



Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Finance, Performance and Resources

Date: Thursday 5 December 2013
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury

AGENDA

9.30am Pre-Meeting Discussion

This session is for members of the Committee only. It is to allow the members time to discuss lines of questioning, areas for discussion and what needs to be achieved during the meeting.

10.00 am Formal Meeting Begins

Agenda Item	Time	Page No
1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP	10.00	
2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To disclose any Personal or Disclosable Pecuniary Interests		
3 MINUTES To agree the Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 October to be agreed as a correct record.		1 - 8



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Public Questions is an opportunity for people who live, work or study in the county to put a question to a Scrutiny Committee about any issue that has an impact on their local community or the county as a whole.

Members of public, who have given prior notice, will be invited to put their question in person.

The Cabinet Member and responsible officers will then be invited to respond.

Further information and details on how to register can be found through the following link:-

<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/about-your-council/scrutiny/get-involved/>

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

For the Chairman of the Committee to provide an update to the Committee on recent scrutiny related activity.

6	CONSULTANT SPEND AND USE OF INTERIM STAFF Gill Hibberd, Rose Younger and Paul Raimbach will update Members of the Council's use of consultants and interim staff.	10.05	9 - 20
7	LOCAL EMERGENCY SUPPORT Richard Ambrose will update the committee on the Council's approach to allocating funding to meet local needs.	10.45	21 - 48
8	COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME To consider and agree the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee Work Programme 2013/14.	11.30	49 - 50
9	PAPERS FOR INFORMATION To note the written response following the Capital Item on 5 September in relation to questions about the school asset transfers and the Business Investment Group.	11.35	51 - 52
10	DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING 25 February 2014 at 10am.	11.40.	

Purpose of the committee

The Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee shall carry out the local authority scrutiny functions for all policies and services relating to corporate finance, policy,

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Buckinghamshire County Council, Mrs A Davies, Service Director: Legal & Democratic, County Hall, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1UA.

performance, communications, resources and business matters, including: Corporate resources, including the Council's property portfolio; Finance and commercial services; Corporate performance; Organisational development; Service transformation; Human resources; Media and communications; Website and social media; Customer services and customer insight; Corporate policy and research; Corporate business support; Legal services; Corporate infrastructure, including ICT (Information and communication technology); Local democracy; The overall scrutiny function; Local economic development; and Collaborative and joint programmes and services with other national, regional or local authorities. The Executive's draft budget will automatically be referred to the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee for its consideration as part of the annual budget process.

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For further information please contact: Clare Gray or Karen Jones on 01296 383610 / 3627; Fax No 01296 382421; Email cgray@buckscc.gov.uk / kljones@buckscc.gov.uk

Members

Mr W Chapple OBE (VC)	Mr B Roberts (C)
Mr T Egleton	Mr D Shakespeare OBE
Mr S Lambert	Mr A Stevens
Mr D Martin	Mr D Watson



Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Finance, Performance and Resources

Minutes

FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER 2013, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.10 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr W Chapple OBE (Vice-Chairman), Mr T Egleton, Lin Hazell, Mr S Lambert, Mr D Martin and Mr B Roberts (Chairman)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr A Brown, Mr N Cave, Mrs C Gray (Secretary), Ms G Harding, Mr P Hardy and Ms R Howes

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from David Watson and Alan Stevens. Lin Hazell substituted for David Shakespeare.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 September 2013 were agreed as a correct record. In relation to item 6 (capital) Members noted that Richard Schmidt had circulated a written response to the question raised regarding Aylesbury Vale Academy.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Members noted the outline programme for the budget process. As the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing was unable to attend for the meetings in January, her budget was being scrutinised on 17 December 2013. The Chairman informed Members of the proposed Inquiry into BCC Governance and Accountability which was particularly important in view of the Future Shape of the Council Programme. He also told Members that the Environment Localities and Transport Select Committee were discussing Section 106 funding, which was on the agenda today and that any comments would be fed through to combine Member views. Finally Members were reminded to complete the Transport for Bucks survey.

6 TRANSFORMATION UPDATE/ BCC GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Service Director for Service Transformation attended to present this item. They introduced the item as follows:-

- The Council faces significant financial and service delivery challenges and to respond to this and create a more sustainable organisation for the longer term the Council has developed a Target Operating Model (TOM) to describe the purpose, look, feel and key design principles of the future organisation (Future Shape).
- The presentation attached to the report shows at a high level the outline plan for the delivery of the consolidated business case over the next 90 days.
- The Chief Executive had arranged a meeting of 11 local Upper Tier and Unitary Councils to explore opportunities for developing collaboration between surrounding County and Unitary Councils that could potentially tackle areas of high spend (strategic alliances).

Members asked the following questions:-

Over the next few years it will take a huge leap to make the Future Shape a reality. How long do you expect this to take? What should we be investing in now in order to make this happen and generate savings?

The Cabinet Member reported that they were working on the Business Case which should be completed after Christmas. There are five key sub programmes and Priority Based Resourcing exercise for the next phase of transformation. This will bring together the proposed Corporate Headquarters, the Commissioning Framework and the Business Units. The Council will be enabled by people and organisational Change and assets, infrastructure and ICT. The transformation programme was a significant undertaking and a delivery timeframe of 18-24 months. The Cabinet Member emphasised the importance of exploiting technology and driving the use of digital channels in service redesign (digital by design). There would also be investment in staff to ensure they have the skills to deliver services in the new structure. There was a Future Shape Programme Officer Board which the Cabinet Member attended. The proposed changes were being made in an inclusive way and officers had been asked to contribute to the 'Future Shape' of the Council.

The five sub-programmes designed to save £60m are general and non-specific. Other than strategic alliances, please give specific examples of how significant new income will be generated; and areas of the business where operating costs will be further reduced?

The Buckinghamshire Learning Trust and the Local Authority Trading Company already have enhanced income targets and the proposed alternative business structure for Legal Services should bring in enhanced income. Further work was being undertaken on where trading units could bring in income generation and how business units could deliver in the market place.

The commercially minded Council would search for opportunities to generate income and deliver services in a different way. The Service Director –Transformation reported that another way of serving clients was to offer a bronze service to all but to give a silver or gold service for those customers who were happy to pay extra. These services would be available on the marketplace and entrepreneurial activity would be encouraged. Service Teams should challenge the way work is currently undertaken and to generate ideas for additional income. Members would be asked to put forward their views on the business plan at the end of the 90 day process. A Member expressed concern about the tight timescale for this process and also about the reliance on income generation in an already crowded market as some Council's had already outsourced their services. What would happen if the business units fail and did not have the required marketing skills? The Cabinet Member reported that they had identified this as a risk but whilst some staff did not have a marketing background they knew their product well and had the enthusiasm to promote their product well outside of the Council. Further work needed to be undertaken on the cost of services, understanding the market place and identifying potential customers. This process needed to be as quick as possible so that the Council could compete in the market place.

How can we prepare our staff for this big organisational change and retain the expertise that we need? How can Members and Officers work together to make this successful?

The Cabinet Member emphasised the need to retain staff and that the redesign of the Council would offer different career opportunities. There would be a series of checkpoints along the process where Members could get involved and work with officers on the target operating model. The opportunity for business units to compete in the market place and build their business should offer employees a more enriching and secure career and offer a positive change for them and the residents of Buckinghamshire.

Will we be looking to make further savings from staff terms and conditions? Have we reduced staff numbers to the minimum possible to still deliver services effectively; or are there specific areas of the business where the headcount could be further reduced?

The Cabinet Member reported that efficiencies would be made; it would be undertaken in an ordered way and should be counterbalanced by additional income generation. The Council would need to reduce its size and cost and shape a sustainable model of local government for the future. A series of roadshows had been held for staff in the last six weeks to ensure engagement in the process and a number of officers had been asked to lead specific project streams so that change was being led by Members and officers of the Council. A Member emphasised the importance of retraining staff so that they could be redeployed to minimise the impact on individuals.

Priority Based Resourcing implies that funding to non-priority services will be reduced or stopped. How do we go about identifying spending that may be desirable but is no longer a priority for this Council, and what will be different?

The Cabinet Member referred to the need for income generation to reduce the burden on the Council tax payer. Reference was made to a previous review by Overview and Scrutiny on what services were statutory and which were discretionary. Changes were looked at which included community libraries and providing services in a different way. A conscious effort was made to keep services going but with a different method of delivery. The Service Director – Transformation reported that whilst there was a statutory requirement to provide a library book it did not have to be provided in a formal library setting; the Leadership Team have worked on the irreducible minimum (understanding what the statutory minimum is that the Council has to provide). Services could still be provided in a reduced way and also jointly with other services which could be income generating. The important question was how these services fitted in with the Council priorities and what the risks were in stopping services. Preventative work may not be statutory but could have a high impact on reducing service costs. A copy of the statutory/discretionary review of services would be circulated to Members. However within the review there were 'grey' areas. Every year the Council had been challenged within the Medium Term Process in what areas should be invested in and what services should be reduced or

stopped. The reason for looking at the Future Shape was to have a sustainable Council as it was now difficult to have a balanced budget without major change.

What in practice do you mean when you state that the operating framework will act as the glue between the HQ and delivery units? How will a decision maker in the HQ be able to make a difference, and how can we continue to be Member-led?

The Cabinet Member reported that Members would set the priorities of the Council and officers would be held to account to deliver those priorities. The Service Director – Transformation reported that Members would need to take a different approach in the new ‘commissioning’ model and to ensure that the right outcomes were being delivered for residents. The local knowledge of Members was crucial to this process and Members would be engaged through the Corporate Headquarters. A Member referred to the previous statutory/discretionary review and that few discretionary services were identified. Members as Community Leaders have a large role to play in the way local services are delivered and engaging the local voluntary sector, ensuring that services are customer focussed.

What does ‘digital by design’ mean and what are the opportunities and potential benefits of this approach?

The Service Director – Transformation reported that this meant services could be accessed digitally through mobile devices and driving the use of digital channels in service redesign. Face to face contact was more expensive and digital channels needed to be exploited and contribute to the new ways of working. Reference was made to the high cost young people placements which was a web based tool which will enable authorities to see the demand and supply of young people residential care places across a group of County and Unitary areas.

What lessons have we learnt from the different service delivery arrangements we already have in place, such as Home to School Transport (Amey), Transport for Bucks (Ringway Jacobs), and more recently the launch of the Bucks Learning Trust and Buckinghamshire Care?

The Cabinet Member commented that there was a need to take risks in order to develop. The Council was learning with other contracts and implementing good governance to address this in a holistic way. The Local Authority Trading Company was a good example of empowering staff and involving Members. A new Managing Director and Finance Director had been recruited and were fostering enthusiasm.

Are we exploring joint working opportunities with District Councils, for example bringing together Waste or Planning services, or back office functions? Could the lean HQ be the basis of a future Unitary Council in Bucks?

