At a meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, SG17 5TQ on Thursday 30 May 2019, 10:00 AM — 12:23 PM BST

Present:

Cllr Paul Duckett  Chairman
Cllr John Chatterley  Vice Chairman
Cllr Ian Bond
Cllr Charles Gomm
Cllr Eddie Perry
Cllr Peter Snelling
Cllr Tracey Wye
Cllr Gareth Mackey  (for item 1 only)
Substitute
Cllr Mark Versallion  (For Cllr Brian Saunders)

Officers in Attendance

Marcel Coiffait  Director of Community Services
Charles Warboys  Director of Resources
Tim Hoyle  Assistant Director - Commissioning
Elaine Bradbury  Development Manager, Assets
Paula Everitt  Scrutiny Policy Adviser

Others in Attendance

Cllr Richard Wenham  Deputy Leader and Executive Member Corporate Resources
Cllr Eugene Ghent  Executive Member Assets and Housing Delivery
Cllr David Bowater
1 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Saunders and Stock. Cllr Mackey also gave his apologies at the meeting, that was caused by a clash of Committee meetings on that day.

2 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 31 January 2019 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 Members' Interests

None.

4 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed both new and returning Members to the meeting.

A response to concerns raised on performance issues at the last meeting was delivered and included an update on:-
the fall in percentage terms of care leavers aged 17-21 engaged in Employment Education and Training (NEETS), and when Village Care Scheme Leaders could expect to be engaged and linked into the social prescribing initiative. A copy of the briefing would be published with the minutes.

The Chairman also announced that item 18, the disposal of land report, had been withdrawn from the Agenda.

5 Petitions

None.

6 Questions, Statements or Deputations

None.

7 Call-in

None.
8 Requested Items

None.

9 Executive Members' Update

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources wished to extend his thanks to Governance Services and the Elections Team who had run two elections in quick succession. In summary Members were advised:

- The Council had moved from the Modern Gov Committee System to Convene.
- A new website portal for Revenues and Benefits had been created and Members were encouraged to signpost residents to the portal in future.
- The Finance Team had completed the Statement of Accounts on time and the Council had achieved a budget figure of £51,000 under budget. Congratulations and thanks were extended to the Finance Team.

The Executive Member for Assets and Housing Delivery gave an overview of the work of the Assets service and in summary Members were advised that:

- A new 7 year contract had been awarded for facilities maintenance work. Work was underway to refurbish the Café and kitchenettes at Priory House.
- Project work that included the proposed crematorium, planned school maintenance and care home facilities was progressing.

In response to a question regarding affordable homes in Wrestlingworth, the Committee was advised the development would be completed in July 2019. Members were also advised that a report would be submitted to Executive at the end of the year regarding proposals for a replacement care home in Leighton Buzzard.

NOTED the updates.

10 Q3 Budget Monitoring Reports

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member introduced the Q3 2018/19 Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for all areas of Council Business. Members were advised how the quarterly budgets system worked and when CR OSC would receive information.

The Director of Resources advised the outturn projected overspend of £1.9m was offset by contingency funds of £2.1m and put the Council in a better position with an underspend of £50,000, after the creation of a new earmarked reserve £1.4m. This reserve would be used to support services across the whole Council.

Members were advised that outturn budget pressures were generally caused by the same service areas identified at Quarter 3 which included:

- Learning Disabilities and Mental Health costs
- Community Services school transport services costs for SEND children
• Waste services that had seen a change in recyclates so that an income stream had become an overspend.
• Fostering and adoption placements where costs and volume of placements was high.
• The recovery of housing benefit overpayments service changes.

In light of the reports, Members discussed the following in summary:-
• The general reserve position, as outlined in the February budget papers, detailed a figure of £15.6m. It was difficult to compare our position with nationally, however, the Council fell within the risk assessed range.
• Whether the current vacancies position was due to difficulty in recruitment or that the Council had a strategy to hold a number of vacancies unfilled. In response, the Director of Resources advised there was a mixture of reasons across the Council for vacancies. To address the shortages, the Council had been successful in training new staff through its academy and trainee positions.
• The European Development Fund position remained in a state of flux.

Recommended a briefing on the work of the Council's Academy be included on the work programme.

12 Establishing a Trading Entity for the Delivery of Social Care Services

The Assistant Director Commissioning delivered a presentation that set out the Council’s current thinking in relation to the establishment of a trading entity for social care services.

He explained the basis on which the Council both commissions and delivers care services and the range of providers in the marketplace. This includes a variety of ‘not for profit’ organisations both local and national alongside commercial sector providers that range from very small organisations to large multi-national ones.

He also explained the requirements of the Council to support and managed the care market and ensure there was sufficient resilience within the care system. This was one of the drivers for the creation of a trading entity. He explained the involvement of independent consultants (C.Co) and the progress of work so far including the options considered for different types of entity and the preferred option of a wholly-owned company.

The Committee requested that it met C.Co representatives at a future meeting to hear details of the business plan and trading proposals.

Recommended
1. That C.Co be invited to attend a future meeting to explain the proposals for a wholly owned company, the business plan and how the new trading company could facilitate and broaden delivery.
2. The proposals outlined in the Trading Entity report be supported in principle.
13 **CR OSC 2019/20 Work Programme and Executive Forward Plan**

The Committee considered the current Work Programme and Executive Forward Plan. The Work Programme was approved subject to the following additions:

- Procurement Options in relation to the Agency provision of temporary staff (Commensura) update 28 November 2019
- To receive an update on the work of the Council’s Academy (tbc)
- Trading Entity for Social Care business plan and proposals (tbc).

14 **Variation to the Capital Programme**

The Executive Member for Assets and Housing Delivery introduced a report outlining proposals for the Council to deliver new infrastructure in the form of a relief road and other necessary infrastructure ahead of the development or sale of Chase Farm, Arlesey. An adjustment to the Capital Programme was required to include a £15 million provision for the works.

In response to a question regarding the development of a new lower school for the proposed development at Chase Farm, Arlesey, the Director of Community Services advised a new primary school would be developed in line with Council policy.

**RECOMMENDED** that the proposals outlined in the report to the Executive be fully endorsed.

15 **Establishing a Council Owned Housing Company - Identification of Priority Sites for the Delivery of Housing by the Council**

In order to consider the papers prepared on the identification of priority sites for the delivery of housing by the Council, the Chairman had accepted an additional late reports. This was due to unavoidable scheduling issues for the meeting on this occasion.

The Executive Member for Assets and Housing Delivery introduced the report that outlined how the Council wished to progress its approach to resolve the shortfall between demand and supply of affordable homes in Central Bedfordshire.

The Development Manager, Assets, introduced a presentation that outlined the key proposals for Council owned land and for it to remain in the Council’s ownership. The Director of Community Services advised this was an indicative start point in the process, each site would be subject to the usual planning processes and there may be variations on the tenure proposals.

In light of the report and presentation, Members discussed the following in summary:

- Concerns regarding traffic movement in the centre of Dunstable. In response the Director advised that Highways would be consulted as part of the planning process.
- Whether local residents would be given priority to affordable housing. The Director reported that the Housing Allocations Policy would be adhered to for this process.
• That careful consideration be given to mixed tenure where possible in Dunstable. The Director advised that local need would be taken into account and Dunstable had the highest level of need in Central Bedfordshire to be met.

In summary the Committee welcomed the proposals outlined in the Executive report.

RECOMMENDED that the report, direction of travel and pace of change that would deliver homes in Central Bedfordshire was endorsed for presentation to Executive.

Chairman ...........................................

Date .................................................