
Meeting: General Purposes Committee
Date: 28 January 2013
Subject: In-Year Changes to the Capital Programme
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources

Summary: The report seeks the General Purposes Committee's views on amending the Constitution to extend the Executive's authority to add schemes to the Capital Programme.

Advising Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Finance Officer
Contact Officer: Mel Peaston, Committee Services Manager
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: None
Function of: General Purposes Committee/Council
Key Decision No

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

This proposal supports the Central Bedfordshire Council priority of providing value for money by ensuring that the Council makes best use of the funding available for capital expenditure.

Financial

1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The intention of the proposal is to simplify the approval of capital schemes, in order that the Capital Programme can operate more efficiently.
2. By virtue of Council approving the reserve list of schemes when setting the overall budget, Members will have been sighted on those schemes which may be brought forward by the Executive in-year.
3. The Chief Finance Officer and Executive Member for Corporate Resources must confirm that associated costs can be contained within the approved budgets which ensures that no expenditure will be incurred above limits approved by Council.

Legal

4. The Constitution sets out how the Council will conduct its business. It is the responsibility of General Purposes Committee to make recommendations to Council on any proposed significant changes to the Constitution.

Risk Management

5. None

Staffing (including Trades Unions)

6. Not Applicable

Equalities/Human Rights

7. There are no human rights/equalities implications.

Public Health

8. None

Community Safety

9. None

Sustainability

10. None

Procurement

11. None

RECOMMENDATION:

that the General Purposes Committee consider recommending to Council that the Constitution be amended as set out in Appendix A.

Background

12. At present, the Council's Constitution permits the Executive to add new schemes to the Capital Programme where these are estimated to cost less than £500,000 (whole life cost). New capital schemes that cost more than £500,000 (whole life cost) must be approved by the Council.
13. This report proposes extending the Executive's power to allow schemes to be added from a list of reserve schemes that has been approved by the Council or where the costs of the scheme will be met from external funding, provided that the associated revenue costs can be accommodated within the approved revenue budget for financing the Capital Programme.

The Proposal

14. The proposal concerns paragraph 4.10.10 of the Council's Code of Governance (see Appendix A). At present, this permits the Executive to add new schemes to the Capital Programme, provided that the whole life cost of the scheme is estimated to cost less than £500K. Schemes costing more than £500K require the approval of the Council.
15. The amendment would permit the Executive to add new schemes from a reserve list approved by the Council or where the costs of the scheme are to be met in full from external sources and provided that the effect of adding these schemes does not result in expenditure in excess of the approved budget for financing the Capital Programme.

Conclusion and Next Steps

16. The Committee is asked to consider this matter and determine the appropriate way forward.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Proposed amendment to Part I2 of the Constitution

Background Papers:

None