

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 7 August 2018.

PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)
Cllr R D Wenham (Vice-Chairman)

Executive Members:	Cllrs	I Dalgarno S Dixon E Ghent	Cllrs	Ms C Hegley B J Spurr J N Young
Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	A D Brown K M Collins Mrs T Stock	Cllrs	G Tubb S Watkins B Wells
Apologies for Absence:	Cllrs	Mrs S Clark Mrs A L Dodwell Ms C Maudlin		
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	R D Berry M C Blair D Bowater F Firth C C Gomm Mrs S A Goodchild	Cllrs	Ms A M W Graham R W Johnstone K C Matthews R Morris T Nicols
Officers in Attendance		Mr R Carr Mr A Davie Mr P Fraser Mrs S Hobbs Mr C Kiernan Mr P Mason Mrs J Ogley Mr S Rix Mrs M Scott Mr C Warboys		Chief Executive Development Infrastructure Group Manager Assistant Director Education Senior Committee Services Officer Interim Head of School Improvement Assistant Director Highways Director of Social Care, Health and Housing Interim Monitoring Officer Director of Public Health Director of Resources

E/18/19

Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/18/20 **Members' Interests**

None were declared.

E/18/21 **Chairman's Announcements**

Item 6 'Public Participation would be considered after item 7 'Forward Plan of Key Decisions'.

E/18/22 **Petitions**

Better Infrastructure for Shefford

Ms Bromley presented an e-petition, signed by 187 residents, requesting improvements to the infrastructure in Shefford before any further development took place, specifically the conversion of The Birches Residential Home into temporary housing. She explained that access to the site and car parking needed to be improved, the requirement for a larger doctors' surgery, better transport links and the need for pot holes to be repaired.

The Executive Member for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations had met with local residents to discuss the proposal for the conversion of The Birches Residential Home into 17 units for temporary accommodation. She explained that residents' concerns had been considered in the development of the plans. A planning application had been submitted and would shortly be available to view on the Council's website. A frequently asked questions fact sheet had been prepared for circulation to local residents.

The Council was aware of the pressures on infrastructure across Central Bedfordshire. The Council was working with the NHS to try to enhance health facilities in the area.

Numerous roads in Shefford were due to receive planned maintenance and she requested that any pot holes could be reported on the Council's website.

E/18/23 **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019 be noted.

E/18/24 **Public Participation**

The Chairman invited the public speakers to make their statements in accordance with the Public Participation Scheme.

Shelton Lower School, Marston Moretaine

Ms Drew spoke about the financial viability of the school and explained why she had no confidence in the Council's projections. She felt that the school could be educationally and financially successful and would be viable in the future as there were children wanting to attend the school.

Ms Drew read out a statement on behalf Ms Woods that contended that the consultation had not been carried out correctly, proper evidence had not been provided to the decision-maker and that alternative options had not been considered. She felt that the consultation was flawed as statutory guidance had not been followed. The Chiltern Learning and the Wootton Multi-Academy Trusts had not been consulted.

Mr Miller also contended that the Council's financial estimates and pupil projections were inaccurate. He felt that the Council had predetermined the decision to close the school, the consultation had been flawed and that historic data had not been considered. Parents had already identified that there would be children wanting to attend the school up until 2019/20. Wootton Parish Council did not support the closure and was now promoting the school. Children living in Bedford should not be discriminated against coming to a school in Central Bedfordshire.

Mr Lloyd, Chairman of Wootton Parish Council, explained that there had been an increase in housing in Wootton and there was a need for additional pupil places. Wootton Lower School was due to be expanded with an additional 6 new classes when originally it was hoped to have 10 new classes. The Parish Council would do everything to support the school and felt that it could be viable.

Ms Gardner referred to the delegation in the Council's Constitution to the Director of Children's Services to approve the closure of the school and believed that the Director did not have the power to do so as it should be an Executive decision. She felt that the consultation had been commenced incorrectly and the Director had predetermined the decision. All the options for the school had not been considered.

Councillor Morris, spoke as a member of Marston Moretaine Parish Council, referred to the development in the Marston Moretaine area and felt that the school should not be closed as it could be a sustainable asset. Closing the school would have an impact on the community and the children currently attending it. The school was a good one and provided pupils with high quality education.

The Executive Member for Families, Education and Children responded to the public's concerns under item 8 'Proposal to Close Shelton Lower School, Marston Moretaine'.

E/18/25

Proposal to Close Shelton Lower School, Marston Moretaine, Bedfordshire

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children that proposed the closure of Shelton Lower School due to falling pupil numbers over the last two years. It was projected that the number of pupils would continue to fall in the future, leaving the school financially unviable.

In response to the concerns raised earlier, the Executive Member confirmed that the consultation process had been followed correctly and explained that there was overwhelming evidence to support the closure of the school. Legal advice had been sought as well as advice from the Department for Education. The school had been in financial trouble since February 2018 when the Council had provided a cash advance to ensure that it met its financial obligations and ensure pupils continued to have full access to the curriculum.

