RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE CABINET PANEL
FRIDAY 5 JULY 2019

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL
J Billing; S N Bloxham (substituting for E H Buckmaster); F Button; H K Crofton; R C Deering (Vice-Chairman); M A Eames-Petersen (substituting for S J Taylor); P V Mason; A J S Mitchell; R Sangster (Chairman); R H Smith; P T Williams; T J Williams; P M Zukowskyj

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE
D Andrews; T C Heritage

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel meeting 5 July 2019 as circulated, copy annexed, conclusions were reached and are recorded below.

PART I (‘OPEN’) BUSINESS

<table>
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<th>ACTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. MINUTES</td>
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<td>1.1 The minutes (Part I) of the Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel held on 7 June 2019 were agreed.</td>
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<td>2. PUBLIC PETITIONS</td>
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<td>2.1 There were no public petitions.</td>
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### 3. HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE MONITOR QUARTER 4 (Q4), 2018-19

**Officer Contact:** Alex James, Head of Corporate Policy (Tel 01992 588259)

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<tr>
<td><strong>3.1</strong></td>
<td>Members received the Resources and Performance Monitor Report for the fourth quarter of the financial year.</td>
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<td><strong>3.2</strong></td>
<td>Members were pleased to note the broadly positive performance data outlined within the report.</td>
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<td><strong>3.3</strong></td>
<td>In response to a Member question it was clarified that ‘unsynchronised monthly accounting’, as outlined at 3.1.2 of the report was where differing reporting mechanisms for different spends (in this case salary (monthly) and agency (4 weekly)) did not tally up the way they should, thus producing some variation in the figures produced.</td>
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<td><strong>3.4</strong></td>
<td>In response to a Member challenge regarding the comparatively low number of people required to meet the targets for free school meals and buss passes, assurance was received that target numbers were reviewed regularly to ensure that they provided appropriate performance challenge for individual departments.</td>
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| **3.5** | **CONCLUSION**  
  Resources and Performance Panel:  
  - Commented on the recommendations outlined within the report.  
  - Identified further actions to address any performance concerns raised in the Performance Monitor. |

### 4. HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PERFORMANCE MONITOR –QUARTER 4 (Q4), 2018-19

**Officer Contact:**  
Alex James, Head of Corporate Policy (Tel: 01992 588259)  
Martin Aust, Head of Intelligence, Improvement & Technology (Tel: 01992 555793)

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<tr>
<td><strong>4.1</strong></td>
<td>Members considered the Hertfordshire County Council Quarter 4 Performance Report for 2018/19</td>
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<td><strong>4.2</strong></td>
<td>In addition to the report, Members were provided with a presentation highlighting specific performance areas to note within the report. This can be found here:</td>
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4.3 Members were pleased to note the improvement in the attendance target at property fires.

4.4 In response to a Member challenge regarding difficulties in comparing data in the way some of the targets were reported, it was agreed that consideration would be given to providing data from the previous financial year, and not just the previous quarter, for performance targets where there was seasonal variation to enable Members to make a more comprehensive and informed analysis of the performance data.

4.5 In considering a Member question, the Panel broadly agreed that the performance target for secondary school placement allocation should be improved, given the fact that it was known from the number of children in the cohort entering primary school how many children would be requiring a placement at a secondary school in any given year. Further to discussion, the Chairman stated that this was an Education matter, and as such, he would request that officers bring the issue to the attention of the Executive Member for Education, Libraries and Localism (ELL), with the view to this being discussed in broader detail at a future ELL Panel. Members were advised to contact their group’s representative on the ELL Panel for an update as appropriate.

4.6 It was noted that targets are reviewed annually, to ensure they remain relevant and provide appropriate challenge.

4.7 In response to a Member concern, Members were assured that officers in Adult Care Services were monitoring and developing wider strategies and policies which would improve the targets of permanent admissions to care homes and delays in transfers of care from hospitals as outlined at section one of the report.