The Service Director – Transformation referred to the Strategic Alliance work which was prompting a range of conversations between authorities on some specific services and activity areas. The meeting acknowledged that not all authorities would want to participate in everything. However three key areas of interest had been identified; development of a joint approach to improvement of adoption services, combining to tackle high cost, residential care arrangements for children and bringing together a more co-ordinated approach to procurement and key contracts. A Member expressed concern about there being limited interest from neighbouring authorities in developing shared arrangements. However the collaborative work on high cost young people placements was good. A Member asked about information being available through a web based tool and commented that it was important to visit potential placements. The Service Director – Transformation reported that a visit would still take place; the online tool was used initially to see whether the facility was suitable. It was important to work with partners to ensure that information was in one place and was being shared amongst the right people; this should also include information from Members and residents. Another Member reported that it was important to work collaboratively on adoption to reduce the number of children in care.

Finally, you are returning to update us again on 25 February. What progress do you expect to see over the next 3 months? What happens if the Future Shape programme is not approved by Council?

The Cabinet Member stated that the Future Shape Programme would be a Cabinet decision rather than a Council decision. The Chairman emphasised the importance of regular reports to the Select Committee and the Cabinet Member would liaise with the Chairman on this issue.

The Cabinet Member and Service Director were thanked for their presentation.

7 PROPERTY UPDATE

Gill Harding, Senior Manager in Place Service and Rachel Howes, Rural Estates Officer updated Members on the Property Transformation Programme and the Rent Review process in relation to the Council's agricultural estates. Members noted the following points:-

- Because of the Council's financial challenges there was a need to transform services and to look at the commercial aspects of the service.
- The Corporate landlord gives the opportunity to redesign the service to suit future service provision.
- Internal transformation was committed to a savings target of £185k in the Medium Term process prior to Place transformation. Place Transformation achieved £500k to date.
- Members were informed of the existing asset management process. The proposed property service structure was to have three arms; strategy and programme development, delivery assurance and soft facilities management.
- People were at risk during this process and a consultation was being carried out. 17 people had requested voluntary redundancy which had been granted. In the first round of recruitment 30 people remain at risk and 22 individuals are unaffected by the changes and have been slotted into the new structure.
- There are a number of procurement programmes which include the maintenance procurement and the estates and asset management. There had been four bids on both tenders. The maintenance contract would be awarded mid-December to commence in March.

During discussion the following questions were asked:-

Is the £185k (page 52) a saving that has been committed but not yet delivered? How much do you expect this programme to save, and what else will it enable us to do or be better at than before?

The Senior Manager reported that £500k was the minimum required to cover historic financial gaps. In terms of what it will enable the Council to do it will help rationalise the structure and streamline processes. The Council was entering a new era of becoming more commercial and reference was made to the good relationship this service area had built with schools. The Service would need to be more commercial and compete in the market and generate income. Until the structure was implemented it was difficult to put a figure on the final savings. Whilst the changes were challenging to staff they had embraced the change and had been engaged with the process. Reference was made to the previous failed procurement and the expectation that the inhouse bid would deliver savings. The Senior Manager reported that the inhouse bid was expected to work with the transformation savings. The procurements were two plus three year and therefore not long term. It was important to fully explore the right structure for the future and look at different delivery models before externalising.

Will this programme bring together all property roles and responsibilities across the organisation into one place? If this isn't the case then why not – what are the blockages or reasons for not doing this?

The Senior Manager reported that there was support from all the portfolios in the Council and there were a number of strands of which the Corporate Landlord was one. Staff who perform property duties across the Council were now in the property structure and services were engaging. The Corporate Strategy was on track.

Members congratulated the Senior Manager and her Team on the corporate property approach and their transformation work.

Rachel Howes then updated Members on the Rent Review process. They undertook a desk top exercise in order to gain approval to serve rent review notices. 12 months notice has to be given which commenced in September 2011 so rent reviews could be implemented in September 2012. There were a number of agricultural tenancy agreements and it was agreed not to do all. For example some agreements only include bare land and no houses or buildings which cost £500 or less per year; therefore there was no commercial merit in serving rent review notices. The Council served 44 notices giving 12 months prior notice to the tenants to review the rent. 31 holdings settled rents without going to arbitration. 3 rent reviews have been agreed in principle and the Memorandum of Agreement have been sent out for signature by the tenants but have yet to be received back. For budgetary purposes the Council forecast the rent review would increase rental income by 40%. This did not take into account diversification.

As at 30 September 2013 the additional rental income arising from the 31 completed rent reviews is £146,219 per annum. With a budget of £50,000 allocated for the Councils costs associated with the review, over the three year cycle that the rents will take effect this results in a net additional income to the Council of £388,657.

Members asked the following questions:-

If we forecast that rent reviews would increase income by 40% and it's actually a lot more than that due to subletting and diversification, where does this additional income go?

The actual increase is £200,000 per annum; this was the increase in additional rent. 31 holdings agreed the increase of £146,000 on top of what was already being paid. There was an average increase across the board of 65%. The extra income would be used for maintenance of the agricultural estate, given the increased rent the properties should be fit for purpose.

Why do you think progress has been better than expected? Will we now be reviewing rents on a regular basis? What are the future plans for our agricultural estate – will we be seeking to maximise income or to generate capital receipts?

The Rural Estates Officer was congratulated for her work on carrying out the rent reviews and for obtaining a good level of increase and also clarifying what the land is being used for. A Member commented that he did not believe the County Council should focus on the farming business and should look at releasing properties onto the market, particularly as agricultural land was at a premium price. The Cabinet Member responded by saying that he needed to review the agricultural estate strategy but emphasised that it was important to support the rural economy. The previous Overview and Scrutiny Commissioning Committee had suggested a review of the strategy and to undertake 3 yearly rent reviews to develop a commercial approach. The problem in the past was that no rent reviews were undertaken because of the backlog of repairs and the tenants could serve notice on the Council to do maintenance work. The Council's assets will be improved through better maintenance.

8 SECTION 106 (TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT)

Members noted that John Rippon, Service Manager in Place would be attending the Environment, Transport and Locality Services Select Committee to take questions. Members of this Committee were asked if they wanted to identify possible question areas. A Member

expressed concern that this Council had not replaced their Section 106 officer for a while which could have meant missed opportunities for the Council.

Another Member reported that Section 106 monies had been flagged up as an issue previously to the Cabinet Member and that it was important to monitor this area.

9 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer referred to the Inquiry Proposal paper which had been included under the transformation item. This had been discussed at the Scrutiny Conference in terms of the roles of Members in the Future Shape of the Council and the importance of being involved in the early stages of commissioning. Members had discussed how the democratic function of the Council would look in the Future Shape model. Members made the following comments:-

- Members need to have oversight of the day to day transaction with constituents to ensure the right areas are being prioritised and service users have access to the right services. The end user needed to be safeguarded.
- The Member Development Programme was important to ensure Members have commercial skills and contract management training. Reference was made to p43 of the agenda and a quote from the Centre for Public Scrutiny on accountability, which is increasingly delivered through contract management. Members should be encouraged to attend these training sessions.
- Reference was made to the table on the roles of Members and how they may change.
- There would be less direct influence over service delivery and this needed to be monitored by Members.
- A central resource for Members was very important so that they have the right channels of communication to take up any areas of concern.
- This Select Committee should monitor this area.
- An informal working group session would be set up to look at current evidence and make recommendations to feed into the Future Shape.

With regard to the meeting on 5 December 2013 there were 4 large items and the item on Customer Contact may be deferred. There would need to be an informal session with Members to update them on the Transformation Programme.

10 PAPERS FOR INFORMATION

The outline of the Member Sessions for budget scrutiny were noted.

(i) PAPERS FOR INFORMATION

Members noted the item which had been submitted to the previous Cabinet meeting on the balanced scorecard and joint monitoring report.

A Member queried whether the number of specialist contractors included consultants as it looked like the actual spend per head was going up. Was this because the Council was employing more agency and specialist contractors? Members noted that there was an item on consultants on the next agenda where this could be discussed in more detail. The Cabinet Member reported that the total overall cost was coming down as people were being used in a more flexible way.

In terms of the performance report Members agreed it would be useful to have a highlight report to delve into any areas of concern and a link to any backup papers.

11 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

5 December 2013 – 10am
17 December 2013 – 2pm (Budget scrutiny)

CHAIRMAN



Report to the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee

Title:	Review of Consultancy & Interims spend
Committee date:	5 December 2013
Author:	Paul Raimbach, Category Manager, Commercial Services
Contact officer:	Paul Raimbach x3399 praimbach@buckscc.gov.uk
Report signed off by Cabinet Member:	Peter Hardy, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Electoral divisions affected:	All

Purpose of Agenda Item

- This report provides **information** of spend on consultancy and interims. Information on temporary agency staff is out of scope as this will be subject to a separate report to Select Committee in February 2014.

Background

- Consultancy spend is high profile both within BCC and the wider Public Sector. It can be perceived as high cost; however, when used appropriately, spend on consultancy can offer value for money, by providing access to specialist knowledge or advice that would be inefficient to employ directly.
- The Overview & Scrutiny Committee discussed the 'Review of Spend on Consultants & Interims' report on 14 June 2011. The report explained the policy framework that governs the appointment of consultants and provided data and analysis on the usage of consultants and interims.
- It was agreed to develop a greater control over spend on consultancy, together with clear definitions and processes to encourage the most efficient and cost effective means of procuring and managing consultancy services.

- Considerable progress has been made in understanding this complex area of spend; driven by a savings target of £250k (Consultancy: £100k; Interims: £150k). An overview of the activity is provided in the table below:

Date	Action
June 2011	Review of Spend on Consultants & Interims report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee
April 2012	Contract for the supply of agency staff, interims and specialist contractors commenced with Pertemps
May 2012	Procedures and guidance for managers introduced together with an eform to capture consultancy spend
December 2012	Report to Achieving Outstanding Performance (AOP) Board detailing data collected from the eform submissions together with recommendations
June 2013	Revised eform and procedures implemented

- Information on consultancy spend is subject to frequent Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.
- The term 'consultant' is used in the delivery of a wide range of activities, including consultancy, interim, training and expert witnesses. Appendix 1 provides the recognised public sector definitions for consultancy and interims.

Report

Data Sources

- The Council now has a range of data sources which provide a greater understanding of spend on Consultancy and Interims:
 - SAP:
 - Classification of spend by supplier against nationally recognised categories using ProClass, which is owned and developed by local government.
 - Classification by General Ledger (GL) codes that allocate spend against cost centre budgets.
 - E-form requests from service areas for consultancy provide greater detail/ transparency on individual consultancy assignments.
 - Management Information from the contract with Pertemps, that provides greater control in the engagement of interims.
- It is extremely difficult to understand the actual spend on consultancy, as consultancy can be classified in numerous ways. There are numerous GL codes and ProClass categories that can legitimately be used. Considerable effort in terms of

working days has been invested to interrogate the data available from the various sources to produce the information in this report.

Consultancy ProClass

- The following ProClass categories were analysed: Consultancy – Business; Consultancy - Management - Organisation & Planning; Consultancy - Management – Personnel; Consultancy - Technical & Feasibility; Consultancy – Property.
- The analysis cuts the data by the ProClass category and only one category can be allocated to each supplier. Analysis by GL codes has also been used to understand specific spend in greater detail.
- The total spend with each supplier is aligned to the category of highest spend. E.g. Serco has been classified as “Consultancy – Business” despite also providing ICT products and training services; and Ringway Jacobs is classified as “Construction – Engineering” despite providing some consultancy.
- This analysis does not include suppliers that relate purely to legal advice, construction fees, training and ICT software/ maintenance.

Year	ProClass Consultancy suppliers spend	No. of suppliers	Percentage of total BCC external spend
2011/12	£2,863,419	98	0.9%
2012/13	£4,175,043	87	1.2%
2013/14 (up to 30/9)	£1,563,931	72	0.8%

2011/12 Top 5 Consultancy suppliers spend- ProClass	Proclass Level 3	Spend
Serco Ltd/ Alexander	Consultancy - Business	£300,402
Ernst & Young	Consultancy - Technical & Feasibility	£252,270
RPS Planning, Transport & Environment	Consultancy - Technical & Feasibility	£234,199
Methods Consulting Ltd/ Arcus	Consultancy - Business	£157,278
ROC Systems Consulting Ltd	Consultancy - Business	£149,097
Total		£1,093,245

2012/13 Top 5 Consultancy suppliers spend- ProClass	Proclass Level 3	Spend
Ernst & Young	Consultancy - Technical & Feasibility	£541,771
Serco Ltd/ Alexander	Consultancy - Business	£478,667
Goodman Nash Ltd	Consultancy - Property	£466,322
Methods Consulting Ltd/ Arcus	Consultancy - Business	£458,054
RPS Planning, Transport & Environment	Consultancy - Technical & Feasibility	£277,503
Total		£2,222,317

2013/14 (Q2-Sept 13) Top 5 Consultancy suppliers spend- ProClass	Proclass Level 3	Spend
Ernst & Young	Consultancy - Technical & Feasibility	£389,495
Turner & Townsend Project Management	Consultancy - Technical & Feasibility	£154,138
Methods Consulting Ltd/ Arcus	Consultancy - Business	£144,556
Serco Ltd/ Alexander	Consultancy - Business	£65,509
Bruton Knowles	Consultancy - Property	£57,662
Total		£811,359

Findings- Consultancy ProClass

- Spend as a percentage of BCC total external spend is fairly similar across the years, and arguably low (0.8% in 2013/14). Additionally, these findings are consistent with previous research.
- Other Councils have been asked for their percentage spend on consultancy:
 - Unitary Council A is 11%. Whilst this includes agency/ interims it would be more than twice as much as a BCC 'like for like' figure. Council A recognises the figure is too high and is a focus of activity to reduce cost
 - London Borough Council B is 7.17%
 - Unitary Council C is <1%
 - County Council D is circa 1%
 - County Council E is circa 1%
- Ernst & Young, Serco and Methods Consulting have all been in the top 5 spend during the past 3 financial years.
- The highest spending portfolio is consistently Finance & Resources and reflects the Transformational work taking place in the organisation and the role of the portfolio in terms of commissioning organisation wide activity such as ICT infrastructure.
- Difficulties in understanding consultancy spend are highlighted by Serco spend in 2011/12 which includes maintenance of road safety cameras (£94k).

Benefits

- Strong evidence that consultancy is being engaged where BCC requires specialist support and advice.
 - Ernst & Young provided specialist advice for a number of projects:
 - financial modelling for Energy from Waste (EfW) which is saving Buckinghamshire tax payers over £150 million during the 30-year life of the contract;
 - development of the Local Authority Trading Company (LATC), an innovative delivery model;
 - development of the Future Shape Programme
 - Serco through Alexander, its sub-contractor, supported the Transformation Programme First Phase. A number of individual projects achieved benefits in excess of £4.2M

- Methods Consulting through Arcus, its sub-contractor, are supporting numerous ICT projects, which is instrumental in transforming the organisation.
- Turner & Townsend are supporting Property Transformation in meeting their £500k savings target
- RPS were the technical advisors for the EfW project
- Goodman Nash Ltd have provided specialist knowledge to undertake schools rates reviews in Buckinghamshire and deliver savings (net of fees) in excess of £1.5m

Consultancy Eform

- In support of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommendations, procedures and guidance, together with an eform to capture the details were introduced in May 2012 to support managers in engaging consultants. In June 2013, these procedures were updated (mapped in Appendix 2), so that all requests for generic consultancy work flowed to the Transformation Team to fulfil.
- We have carefully considered tighter controls for consultancy spend, however, as the 'Future Shape' programme develops through business units, they will have the flexibility and freedom to deliver within a cash envelope.

Findings- Consultancy eform

- For the period June to September 2013, 25 eforms were completed for 17 different companies suggesting low compliance when comparing against ProClass analysis. Eform completion by managers has declined from 10 in June to just 2 in September 2013 indicating that the level of compliance is declining.
- The total potential cost of assignments captured is £585,495, which is significantly below spend highlighted in the ProClass analysis. Furthermore, this spend is spread over multiple financial years and confirms little compliance in managers completing the eform.
- The decision making is happening at a service area level and not a corporate level.
- Upon further investigation it can be argued that many of the eform submissions engagements are actually for specialist work e.g. Chairman of Interim Executive board (IEB), Chef Clubs, School Nurse Baseline Scoping. A full list of the assignments is captured in appendix 3, which suggests that BCC is using consultants appropriately to add value by providing specialist advice and not as purely an additional resource.
- The Environment portfolio has the largest spend, however this may only reflect that they are more compliant than other Portfolios as the GL code analysis indicates that they are the 5th highest spending Portfolio.

Conclusions- Consultancy

- The requirement for specialist consultancy to transform the organisation has increased. It is also spread across Portfolios and there may be an opportunity for savings from improved scoping of the work and negotiation.

- Spend on consultancy is relatively low (0.8% of the external spend) and is comparable with other Councils.
- Consultancies are generally engaged where specialist support is required.
- Whilst there is low compliance to the eform process, the direction of travel is for the organisation to have fewer centralised controls and support the commercialisation and innovation of the business units.
- The decision to engage consultancy is made at service level and not a corporate level, and therefore the corporate savings target is difficult to capture. However the direction of travel for the organisation mention above should be noted.

Interims

- The contract awarded to Pertemps in April 2012, includes provision of Interims and Specialist contractors. Unlike traditional temporary worker contracts based upon agency staff, BCC made a decision to include interims and specialist contractors as part of the contract to drive down cost and preferential rates. The Resourcing Team in HR manage the contractual relationship with Pertemps aligned to the Council's Contract Management Framework.
- Engagements through Pertemps reduce the risk of liability, tax and pensions associated with engaging Interim suppliers directly. The reduction in number of suppliers will also reduce contract management costs.
- The Proclass category "HR- Temporary & Agency staff" has been analysed and spend not relating to Interims has been manually extracted. There is no specific GL code for Interims and therefore analysis by GL code is not feasible.

Year	ProClass Interim spend	No. of suppliers
2011/12	£1,222,525	33
2012/13	£1,503,717*	28
2013/14 (to 30/9)	£1,126,372	13

*Includes Interim spend with Pertemps from 1/10/2012 to 31/3/2013 only

2011/12 Top 5 Interim suppliers- ProClass	Spend
Morgan Law Recruitment Consultancy	£142,897
Langley Search & Selection	£125,125
Michael Page International Recruitment	£116,601
Tri- Care Consultancy Ltd	£113,795
ICS (Salary) Ltd	£112,000
Total	£610,418

2012/13 Top 5 Interim suppliers- ProClass	Spend
Pertemps	£818,885
MAPP Ltd	£157,539
ICS (Salary) Ltd	£112,400
Tri- Care Consultancy Ltd	£100,621
Michael Page International Recruitment	£96,860
Total	£1,286,305

2013/14 (Sept 13) Top 5 Interim suppliers- ProClass	Q2 Spend
Pertemps	£910,346
AMEO Ltd	£61,488
ICS (Salary) Ltd	£57,600
Tri- Care Consultancy Ltd	£34,144
Social Services Locums Ltd	£14,610
Total	£1,078,188

Findings

- The Pertemps contract has reduced the number of different interim supplier arrangements to 12, which were in place before the Pertemps contract was awarded.
- As at 30 September 2013 BCC had 21 interims and specialists through Pertemps.
- The average engagement is 60 weeks, and 15 of these interims have been here 6 months or more.
- The average day rate is £334.03 indicating that Pertemps day rates are considerably lower than when individuals/ suppliers are engaged directly.

