. This group is tasked to ensure that the Council's portfolio of assets is managed in a controlled and consistent way and that it delivers

the Council's aim and priorities effectively as a Corporate landlord.

- 3.21. Service specific objectives will define asset needs, allowing the Assets Group to deliver exactly what is required; assets that are fit for purpose, optimised within quadrants against service and customer needs.
- 3.22. Each of these plan documents are key documents that are derived from the AMS and will feed into its iterations on an ongoing basis.
- 3.23. This is a significant change for the Council as assets historically have been managed at a local service level. By bringing the responsibility for assets together it enables the Council to take a more consistent strategic approach across its asset base to drive a more efficient and effective service.
- 3.24. The Council has previously agreed to adapt to this *Corporate Landlord* model – but to evolve into this model over time. With the adoption of the AMS the time is right to drive this agenda forward.
- 3.25. This Approach creates focused expertise by asset type to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the physical assets and sits within the wider Council's operating model, interfacing appropriately with other directorates and having clearly defined accountabilities and responsibilities. Furthermore, it provides a regional focus to optimise the delivery of asset activity, ensuring coordination of procurement and local delivery of these asset services.

4. The Council's Property Portfolio

Overview

- 4.1. As of April 2016 the Council's property estate comprised approximately 1,600 assets, of which in the region of 430 are buildings and the remainder being land holdings (3,631 hectares in total). These are valued in the Council's accounts at £1bn.
- 4.2. The main property types are as follows:
- Secondary schools;
 - Day centres;
 - Primary schools;
 - Highway depots;
 - Special schools;
 - Staff houses;
 - Offices;
 - Children's centres;
 - Waste recycling centres;
 - Homes for older people;
 - Libraries;
 - Leisure Centres;
 - Farms; and
 - Commercial / industrial units.
- 4.3. The five-year maintenance backlog liabilities on the Portfolio amounts to £140m and the net running costs of the Portfolio (excluding Schools and Council Housing) are £12m per annum.
- 4.4. The investment Portfolio comprises Commercial property (shops, offices, industrial) and Farms providing a net income in the order of £1.75m per annum.
- 4.5. The Corporate Landlord model assumes that the Council's land and property assets (excluding Council Housing and Academy

Schools) are managed by the Council's Assets Group, reporting to the Director of Community Services.

Council Accommodation Plans

Corporate Accommodation Plan

- 4.6. As a consequence of reducing headcount, changing working practices and modern customer interaction methods together with budgetary pressures, the Council is undertaking a review of its corporate accommodation requirements.
- 4.7. The Corporate Accommodation Plan (CAP) considers the various options available to the Council to transition from its existing configuration of Priory House in Chicksands and Watling House in Dunstable into a better suited arrangement. Each option is appraised against a set of bespoke criteria including cost, economic impact and alternative use and the preferred solution described.

Quadrants Accommodation Plans

- 4.8. The Quadrant Accommodation Plans (QAP) are key documents that take the strategic objectives and priorities from this AMS and drive through their implementation. The QAPs seek to bring together the Council service requirements across Directorates and also with relevant partners to work collaboratively and creatively across the Public Sector.
- 4.9. The QAPs will complement the CAP and relevant local masterplans to ensure a joined up approach in each quadrant.

Achieving this will require targeted investment by the Council in the quality of the local environment and maximising the potential of its own land and property assets in each quadrant.

- 4.10. A strong partnership with the private sector and other public agencies will also be required to ensure an effective approach is developed that does not cease at the boundary of where the Council interacts with other agencies.

The key objectives of the Quadrant Accommodation Plans are to achieve the following:

- An improved offer for residents with them receiving more cohesive and joined up services. In part through reducing silo working and the potential for duplication of services;
- Council's assets and services are delivered in a more efficient manner working across Directorates and other partners;
- Support the successful implementation of the Town Centre Masterplans;
- Developing Community Hubs to bring together services and meeting spaces for customers and the public, incorporating a variety of uses and enabling good service delivery; and
- Bringing together health and social care services incorporating GPs, Social workers and Community clinics.

Working Smarter Programme

- 4.11. The Council has commenced a major programme to examine the way in which it works and uses its space to support the delivery of its services. This programme, '*Working Smarter*', seeks to develop and implement a corporate approach to agile working in order to provide clarity on the potential size of the Council in the future and how changes in work styles and practices will adapt its office requirements.
- 4.12. The outcomes of this programme will be key inputs into the medium to long term vision for the corporate estate and those offices that are retained or disposed of. The main purposes of '*Working Smarter*' are articulated as follows:
- Review and develop policies and protocols that support new ways of working and cultural change;
 - Deliver essential technology solutions that enable modern workplaces, mobile working and smarter working across the CBC estate;
 - Make more effective use of the Council's staff accommodation to create modern workplaces that are fit for purpose and will enable cultural change; and
 - Facilitate the optimisation of existing CBC assets to create capacity to support property rationalisation activities and delivery of services in localities.
- 4.13. The Council has already commenced a pilot in Priory House of the '*Working Smarter*' programme, having adapted a floor of the

building to a new office environment, in order to support these new working practices. The findings of this exercise will be used to shape the future roll out of the programme.

- 4.14. In order for a programme such as *'Working Smarter'* to be implemented successfully it requires a step change in the way that the employees of the Council behave. In order to achieve this, it is crucial that three factors are put in place;
- **Senior Sponsorship** – Dynamic leadership from the top of the organisation is crucial to ensure the right tone is set from the outset and driven through the Council;
 - **Communication** – All levels of the organisation need to understand what is happening, why it is happening and when. Managing expectations is key to success; and
 - **Engagement** – All stakeholders need to be recruited into the programme and need to be, and feel, engaged in the process of changing how they work. Officers and members are much more likely to accept new technology, workspace sharing and flexible working, if they have been engaged in the process of creating the "Working Smarter" solution.
- 4.15. The review reports to the Senior Management Team within the "Making it Happen" programme, and seeks to provide a set of solutions which reflect the Council's needs in the changing world of local government over the next five years.

Disposals Plan

- 4.16. The Council is committed to using its land and property assets in a corporate manner which realises their optimum benefit to the community and represents value for money. This requires proactive good practice management of the existing portfolio, a commercial approach to the development of new assets and the disposal of assets no longer required.
- 4.17. Where property assets are not meeting the Council's objectives, as articulated within the AMS, then a process of rationalisation and disposal for surplus/under-performing property will be adopted. These terms are defined further below.
- 4.18. The adoption of this protocol will demonstrate that the Council is rationalising or disposing of surplus or under-performing assets, subject to market conditions and possible community use that may affect any such decision. The specific objectives that drive this disposal approach are as follows:
- To achieve priorities in the Council's Medium Term Plan;
 - To optimise capital receipts for the benefit of the Council and its community;
 - To reduce overheads and running costs;
 - To deliver community benefits;
 - To provide resources for service partners; and
 - To meet statutory requirements.

Surplus Property

4.19. Land and property assets can be declared surplus to requirements if the asset meets the following criteria:

- It makes no contribution to delivery of the Council’s services, either directly or indirectly;
- It does not generate sufficient income;
- It has no potential for future service delivery or regeneration purposes; and
- It is not fit for purpose.

4.20. A site could be considered surplus if an alternative site has been identified which would achieve more cost effective service delivery and the existing site has no potential for future alternative service delivery or regeneration.

4.21. A site may also be considered surplus if a community body can more effectively deliver the objectives for managing the land and provide a sustainable Business Case to support the objectives.

Under Performing Property

4.22. Corporate property can be deemed to be under-performing if the following criteria are met:

- Part of the property is vacant and likely to remain vacant for some time; and

- The beneficial use, including any joint uses or financial return generated from the property is below that which could be achieved from an alternative use, a disposal or an alternative investment opportunity.

4.23. The Council may also dispose of property that is not formally classified as surplus or under-performing: to developers for regeneration schemes; to nominated registered housing associations for the development of affordable housing or local communities as part of its aims to benefit the community. The council will consider the balance between capital receipts and delivery of specific council objectives.

4.24. Some property disposals are also driven by statute rather than the identification of surplus assets, the most significant being the right to buy provisions in the Housing Acts and the transfer of the whole of the housing stock and transfers under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and subsequent legislation such as the Academies Act 2010.

4.25. In general, the Council is required to achieve the ‘best consideration reasonably obtainable’ when it is disposing of land or buildings under s.123 Local Government Act 1972. If it seeks to dispose of land or buildings below the market value, it must obtain the consent of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Acquisitions and Enhancements Plan

- 4.26. The Council will consider acquiring land and property from external parties provided the acquisitions further the objectives of the AMS and, more specifically to enable the Council to:
- Achieve its priorities in the Medium Term Financial Plan;
 - Deliver its Service objectives;
 - Provide suitable corporate office accommodation;
 - Action larger development schemes for community benefit; and
 - Maintain and replenish its farm land holding.

Farms Estate Plan

- 4.27. The Farms Estate Plan outlines how the Council will effectively and efficiently manage and develop its farms estate over the Plan period and beyond. Its scope extends to all the building and land assets owned or leased by the Council in the performance of its role as a smallholdings authority.
- 4.28. The Council's Farms Estate has a current asset value of circa £69.75 million. It comprises circa 2,500 ha (6,200 acres) of land and supports 67 full time farm tenancies and a further 50 tenancies for minerals, grazing, sporting, allotments etc. and generates an annual rent roll of circa £550k.

4.29. Farms owned and managed by Local Authorities are an important strategic and national asset. These farms can assist Local Authorities in meeting wider regional economic, countryside and environmental objectives and provide an essential route into farming for new entrants.

4.30. The Council's approach to managing its farms estate takes account of:

- The provision of farms to enable new entrants into agriculture and amalgamate holdings to create more viable farm lettings;
- Statutory requirement;
- Income generation;
- Capital receipts generation and commercial management;
- Leisure and Community facilities for Central Bedfordshire; and
- Environmental responsibilities.

Statutory Requirement

4.31. The history to the 'accumulation' of a farm estate stems from the Smallholdings and Allotments Acts 1907 and 1908. As a consequence, all Councils had a duty to meet the demand of applications by young persons to enter into farming. Later the Agriculture Acts had a similar influence and it appears as the years passed and estates have been reviewed, landholdings have

been amalgamated to form the larger farms we are more used to today.