4.8 **CONCLUSION**

Resources and Performance Panel:

- Commented on the recommendations outlined within the report.
- Identified further actions to address any performance concerns raised in the Performance Monitor.
5. **VALUE FOR MONEY REVIEW - CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER**  

**Officer contact:** Marion Ingram- Operations Director Specialist Services (Tel: 01992 588620)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>5.1</th>
<th>Members considered a report providing an overview of the challenges facing the Council in relation to the costs of caring for Children Looked After (CLA).</th>
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| 5.2 | The Panel were provided with a presentation providing more detail on the issues outlined in the report. The presentation can be found here:  
  
  https://democracy.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=283&MId=1113&Ver=4 |
| 5.3 | The Panel were advised that there were two emerging main challenges facing the Council in terms of placement cost which were:  
  - Residential Homes being taken over by private financial organisations, leading to an increase in unit cost.  
  - Changing profile of Children Looked After. Whilst there has been a decline in children aged 0-10 requiring placement, there has been an increase in children aged 10+ years requiring placement. The children age 10+ are often presenting as having more complex needs, which require more specialist, and therefore more expensive placements. |
<p>| 5.4 | In response to a Member challenge, the Panel were assured that work was being undertaken to understand the reasons behind the changing age profile of CLA, and key issues emerging appeared to be sexual grooming, county lines and mental health. It was noted that social media appeared to be one of the increasing key factors in child and adolescent mental health referrals. |
| 5.5 | During discussion, Members considered whether the thresholds for taking children in to care at a younger age could be reviewed and lowered to reduce the risk and the high cost of children requiring intervention at a later stage. It was noted that the service had robust Family Safeguarding Teams, and children not meeting the threshold to enter care were often subject to child protection plans, which included support provision for other members of the family. |</p>
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<th>Further to a Member suggestion, it was agreed that further consideration would be given to prioritising developing cost effective cross party and cross agency early intervention strategies to support children at risk of mental health issues.</th>
<th>Member of CYPF Cabinet Panel/ CLA Officers</th>
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<td>5.6</td>
<td>Members were further assured that Children’s Services had been judged as ‘good’ in a recent Ofsted inspection, with an ‘outstanding’ rating for leadership. In addition, Hertfordshire’s CLA Team were ranked in the top six in the country, so there could be certainty that officers were getting the balance right in terms of management of referrals.</td>
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<td>5.7</td>
<td>The Panel were advised that the high cost out of county specialist placement options were only considered once the lower cost options of in county foster care, out of county foster care, and in county residential care had been exhausted. In addition, specialist placements were time limited, as they could cost up to £28k per week per child. Members further noted that the option for a residential placement within the county was limited as a majority of residential homes were located in the north of England, due to the property prices being cheaper.</td>
<td>Marion Ingram</td>
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<td>5.8</td>
<td>Members were advised that training was being undertaken with in county foster carers to improve their ability to manage and provide support for children with complex needs. In response to a Member suggestion, it was advised that consideration was being given to increasing the rate payable to in county foster carers, and implementing a carer salary scheme, as this would not only encourage current foster carers to look after children with increasing complex needs but would also hopefully encourage more people within the county to consider becoming foster carers.</td>
<td>Marion Ingram</td>
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<td>5.9</td>
<td>In response to a Member suggestion, it was agreed that officers would explore the possibility of the Council providing the lower cost in county residential homes with indemnity insurance to widen the availability of placements available for children and young people with complex needs.</td>
<td>Marion Ingram</td>
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<td>5.10</td>
<td>The Panel were interested to learn that support for adolescent LAC children and their families was available through the Adolescent Resource Centre (ARC) service and an increase in the number of short breaks available for the age group. In addition, the Targeted Youth Service was being reprofiled to address the changing issues that the children were facing. A Member comment that re-education, training and support for parents was crucial was acknowledged, and Members were advised that if parents significantly improved their own behaviours, care orders were able to be revoked.</td>
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<td>5.12</td>
<td>In response to a Member suggestion, it was clarified that due to the level of complexity of the children’s needs, individual units housing a maximum of 3-4 children, rather than one larger unit, would be the preferred option should the Council consider the development of specialist accommodation for the children and young people requiring support. It was noted that at a recent Topic Group, it had been highlighted by the young people that they preferred a placement in a residential home, as this felt more secure than being transferred between different foster placements.</td>
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<td>5.13</td>
<td>Members discussed the ‘Inside Out’ pilot scheme outlined at section 11 of the report. It was noted that although this was only currently targeted at children aged 15+, if successful, consideration would be made to rolling this out to support children of a younger age. It was noted that some schools across the county were also currently offering mental health support to their pupils where required.</td>
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<td>5.14</td>
<td>The Panel were advised that although there were no indications that the government intended to review the Care Act, officers had been involved in conversations with organisations including the Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Children’s Services to ensure that the current challenges facing CLA were being heard. Members were advised that a recent report from AMEO had also highlighted the importance of the issue of the future of CLA.</td>
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<td>5.15</td>
<td>Members broadly agreed that the report was very emotive, and they were unanimous in their admiration for the work being undertaken by officers. Members were pleased to note that despite the concerns raised, the Council’s performance rates were better than their regional and statistical neighbours.</td>
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<td>5.16</td>
<td>Further to discussion, Members agreed to the following recommendation to be added to the report: Members agreed that a future Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel would consider an Invest to Transform Bid from Children’s Services for the development of bespoke care home provision for children and young people identified as having the highest level of complex need, with the view to reducing current unit cost. To assist the Panel in making informed recommendations to Cabinet, the report will be accompanied by appropriate financial analysis to demonstrate the cost savings the investment would bring, and the recent AMEO report. It was also agreed that further consideration would be given to prioritising developing cost effective cross party and cross agency early intervention strategies to support children at risk of mental health issues.</td>
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<td>5.17</td>
<td>It was agreed that Members would also consider a review of the report at a future meeting of the Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel.</td>
<td>Marion Ingram/ Alex James</td>
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| 5.18 | **CONCLUSION**

The Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel:

a) Reflected and commented on the reasons behind the growing CLA cost pressures set out in this report, in particular those outlined under:
   - placements for CLA (p5);
   - insufficient placement capacity in Hertfordshire (p10);
   - increased number and cost of children in residential care (pp11-15);
   - relatively high cost of placements reflecting the complexity of need which characterises Hertfordshire’s CLA population as stabilised (figs 13-18).

b) Noted the activities, actions and strategies being developed to manage CLA numbers and address cost pressures in the context of the comparative information presented in the report, in particular:
   - responding to local placement capacity under the “Residential Strategy” (pp9-10, 17);
   - recommendations arising from the external “Review of Cost Pressures” (p16);
   - foster care recruitment under the “Fostering Strategy” (p18);
   - innovation approaches aimed at improving outcomes for CLA, including “Inside Out” and “Valuing Care” (pp18-19).

c) Considered the extent to which the Service is securing value for money based on the information set out in this report, with reference to the commentary pertaining to figures 1, 3-5, 8-18, 20.
d) Considered what measures, in addition to the current volumetric measure of CLA presented in the Council’s Performance Monitor, could usefully be included on a regular or periodic basis to enable the Panel to assess the extent to which value for money is being maintained overall and improved in specific areas.

e) Determined any areas of service provision highlighted in the report as benefitting from further investigation and improvement which might be considered at a later stage with a further paper to Panel.

f) Members agreed that a future Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel would consider an Invest to Transform Bid from Children’s Services for the development of bespoke care home provision for children and young people identified as having the highest level of complex need, with the view to reducing current unit cost. To assist the Panel in making informed recommendations to Cabinet, the report will be accompanied by appropriate financial analysis to demonstrate the cost savings the investment would bring, and the recent AMEO report.

g) It was agreed that further consideration would be given to prioritising developing cost effective cross party and cross agency early intervention strategies to support children at risk of mental health issues.