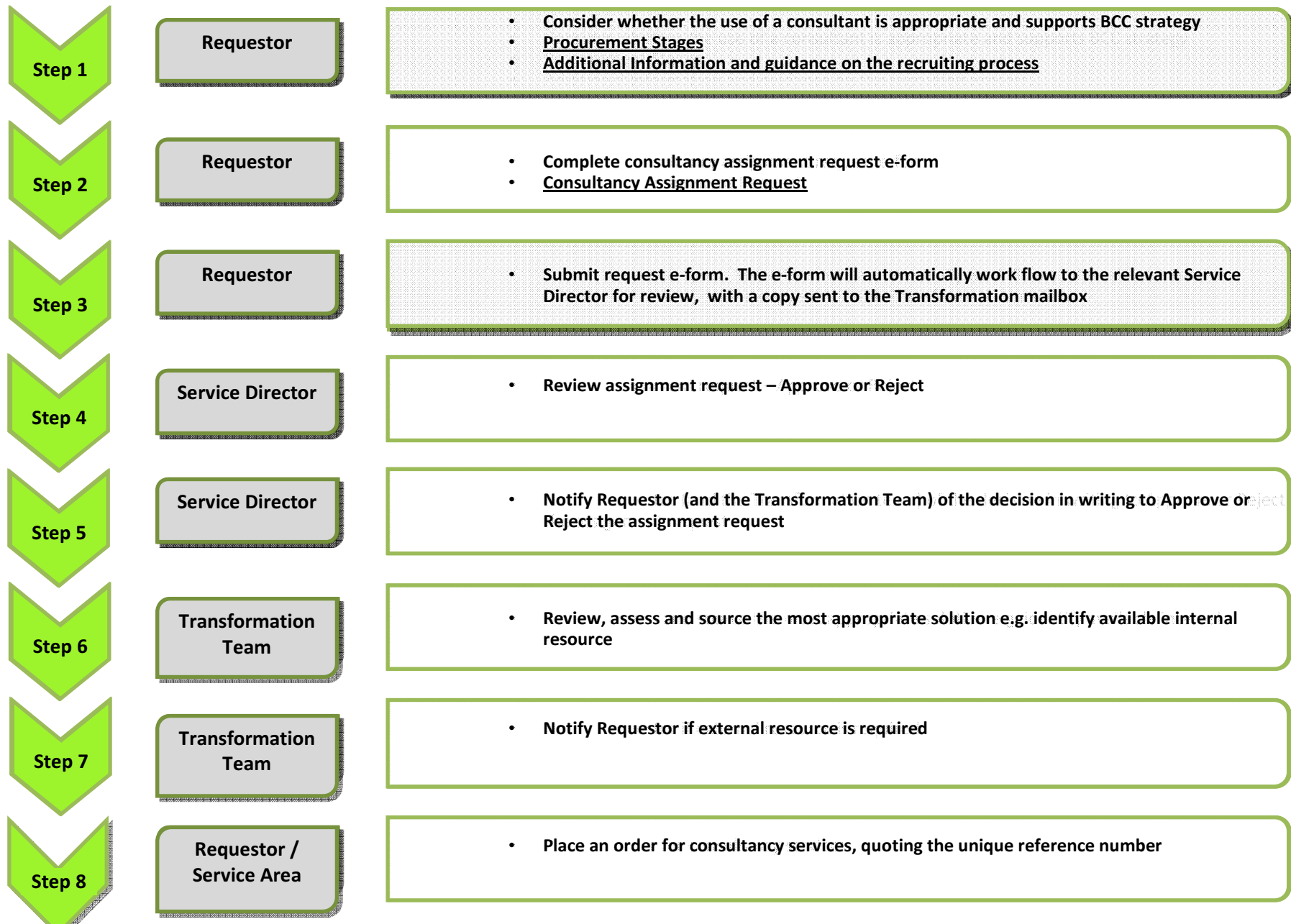
Conclusions - Interims

- It appears that the Pertemps contract for interims and specialist contractors is having a positive impact with strong compliance.

Appendix 1: OGC definitions of Consultancy, Interims and Specialist contractors are below:

Consultancy	<p>The agreed definition of consultancy used by the public sector is “the provision to management of objective advice relating to strategy, structure, management or operations of an organisation in pursuit of its purposes and objectives. Such advice will be provided outside the ‘business-as-usual’ environment when in-house skills are not available and will be time-limited. Consultancy may include the identification of options with recommendations, or assistance with (but not the delivery of) the implementation of solutions.”</p>
Interim Managers	<p>Interims are normally middle-to-senior grade staff working in an organisation, concerned with the fulfilment of particular professional functional or senior management positions within the organisational structure (usually covering Business-as-Usual activities or providing cover for a role) and ideally engaged on a short term basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ may involve providing cover (e.g. for a vacancy, holiday or sickness) or additional resource (e.g. for a new team until someone is recruited, or a seasonal peak in workload). ▪ may include Professional Interim Staff (e.g. senior qualified professionals in areas such as legal, finance, audit) and Interim Managers (including up to the most senior levels of the organisation). ▪ likely to include a degree of organisational involvement (e.g. managing staff, representation at meetings). ▪ typically engaged through an agency although in some cases may be engaged directly.
Specialist Contractors	<p>Specialists are normally middle-to-senior grades, used to provide expertise that is not available in-house, fulfilling functional or senior positions within the organisational structure and ideally engaged on a short term basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ may include sub-categories of Finance, HR, IT, Legal, Logistics, Marketing, Medical, Procurement, Estates, Technical and Other. ▪ not staff substitution; specialists are used to provide additional resource, skills and expertise, not to cover vacancies etc. ▪ should not include management functions or similar organisational involvement. ▪ usually involved in a defined package of work or project rather than covering a day-to-day workload or defined job/ role. ▪ in some instances, may include a degree of organisational involvement (e.g. managing staff, representation at meetings). ▪ not always provided through an agency.

Appendix 2: Current BCC process for engaging consultancy



Appendix 3 E-form assignments

	Assignment Title	Assignment Brief
1	Transition Director support for Buckinghamshire Learning Trust.	Support due diligence analysis and risk management activity. Ensure the smooth handover of staff assets activity and resources. Support the CEO in setting up BLT as a trading entity
2	Media initiatives project extension	
3	School Place Planning Requirements	Supply of Consultancy Services to undertake School Competitions and Area Plan related work
4	Black Park Visitor Centre Feasibility Study	To conduct a study to assess the feasibility of developing a financially sustainable visitor centre in Black Park that enhances the visitor experience of all Bucks Country Parks
5	Counselling Tender - Expert Counselling Support	Provide support, expert knowledge and advice on the Counselling Profession to support the Counselling Information and Support Services Tender
6	Counselling - Professional Support	Providing expert support and advice in order to tender for Counselling, Information and Support Services
7	Museum Trust	Museum Business Planning with trustees prior to transfer
8	Performance governance framework	To achieve the following outcomes: a performance framework, governance arrangements, scorecard and measures, a toolkit and training
9	Review of TfB and Strategic Client	This is a diagnostic exercise into emergent problems in TfB. it has been discussed at high level by Service Director, Neil & Chris Williams to understand and redress Member concerns
10	School Nurse Baseline Scoping & Recommendations	To analyse the current work content of the school nursing service and provide an informed professional opinion of how the service can be re-designed to meet the national model recommended for school nursing.
11	FMS Consultancy	Train Schools on FMS
12	Chairman of Little Marlow CE Infant IEB	Chairman of Little Marlow CE Infant IEB
13	Consultant for FGC	Consultant for Family Group Conference Evaluation and Training Day
14	Structural Engineering Consultants	Consultant structural engineers
15	Expert opinion on report re Safety of Cot	Service is investigating a potential unsafe cot and requires an expert to give an opinion (which will be done in the next few weeks) and potentially be a witness for any future prosecution case (which could be some time away - hence the late anticipated finish date)
16	SIMS Support	Support Schools on use of SIMS
17	Chairman of IEB, Wye Valley School	Duties of Chairman to IEB
18	AUTHORITY ENGINEER	Provision of 'Authority Engineer' service to protect Council interests during the construction of the Energy from Waste Facility and Transfer Stations
19	Consultant for complaints investigations	We need to set Michael Williams as a vendor for his work in investigating complaints
20	Telehealth GP	To provide independent clinical project advice on Telehealth programme
21	Matrix re-assessment advise	Matrix re-assessment advise and training
22	HIGH HEAVENS TECHNICAL SUPPORT	Technical support for 3 projects required for the implementation of the Waste Transfer Station at High Heavens - Highway junction and Road widening, Electrical Transformer relocation and Dano building demolition
23	Narrowing the Gap	Develop a project plan in relation to how we can narrow the educational attainment gap in Bucks
24	Chefs Clubs	Provide Chefs Clubs into schools

25	Highway Development Control Advice	To provide advice to Development Control (existing services - vendor name and bank details change took place - new vendor required in SAP)
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Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee

Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee

Report to the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee

Title:	Local Emergency Support
Committee date:	31 October 2013
Author:	Richard Ambrose
Contact officer:	Halinka Rands – F & CS Ops Manager – hrands@buckscc.gov.uk
Report signed off by Cabinet Member:	Peter Hardy
Electoral divisions affected:	All Electoral Divisions

Purpose of Agenda Item

- To consult on proposals to amend the Council's Local Emergency Support Policy which was agreed on 26.3.2013.
- To update on the Council's Local Emergency Support operation as this was a new requirement of all County Council's with effect from 1.4.2013.

Background

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 received Royal Assent on 8th March 2012.

Part 3 'Other Benefit Changes' S70-73 provides "Section 138(1)(b) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 (discretionary payments out of social fund) is repealed.

The Welfare Benefit Act 2012 abolished Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans and replaced them with a non-ring fenced grant to be paid to Local Authorities in England. Under the Local Government Act 2000, the Council has been expected to utilise the non-ring fenced grant to provide assistance and emergency provision.



The Minister of State for Pensions, Steve Webb MP wrote to Buckinghamshire County Council on 6th August 2012 advising indicative funding. The values were confirmed as the final settlement on 31st December 2012.

2012/2013	Set up funding	£4,795
2013/2014	Programme Funding	£479,510
	Administrative Funding	£101,324
2014/2015	Programme Funding	£479,510
	Administrative Funding	£92,874

All awards have been approved by the Council's Local Emergency Support Budget Decision Maker or their nominated representatives only.

Programme Funding use and Administrative Funding use has been reported on quarterly to the Service Director (Finance & Commercial Services)

Buckinghamshire County Council's Local Emergency Support solution has been in operation since 3rd April 2013.

The Council's Policy which received Cabinet Member approval on 26th March 2013 is attached within the Appendix.

Claimants contact the Council via the Contact Centre where Officers record details on the 'CRM' system. 1 FTE of temporary resource has been funded using Local Emergency Support programme funding so support additional workload.

2 FTE of Local Emergency Support Officers (seconded on Fixed Term Contracts) located within the Direct Services area of the Support Services Centre manage the referrals by reviewing the 'CRM' system on a daily basis.

Out of Hours support for residents in crisis is provided by the Council's Out of Hours Team using Local Emergency Support funding. To date there has been no demand out of normal working hours.

The focus of the Council's Local Emergency Support operation has been to:

- Fully understand each claimants personal and financial situation
- Maximise each claimants financial situation by signposting to eligible benefits and resources available to minimise dependency on crisis provision i.e. heating initiatives from Central Government (including Priority Services Register, Warm Home Discount Scheme), Rent Deposit / Rent Guarantee Schemes / Discretionary Housing Payments available from the relevant District Council, Budgeting Loans from the Department of Work & Pensions etc.
- Provision of resources to assist in the immediate crisis or emergency situation

- To prioritise support and assistance to those in need of food / heating / sanitary provisions
- To report any safeguarding concerns to AFW and CYPS Teams.

The Local Emergency Support Team have developed effective relationships with voluntary organisations, charities, CAB, food banks, Homelessness Organisations, Districts, Probation Service, Police Service, Job Centre Plus' and the Department of Work & Pensions to optimise support for Buckinghamshire claimants. The Local Emergency Support Officers plan to operate 'surgeries' within local Job Centre Plus offices to raise awareness of assisting those in crisis amongst JCP+ staff avoiding claimants being 'ping-ponged' between services and to assist claimants where possible.

The Team are also working closely with the Council's Policy Team to support the Welfare Benefit Reform Project with involvement and participation in various working groups.

Solutions provided directly by the Local Emergency Support are:

- Gift Cards for all major supermarkets enabling claimants to purchase fresh food items, sanitary items, nappies, clothing items etc.
- Postal Orders enabling claimants to draw cash at Post Offices to top up gas / electric accounts. The Council's Post Office Payout system has recently been extended to enable Local Emergency Support claimants to utilise this service.
- Second hand furniture from locally sourced suppliers.
- New furniture / electrical essentials from organisations such as Argos.

