

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 13 January 2015.

PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)
Cllr M R Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Executive Members:	Cllrs	C Hegley B J Spurr R C Stay	Cllrs	Mrs P E Turner MBE M A G Versallion J N Young
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Deputy Executive Members:	Cllrs	A D Brown Mrs S Clark I Dalgarno A L Dodwell	Cllrs	D J Hopkin A M Turner B Wells R D Wenham
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Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	A R Bastable D Bowater Mrs G Clarke Mrs R J Drinkwater C C Gomm Mrs S A Goodchild Ms A M W Graham	Cllrs	D Jones D McVicar J Murray B Saunders A Shadbolt P Williams
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Officers in Attendance	Mr R Carr Mr M Coiffait Mrs S Harrison Mrs S Hobbs Mr J Longhurst Miss L McShane Mrs J Ogley Mrs G Stanton Mr C Warboys	Chief Executive Community Services Director Director of Children's Services Committee Services Officer Director of Regeneration and Business Legal Services Manager -Commercial Director of Social Care, Health and Housing Chief Communications Officer Chief Finance Officer
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E/14/91. **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

E/14/92. **Members' Interests**

None were declared.

E/14/93. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman held a one minute silence in memory of those who lost their lives in the recent terrorist attacks in Paris.

E/14/94. **Petitions**

No petitions were received.

E/14/95. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

E/14/96. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

RESOLVED

that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 2 February 2015 to 29 January 2016 be noted.

E/14/97. **Draft Budget 2015/16 and Medium Term Financial Plan**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that proposed the draft budget for 2015/16 and updated the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The draft budget identified the efficiencies required in the light of the ongoing reduction in funding from Government and other pressures. Efficiencies of £13.7m were identified for 2015/16 to produce a balanced budget. It was proposed that there would be no increase in the Council Tax rate for Central Bedfordshire Council.

The Community Services Director clarified that the efficiency SC373 related to public health funding to support mental health improvement through physical activity.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing explained that the Council would be responsible for implementing many aspects of the Care Act 2014 and Members would receive a briefing on the associated implications.

In response to a question, the Chief Finance Officer clarified that assistance would still be provided to claimants completing an e-claim benefit application form.

Members thanked the Deputy Leader and Officers for their continued commitment to identifying more efficient and cost effective ways of working.

Reason for decision: To enable consultation on the draft budget 2015/16 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2015-2019, prior to final recommendations being made by the Executive on 10 February 2015 to Council on 26 February 2015.

RESOLVED

that the draft budget proposals for 2015/16 be approved as the basis for consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and other interested parties.

E/14/98. Draft Capital Programme 2015/16 to 2018/19

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the proposed draft capital programme for 2015/16 to 2018/19. The capital programme included a number of significant projects. This included New School Places, Enhanced Waste Disposal Facilities, Flitwick Leisure Centre and the Woodside Link. The development of Dunstable Leisure Centre had also been added to the plan.

Reason for decision: To enable consultation on the draft capital programme 2015/16 to 2018/19, prior to final recommendations being made by the Executive on 10 February 2015 to Council on 26 February 2015.

RESOLVED

that the draft capital programme for 2015/16 to 2018/19 be approved as the basis for consultation.

E/14/99. Draft Budget for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Service) Business Plan

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing that set out the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the draft budget for 2015/16. The report included proposals concerning the debt strategy, investment potential and rent increases.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing confirmed that the development in Houghton Regis was at a very early stage and a full consultation process would be followed. It was proposed that the development would include affordable, independent living accommodation, improved retail that was complementary to other retailers in Houghton Regis, an opportunity to deliver public services in the town centre, an improved local heritage offer and the creation of a community hub. The Independent Living Scheme would provide homes for older people (aged over 55) including options for outright sale, rent and shared ownership.

Reason for decision: To enable consultation on the draft HRA budget for 2015/16 to 2018/19, prior to final recommendations being made by the Executive on 10 February 2015 to Council on 26 February 2015.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the HRA's debt portfolio and interest payments due in 2014/15 be noted;**
- 2. that the intention to commence principal debt repayments from 2017/18, as approved previously by Council in February 2014, be noted;**
- 3. that the Landlord Business Investment Plan, which proposes HRA investment throughout the Council area, be approved for consultation;**
- 4. that the Draft HRA Revenue Budget for 2015/16 and the Landlord Business Plan summary at Appendix A and B be approved for consultation;**
- 5. that the Draft 2015/16 to 2018/19 HRA Capital Programme at Appendix C be approved for consultation; and**
- 6. that the draft average rent increase of 2.20% for 2015/16 be approved for consultation, in line with the national rental increase as per Government guidance.**

E/14/100. School Funding Reform: Arrangements for 2015/16

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Children's Services that provided the background to changes in the funding regulations for schools and the proposed distribution of funds for 2015/16.

The proposals had previously been subject to full consultation with all Maintained Schools and Academies in September 2014 and considered by the Schools Forum. The report provided a summary of the consultation responses received, which highlighted the broad agreement of schools to all of the proposals put forward. The report therefore set out the proposed distribution for the Dedicated Schools Grant – School Block. The final proforma needed to be submitted to the Education Funding Agency by the 20 January 2015.

Reason for decision: To enable schools' individual budgets to be issued by 27 February 2015.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the responses to the School Funding Consultation 2015/16 be noted;**
- 2. that the submission of the final proforma to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) by the 20 January 2015, be approved; and**
- 3. that the distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant – Schools Block for 2015/16 be approved.**

E/14/101. National Non Domestic Rates, Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the proposed Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) Policy. The DRR would be introduced from 1 April 2015 and a review of all current awards of relief would be undertaken before this date in order to give advanced notice to current beneficiaries of any changes to their entitlement. Any negative change in entitlement required at least one full financial year's notice to be given to the ratepayer before the relief could be reduced.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources advised Members that the reference to Boy Scouts and Girl Guides would be amended to read the Scout Association and Girl Guiding UK.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to have a DRR Policy that would deliver an equitable and transparent decision making process.

RESOLVED

that the National Non Domestic Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Policy be approved.

E/14/102. Quarter 2 Performance Report

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the quarter 2 2014/15 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council's Medium Term Plan indicator set. The overall performance remained strong across the priorities.

Reason for decision: To ensure a rigorous approach to performance management across Central Bedfordshire Council.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the continuing good performance in Quarter 2 for the indicators being used to help monitor progress against the Medium Term Plan priorities be acknowledged; and**
- 2. that officers be requested to further investigate and resolve underperforming indicators as appropriate.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 10.37 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated