

At a meeting of the **Executive** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford on Tuesday 7 December 2021, 9:30 a.m. — 12:19 p.m.

Present:

Cllr R Wenham (Chair)
Cllr S Clark (Vice-Chair)

Executive Members:

Cllrs	K Collins	Cllrs	C Hegley
	I Dalgarno		D Shelvey
	E Ghent		T Stock
	S Dixon		

Apologies:

None

Absent:

None

Members in Attendance:

Cllrs	I Bond	Cllrs	V Harvey
	N Bunyan		P Snelling
	A Dodwell		E Wallace
	S Goodchild		S Watkins
	C Gomm		N Young

Officers in Attendance:

Ms L Carver	Director of Place and Communities
Mr M Coiffait	Chief Executive
Ms S Ferguson	Interim Director of Children's Services
Mr E Garcez	Director of Transformation
Mrs V Head	Director of Public Health
Mrs S Hobbs	Senior Committee Services Officer
Mrs J Ogley	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
Mr T Stephenson	Head of MANOP
Mr C Warboys	Director of Resources
Ms L White	Policy Manager - Leisure, Libraries & Countryside

1. Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. Members' Interests

Councillors Ghent and Hegley declared an interest in items 22 and 28 'Appointment of Preferred Bidder for Care Home 2, Short Breaks Unit 1 and HRA funded Independent Living Scheme; Steppingley Road, Flitwick' as they were Non-Executive Directors of the Central Bedfordshire Group. They were not present in the room during this item.

3. Chair's Announcements and Communication

No announcements were made.

4. Petitions

a) Pedestrianisation of Leighton Buzzard High Street

Mr Littlehale presented a petition that requested the Council to permanently pedestrianise Leighton Buzzard High Street, and invest in more benches, trees, greenery, cycle parking, a continuous surface across the street, while making good provision for deliveries and disabled parking. Also investigate bringing buses closer to the high street without letting them drive down the High Street itself. Since the High Street had been temporarily pedestrianised it had made it a more appealing place to shop and residents had already benefitted from cleaner air. Mr Littlehale used the town of Salisbury as an example of a town that had also pedestrianised its town centre. Better access for those with mobility issues would need to be considered with additional disabled parking spaces and better access for bus users. Surveys had indicated that the public wanted walking and cycling to be made easier.

The Executive Member for Community Services explained that he had met Mr Littlehale on market day in Leighton Buzzard. At the Traffic Management Meeting on 24 January 2022 consideration would be given to the extraordinary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) that was put in place in March 2020 for the high street to be pedestrianised. Options to be considered would be to make the TRO permanent, revert back to the previous situation or advertise a new TRO, this would also include considering any changes to areas such as disabled parking, operating hours, class of vehicles that could use the High Street and available parking. Evidence was being collected to inform the report being considered on 24 January which would include a local economic impact assessment. The Town Council would be undertaking a market user survey and Central Bedfordshire Council would also be running a Market Survey, the results from these surveys would also be included in the report on 24 January. The Council was working with bus operators to increase passenger use. There had been issues with the barrier and additional solutions were being considered.

5. Questions, Statements or Deputations

No members of the public had registered to speak.

6. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

RESOLVED

that the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022 be noted.

The decision was unanimous.

7. Schools for the Future – Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) Consultation Report

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children that set out the response to the ‘Have Your Say’ consultation undertaken on the proposals to increase places in Additional Resource Provisions and at Special Schools as part of the Schools for the Future programme.

In response to questions, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Families, Education and Children explained:

- that there had been a proposal for a second site at Oak Bank School, Leighton Buzzard but following feedback from the consultation this had received the lowest support. Further conversation would be held with the School to discuss the best way of delivering those additional places required. Further proposals would be brought forward in the New Year;
- that BB103 was guidance for schools and this would be applied to all new builds but it was not necessarily appropriate or possible to deliver this at existing schools as part of the Schools for the Future Programme. The Council was working with schools to make sure they had the space required to deliver the curriculum;
- the lack of provision in Leighton-Linslade was going to be addressed;
- the Council would be delivering on the places for September 2022 and 2023 and once the plans had been finalised they would be shared publicly.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to have the right education provision in place to meet the needs of children with SEND in Central Bedfordshire, as this would enable those children to reach their full potential and live fulfilled lives.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the consultation feedback be noted;**

2. **that the annual revised forecast for special school and specialist places be noted;**
3. **that the intention to deliver the extra Additional Resource Provision places by 2023, as set out in the consultation document, be approved;**
4. **that the proposed next steps detailed in the report be noted;**
5. **that the development of a strategic specialist place plan, working with key stakeholders, for children with SEND by early 2022, which responds to the outcome of the consultation and contributes to addressing the gap in places identified be approved; and**
6. **that the progress feasibility work with schools as required, in order to develop business cases based on the revised forecast need for places be noted.**

The decision was unanimous.

8. Formation of a Fairness Executive Task Force

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Sustainability and Transformation that sought approval of the formation of a Fairness Executive Task Force. The report proposed that an Executive Task Force be established to review the information relating to the needs of residents and consider the development of a refreshed approach and programme to tackle and prevent deprivation – helping residents succeed. This would need to take account of the real challenges and hardship that the Covid 19 pandemic had brought to many residents. The work of the Executive Task Force would be informed by the commissioning of expert external support to identify high impact initiatives to make the most difference for our residents.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Sustainability and Transformation explained:

- that there were pockets of deprivation and poverty across the whole of Central Bedfordshire and Members on the Task Force would be asked to focus on this rather than their own wards;
- that Members on the Task Force would be expected to be available to go out into the community as this would not be a desk-based exercise;
- a presentation had been considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board to enable health partners to share information that the Council could learn from;
- that he had visited the kitchen garden in Houghton Regis and was very impressed with the work being carried out there;
- that areas of hardship that had arisen since the beginning of the pandemic would emerge;
- updates would be provided with a final report being submitted to the Executive at the end of the summer 2022; and

- the Task Force would be made up of 7 Members; 1 Executive Member, who would also be chair, 3 Conservative non-Executive Members, 1 Independent Group Member; 1 Liberal Democrat Group Member and 1 non-aligned Member.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to review its approach to fairness and preventing and tackling poverty.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the formation of a Fairness Executive Task Force be approved; and**
- 2. to authorise the Executive Member for Sustainability and Transformation to confirm the Members of the Executive Task Force, as set out in paragraph 7 of the report.**

The decision was unanimous.

9. Integrated Health and Care Hub, Leighton-Linslade – Motion Proposed by Councillor Harvey

Councillor Harvey introduced her Motion that had been presented to Full Council on 23 September and referred to the Executive for consideration. The Motion asked the Executive to directly manage the increased tempo in planning and delivering a Leighton-Linslade Health Hub and to ensure that Leighton-Linslade Members and the Leighton-Linslade Town Council Health Group receive regular progress reports.

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Communities that set out the details of the Motion including the appropriate risk assessments.

The Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Communities explained that:

- no significant capital funding had yet been identified for a hub in the Leighton-Linslade area;
- capital funding had been secured to support the delivery of the first two Hubs, Dunstable and Biggleswade;
- the Council was working with local NHS organisations to secure Integrated Health and Care Hubs across Central Bedfordshire as the responsibility for this was with the Clinical Commissioning Group and the NHS and not the Council;
- regular update on the Hubs Programme was provided to the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- she had attended the Town Council's Health Group along with officers. Unfortunately, the CCG and the local GP were unavailable for the July meeting as they were dealing with covid-19 issues;
- the NHS strategic document did not belong to the Council, it was the responsibility of the NHS to share it publicly;
- the Bedfordshire Hospitals Trust were very interested in locating services to the Dunstable Health Hub and she hoped that this would continue with future Hubs;

- once all partners were able to bring forward a business case for a Leighton-Linslade hub further consultation would be undertaken;
- the BRCC had Community Wellbeing Champions that covered the whole of Central Bedfordshire so there would be social prescribing in Leighton Buzzard; and
- she proposed that the Motion be rejected and that the ongoing works be noted.

The Leader confirmed that the Council had and was delivering a number of large capital projects across the whole of Central Bedfordshire, including Leighton-Linslade.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the motion proposed by Councillor Harvey at Council on 23 September 2021 and referred to the Executive be rejected;**
- 2. to note that the motion required identification of capital funding for a Leighton Buzzard hub; and**
- 3. that the direction of travel and ongoing works to progress the partnership aspiration for Integrated Health and Care Hubs across Central Bedfordshire be noted.**

The decision was unanimous.

10. New Leisure Centre – Leighton Linslade

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Communities that set out the approach to addressing the Leisure Facilities Strategy recommendation to provide a new, replacement leisure centre for the Leighton catchment area. £25M had been allocated in the Medium Term Financial Plan in 2021/22 for this scheme.

Reason for decision: To secure a site for the provision of a new leisure centre without incurring the capital cost of land purchase and to provide a modern indoor sports and leisure spaces and facilities to meet the needs of the current and planned population in the Leighton area and address the recommendations in the Leisure Facilities Strategy.

RESOLVED

- 1. that public consultation on the proposed future indoor leisure centre provision for the Leighton area be approved; this would consider the provision of a new centre within the Clipstone Park development area and the proposed closure of Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre once the new facility was open, and address the Leisure Facilities Strategy recommendation;**

- 2. that the approach set out to progress negotiations with the development consortium to secure the education and sports pitch sites on the Clipstone Park development to facilitate the provision of a new leisure centre be approved, subject to future Executive consideration of the results of the consultation and recommendations regarding future leisure provision in the Leighton area;**
- 3. that progression to RIBA Stage 2 and 3 to develop a viable design to inform the proposed consultation and preparation of tender documentation be approved;**
- 4. in conjunction with the above, progression of the agreements with the development consortium to secure the land needed, be approved. This documentation would not be entered into until further Executive approval regarding the leisure provision for the Leighton area was given. Once this further approval was obtained the agreement with the development consortium transferring the land needed for the new leisure centre conditional on the grant of the relevant planning permission, and completion of the Deed of Variation to the s106 agreement, had been signed;**
- 5. that the compliance with recommendations 1 to 4 above, to authorise the Director of Place and Communities, in consultation with the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Communities, the Director of Resources and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to enter into all appropriate legal documentation be approved; and**
- 6. that a report be presented to a future meeting of the Executive that sets out the results of the public consultation together with a preferred, costed option for future leisure provision in Leighton-Linslade, and seek approval to progress to tender and the procurement of a building contractor.**

The decision was unanimous.

11. Levelling Up Fund – Kingsland, Houghton Regis and Clophill Roundabout

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Planning and Regeneration that sought authority to progress with the following capital projects after being awarded Levelling Up Fund from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Department of Transport:

- £19.9M for the community and leisure facilities at the Kingsland site in Houghton Regis; and
- £6.8M for the completion of improved highways infrastructure at the Clophill/A507/A6 junction.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to enhance Central Bedfordshire and invest in infrastructure to deliver the projects set out in the Council's five-year plan.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the approach to community engagement and consultation be approved and to authorise the Director of Place and Communities and Director of Resources (S151 Officer), in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Regeneration and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to approve the final designs of the leisure and community facilities in Houghton Regis and to approve any change in provision resulting from the consultation responses;**
- 2. that the initial offers from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for £19.9M towards community and leisure facilities in Houghton Regis and £6.8M towards Clophill highways and roundabout improvements be accepted and that officers attend inception meetings in early December to finalise next steps on grant agreement contracts, memorandum of understandings and delivery. These meetings would be led by DLUHC for successful regeneration and culture bids and by Department for Transport (DfT) for successful transport bids.**
- 3. that ongoing project development work and spend to deliver the two capital projects meeting essential criteria for the grant awards of achieving capital spend in this financial year be approved and all grant monies spent by the end of March 2024;**
- 4. to authorise the Director of Place and Communities and Director of Resources (S151 Officer), in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Regeneration and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to enter into grant agreements with the Government for these two capital programmes; and**
- 5. to authorise the Director of Place and Communities and Director of Resources (S151 Officer), in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Regeneration and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, where required to approve procurement processes and award contracts to deliver the schemes, and for the Clophill scheme to award contracts for the statutory undertakers for the design and diversion of their plant.**

The decision is unanimous.

12. Central Area Growth Board Membership

The Executive considered a report from the Leader of the Council that proposed that the Council became a full member of the Central Area Growth Board. The report outlined the terms of reference for adoption and the commitment to the relevant ongoing contributions.

In response to a question, the Leader confirmed that the Central Area Growth Board had no planning powers.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council, in the interest of its residents, to engage in regional partnerships to access government funding and to demonstrate its commitment to regional work and to be an active partner within the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford corridor.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Council being part of the Central Area Growth Board be approved, on the basis of the Terms of Reference document set out at Appendix 1 to the report;**
- 2. that Councillor Richard Wenham (Council Leader) be the representative of the Council on the Central Area Growth Board, be approved;**
- 3. that an Executive Member who could substitute for Cllr Wenham be approved;**
- 4. that Milton Keynes Council be the accountable body for the Central Area Growth Board, be approved; and**
- 4. that a financial contribution to the operation of the Central Area Growth Board of £5000 for financial year 2022/23 be approved.**

The decision was unanimous.

13. Highways Asset Management Framework and Strategy

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that sought approval of the Highways Asset Management Framework and the Housing Asset Management Strategy. To deliver the best service and secure the maximum Highways Maintenance Capital Funding from the Department for Transport's 'Incentive Fund' the Highways Service needed to regularly review key efficiency measures and policies. A requirement of being a top-level authority included a renewed commitment, at senior level, to the principles of Asset Management. The Highways Asset Management Framework and the Highways Asset Management Strategy develops the Council's approach from 2017.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Community Services explained that officers were undertaking a huge piece of work to map all the Council's assets.

Reason for decision: To enable the Highways Service to sustain its position as a Band 3 authority, secure future Incentive Funding and become a more cost effective, efficient, and resilient service for its network users.

RESOLVED

that the following key documents be approved:

- **Highways Asset Management Framework (Appendix A to the report); and**
- **Highways Asset Management Strategy (Appendix B to the report).**

14. Proposals for undertaking Public Consultation on the Reconfiguration and Refurbishment of Biggleswade Library

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that outlined the proposals for the refurbishment and reconfiguration of Biggleswade library and the plans for carrying out a public consultation on the proposals. The reconfiguration of Biggleswade Library would see a Children's Centre, Registration Service and a satellite office co-located within the library building.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the proposal was subject to full consultation before any decision was made.

RESOLVED

that a public consultation on the proposed refurbishment and re-configuration of Biggleswade library be approved. This would see a Children's Centre, Registration Services and a Satellite Office co-located within the library building.

The decision was unanimous.

15. Proposals for undertaking Public Consultation on the Relocation and New Fit Out of Stotfold Library

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that outlined the proposals for the relocation of Stotfold library with new furniture, fixtures and fittings and authorise the public consultation on the proposals.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the proposal was subject to full consultation before any decision was made.

RESOLVED

that a public consultation on the proposed project to relocate and enhance with new furniture and fixtures at Stotfold Library be approved. The proposal being to relocate the library from its existing location within Stotfold at Hitchin Road, Stotfold SG5 4HP to a new location in Stotfold at the Greenacre Centre.

The decision was unanimous.

The Executive adjourned for a 10 minute break.

16. Glass Bulking and Processing, Street Cleansing and Bulky Waste disposal Procurement and Contract Award

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that sought approval of the commencement of the procurement process for glass bulking and disposal, street sweepings disposal and bulky waste disposal.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to procure the services and award the contracts to facilitate the continuity of the services.

RESOLVED

- 1. that a competitive procurement process for the bulking and disposal of glass waste, and disposal of street sweepings, bulky waste and fly tipped waste be approved; and**
- 2. to authorise the Director of Place and Communities, in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Services, the Director of Resource and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to award a contract following the completion of the procurement process and approve the execution of all relevant legal documentation.**

The decision was unanimous.

17. Future Highways Contract

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Community Services that outlined the proposed approach for the future delivery of the Highways maintenance service and sought approval to retender the services for new arrangements to begin on 1 April 2023.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Community Services explained that the Council used many different frameworks within the organisation to support the contract delivery and to ensure best value. The Highways team had been split; one area would be working on the procurement for the new contract and another area would be looking at the delivery of the new contract, whilst a team would continue working with the current providers.

Reason for decision: To ensure that a decision was taken in a timely manner to enable the procurement of a new contract to deliver value for money and the best service for residents.

RESOLVED

that the recommendation to end the current Highways term service contract at the end of the initial term on 31 March 2023 be approved and to retender the services for new arrangements to begin on 1 April 2023.

The decision was unanimous.

18. Extension of the Integrated Contraception and Sexual Health Services Contract provided by Cambridgeshire Community Services – iCaSH

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Communities that sought approval to extend the integrated contraception and sexual health contract delivered by the Cambridgeshire Community Services for the full 2-year extension. The service was achieving its key performance indicators and there had been no issues identified through performance management of the contract. The contraception and sexual health provision across Central Bedfordshire was of a high quality. The service was commissioned by Public Health on behalf Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Councils and delivered services across both areas.

Reason for decision: iCaSH had continued to fulfil the contractual requirements, including achieving their key performance indicators, throughout the 5 year period. The service had increased the availability and access to contraception and sexual health provision to the residents of Central Bedfordshire, including a robust on-line STI testing programme.

RESOLVED

that the 2 year extension to the current Public Health integrated contraception and sexual health contract delivered by Cambridgeshire Community Services (iCaSH) be ratified.

The decision was unanimous.

19. Update on the Provision of the 0-19 Healthy Child Programme service in Central Bedfordshire

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Communities that provided an update on the provision of the 0-19 Healthy Child Programme in Central Bedfordshire, particularly the increased investment required because of increased demand during the pandemic.

Reason for decision: To enable the commissioners, partners and the provider to continue to work strategically and collaboratively over the next two years, to plan for how best to sustain and deliver the most safe and effective 0-19 Health Child Programme beyond 2023.

RESOLVED

that the plans and financial allocation to restore service provision to pre-pandemic levels, using Public Health strategic reserve funding, as set out in paragraph 21 of the report, be approved.

The decision was unanimous.

20. Purchase of Property for Use as Affordable Accommodation

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Assets and Housing that sought approval for the Council, via its Housing Revenue Account, to purchase a property development within Central Bedfordshire. The development would deliver multiple units as affordable housing in a new residential area close to amenities. The details of the development and the appraisal were set out in the exempt appendices.

Reasons for decision: The proposed acquisition provided a good opportunity for the Council to acquire and increase stock with 56 newly built properties, meeting relevant legislation and energy efficiency standards, in an accessible location, which would help meet housing need.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the acquisition of a development of residential properties with the freehold interest be approved, at the location and cost set out in Appendix A; and**
- 2. to authorise the Director of Social Care Health and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Member for Assets and Housing, the Director of Resources and the Executive Member for Corporate Resources, to approve all necessary legal documentation relating to the transaction and its execution.**

The decision was unanimous.

21. Appointment of Preferred Bidder for Care Home 2, Short Breaks Unit 1 and HRA Funded Independent Living Scheme; Steppingley Road, Flitwick

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that sought approval to award the contract for the construction of the Steppingley Road development.

Reason for decision: To complete a strategically important project and deliver on investment in this project to date as there was no certainty when or that the Council would achieve a better price by delaying.

RESOLVED

- 1. that contingency funding be approved, the use of which was agreed and approved at Executive on 13 July 2021 and Council on 22 July 2021, to enable the award of a contract for the construction of the Steppingley Road development;**
- 2. to authorise the Director of Place and Communities, in consultation with the Director of Resources, the Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Executive Member for Housing and Assets, to authorise expenditure of this capital as required to deliver the project; and**
- 3. that the appointment of the preferred contractor as per Appendix 1 to the report be approved.**

The decision was unanimous.

22. Revenue Budget Monitoring Q2 (September) 2021/22

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the forecast outturn position as at September 2021.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Corporate Resources agreed that it was important to recruit and develop highly skilled officers to deliver services.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the revenue forecast outturn position for 2021/22 which was a balanced budget, be noted; and**
- 2. request that officers continue to take the necessary action to deliver a balanced budget, avoiding the need to draw on the budgeted contingency so far as possible.**

The decision was unanimous.

23. Capital Budget Monitoring Q2 (September) 2021/22

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the forecast capital outturn position as at September 2021.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning.

RESOLVED

that the capital gross forecast outturn position was a spend of £141.4M (net £84.1M), demonstrating the continued significant capital investment made by Central Bedfordshire Council to support its communities.

The decision was unanimous.

24. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Monitoring Q2 (September) 2021/22

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital outturn position as at September 2021.

In response to a question, the Executive Member for Sustainability and Transformation explained that the first year of the Sustainability Plan was about having the correct resources in place and then to start delivering. The Council was doing a very good job at leading by example and now there was capacity within the team consideration was being given to how the Council could influence businesses and residents on the green agenda, including green employment in Central Bedfordshire.

Reason for decision: To facilitate effective financial management and planning.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the revenue forecast of a balanced budget with a contribution to HRA Reserves of £3.83M, be noted thus strengthening the Council's ability to invest and improve its stock of Council Houses;**
- 2. that the Capital forecast position indicates a net outturn of £46.51M, representing a positive variance against the budget of £60.63M, with proposals for slippage of £10.13M; and**
- 3. that Right to Buy (RtB) sales be monitored for the possible impact on predicted surpluses in the medium to longer term.**

The decision was unanimous.

25. Purchase of Property for Use as Affordable Accommodation

Minute 25 related to exempt business. See minute 20 above.

26. Appointment of Preferred Bidder for Care Home 2, Short Breaks Unit 1 and HRA Funded Independent Living Scheme; Steppingly Road, Flitwick

Minute 26 related to exempt business. See minute 21 above.

Chairman

Dated