Analysis of Operation to Date:

Local Emergency Support

Month	Amount	Progressive	% of total budget used
April	£3,061	£3,061	0.64%
May	£4,737	£7,798	1.63%
June	£6,128	£13,926	2.90%
July	£7,174	£21,100	4.40%
August	£8,744	£29,844	6.22%
Sept	£6,891	£36,736	7.66%
Oct	£10,964	£47,700	9.94%
Nov			0.00%
Dec			0.00%
Jan			0.00%
Feb			0.00%
Mar			0.00%
	£47,700		0.00%
		Total budget	479510

H Rands – Reward & Finance Operations Manager – Support Services Centre Draft V0.2

A dataset of 1,100 claims for assistance from the Council's Local Emergency Support Team was analysed in detail.

- The gender split across claims is 60% males / 40% female.
- In terms of age, 80% of males contacting the Council are aged between 25-64 with 77% of females being in the same age group.
- 15% of males seeking assistance were aged 19-24 with no requests from the 16-18 age group. 18% of females were aged 19-24 and we have received 2 requests from females in the 16-18 age category
- 15% of claims were made on behalf of couples, 85% for singles or lone parents.
- 25% of claims were made from households with dependent children.
- 37% of claims were made from households within Aylesbury, 31% were from Wycombe, 17% were from Chiltern with the remaining 15% divided across LU, SL, MK and UB postcode areas.
- 62% received a solution funded directly from Local Emergency Support monies. 25% of those who did not receive a funded solution could not be contacted in spite of the Team attempting to call on 2 separate occasions and writing to the address given by the claimant. The remaining claimants who were not issued with a directly funded solution were signposted to food banks, advised of their eligibility to benefits or other resources and provided with verbal and written instructions on how to do so, or advised that they no longer needed assistance.
- Of the 62% who received a solution funded from Local Emergency Support monies, $\frac{3}{4}$ advised that food / sanitary items / nappies were their highest needs with assistance towards utilities the next highest. Assistance was further provided towards furniture, white goods, travel, moving cost needs.
- 55% of claimants are referred to the Local Emergency Support Team by the Department of Work & Pensions.
- The Officers receive 25-40 claims on a daily basis. Awards very much depend on individual circumstances as the Officers identify when the claimant will next receive a benefit or income and meet their specific needs up to that date. Depending on the size and needs of the household, Officers calculate food and or heating requirements per person and on a daily basis as per the Department of Work & Pensions daily limits.
- It is acknowledged that the weather has been particularly mild since April and the implementation of Local Emergency Support therefore the demand for assistance with utilities has been relatively low. We therefore anticipate a higher utilisation of

funding as claimants require fuel to heat their accommodation and cook hot food through the winter months.

Anecdotally, many claimants have advised the Local Emergency Support Team that they find themselves unable to purchase food or heat their households because they have received a sanction on their Department of Work & Pensions benefits. This means that some or all of their benefits have been suspended because they have failed to sign on, make contact with the Job Centre Plus etc. for some reason. We have been advised by our local Partnership Manager from the Department of Work & Pensions that benefit claimants have their commitment to receiving on-going payments made very clear at the inception of the claim. The Local Emergency Support Team do not attempt to bridge the claimant's benefit funding gap when determining assistance, their priority is to meet the household's priorities until benefits recommence i.e. providing funding for food or utilities across x days.

The Local Emergency Support Team have access to 'CIS' – Department of Work & Pensions benefits data to validate information provided by claimants and to ensure that they are providing relevant and factual advice on any further benefit eligibility.

Proposals:

Proposal 1

Our analysis confirmed that claimants are being directed to sources of assistance within the County from charities and voluntary groups etc. which has undoubtedly increased demand. To enable these organisations to assist as many residents in crisis as possible, it is proposed that the Policy is updated to include the use of funding for one off requests from these organisations. The analysis further indicates that there is a high likelihood of underspend in Programme Funding across 2013/2014 given demand levels to date even if volumes increase across the winter months thus enabling the Council to support and strengthen the infrastructure across the County.

Requests received to date requiring approval:

Aylesbury Vineyard (Food Bank) – Improvements to existing storage of donated food items provision of further storage and up cycling **£5,500**

One Can Trust (Food Bank) – Storage / office space / kitchen for cookery classes **£19,000**

Central Aid (Second hand furniture/ electrical items) – Operational costs of repairing donations / electrical testing of donations / delivery vehicle running costs **£900**

Wycombe Homeless Connection - a donation will enable them to offer 'honour loans' to young people who are offered YMCA accommodation. The loans are needed to pay a one-off service charge for which the young person is unable to claim Rent In Advance. Wycombe Homeless Connection advise that many young people repay the honour loans and these are recycled to enable them to help more young people. **£1,600**

H Rands – Reward & Finance Operations Manager – Support Services Centre Draft V0.2

Farnham Children's Centre – donation for stock to support the food bank they operate. Request made via Bucks Network Crisis Support Workshop. Contact there – Jo Sheppard. No monetary figure requested. Propose to donate £2,000 in the first instance. **£2,000**

The Local Emergency Support Team have held a number of networking meetings with key partners who support those in crisis. The Officers have promoted the funding to aid a wider population of residents in crisis who may not directly approach the Local Emergency Support Team but responses have been very limited to date. We also recognise that our partners' resources are geared towards front line response and not on the development of business cases.

The Officers are currently working with a number of homelessness organisations to identify how funding could support them with the provision of vouchers for hot food, blankets for their shelters etc.

Bucks Network have asked that we explore the possibility of creating a food bank for Aylesbury Vale North. If Proposal 1 is approved, we will pursue this request.

South Bucks District Council have asked that we explore the possibility of creating a food bank to assist their rural communities. If Proposal 1 is approved, we will pursue this request.

South Bucks District Council have also asked if we would consider one off funding to develop community based volunteer run information points. If Proposal 1 is approved, we will pursue this request.

Proposal 2

It is also proposed that Local Emergency Support is not available to those seeking asylum or for whom an application for asylum has been refused. Applicants must have recourse to public funds and to satisfy the tests under Social Security Persons from Abroad legislation.

Proposal 3

It is further proposed that Local Emergency Support funding will not be used where Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989 applies. Section 17 provides that it is the general duty of Local Authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in need and to promote the upbringing of such children by their families by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs.

Resource implications

- There are no additional financial or resource implications resulting from the proposals to amend the Council's Local Emergency Support Policy.

Next steps

- It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Resources & Finance agrees the proposals to amend the Council's Local Emergency Support Policy.
- If approved, the amendments will be applied immediately.

Appendix

- The current Local Emergency Support Policy which was approved on 26.3.2013:

<..\..\..\..\FCSMT\Local Emergency Support\R05.13 Policy.pdf>

- The updated Local Emergency Support Policy including proposals highlighted above:

<..\..\..\..\FCSMT\Local Emergency Support\Local Emergency Support Fund Policy - Updated 1.11.2013.doc>

- Research collated by the Finance & Commercial Services Operations Manager on activity in other County Councils:

<..\..\..\..\FCSMT\Local Emergency Support\LES - Review 2013-2014.xls>



Buckinghamshire County Council

Title: Buckinghamshire County Council's - Local Emergency Support Policy

Date: 31st October 2012

Author: Richard Ambrose – Service Director (Finance & Commercial Services)

Contact Officer: Halinka Rands – ex 2547

Electoral Divisions Affected: All

1. Introduction & Policy Contents

1.1 This document outlines Buckinghamshire County Council's Policy relating to the delivery of Local Emergency Support.

1.2 The Council's Local Emergency Support Policy was approved on xxxxxx by xxxxxx

1.3 Local Emergency Support Policy Contents:

Paragraph 2: Objectives of the Local Emergency Support Policy

Paragraph 3: Legislation

Paragraph 4: Funding

Paragraph 5: Local Emergency Support – Overview

Paragraph 6: Local Emergency Support – Eligibility

Paragraph 7: Exclusions/Needs Which Are Not Covered

Paragraph 8: Application/Assessment / Decision Making

Paragraph 9: Local Emergency Support Policy Delivery to Claimants

Paragraph 10: Appeals Process

Paragraph 11: Complaints Process

2. Objectives of the Local Emergency Support Policy

2.1 The objective of the policy are to:

- ensure that Local Emergency Support is made in a fair and equitable way
- ensure that the eligibility criteria is easily understandable and meets the Council's Policy on equality and diversity issues
- ensure that the Council operates procedures and has working practices which are efficient and effective in assessing claims and delivering solutions
- ensure that there is an efficient and clear complaints procedure

2.2 The Policy will operate as a pilot from 1.4.2013 to 31.3.2014 with all learning reviewed and informing practices for Year 2.

3. Legislation

3.1 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 received Royal Assent on 8th March 2012.

3.2 Part 3 'Other Benefit Changes' S70-73 provides "Section 138(1)(b) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 (discretionary payments out of social fund) is repealed.

3.3 The Welfare Benefit Act 2012 abolishes Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans and replaces them with a non-ring fenced grant which will be paid to Local Authorities in England.

3.4 Under the Local Government Act 2000, the Council is expected to utilise the non-ring fenced grant to provide assistance and emergency provision.

4. Funding

4.1 The Minister of State for Pensions, Steve Webb MP wrote to Buckinghamshire County Council on 6th August 2012 advising indicative funding. The values were confirmed as the final settlement on 31st December 2012.

2012/2013	Set up funding	£4,795
2013/2014	Programme Funding	£479,510
	Administrative Funding	£101,324
2014/2015	Programme Funding	£479,510
	Administrative Funding	£92,874

- 4.2 To ensure Funding covers the full financial year, the annual Programme Funding amount will be divided into equal twelfths with any surplus accumulating and rolling into the following month / Year 2.
- 4.3 All awards will be approved by the Council's Local Emergency Support Budget Decision Maker or their nominated representatives only.
- 4.4 Programme Funding use and Administrative Funding use will be reported on quarterly to the Service Director (Finance & Commercial Services)

5. Local Emergency Support – Overview

- 5.1 Local Emergency Support will only be awarded to households / individuals who can prove residency within Buckinghamshire and who receive means-tested welfare benefits and / or tax credits and who have no access to sufficient funds or resources to meet their needs in an emergency / crisis situation.
- 5.2 Local Emergency Support will help claimants with their immediate needs to establish themselves in the community following a stay in residential or institutional care or to help claimants remain in the community rather than entering residential or institutional care.
- 5.3 Local Emergency Support will ease exceptional pressure on families in the event of the breakdown of a relationship (especially if involving domestic violence) at the onset of a disability or following severe fire damage or major flooding to the home.
- 5.4 Claimants/households will be signposted to voluntary organisations / food banks / charities / recycling networks etc. in the first instance where appropriate.
- 5.5 Local Emergency Support in the form of goods/services will be sourced from suppliers within Buckinghamshire where possible.
- 5.6 Local Emergency Support will support claimants to meet their short term immediate living expense needs in the event of an emergency.
- 5.7 Concerns regarding social care / safeguarding of applicants or members of households will be referred to the appropriate Council's Directorates for support / advice.

6. Local Emergency Support – Eligibility

- 6.1 From 1.4.2013 – the number of Local Emergency Support awards made to a claimant/household in a 12 month period will be limited to 2. Awards made before 1.4.2013 by the Department of Work & Pensions

will not count towards this limit. Exceptions to this will only be made by the Council's Local Emergency Support Budget Decision Maker.

- 6.2 Local Emergency Support awards will not require repayment by the claimant / household.
- 6.3 Through the Pilot Year, Local Emergency Support applications will be considered by the Council's Local Emergency Support Team on a case by case basis.
- 6.4 Local Emergency Support is intended to cover immediate short-term emergencies only. i.e. where a claimant / household has no immediate food, needs essential goods associated with infants/children, where a claimant / household has no heating, where a claimant requires assistance with emergency travel costs, where the claimant / household has experienced a major upheaval or disaster i.e. a major flood, a gas explosion, a chemical leak, or a house fire. These examples are not intended to be an exhaustive list.

7. Exclusions / Needs Which Are Not Covered.

- 7.1 Applications from individuals who are under 16 years old.
- 7.2 Individuals who are involved in a Trade dispute.
- 7.3 Needs which occur outside of Buckinghamshire.
- 7.4 Needs that can be met by family/friends.
- 7.5 Individuals with capital in excess of £500.
- 7.6 Residents in Care Homes with no plans for discharge within 2 weeks.
- 7.7 Hospital in-patients with no plans for discharge within 2 weeks.
- 7.8 Individuals lawfully detained or on release on temporary licence.
- 7.9 Members of a religious order who are being fully maintained by it.
- 7.10 Individuals treated as in full time education.
- 7.11 To fund rent in advance / rental deposits.
- 7.12 An educational or training need including clothing/tools.
- 7.13 A school uniform or sports clothing for use at school or equipment to be used at school.
- 7.14 Travelling expenses to/from school.
- 7.15 School meals taken during school holidays by children who are entitled to free school meals.
- 7.16 Expenses in connection with court (legal) proceedings such as legal fees, court fees, fines, costs, damages, subsistence, or travelling expenses (other than emergency travelling expenses when stranded from home).
- 7.17 Removal or storage charges if being re-housed following a compulsory purchase order, a redevelopment, or closing order, a compulsory exchange of tenancies, or under a housing authority's statutory duty to the homeless.
- 7.18 Domestic assistance and respite care.
- 7.19 Any repair to Council property, Housing Trust property, privately rented property.

- 7.20 A medical, surgical, optical, aural, or dental item/service (these needs can be provided free of charge by the National Health Service if claiming Universal Credit (Income Support/Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment & Support Allowance or Pension Credit (including Guaranteed Credit))
- 7.21 Work related expenses.
- 7.22 Debts to Government departments, Local Authorities or Utility Companies.
- 7.23 Investments.
- 7.24 To purchase, install, pay for rental or call charges for a telephone.
- 7.25 Mobility needs.
- 7.26 Holidays.
- 7.27 To purchase a television or radio or a licence, aerial or rental charges for a television or radio.
- 7.28 Garaging, parking, purchase and running costs of any motor vehicle except where a payment is being considered for emergency travel expenses.
- 7.29 Housing costs.
- 7.30 Council Tax, Council water charges, arrears of Council Tax or arrears of Council water charges.
- 7.31 Any costs covered by insurance policies.
- 7.32 Any needs met by Department of Work & Pensions benefits/allowances.
- 7.33 Health needs met by the Primary Care Trust.
- 7.34 To supplement Department of Work & Pensions benefit claimants who have been subject to sanctions, conditions, civil penalties or overpayment action.

This is not an exhaustive list and may be added to throughout the duration of the Policy.

8. Application/Assessment/Decision Making

- 8.1 Claims for Local Emergency Support may **ONLY** be made via the Council's dedicated telephone phone number or by completion of the Council's Local Emergency Support Application Form.
- 8.2 A fully completed Local Emergency Support Application Form will be assessed by the Council's Local Emergency Support Team within 5 working days of receipt depending on urgency and priority.
- 8.3 The Council's Local Emergency Support Team will validate all welfare benefits / tax credit details and residential status declared to confirm eligibility.
- 8.4 Where an application is approved, the Council's Local Emergency Support Team will support the claimant / household to meet their agreed immediate/emergency needs through the provision of locally sourced goods/services to the agreed budget.

- 8.5 Where an application is declined, the Council's Local Emergency Support Team will notify the claimant / household by telephone and in writing.
- 8.6 Claims for Local Emergency Support made to any other telephone number will not be accepted.
- 8.7 Claims for Local Emergency Support can not be made in person to any of the Council's offices.
- 8.8 The Council's Local Emergency Support will need the claimant / household to provide all details required / requested to enable a decision to be made.
- 8.9 Any refusal to provide information required may result in a claim being declined.
- 8.10 Where assistance is required out of normal office hours / weekends, the Council's Out of Hours Service will provide for eligible immediate / crisis needs.

9. Local Emergency Support Delivery to Claimants

- 9.1. Local Emergency Support awards will be delivered through the provision of locally sourced goods/services.
- 9.2 Where possible, the claimant will be able to select goods/services from nominated suppliers to the agreed budget which will include the costs of delivery/installation etc.
- 9.3 Local Emergency Support needs will be met through the provision of monies in exceptional circumstances only.
- 9.4 Where Local Emergency Support needs are to be met through monies, payment transfer will be made directly into the claimant's bank account or an account nominated by the claimant.

10. Appeals Process

- 10.1 The Council's Local Emergency Support Budget Decision Maker's decision is final.
- 10.2 There is no opportunity for claimants to appeal against decisions made around the amount or method of Local Emergency Support granted or any decisions made to refuse Provision.

11. Complaints Process

- 11.1 The Council's Complaints Process will apply.

11.2 All complaints relating to Local Emergency Support will be referred to the Council's Local Emergency Support Budget Decision Maker.

Background Papers

Welfare Reform Act 2012

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents/enacted/data.htm>





Buckinghamshire County Council

Title: Buckinghamshire County Council's - Local Emergency Support Policy

Date: 31st October 2012

Author: Richard Ambrose – Service Director (Finance & Commercial Services)

Contact Officer: Halinka Rands – ex 2547

Electoral Divisions Affected: All

1. Introduction & Policy Contents

1.1 This document outlines Buckinghamshire County Council's Policy relating to the delivery of Local Emergency Support.

1.2 The Council's Local Emergency Support Policy was approved on 26.3.2013 by the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources

1.3 **The Council's Local Emergency Support Policy was updated on XXXXXX.**

1.4 Local Emergency Support Policy Contents:

Paragraph 2: Objectives of the Local Emergency Support Policy

Paragraph 3: Legislation

Paragraph 4: Funding

Paragraph 5: Local Emergency Support – Overview

Paragraph 6: Local Emergency Support – Eligibility

Paragraph 7: Exclusions/Needs Which Are Not Covered

Paragraph 8: Application/Assessment / Decision Making

Paragraph 9: Local Emergency Support Policy Delivery to Claimants

Paragraph 10: Appeals Process

Paragraph 11: Complaints Process

2. Objectives of the Local Emergency Support Policy

2.1 The objective of the policy are to:

- ensure that Local Emergency Support is made in a fair and equitable way
- ensure that the eligibility criteria is easily understandable and meets the Council's Policy on equality and diversity issues
- ensure that the Council operates procedures and has working practices which are efficient and effective in assessing claims and delivering solutions
- ensure that there is an efficient and clear complaints procedure

2.2 The Policy will operate as a pilot from 1.4.2013 with all learning reviewed and informing practices for Year 2.

2.3 The Policy has been updated from XXXXX to enable funding to be used to support organisations within Buckinghamshire who work with residents in crisis. Funding will be in the form of one off donations.

2.4 The Policy has been updated from XXXXX to confirm the position around asylum seekers, persons from abroad and Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989.

3. Legislation

3.1 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 received Royal Assent on 8th March 2012.

3.2 Part 3 'Other Benefit Changes' S70-73 provides "Section 138(1)(b) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 (discretionary payments out of social fund) is repealed.

3.3 The Welfare Benefit Act 2012 abolishes Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans and replaces them with a non-ring fenced grant which will be paid to Local Authorities in England.

3.4 Under the Local Government Act 2000, the Council is expected to utilise the non-ring fenced grant to provide assistance and emergency provision.

4. Funding



- 4.1 The Minister of State for Pensions, Steve Webb MP wrote to Buckinghamshire County Council on 6th August 2012 advising indicative funding. The values were confirmed as the final settlement on 31st December 2012.

2012/2013	Set up funding	£4,795
2013/2014	Programme Funding	£479,510
	Administrative Funding	£101,324
2014/2015	Programme Funding	£479,510
	Administrative Funding	£92,874

- 4.2 To ensure Funding covers the full financial year, the annual Programme Funding amount will be divided into equal twelfths with any surplus accumulating and rolling into the following month / Year 2.
- 4.3 All awards will be approved by the Council's Local Emergency Support Budget Decision Maker or their nominated representatives only.
- 4.4 Programme Funding use and Administrative Funding use will be reported on quarterly to the Service Director (Finance & Commercial Services)

5. Local Emergency Support – Overview

- 5.1 Local Emergency Support will only be awarded to households / individuals who can prove residency within Buckinghamshire, and who are on low incomes or have no income, or are eligible or in receipt of means tested welfare benefits and or/ tax credits and who have no access to funds / resources to meet their immediate needs in an eligible emergency or crisis situation.
- 5.2 Local Emergency Support will help claimants with their immediate needs to establish themselves in the community following a stay in residential or institutional care or to help claimants remain in the community rather than entering residential or institutional care.
- 5.3 Local Emergency Support will ease exceptional pressure on families in the event of the breakdown of a relationship (especially if involving domestic violence) at the onset of a disability or following severe fire damage or major flooding to the home.
- 5.4 Claimants/households will be signposted to voluntary organisations / food banks / charities / recycling networks etc. in the first instance where appropriate.

- 5.5 Local Emergency Support in the form of goods/services will be sourced from suppliers within Buckinghamshire where possible.
- 5.6 Local Emergency Support will support claimants to meet their short term immediate living expense needs in the event of an emergency.
- 5.7 Concerns regarding social care / safeguarding of applicants or members of households will be referred to the appropriate Council's Directorates for support / advice.

