

## COUNCIL MEETING – 24 FEBRUARY 2010

### Recommendations to Council from the Executive meeting held on 15 February 2011

#### **E/10/130 Capital Programme 2011/12**

The Executive considered a report from Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and People proposing the Capital Programme for 2011/12 to 2014/15. It was noted that Government spending plans meant that there were fewer resources available for both revenue and capital activities, and the Council needed to respond to this in its own spending plans. The Capital Programme had been reviewed and set out proposals that would reduce the Authority's additional borrowing from the £11.000m envisaged in the Medium Term Financial Strategy to £7.7m in 2011/12.

The Executive debated the report, during which time the Portfolio Holders responded to questions and comments from the Executive and non-Executive Members in attendance. Portfolio Holder undertook to provide written responses to a number of points of clarification sought by individual Members, including covering capital funding for Tithe Farm Lower School, Houghton Regis and Section 106 funding for the provision of a lower school in Leighton Buzzard.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to agree schemes to commence in 2011/12 and reduce the Authority's new borrowing requirement in line with the request by Council in February 2010.

#### **RESOLVED**

To note that the level of borrowing associated with the proposed 2011/12 Capital Programme had been reduced to £7.7m to minimise the impact on the Council's future Revenue Budgets.

#### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

- 1. that the 2011/12 to 2014/15 Capital Programme, as attached at Appendix A to the report submitted to the Executive, be approved;***
- 2. that the 2011/12 to 2014/15 Capital Programme – Housing Revenue Account, as attached at Appendix B to the report submitted to the Executive, be approved.***

## **E/10/131 Draft Medium Term Financial Plan and Revenue Budget for 2011/12**

The Executive considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and People proposing the Council's spending plans for the medium term and the levels of Council Tax rate for 2011/12.

In accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in paragraph 2 of Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution, the Chairman invited the members of the public who had registered to speak on this item to address the Committee:

- Mr Dillon, Chief Executive of the Disability Resource Centre commented on the proposals concerning LuDun. Mr Dillon explained that the LuDun Trust was not meeting its objectives under the terms of its Deed. The Trustees were investigating all possible options for the future.
- Mr Kenny, representative of the GMB Union, spoke in relation to the proposed closure of LuDun. Mr Kenny requested that the Executive consider using reserves to secure the existing facility for the time being, pending an appropriate business case being developed to enable LuDun to operate as a profitable business.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and People introduced the budget proposals. He commented that the Council had a legal requirement to develop a balanced budget. It also had to take account of the current economic climate. He indicated that savings proposals were needed to accommodate in particular reductions in Government grant. The total value of the savings that would be required for next year was approximately £20m.

The Executive welcomed the comments received from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, stakeholders and the public including petitions that had been submitted at this and previous Executive and Council meetings. Portfolio Holders commented on the key issues raised throughout the consultation process including:

- the proposed closure of LuDun
- the efficiency savings to be made at Lavender Court and St Georges Court
- Silsoe Horticulture Centre
- the mobile library service
- school crossing patrols
- leisure centres
- the Music Service
- Youth Services.

The Leader explained that a Member Task Force was addressing how best the Council could facilitate the transfer of some activities and services to communities. Encouraging discussions had already taken place with some town councils too and the Council was exploring the scope for a pan public sector approach to the delivery of some services in conjunction with its partners in Bedfordshire and Luton.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to agree a balanced budget for 2011/12 and identify resource requirements for the medium term.

### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

- 1. that the response to consultation with Overview & Scrutiny Committees and the public, set out in paragraphs 17 to 21 of the report submitted to the Executive, be noted;**
- 2. that the Revenue Budget for 2011/12 and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2011/12 to 2014/15, as attached to the report submitted to the Executive, be approved;**
- 3. that the following adjustments to the draft budget in response to comments and representations received throughout the scrutiny and consultation process, be noted:**
  - (a) adjustments to the proposals covering Overview & Scrutiny offset by further reductions within the Democratic Services budget;**
  - (b) no reduction in School Crossing Patrols from 1 April 2011, but that contributions be sought from communities and partners during the course of the year, with a view to securing the patrols beyond 2011/12;**
  - (c) the creation of a fund to facilitate the transfer of services to partners and communities and that the costs of Public Conveniences be a first charge on this fund during 2011/12; and**
  - (d) a reduction in the proposed increases in car parking charges;**
- 4. that the Council Tax Base, attached at Appendix G to the report submitted to the Executive, be noted;**
- 5. to agree a Band D Council Tax of:**
  - £1,308.33 for residents in the north of Central Bedfordshire**
  - £1,344.15 for residents in the south of Central Bedfordshire**
- 6. that the fees and charges set out in Appendix K to the report submitted to the Executive, be approved;**

- 7. that the additional objective set out in paragraph 58 to the Treasury Management Strategy, be included;**
- 8. that the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan set out in Appendix L to the report submitted to the Executive, with an average increase in rents of 7.02%, be approved.**

### **E/10/134 Local Transport Plan 3**

The Executive considered the report of the Portfolio Holders for Sustainable Development and Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles that provided information about the draft Local Transport Plan for Central Bedfordshire. The Plan would cover the 15 year period up until March 2026 and provided a framework for investment in transport locally. The Plan formed an important tool through which the Authority sets out its transport related objectives and wider priorities. It also contained a shorter term implementation plan to be updated on an annual basis and included a programme of schemes to be delivered on the ground over a three year period. The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development emphasised the extensive consultation process that had been undertaken during the creation of the Plan.

The Portfolio Holder responded to questions and comments from the Executive and non Executive Members in attendance. These included comments in relation to freight, the status of the A1 and access for disabled people. The Portfolio Holder explained that Local Area Transport Plans would be produced and rolled out to cover the whole of Central Bedfordshire.

#### ***RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL***

- 1. that the Local Transport Plan for Central Bedfordshire, be approved;***
- 2. that the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development, be authorised to make any necessary minor drafting changes to the document prior to final publication.***