6. VALUE FOR MONEY REVIEW UPDATE - CARRIAGEWAY MAINTENANCE

Officer contact: Steve Johnson, Head of Contracts & Network (Tel: 01992 658126)

6.1 Members considered a report providing an update on the value for money review on carriageway maintenance first considered by the Panel at its meeting in November 2018.

6.2 The Panel were pleased to note the progress that had been made to date on the recommendations made by the Panel when it had initially considered the report.
6.3 In response to a Member query, it was clarified that the graph presented at 5.1 of the report illustrated the number of roads requiring structural maintenance.

6.4 During discussion, Members highlighted the prospect of using alternative materials to repair or resurface road surfaces. It was explained that whilst this had started to occur it was likely to be 2-3 years before this was fully implemented.

6.5 Members were interested to learn that coincidentally, a section of the A414, had recently been surfaced with a different material on each carriageway, so this would provide officers with a good opportunity to assess the differing resilience of the materials.

6.6 **CONCLUSION:**

Resources and Performance Panel noted and commented upon the report.

7. **COUNTY COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2019 – 2025**

**Officer Contact:** Alex James, Head of Corporate Policy (Tel: 01992 588259)

7.1 Members were presented with the Council’s draft Corporate Plan for 2019-2025.

7.2 In considering the Plan, Members made the following observations for officers to consider:

- Ensure the Plan has numbered pages;
- Increase the gravitas of the need to support children within the county under the 'opportunity for everyone to achieve their potential' section;
- Consider the reviewing the use of the word ‘different’ in describing residents, as outlined on pages 6, 17 & 19 of the Plan. The word ‘diverse’ was suggested as an appropriate alternative;
- Look to increase the promotion of the county’s significant countryside landscape areas within the report.

7.3 In response to a Member challenge, discussion was held as to whether the Plan should include increased emphasis on the significant financial and infrastructure challenges facing the Council during the timeframe the Plan covered. It was broadly agreed that the purpose of the Plan was to be visionary, and the challenges highlighted had been outlined in greater detail in the Annual
Report, which had been presented at Resources and Performance Panel on 7 June 2019.

7.4 CONCLUSION:

The Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel recommended to Cabinet that it approved the Council’s refreshed Corporate Plan 2019 – 2025 subject to any minor amendments made prior to its publication; the Chief Executive to be authorised to make such minor amendments to the Corporate Plan 2019 – 2025 in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.

The Panel noted that the refreshed Corporate Plan would be presented to County Council on 16 July 2019, when County Council will be asked to note its contents.

8. FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

**Officer Contact:** Scott Crudgington, Director of Resources

**Admin note:** At the request of the Chairman, and with the agreement of Members, this item was discussed after items 10 and 11 of the agenda to promote efficient management of the Panel given time constraints.

8.1 Members considered a report outlining the current overall financial outlook for the Council and requesting their views on areas where further work could be undertaken to identify future savings as part of the forthcoming Integrated Plan (IP) process.

8.2 Members were advised that the council was required to identify £45m of additional savings over the next three years. It was noted that whilst a further £45m had already been identified, it had yet been delivered.

8.3 The Panel learnt of the increasing challenges associated with the national political uncertainties surrounding Brexit and leadership, and the impact that this was generating on central government decision making on matters such as the funding review, and the future of individual grant funding.

8.4 During discussion, Members considered the recent extreme financial difficulties incurred by Northamptonshire, Surrey and East Sussex Councils, and it was highlighted that the accelerated level of use of their funding reserves had been a key attribute to their challenged positions. Members were advised that the use of reserve funds should be the ‘last resort’.
The Panel noted that several positive outcomes had been achieved from ‘invest to save’ projects, funded through the transformation reserves, and these had achieved a significant level of savings to date, however Members were cautioned that as the options for the projects became increasingly difficult to identify, the level of risk of them not being achievable was greater.