6. Local Emergency Support – Eligibility

- 6.1 From 1.4.2013 – the number of Local Emergency Support awards made to a claimant/household in a 12 month period will be limited to 2. Awards made before 1.4.2013 by the Department of Work & Pensions will not count towards this limit. Exceptions to this will only be made by the Council's Local Emergency Support Budget Decision Maker.
- 6.2 Local Emergency Support awards will not require repayment by the claimant / household.
- 6.3 Local Emergency Support applications will be considered by the Council's Local Emergency Support Team on a case by case basis.
- 6.4 Local Emergency Support is intended to cover immediate short-term emergencies only. i.e. where a claimant / household has no immediate food, needs essential goods associated with infants/children, where a claimant / household has no heating, where a claimant requires assistance with emergency travel costs, where the claimant / household has experienced a major upheaval or disaster i.e. a major flood, a gas explosion, a chemical leak, or a house fire. These examples are not intended to be an exhaustive list.
- 6.5 Requests for funding from organisations within Buckinghamshire who work with residents in crisis will be considered by the Council's Local Emergency Support Decision Maker. Funding will only be made on a one off donation basis and awards made will not obligate the Council to enter into any long term financial commitments with these organisations.
- 6.6 Local Emergency Support is not available to those seeking asylum or for whom an application for asylum has been refused. Applicants must have recourse to public funds and to satisfy the tests under Social Security Persons from Abroad legislation.
- 6.7 Local Emergency Support funding will not be used where Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989 applies.

7. Exclusions / Needs Which Are Not Covered.

- 7.1 Applications from individuals who are under 16 years old.
- 7.2 Individuals who are involved in a Trade dispute.
- 7.3 Needs which occur outside of Buckinghamshire.
- 7.4 Needs that can be met by family/friends.
- 7.5 Individuals with capital in excess of £500.
- 7.6 Residents in Care Homes with no plans for discharge within 2 weeks.
- 7.7 Hospital in-patients with no plans for discharge within 2 weeks.
- 7.8 Individuals lawfully detained or on release on temporary licence.
- 7.9 Members of a religious order who are being fully maintained by it.
- 7.10 Individuals treated as in full time education.
- 7.11 To fund rent in advance / rental deposits.
- 7.12 An educational or training need including clothing/tools.
- 7.13 A school uniform or sports clothing for use at school or equipment to be used at school.
- 7.14 Travelling expenses to/from school.
- 7.15 School meals taken during school holidays by children who are entitled to free school meals.
- 7.16 Expenses in connection with court (legal) proceedings such as legal fees, court fees, fines, costs, damages, subsistence, or travelling expenses (other than emergency travelling expenses when stranded from home).
- 7.17 Removal or storage charges if being re-housed following a compulsory purchase order, a redevelopment, or closing order, a compulsory exchange of tenancies, or under a housing authority's statutory duty to the homeless.
- 7.18 Domestic assistance and respite care.
- 7.19 Any repair to Council property, Housing Trust property, privately rented property.
- 7.20 A medical, surgical, optical, aural, or dental item/service (these needs can be provided free of charge by the National Health Service if claiming Universal Credit (Income Support/Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment & Support Allowance or Pension Credit (including Guaranteed Credit)
- 7.21 Work related expenses.
- 7.22 Debts to Government departments, Local Authorities or Utility Companies.
- 7.23 Investments.
- 7.24 To purchase, install, pay for rental or call charges for a telephone.
- 7.25 Mobility needs.
- 7.26 Holidays.
- 7.27 To purchase a television or radio or a licence, aerial or rental charges for a television or radio.
- 7.28 Garaging, parking, purchase and running costs of any motor vehicle except where a payment is being considered for emergency travel expenses.
- 7.29 Housing costs.
- 7.30 Council Tax, Council water charges, arrears of Council Tax or arrears of Council water charges.

- 7.31 Any costs covered by insurance policies.
- 7.32 Any needs met by Department of Work & Pensions benefits/allowances.
- 7.33 Health needs met by the Primary Care Trust.
- 7.34 To supplement Department of Work & Pensions benefit claimants who have been subject to sanctions, conditions, civil penalties or overpayment action.

This is not an exhaustive list and may be added to throughout the duration of the Policy.

8. Application/Assessment/Decision Making

- 8.1 Claims for Local Emergency Support may **ONLY** be made via the Council's dedicated telephone number or by completion of the Council's Local Emergency Support Application Form.
- 8.2 A fully completed Local Emergency Support Application Form will be assessed by the Council's Local Emergency Support Team within 5 working days of receipt depending on urgency and priority.
- 8.3 The Council's Local Emergency Support Team will validate all welfare benefits / tax credit details and residential status declared to confirm eligibility.
- 8.4 Where an application is approved, the Council's Local Emergency Support Team will support the claimant / household to meet their agreed immediate/emergency needs through the provision of locally sourced goods/services to the agreed budget.
- 8.5 Where an application is declined, the Council's Local Emergency Support Team will notify the claimant / household by telephone and in writing.
- 8.6 Claims for Local Emergency Support made to any other telephone number will not be accepted.
- 8.7 Claims for Local Emergency Support can not be made in person to any of the Council's offices.
- 8.8 The Council's Local Emergency Support will need the claimant / household to provide all details required / requested to enable a decision to be made.
- 8.9 Any refusal to provide information required may result in a claim being declined.
- 8.10 Where assistance is required out of normal office hours / weekends, the Council's Out of Hours Service will provide for eligible immediate / crisis needs.

9. Local Emergency Support Delivery to Claimants

- 9.1. Local Emergency Support awards will be delivered through the provision of locally sourced goods/services.
- 9.2. Where possible, the claimant will be able to select goods/services from nominated suppliers to the agreed budget which will include the costs of delivery/installation etc.
- 9.3. Local Emergency Support needs will be met through the provision of monies in exceptional circumstances only.
- 9.4. Where Local Emergency Support needs are to be met through monies, payment transfer will be made directly into the claimant's bank account or an account nominated by the claimant.

10. Appeals Process

- 10.1. The Council's Local Emergency Support Budget Decision Maker's decision is final.
- 10.2. There is no opportunity for claimants to appeal against decisions made around the amount or method of Local Emergency Support granted or any decisions made to refuse Provision.

11. Complaints Process

- 11.1. The Council's Complaints Process will apply.
- 11.2. All complaints relating to Local Emergency Support will be referred to the Council's Local Emergency Support Budget Decision Maker.

Background Papers

Welfare Reform Act 2012

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents/enacted/data.htm>

Local Emergency Support - 2013/2014 - Activity in other Local Authorities

Council	Name of Scheme	Eligibility Rules	Application Method	Progress to Date	Notes
Central Bedfordshire	Local Welfare Provision Payment Scheme	Resident in Central Beds (6 of the last 12 months) or 3 of the last 5 years / Age 16 + / In an emergency situation / do not need to be in receipt of benefits	Telephone only to 0300 3008070 Office Hours only. Proof of identity required		
Lancashire County Council	The Care & Urgent Needs Support Scheme	Resident in Lancashire / Age 16+ / low income /	Telephone 0845 0530015 to be guided through an application. Office Hours only. NI number / benefit details / Savings details / relevant information on the crisis.	70% applicants are single / couples with no dependent children. 81% are 25-64. 41% of applications are for fuel. Demand is less than anticipated - forecasting a £0.5m underspend which they are expecting to increase.	No loans paid only grants. Goods from local suppliers. Using the Northgate Social Fund Service. Limiting access to 2 awards annually. Working closely with partners and Welfare Rights Service. £2.9m programme funding. £0.569 administration funding. Providing vouchers for food, payments to suppliers for suitable goods or services, pre payment cards for goods / heating.
Hampshire County Council					No Policy document as they are not an application based process.
East Sussex Council	Discretionary East Sussex Support Scheme	Meet financial criteria / have a qualifying circumstance or need for assistance / need must be of sufficient priority / resident in East Sussex or intending to be resident / Recourse to public funds / satisfy the tests under Social Security Persons from Abroad legislation / Age 16+	Telephone or Online. No face to face contact.	61% of budget used in first 5 months v actual available i.e. £241,851 spent / £396,047 available. Unallocated provision in budget £225,000 as at September 6th 2013. 3481 calls handled to August 2013. Applications taken 709 to August 2013. Claims awarded in full 260 / in part 186 / refused 256 / pending 7.	1 award per household in any 12 month period. Discretion for any subsequent awards requested. Rent in Advance or Deposits are not covered by this scheme. Funding is not available to those seeking asylum or where an application for asylum has been refused. Support is not provided where Section 17 funding applies. Most applications as a result of a new home 25% followed by benefits issue 9% and then leaving supported accommodation 8%. Refusals - insufficient priority 43% followed by other assistance available 26%.
East Riding Council	Local Welfare Assistance	Resident of East Riding / in receipt of qualifying benefits /	Support Grants - through trusted partners (those trained on the eligibility criteria of the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme) / Emergency Loan applications made online or assisted telephone.	Data provided in August 2013: 960 applications, 55% male, 38% 26-40 age band, 31% 41-55 age band. 57% referred by DWP. £105k spent to date, average award, £143.	Scheme made up of 2 parts: Emergency Loans - repayable / Support Grants - not repayable. Excluded persons - persons for whom someone is in receipt of child benefit / Prisoners / Persons in Care Homes / Students / Persons from Abroad / Persons subject to DWP sanctions and disallowances. Max EL amount for living expenses per day £3 per person. Rent in Advance is covered within this scheme & paid directly to landlord or trusted partner. Maximum period of rent paid - 1 month. Awards made via Faster Payments or Pay Point. Repayment of Emergency Loans at £5.00 per week.

