



CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

20 January 2011

1. MEETING

The Authority last met on 10 December 2010

Set out below are some of the main issues discussed.

2. PROVISIONAL BUDGET SETTLEMENT 2011/12

The Provisional Finance settlement was not received in time for consideration by Members at the Authority meeting. It was however considered at a subsequent Members seminar. A factual assessment of the settlement and how it impacts on the Revenue budget 2011/12 is detailed below.

All Police Authorities will receive a 5.1% Formula Grant Reduction in 2011/12, with overall core funding, including specific grants, reducing by 4%.

For Bedfordshire, and all other Police Authorities the settlement for Formula Grant, now incorporates the previous specific grants: Crime Fighting Fund, BCU grant and Rule 2 grant, and is 5.1% less than was received by the Authority for all four grants in 2010/11, this equating to a £3.97M reduction, and provides a Formula Grant of £73.181M.

The table below provides a breakdown of this settlement. It is disappointing that despite a representation to the Policing Minister from our MP's the Government has continued to use the damping mechanism, also known as floors and ceilings, which has resulted in Bedfordshire losing approximately £1M compared to that it should have received through the funding formula.

	2011/12	2010/11
	£M	£M
Total Formula Grant	73.181	73.089
Funded by:		
Business Rates	22.365	26.580
Revenue Support Grant	6.902	3.860
Police Grant	43.914	42.649
Total	73.181	73.089

□The announcement also confirmed that the Neighbourhood Policing Fund, which contributes towards 75% of the pay costs for the 128 PCSOs within the Force, would continue to be ringfenced for 2011/12 and 2012/13 and then

absorbed into the Police Grant in future years.

Whilst not yet confirmed, as part of the settlement, it is anticipated that the specific grants associated with Prevent, Manpads and Security Grant will continue at similar levels to 2010/11.

The announcement also confirmed that Capital Grant would be reduced by 60% in 2011/12 to £0.8M, but increased up to £1.1M for the remainder of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period.

The Finance Settlement included firm details for 2012/13 which highlighted a 6.7% reduction on the 2011/12 Formula Grant. The level of Grant expected to be received totals £68.276M representing a cash reduction of £4.905M. At this stage the forecasted funding gap for 2012/13 is approximately £5.5M.

A specific Grant has been included within the Settlement for 2012/13 of £50M to provide funding for the election of Crime Commissioners.

Based upon this settlement and the pressures to deliver a service that the public deserve the potential budget requirement for 2011/12 is £110.252M leaving a funding gap of £6.3M.

In recognition of the funding gap the Authority continues to drive forward efficiencies through a number of initiatives such as extending our collaboration programme to help deliver more efficient support services and greater resilience within Protective Services and reviewing the way local policing is delivered. However the initiatives in place are expected to deliver £5.9M savings and further initiatives are therefore being considered to meet the full funding gap.

In terms of the level of Council Tax the settlement has confirmed the inclusion of an additional specific grant equivalent to a 2.5% increase on the 2010/11 Council Tax levels to assist Police Authorities in maintaining 2011/12 Council Tax at 2010/11 levels. It had been previously thought that this would be a one off grant but will now be included for all four years of the CSR period. On this basis the Authority has agreed to consider a 2.5% precept to take advantage of the grant to maintain the Council Tax at the 2010/11 level.

The Authority is in the process of consulting with the public around the budget and views expressed will be taken into account when deciding the budget

The Authority will be on meeting 18 February 2011 to determine the budget , budget requirement, Precept and Council Tax for 2011/12

3. SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Significant progress has been made in the fight against crime in Bedfordshire despite disappointing half yearly performance figures. Overall crime in the county has fallen by 18% in the last three years and the number of victims of serious violence has fallen by 4,500 over the same period.

Members are however disappointed that many of the targets have not been met this year particularly in areas such as domestic burglary and crime investigation, but have acknowledged that these targets had been designed to be challenging.

The Force are continuing to implement changes aimed at raising performance to meet the targets which include a new approach to problem solving and better information management. Dedicated investigation teams for crimes such as burglary, robbery and vehicle crime are now in place across Bedfordshire and known offenders are being managed by multi agency specialist teams.

The Authority is keen to see value for money from its investment in new business processes and staff training and is ensuring that resources are being matched to priorities to deliver results.

Public confidence has seen a slight fall in recent months which would be helped by improved detection figures and therefore the Authority is working closely with the Force to develop the investigatory skills of Police Officers.

In terms of most serious violence (MSV) the Chief Constable has assured Members that the targets set for MSV are still achievable. Members felt that this was an area where greater scrutiny would pay dividends and agreed to appoint a Lead Member to focus on the specific issues associated with tackling this type of crime across the county.

While targets are not being met, the number of serious acquisitive crimes is in fact marginally lower than the same period in 2009-10.

4. BEDFORDSHIRE AND HERTFORDSHIRE COLLABORATION PROGRAMME

The Authority has formally approved the establishment of a joint Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire collaboration in the areas of Firearms licensing and counter terrorism and domestic extremism. The new Firearms Unit will be in place from 1st February 2011 and is expected to make combined efficiency savings of approximately £173K in the first year and £194K thereafter. The new counter terrorism and domestic extremism unit will be in place from 1st February 2011 and is expected to deliver combined efficiencies of £124,800 per year.

Bedfordshire has also formally approved the establishment of a joint Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire Procurement Unit. The unit will be in place from 1 March 2011 and will bring combined efficiency savings of approximately £253K per year. Further efficiencies of £2M will be delivered over 5 years.

A business case for a joint Roads Policing unit has also been approved and subject to formal approval at the next meeting of the Authority the unit will be operational from February 2011.

In order to streamline the current governance arrangements for the Beds and Herts Protective Services Department a joint Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) will be appointed to command the department. The ACC will be appointed from the current substantive ACCs in each force. The introduction of the single ACC Protective Services will generate combined savings of between £192k and £208k.

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REPORT OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

