

## Responses to Public Questions

1. Property Services have undertaken a thorough review of the assets held by the authority and the rates obligations associated with these. This has identified a cost pressure that has now been corrected with future years' budgetary assumptions.
2. The authority has achieved an underspending on its debt management costs due to a restructuring of long-term borrowing debt from a fixed to a variable rate of interest. Debt management relates to financing not income due to the Council. The saving is not due to increased income on its investments. All long-term borrowing and investments are made in line with the approved Treasury Management Policy.
3. An underspending has been achieved in Audit Fees due to the cessation of inspection work undertaken by the Audit Commission under the CAA regime that was assumed in the original budget. The revised audit fee structure has been incorporated into the future years' budgetary assumptions as included in the MTFP. There is no significant change in scope
4. The review of the authority's working capital balances identified and remedied in balances between the level of charge recorded on the original purchase orders and the amount invoiced by its suppliers. This review work is in line with best practice and would be a minimum expectation of auditors to ensure robust accounting arrangements. It has resulted in a saving as invoiced costs have been managed and have come in under the original purchase order level. The redundancy costs recorded within the management accounts are a separate matter although this is an additional cost that offsets the purchase order benefit above. The costs arise from an increase to our reserve for redundancy costs to support the council's actions in reducing our cost base.,. The costs are not understated and the overall redundancy provision is separately disclosed.
5. The capital underspend that is shown is primarily due to delays in implementing schemes that results in slippage to future financial years, in part due to longer implementation of schemes where we work closely with other partners.. It is important to note that the funding of capital schemes will be achieved through borrowing (internal and external), application of usable capital receipts or specific grant, and do not constitute an 'up front' charge to CBCs residents. A Capital Review is being undertaken to scrutinise all existing capital commitments against priorities and identify levels of slippage at the earliest opportunity.

### Central Bedfordshire Council

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

**Telephone** 0300 300 8000

**Email** [customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)  
[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

6. The £1.15m credit to General Fund identified on page 21, item 1.3 is the same as the item identified in point 4.