Isle of Wight Council	Local Assistance Scheme	Island residents who have an established link over an appreciable period i.e. 12 months. Age 16+	Online and Telephone	Awards total v budget available at August 2013 - 29% funding used. Programme funding £344,000 for 2013/2014.	Not eligible - persons from abroad in line with Social Security benefit administration rules. Consider maximum of 3 awards in any 12 months.
Surrey County Council	Surrey Local Assistance Scheme			Approving 83% of applications with 70% given a monetary award via pre paid Visa debit card. 22% awarded only household goods through Surrey Reuse Network.	Majority of claims made by individuals who have benefits which are sanctioned or moving between JSA and ESA.
North Yorkshire County Council	North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund	Age 16+, resident or moving to North Yorkshire, in receipt of specific means tested benefits, low income.	Telephone 0845 8727374 Office hours only.		1 application in a rolling 12 month period or food requirements 2 applications. No cash payments. Administration of the scheme has been contracted to Charis.
Wokingham Borough Council	Local Welfare Provision	Age 16+, resident in Wokingham borough or placed outside by Wokingham Borough Council,		Total funding available to August 2013 - £32,172 v actual spend £1,453 = 4.5%	110 enquiries as at August 2013. Payments made to 34 of these i.e. 31%. Do not pay cash. Are helping claimants by sign posting to resources available locally i.e. foodbanks, Budgeting Loans, Rent Guarantee Schemes etc. Provision made by vouchers, goods or services, direct to bank account, cash in exceptional circumstances.
Cheshire West & Chester Council	HELP (Help in Emergencies for Local People)	Residents of Cheshire West / Chester, householders,		Funding has been amalgamated: £755,000 HELP funding, £450,000 Discretionary Housing Payment funding, £60,000 Council Tax Reduction Scheme / Discretionary Hardship Payments. April to July - 460 applications with 324 awards made i.e. 70.4%. Spend from April to July £73,462 v HELP budget of £251,777 = 29%.	Work closely with Furniture Finders and Changing Lives in Cheshire as well as West and Mid Cheshire Foodbanks i.e. Trussell trust. Excludes support for single people stating payments have been lost or stolen. Only consider householders. Exclude homeless. Exclude those on DWP sanctions. The Council make donations to each foodbank to help with their running costs. Provision is made via an Essentials Card if foodbanks or Changing Lives in Cheshire is not open. Provision can also be made via Fuel Cards.
Wiltshire Council	Local Welfare Provision Scheme	Wiltshire residents / Age 16+	Referral from partner organisations. Online. Telephone 0300 0034567. Out of hours covered by Emergency Duty Service.	April to July - 879 crisis awards, 187 community awards, 50 not eligible, 33 refusals.	No more than 2 claims in a 12 month period. Administered by the Council's Revs & Bens Team. Typical applications - sanctions, awaiting DWP decision, lost/stolen monies, money spent on priority debts.
Lincolnshire Council				Slightly more male than female applicants, most requests for food followed by utilities,	
Cumbria Council	Local Welfare Assistance	Cumbria residents. Age 16+. Low income or access to no funding.	Applications made to the Community Support Team. Telephone 01228 221199. Office hours only although answerphone out of hours signposts contact details for children's or adults services.	Budget £1.390m. £273k for admin, staffing, office set up, All Pay (7,000 cards)	Using Northgate System. Provision is made via direct assistance. Pre loaded cards posted to applicants.

Case Studies

- 1) Caller contacts the LES Team to advise that he has lost his benefit money and is not due to receive his next payment for a further week and a half. He has no food and needs to top up his electricity key. He is a single man living in a flat on full Housing Benefit.

LES Team ask how he lost his money and he advises that he drew it out at the Post Office and his wallet was stolen whilst he was in town as his pocket was empty when he got home. The LES Team advise that they need a crime reference number from the caller before they can assist him and explain how he needs to do this. They advise that they will call him back at 12 noon to give him time to report the offence. In the meantime, the Team check his DWP benefit situation and establish that he is receiving all the benefits he is entitled to. They call him back at 12 noon and he gives them a valid crime reference number substantiating his claim.

The Team discuss his immediate needs and advise him where his nearest food bank is for non-perishable food items. They agree to issue him with a £30 Tesco card to enable him to buy perishable foods until he gets his next benefit award. He says he has some money on his electric card and only needs a small top up. The Team agree to issue a £10 Post Office Payout award and explain what he needs to do with this.

He is asked to retain all of the receipts he is given when he makes his purchases and top up as these may be required for audit purposes in the future.

He is asked if he has any further questions and the call is then completed.

The LES Team update our data systems with actions agreed and administer the award posting it 1st class to his registered address.

- 2) Caller contacts the LES Team and advises that he has no money for food.

The LES Team seek to understand how this situation has arisen and the caller advises that his benefit has been sanctioned as he missed his signing on appointment. He thinks he will get a proportion of his money but not all of it.

The LES Team check the DWP data on the caller and clarify that he has applied for a Hardship Payment but it is unlikely to be awarded as he is a single male with no dependents. He is next due to sign on in a week's time. He confirms that he has been relying on friends and family for meals over the last week and has used up their goodwill. He lives in the YMCA.

The LES Team confirm the importance of the Claimant Commitment with the DWP and his responsibility to attend when required otherwise his benefits can be sanctioned for long periods of time. They advise him where his nearest food bank is and agree to issue him with a £20 Sainsbury's card. He is asked to retain all of the

receipts he is given when he makes his purchases and top up as these may be required for audit purposes in the future.

He is asked if he has any further questions and the call is then completed.

The LES Team update our data systems with actions agreed and administer the award posting it 1st class to his registered address.

3) Caller contacts the LES Team and says they want to make a claim.

The LES Team contact the caller to establish what their crisis is and why they are looking to make a claim. The caller says they think they are entitled to 2 awards a year and are therefore calling to see how much they can get.

The LES Team advise that our funding is not a benefit and what we assist with. They clarify that the caller is receiving all of the benefits they are entitled to and ask if they have any further questions. The call is then completed

The LES Team update our data system.

4) Caller contacts the LES Team and says that their cooker has “exploded”

The LES Team contact the caller to establish what has happened and the caller advises that they have an electric cooker which has stopped working. The caller is a female with 3 dependent children. The caller has maximised their Budgeting Loan opportunities with DWP and is in desperate situation.

The Team establish that the caller has sufficient benefit monies for food and utilities and the cooker is her only need.

The Team establish measurements of the current cooker etc. and locate a new one from Argos which can be delivered on the same day. They arrange for the broken cooker to be collected and disposed of.

They notify the caller to expect the new cookery delivery at the notified delivery time. They ask the caller if she has any questions. The call is then completed.

The LES Team update our data systems with actions agreed.

Finance, Performance and Resources select committee – Draft work programme and possible committee items 26.11.13

Committee	Date	Topic	Description and Purpose	Attendees
Finance, Performance & Resources	17 Dec 2013	Budget Scrutiny (day 1)	For Members to question the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing on the draft spending plans and priorities for Adults & Family Wellbeing and Public Health.	Patricia Birchley – Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing; Trevor Boyd – Strategic Director, Adults and Family Wellbeing; Jane O’Grady – Director of Public Health
	7, 8 & 9 Jan 2014	Budget Scrutiny (days 2-4)	For Members to question Cabinet Members on their draft spending plans and priorities.	Cabinet Members and lead officers
	25 Feb 14	Transformation Phase 2 / Target Operating Model	For members to receive a quarterly update on plans being developed to enable the Council to meet future challenges.	Peter Hardy - Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources; Nick Cave – Service Director, Service Transformation
	25 Feb 14	Resourcing	For Members to receive a briefing on staffing levels and the Pertemps resourcing contract.	Chris Daltry – Service Director, Human Resources
	25 Feb 14	Property Update: Corporate Landlord and Asset Management	For Members to receive a briefing on the Council’s Corporate Landlord programme and Asset Management Strategy	Peter Hardy – Cabinet Member, Finance and Resources Ian Boll – Senior Manager, Place Service
	25 Feb 14	Commercial activity update	For Members to receive a bi-annual commercial activity update.	Rose Younger – Commercial Manager
	25 Feb 14	Balanced scorecard and joint monitoring report – quarter 3	Paper for information	N/A
	1 April 14	Customer Contact update	For Members to receive a briefing on how services are being re-organised around customers (including customer insight and corporate complaints)	Martin Phillips - Cabinet Member, Community Engagement; Amanda Brooke-Webb – Service Director, Customer Contact

Finance, Performance and Resources select committee – Draft work programme and possible committee items 26.11.13

	1 April 14	Corporate Communications	For Members to receive a briefing on corporate communications including effectiveness, audience groups, branding, use of channels, overview of website capabilities / online offering	Sophie Payne – Head of Communications
	1 April 14	Freedom of Information	For Members to receive a briefing on FOI requests, progress and costs and options to make more information available to reduce FOI requests	Neil Doling – FOI Officer



Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee

5 September 2013 Capital item written responses

Note on Accounting for Schools Assets when Transferring to Academy Status

The Finance, Resources and Performance Select Committee requested clarification on the position of assets where schools transfer to academy status. This note is aimed at responding to that request.

There are several categories of school in existence and each attracts a different accounting treatment. The table below briefly sets out the way that that schools assets are treated by Buckinghamshire County Council. It should be noted that the treatment of schools assets is currently the subject of national debate within the accounting profession and it is therefore possible that the position described here will change over time.

Funding Source	School Type	Land	Buildings	Other Assets
Local Authority Maintained	Community	On Council's Balance Sheet	On Council's Balance Sheet	On Council's Balance Sheet
	Voluntary Controlled	On Council's Balance Sheet	On Council's Balance Sheet	On Council's Balance Sheet
	Voluntary Aided	On Council's Balance Sheet	Elsewhere	Elsewhere
	Foundation	Elsewhere	Elsewhere	Elsewhere
Funded direct by Government	Academy	On LA B/S or Elsewhere depending upon origin.	Elsewhere	Elsewhere
	Free School	On LA B/S or Elsewhere depending upon origin	Elsewhere	Elsewhere
Fees	Independent	Elsewhere	Elsewhere	Elsewhere

Schools can convert to academy status from any of the other categories.

For a community school converting to an academy the freehold of the Land and Buildings remains with the local authority and is subject to a 125 year peppercorn lease with the



academy trust. Under these arrangements it is deemed that the economic benefit of the property is derived by the academy and accordingly the buildings are removed from the Council's balance sheet; the land is retained on balance sheet.

Where the school land is larger than is needed by the academy the local authority may retain control of the surplus land and only lease what is necessary to the trust. However, the trust may appeal this and the ultimate decision rests with the Secretary of State.

Where economic control of the property has already been transferred to the academy and due to changes in circumstance land becomes surplus to requirements then any capital receipt would come to the freehold owner, i.e. the Council, unless the Secretary of State explicitly over-rides this default position. This principal that the freeholder benefits from the capital receipt also applies to Academy schools that were formerly VC or VA schools – however in this instance the freeholder, may be the Council or (for example) may be the Diocese

For Foundation Schools, even where they were formerly maintained schools, or any of the categories of school not maintained by the local authority, the assets are not on the Council's balance sheet prior to academy conversion and there is no need for any accounting transfers. However, in most cases there is a clause in the academy agreement that states that should the school dispose of land the Council can state a claim on the proceeds. This has happened in the case of Great Marlow School, where the Council secured a proportion of the proceeds.

The legislation and accounting regulations underpinning these arrangements are actually quite complex. It follows that the description above is necessarily a simplified summary. It is therefore possible that in particular unusual circumstances the apparent, or actual, arrangements may differ from this description. However, the above descriptions should stand good for the vast majority of cases.

Response to Business Investment Group (BIG) question

The most recent Capital Programme Annual Report available on our Intranet is for 2010/11, and the latest Business Investment Group (BIG) minutes are dated Oct 2012. Are these still produced and if so, how are they being made available?

- a) There remains an intent on the part of the Business Investment Group to produce an annual report for capital either as a freestanding document as in the past, or as part of a larger annual report. However, for the last two years, resources and more pressing events have prevented this from happening, as its production is quite resource intensive. It remains to be seen whether as the organisation faces further financial challenges the resources can be found to do this. It is, however, recognised that it would be good to do so.
- b) The lack of up to date BIG minutes on the intranet was a known problem stemming from a change of personnel and resulting restrictions on access to the intranet site. As it happens these obstacles have now been overcome and you should find that up to date minutes are now available on the intranet.