Given the level of uncertainty regarding when the level of central government funding would be announced, Members debated the prospect of considering formulating a savings plan to include the limited use of some reserves to secure the future delivery of frontline services.

Officers confirmed it was anticipated that the funding announcement from government would not be received before December 2019 and the Council’s budget required finalisation by February 2020. Members noted that this would leave very limited opportunity to undertake any internal or external consultation on savings plans.

The suggestion to consider formulating an alternative savings plan to include the limited use of reserves created divisive opinion amongst the Panel.

A Member suggestion that officers should work in stronger collaboration with legal services with regards to future savings plans to achieve robust and workable solutions was noted.

Members discussed the prospect and benefits of increasing the policy of ‘smart working’.

Further to a Member suggestion, it was agreed that officers would circulate an article by Price Waterhouse and Cooper which outlined techniques on how this could be achieved.

Members noted and commented upon the financial position and options outlined within the report.

Further to a Member suggestion, it was agreed that officers would circulate an article by Price Waterhouse and Cooper which outlined techniques on how this could be achieved.

CONCLUSION:

Members noted and commented upon the financial position and options outlined within the report.

DRAFT FINANCIAL STRATEGY FOR PERIOD 2020/21-2023/24

Officer Contact: Scott Crudgington, Director of Resources

Admin note: At the request of the Chairman, and with the agreement of Members, this item was discussed after items 10, 11 and 8 of the agenda to promote efficient management of the Panel given time constraints.
9.1 Officers considered the feedback from Cabinet Panels during June and July 2019 outlining suggestions for individual savings from their departments. A document outlining the collated feedback was tabled at the meeting and can be found here:

https://democracy.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=283&MId=1113&Ver=4

9.2 In considering the feedback, the Chairman commented that there appeared to be some misunderstanding regarding the difference between capital and revenue spending, and it was agreed that officers should work with Members to increase the level of understanding in this area.

9.3 In response to a Member challenge, it was agreed that a more detailed analysis of the level of reserve funding should be provided to any future meetings of the Panel where the Integrated Plan was discussed.

9.4 During discussion, confirmation was received that lobbying had been undertaken by officers from across the council to individual government departments and relevant departmental or local government bodies and associations to raise awareness of the immense challenges the Council was facing in drafting a future financial strategy.

9.5 Members unanimously agreed with a suggestion from the Chairman that he now should write to all local MP’s outlining the challenges faced by the Council in formulating a budget and urging them to encourage government to expedite the announcement on future funding.

9.6 The Panel discussed options of areas where savings could be made, and the following suggestions were considered:

- Work towards creating a joint waste authority
- Encourage district and borough councils to improve the collection rates of council tax and increase the collaborative work with them to investigate cases of council tax fraud.

9.7 A Member comment that a broader national governmental review of council tax banding and rates should be undertaken was noted.

9.8 CONCLUSION:

Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel:

Noted the feedback that had been provided from the various
Recommended to Cabinet that Chief Officers were requested to urgently progress work on new savings proposals as part of the Integrated Plan process

Considered the extent of lobbying already underway and any further opportunities that may arise.

### 10. COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT: SMALL SITE DEVELOPMENT

**Officer Contact:**
Sass Pledger, Assistant Director, Property (01992 555970)
Jolyon Adam, Finance Manager, Capital & Commercial (01992 555078)

**Admin note:** At the request of the Chairman, and with the agreement of Members, this item was discussed before items 8 & 9 of the agenda to promote efficient management of the Panel given time constraints.

10.1 Members considered a report outlining a proposed strategy to deliver capital receipts from the sale of small residential sites to Herts Living Limited for development, including the establishment of a limit of investments required to facilitate this activity.

10.2 The report also outlined the financing of the proposed strategy and sought the Panel to recommend to Cabinet that it approved a loan to Herts Living Limited to finance the purchase and development of council land at Shephall Green Stevenage.

10.3 Panel were also asked to consider whether it recommend to Cabinet that it delegate the approval of future investments, subject to a £5m rolling limit, to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources and Performance.

10.4 In response to a Member challenge it was acknowledged that additional consideration should be given to ascertaining whether current and future sites scheduled for sale were suitable for development for bespoke residential homes given the Panels discussions at Item 5 of the agenda and outlined at 5.15 of these minutes.

10.5 Following discussion on the Part II Report, the Panel moved back into Part I (open session) to note the Part I recommendations.

**CONCLUSION:**
The Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel noted the
information contained within the report and recommended to Cabinet that it:

i. approved the proposed strategy set out in the report for disposal of small surplus sites directly to Herts Living Limited for development and sale on the open market;

ii. approved the establishment of a loan facility to Herts Living Limited, in order to undertake the strategy referred to in (i) above, from within the Capital Investments budget set in the 2019/20 Integrated Plan to support Herts Living Limited activity; such facility to be subject to a rolling limit of £5 million;

iii. subject to (iv) below, approved the issue of a loan to Herts Living Limited to finance the purchase and development of land at Shephall Green, Stevenage

iv. delegated to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources and Performance, authority to finalise the terms and sum of the loan referred to in (iii) above, subject to the £5 million limit set out in (ii) above;

v. delegated to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources and Performance, authority to take future investment decisions for subsequent commercial investments to Herts Living Limited under the strategy referred to in (i) above, including authority to finalise the terms and sum of any future loan, subject to the £5 million limit set out in (ii) above.

11. TO CONSIDER THE FUTURE OF LAND AT LONDON ROAD BISHOPS STORTFORD: RELOCATION AND EXPANSION OF THE BISHOP’S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOL

Dick Bowler, Special Projects Officer (01992 556223)
Kate Ma, Senior School Planning Officer (01992 555858)

Admin note: At the request of the Chairman, and with the agreement of Members, this item was discussed before items 8 & 9 and after item 10 of the agenda to promote efficient management of the Panel given time constraints.

11.1 Members considered a report outlining recommendations to the Council on:
a) the County Council assuming Local Delivery of the Priority Schools Building Programme 2 (PSBP2) scheme for The Bishop's Stortford High School (TBSHS) that will enable the relocation and expansion of TBSHS at a new site within the Bishops Stortford South (BSS) development area,

b) associated contractual arrangements, and

c) amending the basis of the County Council's financial support for the scheme.

11.2 Following discussion on the Part II Report, the Panel moved back into Part I (open session) to note the Part I recommendations

11.3 **CONCLUSION**

The Panel recommended to Cabinet that it authorise:

A capital budget for the scheme for relocation and expansion of The Bishops Stortford High School as set out in the report, to include feasibility expenditure to date and which covers the cost of the standard County Council specification for premises having a capacity of 6 forms of entry with 8 forms of entry core facilities and the costs of the associated minor projects, in the sum of £45.31m;

The capital funding sources that are to be relied upon, being the PSPB2 grant from the DfE, the capital receipts from the sale of the existing Bishops Stortford High School site and s106 planning obligations, and the gap capital funding of £7.8m to be met from basic need;

The capital receipts from the sale of the existing Bishops Stortford High School be protected by the County Council requiring that the sale be joint with the School, that a caution be placed on the titles and that no sale be agreed until the Secretary of State for Education has given consent in writing to the sale and to the sale proceeds being remitted to the council;

and

The Director of Resources, as S151 officer, to provide a Capital Contributions Letter to the DfE in respect of all capital funding for a relocation and expansion scheme beyond the Priority School Building Programme (PSBP2) grant.