- 4.32. As a result of the economic difficulties of 2009 onwards, a number of smallholdings authorities have decided to sell off significant numbers of their farms after obtaining Counsel Opinion that there is no statutory duty. In conclusion whilst CBC is not barred from disposing of our farms per se, it should take account of the 'general aim' under s.39 of the 1970 Act.

Income Generation & Capital Receipts

- 4.33. The Farm Estate provides a substantial income via its agricultural rental and mineral royalty (circa £550k per annum). Following a period of reduction in farm rents in the early 2000s the agricultural rental market is now very robust and with a realistic investment in farm buildings the return on capital is predicted to increase.

Environmental Responsibilities

- 4.34. The Council's Farm Estate also demonstrates the Council's commitment to the environment. Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006), all public authorities have to have regard to conserving biodiversity, for example by creating ecological networks, and buffering biodiversity sites. The Council take this responsibility seriously and its commitment to the Farms Estate evidences this

Commercial Portfolio Plan

- 4.35. The investment Portfolio comprises commercial property (shops, offices, industrial) and farms, and provides a net income in the order of £1.75m per annum.
- 4.36. The Council will continue to seek opportunities for capital investment in surplus / investment property on the basis that they provide an income stream, subject to a robust business case in our role as steward of the land, and our ability to have some measure of control over development, making CBC a great place to live and work.
- 4.37. In support of this policy the Council will be willing to hold a longer-term vision for use of capital funding.
- 4.38. In addition, the Council will seek to maximise revenue returns from its existing portfolio of land and buildings, having regards to the residents of the area and services the Council delivers.

Development and Regeneration

- 4.39. In certain cases, the Council will hold land and property assets, sometimes for long periods, in anticipation of some wider benefit to be secured through a wider regeneration proposal.
- 4.40. Where appropriate, the Council will use its surplus land and property assets to contribute towards corporate objectives for regeneration across the region and where opportunities arise.
- 4.41. The Council will pursue public/private property initiatives, where there is a robust business case for doing so and where the

scheme will contribute significantly to corporate objectives for regeneration in a particular locality.

Improving Linkages with Public Sector Partners

- 4.42. Working in partnership across the breadth of the public sector operating within the region is a key theme of the AMS. Indeed, the foundation of this document, and the quadrant approach to assets, is predicated on working with the Council's partners in health, who established the quadrant approach, and ensures the Council aligns its approach to services, and therefore assets, to the broader public estate.
- 4.43. The Council is actively seeking opportunities for more efficient and effective collective use of the wider public sector estate through ongoing liaison with the Council partners in health, the police and fire services and central government and this will continue to be a key objective across the plan period.

Community Asset Transfer

- 4.44. The Council is committed to localism and, where they are compatible with the Council's wider objectives, to supporting voluntary organisations that serve the community.
- 4.45. In accordance with the Community Right to Bid provisions of the Localism Act the Council will consider the disposal of land and property assets to community groups where they develop a proposal and raise capital to bid for an "asset of community interest" when it comes to the open market.

5. Summary

- 5.1. This Asset Management Strategy establishes a framework by which the Council will manage its assets portfolio for the next five years.
- 5.2. Effective asset management, whilst a desired outcome per se, is a key enabler for the delivery of the Council's key strategic, service and financial objectives, as outlined in the Council's Five Year Plan, its Medium Term Financial Plan and in other associated Business and Service Strategies.
- 5.3. This document is an important point of reference for elected Members, employees, the public and other key stakeholders of the Council as it supports, informs and underpins all future decisions related to the Council's assets.
- 5.4. Property assets are expensive to procure, run and maintain and as such, they require careful management to ensure best value is achieved with regards use, maintenance and financial return, especially when budgets are under ever increasing pressure. The AMS has set out eight asset management objectives, which through their achievement will ensure best value is achieved. These objectives are:
 1. Develop a five-year vision and strategic approach to managing the Council's property assets that supports the Council's Corporate Plan;
 2. Review and revise the Council's operational estate to optimise ways of working, optimise operational space, achieve revenue savings and focus on service provision;
 3. Ensure that operational properties are appropriately located, fit for purpose, provide flexible accommodation, in good condition, within an efficient cost envelope that is appropriately accessible to customers;
 4. Deliver cost effective and efficient acquisition, disposal and management of property and land to meet safe service delivery, community benefit and investment needs;
 5. Maximise the delivery of capital returns from the disposal of property and land to support the Council's capital programme (this may include the Council acting as a promoter and/or developer of its sites in order to maximise receipts and income);
 6. Where appropriate utilise assets to kick start, enhance or underpin economic regeneration;
 7. Actively consider and implement innovative use of assets to address specific financial, housing, service and development challenges. Building on innovative models being developed across the local government sector; and
 8. Maximise revenue income from the rents, leases and 'traded' services.

- 5.5. These objectives are appropriate for now but will change as the Council's requirements morph over time. The AMS is designed to be a live document that adapts to meet the changing priorities of the Council. Accordingly, the objectives will be reviewed annually to coincide with budget setting and a continued drive to enhance the management of the Council's asset portfolio.

Appendix A – Governance and Review

Governance and Risk Management

In relation to the delivery and implementation of the Plan, specific roles, accountabilities and responsibilities have been assigned to a number of Council bodies and these are listed below.

- **Council’s Executive Committee (Executive):** Asset management matters will be reported to the Executive on a regular basis by the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources. Formal reporting will also be supplemented by regular informal member briefings. The Executive will be accountable for approving the Plan and associated Capital Programme for recommendation to Council as part of the normal budget setting process;
- **Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources (PHCR)** is accountable for signing off the Building Capital Programme related to the Plan. He will also be consulted on all disposal and acquisition matters within the delegated limits set out in the Council’s Constitution and Property Disposal Protocol. Finally, the PHCR will be responsible for reporting progress on the Plan to the Executive on a quarterly basis as part of the programmed Quarterly Performance Monitoring, as well as to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- **Director of Community Services** is accountable for developing, implementing, driving and leading appropriate Asset Management behaviour and practice throughout the organisation to deliver identified, and asset related benefits aligned to the Council and this Plan. To meet this aim, the Director of Community Services will ensure the Plan is developed against good practice and is:
 - Communicated and made available to all those people whose roles and responsibilities are directed by the Plan;

- Reviewed annually, or as appropriate, to ensure constant alignment with our 7 stars; and
- Amended and continually improved to maintain the ability to deliver the Asset Management Strategy, Objectives and overarching Council priorities.

- **Strategic Growth Board** is chaired by the Chief Executive. The overall aim of the Board is to deliver Sustainable Economic Growth across Central Bedfordshire enabling the area to grow and develop as a place where people want to live, work, do business and invest.

Asset Risk Management is a key discipline to be embedded within the approach to Asset Management for the Council and in the future will form an integral part of many elements of the end to end process as well as being recognised as a process in its own right.

Review and Improvement

It is essential that the Council continues to develop its Asset Management resource capacity and capability in order to ensure the full benefits from this Plan are delivered effectively and efficiently.

This on-going development will include the following:

- Reviewing the team resource capability, capacity and team structure in order to deliver the short to medium term aspirations;
- Developing and deploying a communication strategy to embed the Asset Management Vision and Plan both within the team and across the services;

- Establishing clear governance and accountability lines within and around Asset Management, via the formation of various strategic groups, such as the Strategic Growth Board (SGB);
- Creating detailed programmes (i.e. the Quadrant Accommodation Plans) for each region and our farms estate, with clear objectives, milestones, accountabilities and activities;
- Undertaking detailed asset contingency planning and risk assessment (with associated registers) to enable the Council to quickly adapt to changes in external influences and pressures, such as funding and grant reductions, changes in legislation, resource capability and capacity, programme slippage, etc.; and
- Carrying out a detailed and engaging Stakeholder mapping and impact exercise, both internally and externally.

The accountability for enabling and driving this development lies with the Director of Community Services.

Contact us...

By telephone: 0300 300 8301
by email: customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
on the web: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

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

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 7 June 2016

Maintaining a Sustainable Land Holding

Report of Cllr Richard Wenham, Executive Member for Corporate Resources,
(richard.wenham@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officers: Director of Community Services, Marcel Coiffait
(marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk,
Chief Finance Officer, Charles Warboys
(charles.warboys@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk); and
Steven Girling (steven.girling@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk),
Tel: 0300 300 5246

This report relates to a key issue

Purpose of this report

1. Currently there is no provision in the capital programme for land acquisitions. It is proposed that a policy of land acquisition is put in place that allows Central Bedfordshire Council to replenish its estate through judicious purchases of land where these fit strategically with our current estate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to approve the following recommendation:

1. **that approval from Council is requested for a new item to be added to the capital programme to cover land purchases up to a maximum combined total of £8 million for financial year 2016/17 subject to the revenue impact being containable within the existing budget and the completion and sign off of a suitable business case.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. This report will be considered by a Special Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 May 2016. The Committee endorsed the document for Executive approval.

Background

3. The Council's capital programme is also underpinned by the capital receipts it receives from the sale of land; the current MTFP assumes around £40 million of income from sales.
4. In order to retain the viability of the Council's agricultural holdings, so that they continue to play a role in protecting the landscape and to ensure the long term asset base of the Council is maintained a policy of land acquisition to replace that lost through sales is suggested.
5. This will help support the Council's Farm Strategy which sets out our role as landlord of agricultural holdings in order to provide tenancy opportunities and protect the character of Central Bedfordshire.
6. Currently over 200 acres of ex-agricultural land are being marketed or sold by the Council including:
 - Arlesey Cross, Arlesey
 - Thorn Turn, Houghton Regis
 - Stratton 5, Biggleswade
 - Hitchin Road, Fairfield
7. Whilst disposing of developable land makes sound financial and business sense, the Council currently has no policy of land acquisition specifically aimed at replacing the land being sold; therefore the Council's asset base is being depleted over time.

Options for consideration

8. It is proposed that a policy of land acquisition is put in place that allows Central Bedfordshire Council to replenish its estate through the judicious purchase of land where this fits strategically with our current estate.
9. To enable the replacement of land sold for development it is proposed that Council is asked to add a Land Acquisition item be added to the capital programme.
10. The proposed value of the Land Acquisition programme is £ 8 million as this represents a reinvestment of 20% of the disposals income over the period of the MTFP.
11. As it is not possible to predict what opportunities will come forward and when, it is requested that the full value of this programme is available in 2016/17 but that this represents the total value of this activity over the period of the MTFP with any unspent balance rolling into future years but not being added to in those years.

9. The alternative option is to maintain the status quo, with land being sold when it becomes possible to enhance its value, this is not sustainable in the long term as it leads to depletion of assets and does not support our farming businesses nor help protect our rural landscape.

Issues

10. The Council's constitution requires capital expenditure over £ 500k, unless specifically detailed in the budget, to be an Executive decision.
11. However the speed and agility of decision making required to purchase land in an active market does not always sit well with an eight week Executive meeting cycle, particularly with reports needing to be prepared at least a month in advance.
12. The Constitution does however allow for more rapid decision making if required, and therefore the following hierarchy of decision making is suggested:
 - Individual land purchases over £ 500k are approved by Executive.

If this is not possible due to timescales then:
 - Reports are submitted to Executive using the General Exceptions rule, shortening the timescales in preparation

If this is not possible due to timescales then:
 - A Special Executive is called to enable the decision to be made

If this is not possible due to timescales then:
 - A decision is made using the Special Urgency Rules.
13. Following this hierarchy of decision making would allow decisions on land purchases to be made without need to change the Council's constitution and yet retain the ability to make decisions quickly if required.
14. The frequency of suitable opportunities has, to date, been low and therefore it is not expected that requirements for a Special Executive, for example, would be commonplace.

Reason/s for decision

15. Over 200 acres of ex-agricultural land are currently being sold.
16. Whilst disposing of this land makes good financial and business sense it means the Council's agricultural asset base is shrinking significantly.

17. Currently there is no provision in the capital programme for land acquisitions, which makes the current policy of disposals to underpin the capital programme and deliver policy objectives unsustainable in the long term.

Council Priorities

18. The acquisition of additional land will assist in delivering more efficient and responsive Council.

Corporate Implications

19. The corporate implications are covered in the legal and financial risk sections below.

Legal Implications

20. There are no legal implications beyond the work required to carry out the purchase of agreed land.

Financial and Risk Implications

21. Currently there is no provision for land acquisition in the capital budget; it is proposed only to bring forward proposals whose costs can be contained within the existing revenue budget.
22. It is intended that the financial and risk implications of each proposed purchase will be managed via a business case, with each proposal being considered on its merits and that the case for each proposal will be part of the Executive report that informs the Executive's decision.

Equalities Implications

23. No Equality implications have been identified.

Implications for Work Programming

24. It is not anticipated that this will have any implications for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Conclusion and next Steps

25. If the recommendations are accepted a report will be made to the July Council seeking the addition of a land acquisition allocation to the capital budget
26. If Council in turn approves the addition to the capital budget the assets team would seek to bring forward a series of business cases to Executive for consideration, as and when opportunities arise.

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

None.

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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

7 June 2016

Commissioning of New School Places in Arlesey for September 2017

Report of: Cllr Steven Dixon, Executive Member for Education and Skills
(steven.dixon@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 the consultation by Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust (BEMAT) on behalf of 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.
2. To seek the Executive's approval of the proposal, subject to approval by the Department for Education (DfE), and for commitment to required capital expenditure.
3. The school referred to within the report serve the Wards of Arlesey, Stotfold and the Parish of Fairfield.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **note the response received to the consultation by Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust (BEMAT) on behalf of 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; and**
2. **approve the commencement of capital expenditure as set out in the report, subject to the approval of the proposal by the Education Funding Agency and subject to the grant of planning permission under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny

4. A report was presented to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 15 March 2016 and the Committee indicated its support for the proposal outlined in this report and for the commencement of the recommended consultation, the outcome of which is set out within this report.

Pupil place planning for Middle and Upper School places in Arlesey

5. On 5 April 2016 the Council's Executive approved the recommendation of the report to support a consultation by Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust (BEMAT) on behalf of Etonbury Academy for the proposal 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.

The April report can be viewed as Agenda Item 11 at:

<http://centralbeds.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=577&MId=4923&Ver=4>

6. The proposal was made with the support of the Council and its need to commission new school places as a result of the forecast further increases in size of the school's Year 5 catchment cohort, and the Academy's retention of its first Year 8 into Year 9 on site from September 2016 which produces a forecast deficit in provision from September 2017.
7. With the support of the Council BEMAT's consultation commenced on 12 April 2016 and concluded on 12 May 2016. The consultation was undertaken to comply with DfE guidance published for Academies wishing to make significant changes and included a public meeting. The consultation materials and a summary of responses received by BEMAT are attached at Appendix A to this report.
8. Issues arising through the consultation have been reflected upon in the summary report provided by BEMAT within Appendix A.
9. The business case that BEMAT has also prepared is attached at Appendix B and articulates how the proposal is aligned with the Council's Policy Principles on Pupil Place Planning in Schools.
10. BEMAT has considered the outcome of its consultation and has agreed that it wishes to proceed with the proposal. As a result, a significant change application has been submitted by the Trust to the Department for Education's Education Funding Agency to secure approval for the expansion of the Academy. The Trust has also continued to work with the Council in developing the design proposals for the new facilities required if the expansion is approved.

Design and procurement of the new provision

11. Working with their appointed education capital consultant and with support from the Council, the Academy has commissioned further design studies for the school's expansion. These have referenced Building Bulletin 103 which provides area guidelines for mainstream schools.
12. The proposed scope of the new provision will include an increase in general teaching and food technology classrooms, office space, group rooms and a staff room as well as improved school reception arrangements. The new provision will be located to ensure integration with the existing accommodation on the school site.
13. The resulting cost estimates have indicated that the project is affordable within the total capital budget established by the Council. The Academy intend with the support of the Council, to directly procure the project. This will follow a procurement exercise which will be undertaken when planning approval has been secured, if the Executive approves the recommendations contained within this report.
14. The governance of the project will be provided through a board that will include Council officers from the School Organisation & Capital Planning Team who will control the release of capital funding aligned with the achievement of key project milestones. This arrangement has overseen and provided the accountability required recently for the successful delivery of the Academy's previous phase of expansion.

Reasons for decision

15. The consultation undertaken on the proposal to expand Etonbury Academy has complied with the 2016 DfE Guidance for making significant changes to an existing Academy.
16. The proposal supports the Council's Policy Principle of investment in successful schools. Etonbury Academy was rated Good by Ofsted at its last inspection in 2012.
17. As set out in detail in the April report to the Council's Executive, the completion of the proposed project outlined within this report will ensure that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations to secure sufficient school places for children in the area.
18. BEMAT 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 Academy's ambition is aligned with the Council's Partnership Vision for Education 2015-2019.

19. 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 the Academy's proposal.

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. Department for Education (DfE) Guidance for Academies wishing to make significant changes, including enlargement of their premises, was published in March 2016.
24. The Guidance can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-significant-changes-to-an-existing-academy>
25. Academy Trusts are to exercise their own judgments in deciding whether a change is significant although the proposal set out in this report by BEMAT would come within the definition of 'fast track significant change' as set out by 2016 DfE Guidance.
26. The process is overseen by the Education Funding Agency on behalf of the DfE and requires an Academy to undertake consultation, to obtain consent on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education from the Regional Schools Commissioner, advised by his Head Teacher Board, and to secure any capital required by the proposal before implementation.
27. The application 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 2016 DfE Guidance.

Financial Implications

28. The New School Places Programme is funded by developer contributions and Basic Need grant income from the Department for Education (DfE) and has a provisional gross expenditure outturn for 2015/16 of £23.2M. On current planning assumptions the programme 2016/17 to 2020/21 is now forecast with gross expenditure of £22M in 2016/17, £24M in 2017/18, £16.6M in 2018/19, £21.7M in 2019/20 and £7.7M in 2020/21.
29. The capital financial implications arising from approval of the recommendations of this report are contained within the Council's approved Medium Term Financial Plan and specifically its New School Places programme.
30. 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.
31. 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.
32. 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.
33. 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

34. 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.

35. 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.
36. 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.
37. As proposer of the enlargement of the premises of Etonbury Academy BEMAT has considered that there are no discrimination issues that arise from the change being proposed.

Risk Management

38. 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:

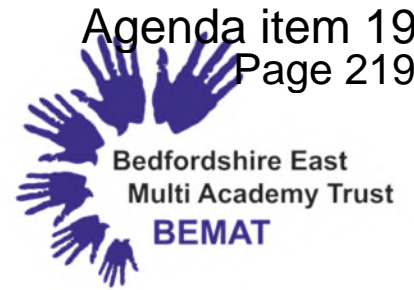
- Failure to discharge legal and statutory duties/guidance.
- Failure to deliver the Council's strategic priorities
- Reputational risks associated with the non delivery of required school places.
- Inability of schools to recruit suitable additional staff
- Failure to secure planning consents
- Financial 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 A – Consultation materials and summary of responses

Appendix B – Business Case



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?

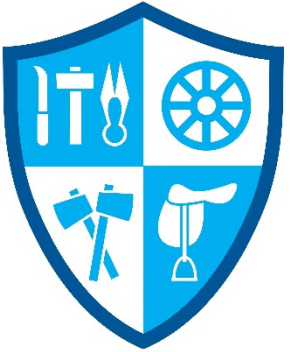
YES NO

Comment

[Optional]

Name: Email:

Address:



ETONBURY
ACADEMY



ETTONBURY
ACADEMY

Welcome



ETONBURY
ACADEMY



Phase 2 Development Plan Public Consultation



Why?

- There are not enough student places in the Arlesey, Stotfold and Fairfield catchment area to fulfil need resulting from population growth.
- Without Etonbury Phase 2 Development, there will not be sufficient places from September 2017 for catchment students to be educated in their community.
- Unless Phase 2 Development happens, there will be approximately forty students at Yr5 who will have to be bused out to other schools outside of the catchment in September 2017.
- The situation will then get progressively worse, with inadequate places across all the year groups, including Key Stage 4.



When?