In response to Members questions, the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children explained that a full consultation exercise had taken place, which had included engagement with Wootton Lower School and the Department for Education. He explained that all options had been explored before proposing that the school be closed.

Reason for decision: The school was financially unviable due to the falling number of pupils attending it. It had a budget deficit that was projected to increase between now and 2021/22 and there was no credible recovery plan in place.

RESOLVED

that the closure of Shelton Lower School on 31 August 2019 be approved.

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/26

Cranfield Community Building

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that proposed the transfer of Cranfield Community Building, all future liabilities and responsibilities for the building, from Persimmon Plc to Cranfield Parish Council.

Reason for decision: To enable Cranfield Parish Council to manage the Community Building and sports facilities.

RESOLVED

- 1. that Cranfield Parish Council be nominated to accept the offer of the Cranfield Community Building, comprising a community hall, meeting rooms, community space, reception area, changing rooms, 1 junior football pitch, 2 intermediate size football pitches and cricket square with outfield, kitchen and other ancillary facilities, from Persimmon Plc. This being subject to the following:**

- a. **submission of a satisfactory Building Management Plan by Cranfield Parish Council indicating how it would manage all future responsibilities and liabilities associated with the community building;**
 - b. **approval by CBC of the football and cricket pitch construction specifications;**
 - c. **satisfactory completion of the construction of the sports pitches named in (b); and**
 - d. **satisfactory completion of the car park**
2. **to authorise the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to consider the Community Building Management Plan for approval when submitted by Cranfield Parish Council;**
 3. **subject to (1) and (2) above approve the payment of the community building commuted sum to Cranfield Parish Council and the Parish Council be invited to consider the need to raise their precept to contribute towards the operation of the building; and**
 4. **that the approved draft transfer deed of the Cranfield Community Building contain a restrictive covenant to protect the use of the site for the purposes of a community hall and that all future responsibilities and liabilities associated with the community building lie within Cranfield Parish Council.**

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/27

Central Area Growth Board

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Regeneration that sought endorsement for Central Bedfordshire to become a full member of the Central Area Growth Board and the adoption of the proposed terms of reference. The Council would then work collaboratively with the other neighbouring local authorities and be an active partner within the Cambridge-Oxford Corridor.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Regeneration explained that the Board would not have any delegated decision-making powers from councils. Any decisions required would need to be ratified by each of the constituent authorities. Regional assemblies had been disbanded, but working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities would help shape the area's future and help access funding for infrastructure.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to actively participate in contributing to shaping and driving the agenda on strategic planning, economic development and infrastructure planning at the sub-regional level.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the significance of the National Infrastructure Commission and Government focus on the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor be noted; and**
- 2. that an associated contribution of £5k of ongoing revenue to support the work of the Central Area Growth Board be approved.**

RECOMMENDED to Council

- 1. that Central Bedfordshire Council become a full member of the Central Area Growth Board by adopting the Terms of Reference, as set out in Appendix A to the Executive report;***
- 2. that the creation of the Central Area Growth Board as a joint committee under section 101(5), 102 Local Government Act 1972 and section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant (where applicable) to the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012 be approved;***
- 3. that the additions to the Constitution, as set out in Appendix B to the Executive report, be approved.***
- 4. that the Executive Member for Regeneration be appointed as the Council's representative on the Central Area Growth Board.***

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/28

Highways Service Incentive Fund Bid

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that set out the:

- Highways Service Communications Strategy
- Highways Asset Management Framework
- Highways Service Trees Policy.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director Highways advised that the Network Maintenance Management Plan was being updated in response to the Well Managed Highways Infrastructure Code of Practice published by the Department for Transport. This was a risk based approach to help understand the defects and their impact on highway users, including cyclists.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to maintain its status as a Band 3 authority in 2019/20 and secure the maximum possible Highways Maintenance Capital Funding from the Department for Transport's Incentive Fund.

RESOLVED

1. **that the following key documents be adopted:**
 - **Highways Service Communications Strategy, set out in Appendix A to the report**
 - **Highways Asset Management Framework, set out in Appendix B to the report**
 - **Highways Service Trees Policy, set out in Appendix C to the report**

2. **to authorise the Director for Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Services, to adopt the following documents that are currently being prepared:**
 - **Highways Asset Condition Survey Regime**
 - **Network Maintenance Management Plan (NMMP)**
 - **Highways Asset Performance Management Framework.**

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/29

Executive Response to Overview and Scrutiny Enquiry on Pupil Attainment

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children that set out the Executive's response to the recommendations from the task force enquiry into pupil attainment. The recommendations had been prioritised and work had already commenced on implementing them.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children explained that the Council needed to create an identity that supported the recruitment of the best teachers. He acknowledged that there was a need to deliver better and more affordable housing for key workers. A list of key workers would need to be considered, as well as those in education.

