Minutes of the meeting of the MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on TUESDAY 14 JUNE 2005 at 7.30 pm

Present: Councillor Gerrella (Mayor)
Councillor Carstens (Deputy Mayor)

The following Honorary Alderman was also present: Alderman Howell

Apologies: Councillors Bartlett, Benning, Box, Bristow, Carrington and Hopkins and Aldermen Ellis and Saunders

Also Present: 10 Members of the Public

CL13 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2005, be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

CL14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST


CL15 ANNOUNCEMENTS
Honours

The Mayor announced that Professor Raymond Clarke, a resident of the Borough, had been awarded the OBE for services to photography.

CL16 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Question from Mr Fleming to Councillor I Wilson (Leader of the Council), asked by the Mayor on his behalf:

“You all seem to talk about improving services and then argue with each other, why not work together as a team for a better place?”

Answer from Councillor I Wilson:

“I would prefer to see Members working together for the benefit of Milton Keynes. However, I recognise that the opposition do have a role to scrutinise and challenge the Administration.”

CL17 PROCEDURAL ITEM

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2, the Mayor brought forward Item 6 ‘Presentation from the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police’.

CL18 PRESENTATION FROM THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF THAMES VALLEY POLICE

The Council received a presentation from Mr Peter Neyroud, the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police. The presentation covered the achievements of the Force over the last three years, priorities for the future and crime hot spots.

The Chief Constable answered questions from Members of the Council.

CL19 PROCEDURAL ITEM

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2, the Mayor brought forward Item 7 ‘Policy Development Committees / Scrutiny Panels Annual Reports’ as business remaining from the last ordinary meeting of the Council.

CL20 POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES / SCRUTINY PANELS ANNUAL REPORTS

The Council received the Annual Reports from its Policy Development Committees / Scrutiny Panels.
(a) Cabinet - 19 April 2005

(i) Housing Strategy – ‘Fit for Purpose’ (Minute C215)

RESOLVED -
That the Housing Strategy for the period April 2005 to March 2008 be adopted.

(b) Business Management Group - 2 June 2005

(i) Statement of Accounts 2004/05 (Minute BMG07)

RESOLVED -
1. That the Business Management Group be authorised to sign off the Statement of Accounts for 2004/05.
2. That the Council receive a presentation on the 2004/05 Accounts at its meeting in September 2005.

(ii) Dependent Carers’ Allowance Scheme (Minute BMG10)

RESOLVED –
That the revised Paragraph 7 of the Scheme of Allowances for Members 2005/06, amended to reflect revisions to the Dependent Carers’ Allowances, as set out in Annex B of the report to the Business Management Group, be adopted.

(iii) Membership of Executive Scrutiny Panel (Minute BMG11)

RESOLVED –
That the Constitution be revised to prevent a member of the Executive Scrutiny Panel from participating in meetings scrutinising decisions he/she has called in.

(c) Cabinet – 7 June 2005

(i) Corporate Plan 2005/08 (Minute C13)

RESOLVED -
That the Corporate Plan 2005/08 be approved.

(ii) Financial Regulations – Strategic and Financial Regulations – Operational (Minute C14)

RESOLVED -
That the revised Financial Regulations – Strategic be approved.

(Councillor Edwards asked that his vote against the resolution be recorded.)
CL22  ICE FACILITIES – MILTON KEYNES
The Council noted that Councillor Bartlett had requested that this motion be deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

CL23  DESIGNATION OF DOG FREE AREAS
The Council noted that Councillor Bartlett had requested that this motion be deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

CL24  REVIEW OF GRAFFITI REMOVAL SERVICE
The Council noted that Councillor Bartlett had requested that this motion be deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

CL25  PROCEDURAL ITEM
In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2, the Mayor brought forward Item 5(a)(vi) ‘National Identity Cards and a National Identity Database’.

CL26  NATIONAL IDENTITY CARDS AND A NATIONAL IDENTITY DATABASE
Councillor Tamagnini-Barbosa moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Crooks and on which a recorded vote was requested:

"1. That this Council opposes the Labour Government's plans to introduce National Identity Cards and a National Identity Database.

2. That this Council is concerned at:
(a) the amount of information that will be gathered in the National Identity Database,
(b) the ability for the Home Secretary to require more information on a whim;
(c) the lack of clarity of just who will have access to it; and
(d) the purpose for which it may be used.

3. That this Council believes:
(a) that the Labour Government’s plans will fail to deal with many of the reasons for which it wishes to introduce Identity Cards, as they will have little or no affect in fighting terrorism, crime or illegal immigration; and

(b) that the estimated cost of £3 billion for the introduction of the National Identity Card and its related database could be better used elsewhere."
4. That this Council therefore urges the Labour Government to abandon its Identity Card plans and reassign the funds allocated for their introduction to the front-line services that will have a real impact on the safety and security of the residents of Milton Keynes, and throughout the Country. These include higher visibility community policing and greater crime prevention.

5. That this Council requires the Chief Executive to write to the two Members of Parliament for each of the Milton Keynes Constituencies to request them to vigorously oppose the introduction of National Identity Cards and a National Identity Database."

The Council heard from two members of the public on this matter.

The voting was as follows:

The voting was as follows:

FOR: Councillors Barry, Burke, Carruthers, Carstens, Sandra Clark, Stephen Clark, Crooks, Drewett, Eastman, Eaton, Exon, Geary, Gerrella, E Henderson, I Henderson, Hoyle, Jury, G Mabbutt, McCall, Monk, Pugh, Seymour, Snell, Tallack, Tamagnini-Barbosa, Wicker, Williams and I Wilson (28)


ABSTENTIONS: (0)

The motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED -

1. That this Council opposes the Labour Government's plans to introduce National Identity Cards and a National Identity Database.

2. That this Council is concerned at:

(a) the amount of information that will be gathered in the National Identity Database,

(b) the ability for the Home Secretary to require more information on a whim;

(c) the lack of clarity of just who will have access to it; and

(e) the purpose for which it may be used.
3. That this Council believes:
   (a) that the Labour Government’s plans will fail to deal with many of the reasons for which it wishes to introduce Identity Cards, as they will have little or no affect in fighting terrorism, crime or illegal immigration; and
   (b) that the estimated cost of £3 billion for the introduction of the National Identity Card and its related database could be better used elsewhere.

4. That this Council therefore urges the Labour Government to abandon its Identity Card plans and reassign the funds allocated for their introduction to the front-line services that will have a real impact on the safety and security of the residents of Milton Keynes, and throughout the Country. These include higher visibility community policing and greater crime prevention.

5. That this Council requires the Chief Executive to write to the two Members of Parliament for each of the Milton Keynes Constituencies to request them to vigorously oppose the introduction of National Identity Cards and a National Identity Database.

**CL27 AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Councillor Long moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Coventry:

"1. That this Council welcomes:
   (a) the action the Government is taking to increase the supply of affordable housing;
   (b) the allocation of the Renny Lodge site in Newport Pagnell for affordable housing; and
   (c) the development by English Partnerships of new communities with affordable housing and the progress made to increase affordable homes completions to 32% of completions last year.

2. That this Council supports the work of the Milton Keynes Partnership Committee backed by English Partnerships to deliver more affordable homes on appropriate identified growth areas."

Councillor I Henderson moved the following amendment, seconded by Councillor Drewett, which was accepted by the mover of the original motion:
“1. That the following words be added to clause 1(a):

‘but regrets that the thrust is almost entirely towards home ownership, ignoring the need for homes for social rent by low-income families who cannot afford to buy’

2. That the following words be added to clause 1(b):

‘but notes with regret that initial indications are that this too will be low cost/shared ownership and not for social rent’

3. That 1(c) be replaced with the words:

‘the steady progress, resulting from effective collaboration between this Council and English Partnerships, that has seen an increase of affordable homes from less than 8% of completions in 2001/02 to over 32% in 2004/05’.

On being put to the vote the motion, as amended, was declared carried with 33 Members in favour and 5 Members voting against.

RESOLVED -

1. That this Council welcomes:

   (a) the action the Government is taking to increase the supply of affordable housing but regrets that the thrust is almost entirely towards home ownership, ignoring the need for homes for social rent by low-income families who cannot afford to buy;

   (b) the allocation of the Renny Lodge site in Newport Pagnell for affordable housing but notes with regret that initial indications are that this too will be low cost/shared ownership and not for social rent;

   (c) The steady progress, resulting from effective collaboration between this Council and English Partnerships, that has seen an increase of affordable homes from less than 8% of completions in 2001/02 to over 32% in 2004/05.

2. That this Council supports the work of the Milton Keynes Partnership Committee backed by English Partnerships to deliver more affordable homes on appropriate identified growth areas.

CL28 TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL CHARTER

RESOLVED -

That the withdrawal of the motion and its resubmission to the next meeting of the Council be agreed.
Councillor Bartlett asked the following questions of Councillor Coventry, the appointed representative of the Thames Valley Police Authority, in accordance with Section 20 of the Police Act 1996:

1. How many of Milton Keynes police officers (PC and WPC grade) are in full service of one year or more (%%)?
   Answer: “233.86 Full Time Equivalents, this represents approximately 80% of the total constable strength (293 Constables) in the Milton Keynes Base Command Unit”.

2. How many officers are probationers in Milton Keynes (%%)?
   Answer: “As at 24 May 2004 there were 65 Probationary Constables, this represents approximately 22% of the total Constable strength in the Milton Keynes Base Command Unit”.

3. What is the average 24hr time spent on the beat (%%)?
   Answer: “18.2% of uniform constables’ time is spent specifically on visible and targeted patrol. However, more time is spent dealing with specific incidents while officers are ‘on the beat’ - so they are actually more visible to the public than the 18.2% would imply. Actual ‘visibility’ is not something that is measured in the Accessibility and Availability studies undertaken, the criteria being determined nationally”.

4. What is the average time taken for an officer to do paperwork on one case (hours)?
   Answer: “It is not possible to answer this question as the amount of time spent on case preparation varies according to the type of case, its individual complexity etc., and therefore there is a wide fluctuation in the time spent on paperwork”.

5. How many ASBOs have been issued in Milton Keynes?
   Answer: “A total of 17 Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) have been issued to this point (there are currently a couple more in the pipeline.) This does not show the true level of activity against anti-social behaviour because locally they are only used as a last resort. Many steps are taken to address anti-social behaviour prior to application for an ASBO, such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts etc. In the vast majority of these cases those steps are successful, negating the need to go as far as ASBOs”.

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6. How many parenting orders have been issued in Milton Keynes?

   Answer: “Two Parenting Orders have been issued to date, both originating with Local Authority Education Department”.

**CL30 APPEALS COMMISSION - MEMBERSHIP**

The Council noted that Councillor Bartlett had filled the vacancy on the Appeals Commission not taken up by the Labour Group.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10.55PM