- Etonbury has a PAN of 150 students in Yr5 as maximum but is admitting 180. There are 217 students in the feeder lower schools needing places for September 2017. This then rises to nearly 240 for September 2018.
- Population growth and student numbers will continue to expand until 2023, based on known development plans and projected growth.
- Etonbury currently has capacity for 100 students per year group from Yr9 onward. It is now clear that this is not sufficient, as virtually all parents and students are choosing to remain here for KS4.
- In order to meet this need, the school has to expand to fulfil 180 students per year group across all years 5-11.



What?

- This enhancement in capacity has already commences with Etonbury Phase 1 Development, which is fully on track, ahead of schedule and will be complete and operational for September 2016 this year.
- The proposal is that Etonbury Academy develops to accommodate 180 students per year group, giving a total roll capacity of 1260 students.
- This development will ensure that all 180 students who start in Yr5 can remain and complete their seven year journey to KS4.
- The site will be further developed to provide additional teaching and learning space, along with ancillary services, and enhanced sporting and leisure facilities for school and community use.



How?

- 9 general teaching classrooms @ 55m²
- 1 general teaching classroom @ 70m²
- 2 Food technology rooms @ 100m²
- 1 Food technology store 10m²
- 1 Dance studio² @ c.180m and an enlarged entrance to the sports hall
- 1 CAD room with associated printing facilities @ 60m²
- 5 offices @ 9m²
- 5 group rooms @ 10m²
- Toilets associated with this increase in numbers
- A new staff room is required @ 35m²
- A nursery on the ground floor
- A revision/extension to entrance and reception to ensure students do not need to circulate through this area



How? (cont)

The school and BEMAT have aspirations for further improvements to the school. This includes:

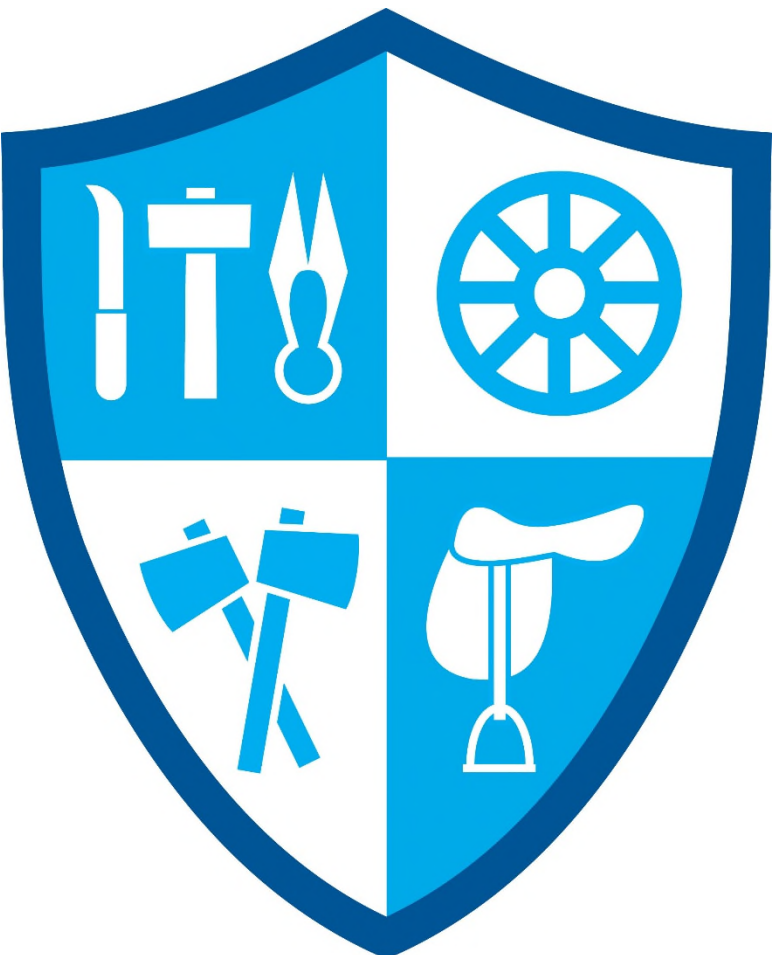
- Tennis/Netball/Basket Ball Courts
- Orchard
- Additional Changing facilities for the outdoor All Weather Pitch
- Additional Car Parking
- Improved pick-up and drop-off vehicular access
- Additional Food Tech
- Additional Science Laboratory
- Exam space – large and small spaces
- Small group room spaces
- Refurbishment of the existing year 5
- Additional outdoor teaching areas
- Additional provision for PVs across the site
- General improvements to the outdoor areas (landscaping)



ETTONBURY
ACADEMY

To do this, and ensure every student has a place to be educated in their community, we need your support.

Thank you.



Etonbury Phase 2 Public Consultation

Tuesday 19th April 2016 1830 Etonbury

BEMAT Director: David Shelvey [also CBC ward member for Arlesey]

BEST Trustee: John Street [also Chair of the Etonbury local governing body]

CBC Representatives: Lydia Braisher, Victor Wan

BEMAT officers: Ian Kite, Mandy Salzen

Etonbury Principal: Alex Prior

36 members of the public

Etonbury Academy Phase 2 Public Consultation Meeting

6.30pm Presentation given by Mr Alex Prior Principal of Etonbury Academy followed by questions.

Please see: BEMAT ETA Phase 2 Public Consultation

Q: Are there currently 6 classes in year 5?

A: Yes. From next year it will be 7 possibly 8 but this will drop down in 2019 to 6.

Q: We're worried that in a school of 1200 students the year 11 students could be intimidating for year 5 students.

A: Great deal of thought has been put into this and the school will be zoned. Key Stage 2 pupils will have their own playground from September 2016, specific classrooms and their own canteen time. Behaviour in the school as a whole is very good and this is commented on by visitors, but there will be times when the whole school will come together.

Q: I'm worried about the social interactions and conversations that the older students may have, and the language that they may use around the younger students particularly traveling to and from school.

A: The students are always reminded that they are ambassadors for the school when they're out in the community and the school tackles any issues that they become aware of. Within the school, the zoning will help prevent this.

Q: Where will the phase 2 build be?

A: There will an extension to the new block that is just being finished and a block of 4 new classrooms behind the existing year 5 block.

Q: How will the safety of the students be handled when the new classrooms are being built?

A: Morgan Sindall will manage the safety of both students and staff in partnership with the school senior team. This has worked very well with the construction that is finishing in May 2016.

Q: Will the current year 8 students continue to be the oldest in the school?

A: Yes.

Q: Will students come from outside the catchment area?

A: Students from within catchment will always be the priority however if there are spaces available students from other catchments may have the opportunity to come here.

Q: I currently have one child at Samuel Whitbread Academy and one at Etonbury. Will there be the option to send my child to Samuel Whitbread Academy?

A: Yes. Etonbury Academy will be offering some courses that are not available at Samuel Whitbread Academy and all catchment students will have the option to attend either school.

Q: The age range is my main concern.

A: The students will spend 7 years at Etonbury Academy so the staff will get to know them really well. This will make student management in the school easier to handle.

Q: If a student starts badly at Etonbury it could really affect their education in the future.

A: I come from a secondary education background and I've realised that middle school education needs a different set of skills. With this in mind, fantastic new staff have been recruited, existing staff have been restructured and a new Head of Key stage 2 appointed to ensure that all new students have a great start in their new school. Etonbury will still have the small school environment with additional benefits of a bigger school such as a brand new library.

Q: With the educational numbers bulge, do you have the confidence to take this forward and also forge links with Samuel Whitbread Academy?

A: The proposed building works will give us the space to educate the additional students created by the bulge. It's been proved that if a student does well at Key Stage 4 then they will do well at Key Stage 5. Key Stage 5 (6th Form) at Samuel Whitbread is very successful and I'm already working on very close links with SWA, North Herts College and Bedford College so that we can support the students through this transition.

Q: You've said that you will offer some different courses to Samuel Whitbread Academy. If a student wants to attend SWA for a particular course how would this be dealt with?

A: It may be possible for just one course to be accessed at Samuel Whitbread Academy and for the student to remain at Etonbury for the rest of the curriculum in the future however this not something that we are focusing on at the moment.

Mr Prior invited all attendees to contact him direct should there be any further questions.

7.35pm Meeting came to a close.

22 April 2016 13:59

Etonbury Academy

Budget 2015/2016 - WIP

1/E' Group

2019-20

Revenue

Income

Total DfE revenue Income	2,224,282	2,467,684	3,335,300	4,512,004	5,760,661
Local Authority	28,133	35,133	35,133	35,133	35,133
Voluntary Income	0	0	0	0	0
Other vn Grant rev inc	230,000	489,590	489,590	489,590	9,590
Other Income	111,183	205,200	205,200	205,200	205,200
Transfer in Revenue from Capital	0	0	0	0	0
Total Income:	2,593,598	3,197,607	4,065,223	5,241,927	6,010,584

Expenditure

Staff Costs	2,067,511	2,625,960	3,019,250	4,223,070	5,290,886
Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA)	0	0	0	0	0
Other Non - Staff Costs	526,087	725,347	744,658	764,644	781,671
Transfer to capital fund	0	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure :	2,593,598	3,351,307	3,763,908	4,987,714	6,072,558
In Year Surp/(Def):	0	(153,700)	301,315	254,213	(61,974)
Surp/(Def) B/Fwds:	0	0	(153,700)	147,614	401,828
Cumulative C/Fwds:	0	(153,700)*	147,614	401,828	339,854

*

BEMAT is in the process of applying for Local Authority Growth Fund. We have been granted £321K [April to August] which has not yet reached our accounts and we expect a further £230K [September to March 2017] pupil lead funding. We also expect £200K Project Management funding for the year April 2016 to March 2017. These amounts will be added to our forecast as they are confirmed and arrive.

Report on the Etonbury Academy Expansion Proposals

The proposal

It is proposed that Etonbury Academy currently at a capacity of 900 pupil places is expanded to accommodate 1260 pupil places at a PAN of 180 from year 5 to year 11.

Business Case

Please see: Open academy fast track application ETA BEMAT

Please see: BEMAT Business Case ETA Expansion

Financial Projection [5 years]

Please see: Etonbury 5 year financial projection

Public consultation

The public consultation was opened on the 12th April 2016 with a public meeting held on the 19th April and was closed on the 12th May 2016. The details of the consultation are contained in the attachments:

BEMAT Etonbury – Consultation Letter re proposed ETA expansion

BEMAT Etonbury - Consultation FAQ

BEMAT Etonbury – Consultation ETA response form

These documents were sent to all local stakeholders.

Please see: BEMAT Etonbury - Consultation Q&A 19.04.2016

The public consultation was attended by 43 parents, CB officers, BEMAT officers and local CBC ward members.

Responses to the consultation questionnaire.

The first asked that the impact of first phase of expansion be evaluated before the second phase is commenced.

Etonbury has been expanded from a 4FE middle school to a 5FE 9 to 16 extended secondary with a capacity of 900 pupil places with 600 places in the 9 to 13 age range and 300 pupil places in the 14 to 16 age range. This phase is due to complete on the 23rd May 2016. It was always intended that this phase would be followed by a second to expand the academy to 6 FE through the age range 9 to 16. The drive for this expansion is demographic which has accelerated over the past year with the completion and sale of houses in the area. Etonbury is already taking 180 pupils in year 5 and must continue to do so in order that all pupils in the locality have a school place. Whilst the BEMAT Board would prefer to have waited the pressure on places is acute and unless this expansion takes place now pupils without a place will have to be educated elsewhere. This would not be a viable option as other local upper schools are full.

Two responses were in favour.

Another raised issues concerning home school transport and the expense and difficulties of young children walking along major roads. The Fairfield Park housing estate is located on the margins of the free home school qualification criteria for distance. BEMAT is organising a meeting with the parents of the pupils affected with the aim of providing a bus service for which the parents have agreed to pay. The cost of this service is likely to be less than the commercial fare.

One respondent is against the expansion as they feel that the age range 9 to 16 is too great and will make the school daunting for the younger children. This was a theme of the public meeting and was addressed by the Principal.

Arlesey Town Council made a formal response: BEMAT were asked to review the drop off arrangements at the site which are under consideration and incorporated into the designs. They requested that BEMAT undertake a school travel plan modelling exercise which is part of the planning process and has been undertaken. They asked our view on the method of crossing the A507 – BEMAT is in negotiation with CBC highways and the consensus is that there will either be a footbridge or an underpass. Due to the high water table in this area the bridge is likely to be the favoured option. BEMAT is opposed to any type of pedestrian crossing. However, all of these queries will be dealt with through the normal planning and public consultation process.

Questions at the public meeting revolved around several themes:

Please see BEMAT Etonbury Consultation Q & A 19.04.2016

Concerns were raised about the age range and the social mix of year 5 and year 11 pupils. These issues were resolved by the Principal who explained that the site was to be zoned. Year 5 pupils [and year 6] had their own teaching block, their own timetable and social areas for play during breaks and lunchtimes. These lunch times were also different to the upper part of the school, which would also have its own social area. All social areas will be supervised and there will be robust behavioural policies and procedures in place. The campus is very well served with outstanding facilities and there will be a large number of organised activities at lunchtimes in which most pupils will participate. Pupils will be in the system for 7 years and from an early age, the transition from middle school to extended secondary will be gradual and well managed.

Other questions wondered if the very good links with Samuel Whitbread Academy might be lost and pupils may suffer from a drop in standards as Etonbury established itself. Again the audience were reassured that as both academies were part of BEMAT the excellent relationships would continue. Several members of staff were working on both sites and more had been promoted to posts at Etonbury from Samuel Whitbread. The curriculum had been designed in consultation with senior leaders at both academies and is complimentary. Pupils who wish to attend Samuel Whitbread may do so.

The third area of concern related to the actual build, where the new blocks would be located, what facilities would be available and how safety would be managed. The new block would be an extension of the block which is about to be completed with an extension to the year 5 block. It was hoped that tennis courts, a dance studio, basketball courts and hard surface recreational space

would be added. Health and safety had been extremely well managed by the academy and the main contractor thus far and this would continue.

The meeting closed at 7:35 pm

The BEMAT board and the Etonbury Local Governing board have considered these representations and the responses to them and approve of the development of this proposal.



Making significant changes to an open academy: fast track application

This form is for open academy trusts judged as 'good' or 'outstanding' at their latest Ofsted inspection, wishing to propose one of the changes listed in Part B of this form to an existing academy. Please complete all sections of this form and submit to academy.questions@education.gsi.gov.uk.

Academy trusts wishing to [make a significant change](#) to the characteristics of an open academy that will affect clauses in their funding agreement **MUST** submit a proposal for change in advance of the change being made. **Failure to do so could constitute a breach of its funding agreement.**

Academy trusts should note that where a proposed change sets a precedent or is potentially contentious as described in the significant change guidance, a [full business case](#) will be required. This is regardless of the academy's Ofsted rating and whether the type of change being proposed is eligible for the fast track process. Examples are those which:

- Reduce places in an area of basic need; and
- Have received objections from the LA and/or neighbouring schools that the proposed change will undermine the quality of education provided by other 'good' or 'outstanding' schools in the area, by creating additional places where there is already surplus capacity.

Whilst we endeavour to approve all changes deemed as 'fast track', changes that do not meet the specified criteria will not be approved by [Regional Schools Commissioners](#) (RSC). All other proposals to make significant changes must use the [full business case](#) form

Information provided in this application form, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 or the Data Protection Act 1998.

Part A: Academy trust details (all details must be completed)

Date proposal submitted:	
Effective date of the proposed change and how this will be implemented (e.g. will it be in stages?):	1 st September 2017
Name of academy where change will take place:	Etonbury Academy
Name of academy trust; MAT/sponsor if academy is within MAT structure:	Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust Ltd
Academy type (please delete):	Converter
Date academy opened:	1 st November 2011
Academy trust number as registered at Companies House:	07546141
Local Authority:	Central Bedfordshire
LA Establishment number:	823
Name of Head teacher:	Mr Alex Prior
Full address:	Etonbury Academy, Stofold Road Arlesey BEDS
Postcode:	SG15 6XS
Current Published Admissions Number:	150
Current number on roll:	609
Current school capacity number as noted in your funding agreement:	480 [to be changed by deed of variation to 900 once the current phase of expansion id completed; 23 rd May 2016]
If relevant, the proposed new capacity:	1260
Current age range:	9 to 16
If relevant, the proposed new age range:	9 to 16
Main contact name:	Ian F Kite
Your role within the organisation:	Head of Projects Resources Operations and Capital
Telephone number:	01462 811519
Email address:	ikite@bemat.org.uk

Part B: Proposal details (please tick all boxes that apply)

- Physical expansion of premises where the fast track criteria are met *
- Change of lower or upper age limit by up to two years (excluding adding a sixth-form) where the fast track criteria are met **
- Satellite expansions (excluding proposals from selective academies and/or satellite expansions that include an age-range change) where the fast track criteria are met
- Adding or increasing boarding provision where the fast track criteria are met
- Removing a sixth-form where the fast track criteria are met

* Please note the significant change process does not apply to expansions relating to non-teaching floor space, where it does not change the capacity of the academy e.g. adding a sports hall.

** Where early years provision is established, the academy trust must ensure the qualified staff to child ratios are met (as set out in the [statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#))

Part C: Rationale (1 page max)

Please provide details of the change, including: the rationale for change and impact on the school, any potential issues / risks relating to the proposals (e.g. changes to leadership and governance, any foreseen adaptations, additions, refurbishments or land transfers needed), and evidence of demand for the change.

Demographic growth due to house building has increased local demand for pupil places from a PAN of 120 with an age range 9 to 13 to PAN 150 with an age range of 9 to 16 [this phase of expansion is due to complete on the 23rd May 2016] and now requires a PAN of 180 age range 9 to 16 from September 2017. The academy is well prepared, staff have been recruited to teach key stage 4 and support services are in place. No land transfers are required. There are no changes of governance or leadership required. Adaptations and refurbishments of the original buildings have taken place and are complete. The campus is large enough to accommodate the development, including the expansion of the outdoor facilities. This project is a straightforward extension to the main building and an extension to the year 5 block with some landscaping to provide playing areas and social spaces from open land already available on the site.

The following table shows the increased demand for pupil places;

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Y5	165	201	255	229	263	282	319	320	291
Y6	184	181	202	256	230	266	284	321	323
Y7	143	189	181	202	257	233	268	286	323
Y8	117	142	190	181	204	259	235	269	288
Y9		90	142	190	181	206	261	236	271
Y10			90	143	192	183	208	263	238
Y11				90	144	194	185	210	265
Total	609	803	1060	1291	1471	1623	1760	1905	1999

Capacity	480	900	1260	1260	1260	1260	1260	1260	1260
Variance in Pupil Places	-129	97	200	-31	-211	-363	-500	-645	-739

These figures are agreed with Central Bedfordshire Head of School Organisation, Admissions and Capital Planning.

Part D: Consultation and local support – as set out in section 5 of the significant change guidance document

I declare that: a fair and open consultation has taken place for a minimum of 4 weeks; where necessary consultation relating to admission arrangements has been undertaken (as set out in The School Admissions Code); the number and percentage of responses that are in favour of the change has been considered as well as any objections; and that any issues raised have already been managed or there is a plan for them to be managed.

Yes No

Part E: Alignment with the Local Authority’s pupil place planning – as set out in section 5 of the significant change guidance document

I declare that: the view of the local authority has been sought; that in their view the change is aligned with local pupil place plans; and that the change is unlikely to have a negative impact on educational standards at the academy or at other local schools or colleges.

Yes No

Part F: Securing appropriate permissions

I declare that: appropriate planning permissions and any other consents that may be required to enable the change to happen have been secured.

(Examples of permissions/consents might include: acquiring land or buildings; building on playing areas; changing leases; consent of any relevant religious authority).

Yes No

Part G: Finance and funding - as set out in section 4 of the significant change guidance document

Part G (a): Funding is secured in relation to the proposed change

I declare that: funding has been secured in relation to the proposed change for both capital and revenue costs; that the academy trust is in a strong financial position and there are no issues with current budget and/or finances. In the case of expansions, academies have sufficient funding for additional pupils, until lagged funding is applied;

Yes No

Part G (b): Forward financial forecast for the academy trust (to be completed for all cases)

Please confirm by indicating yes/no below that:

- the academy trust has undertaken a forward financial forecast for 5 years;
- the finances of the academy trust, taking into account projected pupil numbers can support this proposed change;
- the academy trust will remain in a surplus situation as a result of this change within the 5 year forecast.

Yes No

Part H: Declarations

The chair of the academy trust and/or accounting officer **MUST** confirm that the information provided in this form is correct

Declaration:

I hereby certify that the information entered in this form is correct.

I confirm the proposal for a significant change is being submitted in advance of the change being made.

I confirm that the academy trust has discharged its public sector equality duties in proposing this change, to ensure that the policies and practices adopted by the academy trust comply with the equality duties under the Equality Act 2010.

I understand that the academy trust is responsible for making sure that all legal requirements are met when the change is implemented.

I understand the supply of inaccurate or misleading information and failure to follow the correct procedures could constitute a breach of the funding agreement and that any changes granted by the Secretary of State as a result, will be rendered null and void.

Name:	Mr Peter Little
Role within the organisation (This must be either the chair of the academy trust or the accounting officer):	Chair
Signature:	
Date:	

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Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust Ltd [BEMAT]

Etonbury Academy [ETA]

<p>1</p>	<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>In accordance with Section 38 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 BEMAT wishes to fulfil its duty to promote community cohesion. The promotion of this expansion of Etonbury Academy which is local to and serves a catchment including the towns of Arlesey and Stotfold and the Parish of Fairfield will enable children living in the local community to attend the same academy fostering a coherent community identity and enabling community ownership to build around a range of extracurricular activities.</p> <p>If the proposed expansion of Etonbury Academy to 6 forms of entry with a PAN of 180 and a capacity of 1260 did not take place the pupils would need to be bussed to Samuel Whitbread Academy as the existing academy fills or if parents' preferred travel outside of the catchment, probably by car. By providing these local places for local pupils the need for travel is significantly reduced.</p> <p>In accordance with Section 76 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 BEMAT intends to support the local education authority to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs of their area. The expansion of the academy also supports the LA in ensuring the sufficiency of provision local to the areas of demographic demand and supports this duty by reducing the need for car journeys and also limits potential growth in the cost of providing school transport on distance criteria to qualifying pupils to meet the Council's statutory responsibilities.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>The need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable.</p>
	<p>BEMAT sets five year projections for all academies as part of its budgeting planning process. The estimated pupil numbers supplied by CBC admissions service and operational related costs show a surplus at Etonbury over the next five years. The forecast shows a £157,700 deficit in the current year [2016 / 2017] but this will be eliminated by Local Authority Growth Fund the application for which is being processed. BEMAT is confident that the expanded academy is sustainable in the long term.</p> <p>The academy will be ideally placed with six forms of entry [180 pupils in each year group] in terms of supporting a broad curriculum offer. Six forms of entry would be what most educationalists and their professional bodies would consider to be the minimum year group size to support the curriculum offer to meet the range of needs typical in a Central Bedfordshire context.</p> <p>BEMAT will have more options with the expanded school in shaping an excellent curriculum to meet the needs of students, especially at Key Stage 4</p> <p>The proposals to expand Etonbury Academy to provide the required additional middle school places, has not been subject of an options appraisal. However, the proposals provide for growth from within the local catchment and in all other</p>

relevant respects are aligned with the Council's Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools.

The requirement to provide 240 additional upper school places serving the catchment of Samuel Whitbread Academy has however been subject of an options appraisal undertaken with Council support by Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust.

A summary of the key elements of the options appraisal follows:

The current site of Samuel Whitbread Academy was re-developed and expanded through the Bedfordshire Education Partnership PFI scheme. This increased the capacity of the school to 1758 places. Presently, the Sixth Form has more than 450 students on roll and each of the school's year groups are between 400 to 450 students in size.

The academy was graded as 'Good', including the Sixth Form by Ofsted in its last inspection in June 2014. The Academy proposes to achieve an 'Outstanding' standard with support of a new Chief Executive Officer, new Principal and the newly constituted Board of Directors, within the academic year 2019 / 2020.

As the Upper school serving the catchments that are undergoing significant demographic growth, demand for additional places for 13-19 year-olds would normally be accommodated within a redevelopment of the campus. However BEMAT has declared that accommodating the required expansion from 1758 places to 1998 places on the Samuel Whitbread campus would not be its automatic choice for a number of valid reasons, including the following statements made by the Multi Academy Trust for inclusion within this business case.

Logistical Issues in Size: BEMAT has made significant improvements at KS4 in the past two years, taking the GCSE 5A*- C including Maths and English from 47% to 67% and significantly improving outcomes at 16+. However, KS 4 is currently at 52% and it is felt that increasing the size of year groups to almost 500, coupled with the expected expansion of the Sixth Form as a result of increased staying on rates will potentially hinder BEMAT's drive to deliver outstanding education across the board on the Samuel Whitbread site. The resulting size of the Samuel Whitbread campus would place it above the Council's own guidelines for the optimum size of Upper Schools, outlined in its Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning in Schools.

Issues with Community Disconnect & Transport: At present approximately 80% of children are transported by bus to the Samuel Whitbread campus, many from Stotfold, Arlesey and the surrounding villages. It could be argued that this creates a 'community disconnect', hindering the development of positive relationships with children, families, and the community and to the detriment of sustainable extra-curricular and community projects. The 'remoteness' of the Samuel Whitbread campus to some of the communities within its catchment that are giving rise to the need for the identified new school places is not only a potential obstacle to improving standards further, but will also add to the Home-School transport costs and is in conflict with both the Trust's and Council's obligations to promote sustainable school transport. It would also be at odds with BEMAT's aim 'to advance education and community cohesion'.

BEMAT based upon the detail expounded above believes that expanding Etonbury Academy to an appropriate size is likely to contribute towards the likelihood of success and improved outcomes on a single site.

3	The ability to support the expansion of local popular and successful schools or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools.
	<p>Etonbury Academy is rated 'Good' and is in a multi academy trust that includes good and outstanding academies. BEMAT has moved academies within its membership from 'requires improvement' to 'Good' [Samuel Whitbread [SWA], Etonbury Academies] and has the capacity to support the expanded school in terms of standards and quality in order that it can become outstanding itself.</p> <p>ETA is oversubscribed, at its current PAN of 120 to be increased to 150 for September 2016 has year groups of 178, 183, 140 and 119 [years 5 to 8] and with the larger cohorts forecast to increase to a potential Year 5 intake of 217 in September 2017. ETA is a successful and oversubscribed academy.</p>
4	The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities
	<p>BEMAT is a collaborative partnership of six academies and works closely with Henlow Academy through its foundation trust Bedfordshire East Schools Trust Ltd. Our Robert Bloomfield Academy operates the Central Bedfordshire Teaching School Partnership (CBTSP) and brings great value in relation to school improvement and to teacher education, qualification, induction and development; to leadership development and succession planning and also in relation to identification and transfer of successful practice. CBTSP will support the development of Etonbury as it expands and fills. BEMAT also works closely with the Bedfordshire Schools Training Partnership which trains teachers through its School Centred Initial Teacher Training programmes at primary and secondary level. This partnership will enable recruitment of outstanding staff. BEMAT's long established CPD programmes BEMAT can fully support the expansion of ETA and the recruitment, induction, training and professional development staff. BEMAT has developed excellent in-house support services including HR, Finance, IT, projects and Operations and Marketing. These services will add great value to the academy as it expands and fills.</p> <p>BEMAT is developing a strategy of school community engagement in order to facilitate parental and school-led system development and as funding reforms are rolled out, so affecting the viability of some school budgets, this policy will continue in order to ensure small school settings serving rural communities can reconfigure the way they are run in order to continue to provide education close to home. Already Gravenhurst, Langford and Gothic Mede academies have benefited from the economies of scale BEMAT has brought.</p> <p>The 9 to 16 model at Etonbury will enable existing lower schools to continue to serve their local communities whilst having the option to join BEMAT in the future to further obviate the effects of transition and dislocation, not to mention the disruption and concern the closing of small rural schools would bring to their communities, many of which have only the school left as a community focal point.</p>
5	The ambition to achieve a single phase of education 0 -19 and reduce school transfer points
	<p>There is evidence that learning and progress can be lost at points of transfer between schools and also transition within schools from one phase or key stage to another. BEMAT is addressing this in two ways.</p> <p>The first is to design systems that limit the number of points at which a child transfers from one school to another. The second is to promote collaboration amongst schools through which a cohort of children will pass, on such issues as continuity of pedagogy, curriculum, expectations, progress, behaviour and ethos.</p> <p>BEMAT has close agreements between its constituent academies and with the</p>

	<p>knowledge of the community it serves will mitigate some of these effects. Reducing transfer and transition or the effects of transfer and transition is a core objective. By extending the age range at ETA the transition between KS2 and KS4 is entirely eliminated. BEMAT and ETA work closely with the local feeder schools to mitigate the transition at year 4 and will continue to do so.</p> <p>BEMAT with its foundation BEST intends to extend integrated early years provision in a variety of settings, wrap around childcare and nursery education to ensure all parents who require it have access to an extended and flexible early years offer so that they can access training or work. It is BEMAT's intention to promote a 0 – 4 nursery on the ETA campus to mirror the outstanding nursery provision BEST operates in Shefford through BEST Nurseries Ltd.</p> <p>Where new early years provision is needed as a result of demographic growth or changes in entitlement, and is forecast to be required in a similar timeframe and location as proposed new lower or primary places, BEMAT will seek to develop both new provisions on the same academy site and under its leadership. This will obviate transition points at pupil admission points. By developing all through systems, seamless curricula and leadership in Mathematics, English and Science BEMAT will also reduce transition issues between Key stages and sites.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>The need to support the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).</p>
	<p>Government policy ensures that all young people are in either education, training or work related education / training full time up to the age of 18. By expanding ETA from September 2015 BEMAT has reduced the number of pupils currently transferring to SWA. This will enable the Sixth Form at SWA to be expanded at no cost to accommodate the growing number of 16+ students who will be remaining in education until they are 18 years of age.</p> <p>BEMAT will also support the maintenance of a diverse range of post-16 provision, enabling students to choose between remaining at ETA or transfer to SWA, transferring to an FE college or taking advantage of vocational routes of study. BEMAT by expanding Sixth Form provision will be able to offer a wide range of academic and vocational courses and provide a sustainable local service. BEMAT expects the number of students in its Sixth Form to grow to 800 in the long term.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>To seek opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.</p>
	<p>BEMAT has adopted a high standard of design and community engagement as part of its delivery of the first expansion of its ETA campus, working with the Football Foundation, Sport England, CBC Leisure and Recreation, local councils and local sporting clubs and societies to provide a 4 court sports hall, a 40 station fitness gym, and an all-weather floodlit pitch in addition the new teaching block, the delivery of which is due to complete at the end of May 2016. BEMAT has entered into a Community Use Agreement with Central Bedfordshire to ensure the community has access to all the indoor and outdoor facilities at ETA.</p> <p>BEMAT has also invested heavily in the existing academy buildings to bring them up to the standard of the new buildings. IT infrastructure, welfare facilities, offices, outdoor spaces, classrooms and corridors have all been improved. All windows have been replaced with aluminium double glazed units, roofs have been insulated and replaced, boilers renewed with all pipework lagged, low energy lighting has been installed with 3 photo voltaic arrays providing power during the day and Feed in Tariff payments have been deployed.</p> <p>The design brief for the expansion project will be based on a schedule of accommodation (SoA) that is derived from both the DfE's Building Bulletin 103 and Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBC) own example SoA models. The</p>

	<p>Council’s funding of the project will only be based on the capital costs associated with the additional students to be accommodated within the academy however; where sensible the briefing analysis will also seek to address any existing deficiencies, inefficiencies or issues of suitability. The SoA for this project will be developed by an independent expert in schools capital and will be checked by CBC for accuracy and appropriateness.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>To promote the diversity of provision offered in Central Bedfordshire to increase opportunities for parental choice</p>
	<p>BEMAT sets out its vision and values to all its member academies but each academy is governed by the high autonomy high accountability principle. The academies provide for different age ranges in different local communities. As ETA grows and develops its key stage 4 offer it will provide parents with choice, a unique ethos and a complimentary curriculum to Samuel Whitbread within a competitive framework of support and challenge. All BEMAT academies are co-educational comprehensives.</p> <p>The BEMAT geographical area comprises only co-educational academies and the majority of academies are based on a three tier system of education although academies are encouraged to consider alternative models of leadership, governance and organisation to achieve the BEMAT’s overarching aim of raising standards. This creative thinking has created a hybrid two tier system in Arlesey and Stotfold with nurseries, lower schools and a 9 to 16 extended secondary at ETA, with a Sixth Form available on BEMAT’s SWA campus.</p> <p>BEMAT’s aim is to create a more diverse school system offering excellence and choice, where each academy 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>
<p>9</p>	<p>To support vulnerable learners in Area Special Schools and integrate appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within mainstream schools</p>
	<p>A significant part of this work will be developing the provision for SEND and high achieving students. BEMAT have reached ‘Outstanding’ results in KS2 on its Robert Bloomfield campus and the best KS2 results at Etonbury in 2015 with the most able pushing beyond expectation. With the enhanced provision we should be able to push more high achieving students from an early age through ‘Outstanding’ levels of achievement in KS2 and then KS4 due to the more seamless transition we will provide for them on the Etonbury campus and due to the proximity of the KS4 provision for KS3 students to access. For example, Year 7 and 8 (indeed KS2 students) could access Engineering facilities designed for GCSE and, no doubt, access GCSE standards of teaching and learning. Similarly, our impressive Options programme (recognized by Ofsted as being an ‘Outstanding’ element of our curriculum) would be enhanced further to give even more real life learning opportunities that are not found within the core National Curriculum taught at mainstream schools. The development of 14-16 on our Etonbury campus will allow us to create an impressive all-through curriculum from 9-16 with greater opportunities for acceleration and enrichment for pupils with special needs. We will work with our business and commercial partners to provide work placements for our young people. Our SEND provision at 8-13 was rated ‘Outstanding’ in 2008 and again in 2009 as part of an HMI inclusion inspection.</p> <p>Along with catering for the mainstream and the high achievers, the 14-16 provision at our Etonbury campus will provide for Special Education Needs and Disabilities [SEND] students far more effectively than we are currently able to do.</p>

	<p>Our refurbished buildings with enhanced access have already had a positive impact. The buildings now have provision for students with mobility and sensory impairments and we expect the building work to support these students with state-of-the-art provision. Similarly we expect to develop our Ofsted recognized successful pastoral and SEND provision to cater for the 9-16 journey. One key to this sort of support is the fact that children learn naturally in mixed age group provision – families, for example, when going well have learners of all ages supporting each other to overcome disadvantages. Our SEND students will be supported by an enhanced family of 9-16 aged learners framed within our Ofsted recognize ethos of care for others and high achievement. The development of a single point of contact children and family services team across BEMAT and a single SENCO structure will greatly enhance provision. Children and their families will be supported by these teams throughout their 9-16 journeys and into the Sixth Form at our SWA campus.</p> <p>BEMAT expects to make its facilities at Etonbury available to the Central Bedfordshire Academy located in Stotfold.</p>
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<p>10</p>	<p>Capacity to Deliver the proposed expansion</p>
	<p>For schools/academies that would like to procure design and construction works directly and manage the project to completion, please set out below the project management approach that you intend to take, including governance arrangements. Please ensure that you are clear of the professional support that you intend to engage and of the experience of the School and its Governing Body in successfully delivering significant capital projects.</p>
<p>1</p>	<p>Whilst BEMAT has a good track record of delivering building projects, for a scheme of this size we will seek to engage a specialist team to provide additional capacity and expertise. We have identified AMR Consult as our chosen partner, the same team that has delivered the projects at Robert Bloomfield and Etonbury Academies on time and on budget. This programme was eventually valued at just under £10m when all the associated works were taken into account. AMR Consult has also delivered in the region of 20 other projects on behalf of CBC or schools within the local authority area, all of which have been achieved on time and on budget. We are confident that this track record can be maintained, particularly as the academy and site are ones both BEMAT and AMR Consult have recently worked on.</p> <p>The BEMAT Board has agreed the existing governance arrangements which have successfully delivered the first phase of Etonbury's development will continue. The Transforming Education Steering Group will provide day to day scrutiny and management of the project and will include;</p> <p>CBC Head of Admissions, School Organisation and Capital Planning BEMAT Chair of Directors BEMAT Chief Executive BEMAT Head of Projects, Resources, Operations and Capital AMRConsult Ltd Principal Etonbury Academy Chair of Governors Etonbury Academy BEMAT Head of Finance</p>

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Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

7 June 2016

**Tender Award for the Re-development of Croft Green,
Dunstable**

Report of Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing
carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Advising Officers: Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
julie.ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Matthew Berry, Housing Development Manager, Social Care, Health and
Housing
matthew.berry@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. This report recommends the award of part A of a two part contract for the demolition of part of an existing sheltered housing scheme and the design and construction of a new 24 unit Independent Living Scheme at Croft Green, Dunstable. Members will be asked to consider the award of part B at a later date as this is dependent on the conclusion of successful negotiations with the preferred tenderer. The work to the Croft Green sheltered housing complex emanates from the Sheltered Housing review that determined the future of this type of accommodation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **to approve the award of part A of a two part contract (A&B) for the demolition (of part) of an existing sheltered housing scheme and the design and construction of a new 24 unit Independent Living Scheme at Croft Green Dunstable. Part A comprises the detail design and agreement of the contract sum for the works; and**
2. **to note that Members will be asked to consider a further report on the award of part B of the contract at a later date following the satisfactory conclusion of successful negotiations with the preferred tenderer. Part B comprises the construction of the works.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. The item is not planned to go to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee but may by virtue of s101 of the Local Government Act 1972. Budget for the project was approved as part of the Landlord Business Plan approved by the Council on the 25 February 2016.

Issues

3. The Council is committed to improving living standards and choice of accommodation in the wide portfolio of sheltered housing schemes. As part of the Council's review of the sheltered housing schemes Croft Green, Dunstable was identified as a scheme for partial re-development. The objective for the review of sheltered housing provision was to develop a strategy that ensured the Council's sheltered housing stock remains fit for purpose both now and in the future.
4. The existing bedsit block at Croft Green is no longer fit for purpose and has been empty for 2 years. It is intended to demolish this block and replace it with a modern and sustainable building, increasing the density from 9 to 24 units. It is not proposed to re-develop the neighbouring bungalows at Croft Green which are currently fit for purpose. This re-development will provide a new high quality facility with apartments built to modern accommodation standards and high quality communal space.
5. The scheme received planning consent in December 2014 for 23 new residential units (an increase of 14 units). After tendering further work was undertaken to find savings within the scheme; without compromising unnecessarily on standards this has identified the potential to increase the number of units to 24. The Council will continue to identify opportunities for further development opportunities that will improve viability.
6. The scheme will provide a day opportunity facility for residents within the building but also the wider community. It is proposed that the new apartments will be let at an affordable rent, i.e. up to a maximum of 80% of the market rent.
7. A Business case has been developed that demonstrates the project pays back within 33 years. The scheme is part funded by receipts from Right to Buy sales. The use of these receipts is time limited, and also limited to new build developments that do not benefit from other grant funding. The scheme has been modelled on affordable rent as this is consistent with the approach that has been taken at Priory View and Creasey Park Drive. In terms of mitigating the impact of a Housing Benefit cap at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels the Council have taken into account a number of issues.

The Government review into Supported Housing is due later in 2016 and this issue will be addressed. A one year delay in applying the LHA cap to residents in supported housing has been announced. If the review does implement the Housing Benefit cap for Supported Housing then to let the properties at affordable rent will require consideration at the letting stage. The options would be to let to those not reliant on Housing Benefit or to let to those on Housing Benefit but subsidise them.

8. Tenders were received in January 2016. Twenty six expressions of interest were received and six proposals were eventually received. The form of contract for both the Part A (Design development and agreement of Contract Sum) and Part B (Construction works including demolition) will be the JCT Design and Build Contract 2011 Edition.
9. The tender evaluation was undertaken by officers, professional advisors and tenant representatives. Three contractors were shortlisted for interview. A preferred bidder has been identified; the evaluation table can be seen at exempt appendix A. It is proposed to enter into contract for the Part A works with bidder B.
10. Tenants at Croft Green and stakeholders have been fully engaged in the proposals for the project.

Reason/s for decision

11. The scheme will involve the award of a contract in excess of £500,000 (the combined Parts A and B).
12. This proposed development will contribute towards Priority 4 of the Housing Asset Management Strategy (HAMS): the development of new homes.
13. The site is a brownfield site within an urban area. The re-use of sites such as this reduces the need to develop greenfield sites within Central Bedfordshire.

Council Priorities

14. The proposed development supports the following Council priorities:
 - a. Enhancing the local community, creating jobs, managing growth, protecting the countryside and enabling businesses to grow. The development will contribute to the delivery of this priority through regenerating a brownfield site. Through advertising locally this increases the opportunity for local businesses and job creation.

- b. Promote health and well being and protect the vulnerable. The development will contribute to delivering this priority through providing housing for the elderly and disabled.
- c. Generating efficiencies and value for money through economies of scale, supply chain management and improved working practices. The business case also identifies a clear financial benefit.

Corporate Implications

Procurement

- 15. The contract has been tendered in accordance with the Council's Corporate Procurement Rules. The chosen route to market provides value for money as the prices have been competitively tendered. The agreed contract sum will be benchmarked against current prices to ensure that value for money is obtained.
- 16. Corporate Procurement have been fully engaged in the procurement process.

Legal Implications

- 17.
 - a. Given that the value of the procurement was estimated to be below the EU threshold for works contracts, the Contract Procurement Regulations 2015 do not apply and accordingly the procurement process and contract award must comply with the Council's contract standing orders where applicable and be properly authorised in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
 - b. The Council is subject to the requirement to obtain best value in the 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 process achieves best value in terms of price and quality.
 - c. The Council should also ensure that the procurement process complies with the EU Treaty principles of proportionality, equal treatment, transparency and mutual recognition.
 - d. The building contract is based on the JCT Design and Build Contract 2011; the approach to be taken has been approved by legal services. The contract should be completed to ensure the Council is sufficiently protected whilst maintaining commercial viability.

Financial Implications

18. The scheme is to be funded from the Council's Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Business Plan) that received Council approval on the 25th February 2016. This project was specifically identified in the Landlord Business Plan with budget provision of £4m in 2016/17 and 2017/18. In addition there is slippage from the previous financial year that will provide sufficient resource for the target cost as set out in the business case.
19. It is proposed that 30% of the construction cost will be met from receipts received from Right to Buy sales. The Business Case is not predicated on receiving commuted sums or grant.

Equalities Implications

20. The successful contractor is required to provide a copy of their policy statement on Equal Opportunities. They have to provide written confirmation that the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy has been read and understood. They will confirm in writing that they will work in accordance with the Employer's Equal Opportunities policy at all times. Similar assurances will be required of the contractor's consultants and sub contractors
21. The successful contractor is required to register the site under the Considerate Constructors Scheme and comply with the Code of Considerate Practice. This requires the contractor to prevent the display of "pin-up" type material or any material or graffiti that is offensive or insulting or is abusive or degrading to women, lesbian and gay people or ethnic minorities. They are required to immediately remove any such material as soon as it is discovered.
22. The apartments are to be designated as housing for older persons; these will provide high quality and accessible accommodation for those in housing need. The scheme has been designed to take into account those with mobility needs.

Risk

23. A number of measures have been put in place to "de-risk" the scheme and ensure that the Council's priorities are met. The following key risks have been identified:
 - a. Value for money – there are indications that the construction industry is facing rising labour costs and materials shortages. This is resulting in rising construction costs. This has been mitigated through the running of a competitive tender process. The Council has also identified design changes that could reduce the construction costs; these will be implemented where appropriate.

- b. Delays in completion – There have been rigorous project management processes put in place to mitigate this risk. In addition there will be financial penalties put in place for delays in completion.
- c. Two stage tender process - We are mitigating the potential for future variations in costs and programme through the two-stage procurement process. Both the contractor and client have the opportunity through this process to work together to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the scheme requirements.

Sustainability

- 24. The scheme has been designed to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4. Energy efficiency measures are at the core of the design. These will reduce the energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions from space heating and water heating, e.g. passive solar design where possible.

Conclusion and next Steps

- 25. Following approval to enter into contract, work will be undertaken to design the scheme in detail against the agreed target cost (this is identified in the business case). If a firm process can be agreed that delivers the target cost members will be asked to approve the next phase of the project. If the target cost cannot be achieved members will be advised of the options available. The principle of funding the redevelopment of Croft Green, Dunstable is established within the Landlord Business Plan. Following appointment of the contractor the next step will be to enter into negotiation with the preferred contractor.
- 26. The homes should be ready for occupation in the summer of 2018.

Appendix

- 27. Appendix one – Tender evaluation worksheet - Exempt

Background Papers

None.

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday, 7 June 2016

Tender Award for the Contract for Kitchen and Bathroom Replacements to Council Housing 2016-2020

Report of Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing (carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officers: Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing (julie.ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) and Stephen Jeremy, Major Works Manager, (stephen.jeremy@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk, Tel: 0300 300 4655)

This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. This report recommends the award of the contract for Kitchen and Bathroom Replacements to council dwellings for 2016-2020. The contract is a one year rolling contract up to a maximum of four years. The reason for this choice of contract is that following years being awarded is based upon continued good performance, and that it gives housing the flexibility to reconsider the procurement strategy for Kitchen & Bathrooms in the coming years. This contract will help meet priority 6 of the Housing Asset Management Strategy, i.e. to ensure the housing stock is kept in good repair and meets tenants' current and future expectations

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **approve the award of the most economically advantageous tender to contractor A for the replacement of Kitchen & Bathrooms to Council homes.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. The Chairman of Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee has been consulted and agrees that the proposals do not require review by the Committee.

Issues

3. This report outlines the outcome of the tendering of the Housing Service Kitchen & Bathroom Replacement Contract. This contract was procured using standard contract documentation (Foremaster 6.1 Contract).
4. The new contract allows for the replacement of Kitchen and/or Bathrooms to domestic properties within the HRA housing portfolio. This is a one year contract with the option to extend by up to three years, subject to performance and annual review.
5. The Contract employs standard commercial terms following the Form of Contract supported by a priced bespoke schedule of rates.
6. Variation orders are agreed for any adjustment to the original works using pre-priced rates before the contractor is paid any additional or reduced sums.

Reason/s for decision

7. This contract will help to meet priority 6 of the Housing Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) to ensure the housing stock is kept in good repair and meets tenants' current and future expectations. This contract will allow the Council's Housing Services to continue the Kitchen & Bathroom programme during 2016 – 2020
8. The existing contract for Kitchen & Bathroom Replacement ended in March 2016 and the Council will enter into new contract arrangements that will commence following Executive Approval

Council Priorities

9. The actions support the Council priorities by:
 - a. Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – improving the quality of Council Homes within the Central Bedfordshire area.
 - b. A more efficient and responsive Council - Generating efficiencies and value for money through economies of scale, supply chain management and improved working practices.
 - c. Great Resident Services – ensuring the delivery of improvements to council homes.

Legal Implications

10. Standard contract documentation Foremaster Contract, with schedule of rates for the installation of Kitchens and/or Bathrooms

Financial and Risk Implications

11. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Medium Term Financial Plan indicates budgetary provision for Kitchen & Bathroom Replacements as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>MTFP Budget</u>
2016/17	£900,000
2017/18	£797,000
2018/19	£876,000
2019/20	£1,000,000

12. The contract is initially for a one year period with the option of extending up to 3 years, subject to satisfactory performance review at the Council's discretion.
13. Whilst this budget provision is available within the Business Plan, there is no obligation within the contract to spend a minimum sum with the chosen contractor. The Council has the flexibility to adapt its strategy to meet its current priorities without financial loss. The contract evaluation is based upon an equal 70% price and 30% quality assessment to help ensure value for money from the contract.
14. The following risks have been identified:
- Failure to deliver the Kitchen & Bathroom Replacement programme.
 - Failure to effectively utilise the 2016-20 budget provision for the purpose intended.
 - Failure to deliver value for money.
 - Failure to deliver the Housing Strategy (i.e. to ensure that the housing stock is kept in good repair and meets tenants' needs and expectations) and other council priorities.

Equalities Implications

15. Equality and diversity are key issues for all directorates within Central Bedfordshire Council. As part of the tender evaluation contractors' demonstrated their compliance with the Corporate Equalities Policy and incorporate this commitment within their method statements. As part of ongoing contract monitoring arrangements the Council will check that statutory service delivery and employment requirements relating to equality are met.

Procurement

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

17. A contract advert was placed on the 4 April 2016 in local newspapers and on the CBC website, with a tender return date of 25 April 2016.
18. During the tender process the Council received 40 expressions of interest, with 20 tenders being submitted before the deadline.
19. The Standard Award Criteria Evaluation Mode used is a points system based upon 70% of the points being awarded for financial submissions and 30% of the points being awarded for quality method statement submissions.
20. The Financial submissions were marked / scored independently of the Quality submissions to ensure that scoring of the quality submission was not influenced by the tender sums submitted by the suppliers, and to help ensure objectivity when scoring the Quality Statements of the bidders.
21. The criteria for assessment of quality covered the following specific areas: Methodology, Key Performance Indicators, Warranties, Information Systems, Resident Liaison, Management Structures, Environmental Sustainability, Social Value and Data Handling
22. A joint evaluation panel made up of officers and tenants was established to evaluate all tender bids. The information provided in the quality method statements was reviewed. The outcome of the evaluation was to recommend a contractor who met quality and financial criteria, and provided the most economically advantageous tender.

Conclusion and next Steps

23. The conclusion of the report is for the Executive to approve Contractor C for the Housing Kitchen and bathroom contract. The next step if Contractor C is approved; is for Housing to prepare the contract and award the works.

Appendices

The following Appendix is attached

24. Appendix A. The appendix is exempt under category number 3 - "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)".
25. Appendix A – Exempt report Award of the Housing Kitchen and Bathroom Replacement Contract 2016 -2020

Background Papers

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

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