Reason for decision: To enable the recommendations, where applicable, to be implemented.

RESOLVED

that the Executive's response to the enquiry into Pupil Attainment, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/30

Schools for the Future

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children that set out the approach being proposed for meeting the demand for school places over a 15-20 year period. The school landscape was very mixed with lower, middle, upper, primary and secondary schools. Around 40,000 new homes were due to be built in Central Bedfordshire by 2035 and it was estimated that there would be an additional 9,700 children requiring a school place over the next 5 years.

It was proposed to support those schools that wanted to work towards a primary and secondary model and to actively promote that any new schools being built would be primary or secondary.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children confirmed that the Executive had approved an increase in pupil yield from 0.04 to 0.06 pupils per dwelling, per academic year group. The plan for schools for the future would be aligned with the Local Plan. The Council would help facilitate, coordinate and support any schools that wanted to change and as yet the cost implications were unknown. The Special Education Needs and Disability provision was also being considered to enhance that provision.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to develop a longer term coherent and transparent plan for future educational provision, shaped by the schools and to ensure the Council was best placed to deal with the growth agenda.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the position reached on planning for schools for the future be noted; and**
- 2. that the following policy be approved:**
 - To support schools and clusters that want to work towards a primary and secondary model, based on:**
 - the appropriate resources being in place to do so;**
 - change being coordinated; and**
 - change supports improvements in educational outcomes.**
 - To actively promote that any new schools that are be built be primary or secondary.**

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/31

Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan (including the Capital Programme and Housing Revenue Account)

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the framework for the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2019/2020 – 2022/23 with the updated planning assumptions.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to have a framework to meet the financial challenges faced over the medium term.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the proposed framework for the updating of the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2019/20 – 2022/23 and the preparation of the a Budget for 2019/20 be endorsed; and**
- 2. that the approach to consultation for 2018/19 be approved.**

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/32

The Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Adult, Social Care and Housing Operations that set out the options for the future of Ampthill Day Centre for Older People and sought authorisation for the commencement of consultation on the proposals set out in the report.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to commence consultation on the proposals and report back to the Executive in December 2018 with recommendations about the future of Ampthill Day Centre.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the work under way to explore improvements in the variety, flexibility and sustainability of day services for older people in West Mid Beds in line with the new Day Offer adopted by the Council be noted;**
- 2. to authorise the commencement of formal consultation on proposals for the future of Ampthill Day Centre for Older People, as set out in paragraphs 17 to 27 of the report; and**
- 3. that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Executive advising of the outcome of the consultation and making recommendations about the future of the Centre.**

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/33

Arrangements for the Supply of Agency Staff to the Council

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the requirement to re-procure the contract for agency workers and the proposed approach and timescale.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to re-procure the contract for the supply of agency workers.

RESOLVED

1. that the award of an interim contract for the supply of agency staff to the current supplier for a period not exceeding nine months, as set out in paragraphs 21 to 23 in the report, be approved;
2. that a report detailing the options for procurement be taken to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee before the delegated authority below be exercised;
3. to authorise the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to determine the most appropriate consortium framework from within which to procure agency services to follow on from the interim arrangements set out in resolution 1;
4. to authorise the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to award a contract to the supplier selected as a result of the process set out in resolution 3; and
5. to authorise the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to award a contract to the supplier as selected as a result of the process set out in resolution 4.

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/34

Insurance Retender

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that outlined the approach to meeting the Council's insurance requirements for April 2019.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to re-procure the insurance contract.

RESOLVED

to authorise the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to conduct the tender process and award appropriate contracts.

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/35 **Revenue Budget Monitoring 2018/19 - Quarter 1**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the forecast revenue outturn position for Quarter 1 in 2018/19. The forecast position was an overspend of £0.8m.

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

RESOLVED

1. **that the revenue forecast outturn position of an overspend of £0.8M, be noted;**
2. **to note that the budget includes £2.1M of contingency against which no call has been made as yet. If this contingency was released then this results in an underspend of £1.3M; and**
3. **to request officers to continue to look for compensatory savings in order to deliver a balanced budget.**

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/36 **Capital Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the forecast capital outturn position for Quarter 1 in 2018/19.

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

RESOLVED

to note that the capital gross forecast is a spend of £109.7M (£63.2M in 2017/18), demonstrating the continued significant capital investment made by Central Bedfordshire to support its community.

The decision was unanimous.

E/18/37 **Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 1**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the Housing Revenue Account projected revenue and capital outturn position for Quarter 1 in 2018/19.

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

RESOLVED

- 1. that the revenue forecast of a balanced budget with a contribution to HRA Reserves of £6.493M, be noted thus strengthening the Council's ability to invest and improve its stock of Council Houses;**
- 2. to note that the capital forecast position indicates a net outturn on budget of £25.130M; and**
- 3. that Right to Buy (RtB) sales would be monitored for the possible impact on predicted surpluses in the medium to longer term.**

The decision is unanimous.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 12.45 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated