

Minutes of the meeting of the CABINET held on TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2020 at 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council).
Councillors Darlington, Gowans, Long, Marklew, Middleton, Nolan, O'Neill and Priestley.

Officers: M Bracey (Chief Executive), T Aldworth (Deputy Chief Executive), S Bridglalsingh (Director Law and Governance), T Darke (Director Growth, Economy and Culture), S Gonsalves (Director of Policy, Insight and Communications), M Heath (Director Children's Services), S Proffitt (Director Environment and Property), N Allen (Head of Regulatory Services), P Brown (Head of Democratic Services), N Hutchin (Head of Finance [Deputy Section 151 Officer], P Fletcher (Community Engagement Manager) and S Muir (Committee Manager).

Also Present: Councillors Bint, Brackenbury, Carr, Cannon, Ferrans, P Geary, D Hopkins, Jenkins, Miles, Petchey and Rankine and 15 members of the Public.

C104 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 4 February 2020 be approved and signed by the Leader of the Council as a correct record subject to Councillor Nolan being added to the list of those present.

C105 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Councillors Ferrans, Marland and Middleton advised the Cabinet that, in respect of Item 12 (Business Case for the Establishment of a Local Housing Company), they were Board members of Milton Keynes Development Partnership, but they did not have any interest in the item that would preclude them taking part in any discussions or votes on the item.

C106

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Marland announced that Councillor Miles would not be seeking re-election at the May 2020 Election and thanked him for his many years' service in his roles of Councillor, Mayor and Leader of the Council and also as a fellow Ward Councillor in Wolverton.

C107

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- (a) Written Question from Dave Adamson to Councillor Priestley (Cabinet Member for Economic Growth & Community Partnerships)

In response to a written question submitted by Dave Adamson, who asked the Council to provide a Children's Play Park on the grassed area between the car park adjacent to Otterburn Crescent and North Bucks Way at Oakhill as Oakhill was the only district in Milton Keynes without a recreation facility and owing to planning oversights during the initial development, no other suitable land existed, the Cabinet noted that a play area was needed in this area of the borough.

Councillor Priestley indicated that an analysis of the proposed area was currently being carried out and this would lead to further work with residents, the parish council and partners to progress the type and scope of the play area.

Councillor Priestley also indicated that she would be contacting Dave Adamson in due course to update him with progress.

- (b) Question from Andy Carr to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Andy Carr, referring to comments from local residents about the deteriorated state of the pavement outside of Lawnsmead Retirement complex in Newport Pagnell, asked Councillor Darlington to consider the need to resurface the pavement.

Councillor Darlington thanked Andy Carr for his request and indicated that following her meeting with him to discuss the issue she would request the Council's Highways Department to carry out an inspection to ascertain the scale of the required works.

Andy Carr thanked Councillor Darlington for her help with this request.

- (c) Question from Tim Skelton (MK Forum) to Councillor Gowans (Cabinet member for Planning and Transport)

Tim Skelton (MK Forum) asked Councillor Gowans, with reference to the proposed Milton Keynes East Supplementary Planning Document, what analysis had the Council undertaken to understand the amount of commercial floor space that would be appropriate to Milton Keynes East so that it could support the proposed population without affecting the vitality of Newport Pagnell.

Councillor Gowans indicated that the Council had not undertaken any retail assessment specific to Milton Keynes East when preparing Plan:MK, or as part of the work on the Development Framework Supplementary Document, because this would come forward during more detailed master planning work associated with future planning applications for the site and the Community Hub.

Following a supplementary question from Tim Skelton who asked that a survey be undertaken, Councillor Gowans repeated his previous response.

C108

COUNCILLORS' ITEMS

The Cabinet considered an item from Councillor Wallis which was presented by Council Marland (Leader of the Council) and referred to the Local Government Pay Settlement. Councillor Marland asked the Cabinet to consider that:

- A £10 per hour National Minimum Wage be supported;
- The National Joint Council (Employee) claim of 10% across all pay points be supported in principle;
- The principle that this should be funded through ongoing funding from Central Government rather than an extra pressure on the local authority be supported;
- The Leader of the Council should write to the Secretary of State to call for a pay increase for local government workers to be funded with new money from Central Government in advance of the upcoming budget;
- It be conveyed to the local National Joint Council union representatives that Council supported a fully funded pay claim;
- The Leader of the Council raised the matter, and showed supported the pay claim, at the Local Government Association Resources Board.

RESOLVED –

The Cabinet noted the request and agreed:

1. That the Leader of the Council would write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to call for a pay increase for local government workers to be funded with new money from central government in advance of the upcoming budget.
2. That the Cabinet would convey to the local National Joint Council union representatives support for the fully funded pay claim.
3. That the Leader of the Council would raise the matter, and show support for the pay claim, at the Local Government Association Resources Board.

C109

COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

- (a) Question from Councillor R Bradburn to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council).

Councillor R Bradburn referring to the change of date of this Cabinet meeting from 3 March 2020 which had resulted in a clash of Council meetings and had precluded Councillors from attending the Cabinet meeting, asked Councillor Marland for his reassurance that this would not happen again.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) apologised and indicated the 3 March 2020 date of the Cabinet meeting had been moved at his request and had been unavoidable.

- (b) Question from Councillor Jenkins to Councillor O'Neill (Cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing) and Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Jenkins, asked, with reference to the current Covid-19 epidemic, what measures were being put in place for vulnerable and older members of the community.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) indicated that both he and the Deputy Chief Executive were continually briefed by the Director of Adult Services (DASS) and the Director of Children's Services with reference to the actions and plans being put in place for older and vulnerable residents. Resilience and Critical Incidence Plans were also in place and were being continually reviewed and updated in response to rapidly changing circumstances.

Councillor Marland also indicated that strategies were being put in place by Government to contain and slow the rate of infection and urged residents not to panic and carefully follow any advice given.

Councillor O'Neill (the Cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing) indicated that a number of measures were being put in place with Health and Adult Social Care colleagues. However, the situation was changing rapidly and the Cabinet would follow Government advice and guidelines to implement actions that were required. She added that keeping all residents safe and well was the Cabinet's first priority.

C110

REFERRAL FROM STRATEGIC PLACEMAKING SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE – 12 FEBRUARY 2020

Adoption of Milton Keynes East Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document 2020:

The Cabinet considered a referral from the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 12 February 2020 had which considered the Call In of the Cabinet decision to adopt the Supplementary Planning Document (Minute C90 refers).

Councillor P Geary (Chair of the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Sub-Committee) presented the referral and thanked the Scrutiny Sub-Committee for its work, summarised the history and events thus far regarding the decision and indicated that constructive discussions had taken place at the Sub-Committee, whilst recognising that there were very strong feelings about the item. Changes had also been made to the document following the consultation period, which had improved it significantly.

Councillor Gowans (the responsible Cabinet member for Planning and Transport), indicated that the discussions at the Sub-Committee had been helpful, highlighted a number of issues and referred to the briefing note which included:

- That references to "District Centre" within the Supplementary Planning Document had been amended to "Community Hub";
- That additional text at paragraph 3.2.1 of the Supplementary Planning Document had been added to provide greater clarity about the anticipated nature of Milton Keynes East; and
- That additional text at paragraph 3.2.1 of the Supplementary Planning Document had been provided to illustrate parallels with other existing centres in Milton Keynes to give a sense of scale and function of the amenities and retail offer.

Councillor Gowans also indicated his disappointment that it had not been possible to reconcile the issues of concern before the Cabinet decision had been taken in January 2020, as there had been many opportunities to receive comments, discuss and respond to them and clarify issues during the consultation period and these opportunities should have been taken up.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) indicated that the Supplementary Planning Document was required to be Policy Compliant and therefore the request from the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Sub-Committee that a further review of paragraph 4.3.6 of the Supplementary Planning Document to add a requirement for grade separated crossings of grid roads by motor vehicles would not be included as “At Grade” crossings were not appropriate on the grid road (H3) A422, or on Willen Road within a distance that would have an adverse effect on traffic flows of the A422 or Tongwell Roundabout.

Councillor Marland also indicated, with reference to the request for clarification in the document as to whether the site was a new settlement or part of Milton Keynes that this would be included in the Supplementary Planning Document revisions and the Director for Growth, Economy and Culture, in consultation with the Cabinet portfolio holder for Planning and Transport, was to be authorised to make any minor amendments, prior to publication.

RESOLVED:

1. That the revised Milton Keynes East Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be adopted, noting that it took into account the following changes and /or additions recommended by the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee:
 - (a) Clarification of the definition and sense of scale of the “Place” be included;
 - (b) That the “District Centre” reference had been changed to “Community Hub”;
 - (c) Examples to give a sense of scale that may be appropriate of the community hub had been included; and
 - (d) Clarification had been provided as to whether the site was a new settlement or part of Milton Keynes.

2. That the MK East Supplementary Planning Document be policy compliant in relation to grid road crossings as “At Grade” crossings were not appropriate on the grid road (H3) A422, or on Willen Road within a distance that would have an adverse effect on traffic flows of the A422 or Tongwell Roundabout.
3. That the Director for Growth, Economy and Culture, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Planning and Transport, be authorised to make any minor amendments, to the Supplementary Planning Document prior to publication.

C111

REFERRAL FROM COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 28 JANUARY 2020

The Cabinet considered a referral from the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee held on 28 January 2020 which was presented by Councillor Ferrans (Chair of the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee).

Councillor Ferrans indicated that the Committee supported the current work being carried out to investigate how supported housing provision for young people could be continued and also that the Committee was encouraged by the work being done to improve data sharing between the organisations involved in cases referred to the Safe Place to Stay Hub and would like assurance that progress of both issues would be monitored over the next 6-9 months.

Councillor Long, the responsible Cabinet member, thanked Councillor Ferrans and the Scrutiny Committee for their work on these issues and indicated that he had noted the findings of that Committee.

Councillor Long also indicated that supporting independent living was an important priority for the Cabinet and referred to Section 3 of the Council Plan which addressed homelessness through prevention and support services. This strand of the Council Plan also sought to ensure that housing growth benefited local families first and delivered more affordable housing, Council housing and accessible properties.

Councillor Long further indicated that the request for supported housing provision of young people and progress of the Safe Place to Stay Hub would be monitored by regular reports to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

1. That the request for supported housing provision for young people be noted.

2. That progress of the Safe Place to Stay Hub be monitored by regular reports to Cabinet.

C112

**REFERRAL FROM DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE –
6 FEBRUARY 2020**

The Cabinet considered a referral from the Development Control Committee held on 6 February 2020 which was presented by Councillor Bint (Chair of Development Control Committee).

Councillor Bint introduced the item and indicated that the Development Control Committee had considered the issues raised at a recent Council meeting in relation to improving public accessibility issues, arising from the provisions of the Equality Act of 2010. The Committee had also requested that a Supplementary Planning Document or similar policy be introduced to further strengthen the legislative requirements.

Councillor Gowans (the responsible Cabinet member for Planning and Transport), indicated that, as primary legislation was in place under the Equality Act 2010, a Supplementary Planning Document, or similar policy, was not required to enforce this. However, a review would be carried out as part of PlanMK2 to establish if the Council could go beyond the statutory minimum in future policy.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) indicated that primary legislation had to be complied with. Additionally, all new Council homes were built to Lifetime Homes Standards that included accessible items such as half height electrical sockets, wide doorways, flat thresholds, ramped paths and downstairs toilets. New roads and footpaths, including Red Ways, also featured wider pavements and dropped kerbs at all crossings and junctions.

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that as primary legislation was in place under the Equality Act 2010, a Supplementary Planning Document, or similar policy, was not required, but a review would be carried out during PlanMK2 to establish if the Council could go beyond the statutory minimum in future policy.

C113

REFERRAL FROM THE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 6 FEBRUARY 2020

Milton Keynes Hospital and Public Transport and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsmen Decision on Adult Care Services

The Cabinet considered referrals from the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee held on 6 February 2020 which were introduced by Councillor Jenkins (Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee), in respect of public transport connections to Milton Keynes Hospital and Public Transport and a Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Decision on Adult Care Services.

Councillor Jenkins summarised that the Scrutiny Committee had found it extremely regretful that any case should be referred to the Local Government Ombudsman, particularly where it was found that the Council had failed to meet its requirements under the Social Care Act. Councillor Jenkins asked the Cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing to ensure that lessons had been learnt from this incident.

Councillor Jenkins also asked the Cabinet member for Planning and Transport to work with the Hospital and local public transport providers to encourage buses to use the new entrance to the hospital.

Councillor O'Neill (Cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing) indicated that the referral to the Government Ombudsman had been disappointing, but she was aware of the circumstances surrounding the case and referred to the measures that had been put in place to monitor and review new cases.

With reference to the request that buses be encouraged to use the new entrance to the hospital, Councillor Gowans (Cabinet member for Planning and Transport) indicated that officer colleagues were working on providing a new bus stop at the Hospital and also that it was anticipated that revisions to current draft Transport Strategies would include improvements to accessing health facilities by public transport.

RESOLVED –

1. Milton Keynes Hospital and Public Transport

That actions to improve public transport access to the hospital be included as part of any Strategy reviews.

2. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsmen Decision on Adult Care Services

That it be noted that any new cases would be monitored and reviewed.

C114

REFERRAL FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - 20 FEBRUARY 2020

The Cabinet considered a referral from the Scrutiny Management Committee held on 20 February 2020, that was introduced by Councillor Brackenbury (Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee) arising from the 2091/20 Quarter Three Performance Report.

Councillor Brackenbury indicated that the Scrutiny Management Committee was concerned about the persistent underperformance against Building Control Performance Indicator MKC228 and the limited resources available to the Building Control Service, and asked the Cabinet to consider reviewing the resources to ensure that the service was sufficiently staffed to meet demand and that there were no delays which could impact on building developments proceeding.

Councillor Marklew (the Cabinet member for Climate Action and Sustainability) thanked Councillor Brackenbury for bringing this to her attention and indicated that the Head of Regulatory Services had carried out a review of how the service was delivered and, as a result, had since moved away from using contractors. Additionally, as part of the actions to improve performance, more staff were being recruited and these included apprentices.

Councillor Marklew also confirmed that the Head of Regulatory Services had assured her that statutory requirements were always met.

RESOLVED –

That the referral be received and it be noted that statutory targets were continually being met and actions to improve performance were in place.

C115

REFERRAL FROM THE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK AND FINISH GROUP - 20 FEBRUARY 2020

The report from the Climate Change Task and Finish Group was considered alongside the Sustainability Action Plan 2019-2050 later on the agenda.

C116

MAKING THE LAVENDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Cabinet considered the outcome of the Lavendon Neighbourhood Plan referendum noting that at the referendum, 440 people voted 'Yes' and 31 voted 'No'; turnout was 44.8%.

Councillor Gowans (the Cabinet member for Planning and Transport) thanked Lavendon residents for their work in bringing forward a successful Neighbourhood Plan and requested the Cabinet's agreement to recommend to Council that the Lavendon Neighbourhood Plan be made.

Councillor Gowans indicated that if the Council adopted the Neighbourhood Plan, it would come into force as part of the statutory development plan.

RESOLVED:

1. That Council be recommended to make the Lavendon Neighbourhood Plan pursuant to the provisions of Section 38(A)(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. That a decision document setting out the results of the referendum and the Council's decision to make the Lavendon Neighbourhood Plan, and the Lavendon Neighbourhood Plan be published on the Council's website and by other means, to bring them to the attention of people who live, work or carry out business in the neighbourhood area.
3. That the decision document and details on how to view the plan be sent to the qualifying body (Lavendon Parish Council) and any person who asked to be notified of the decision.
4. That Lavendon Parish Council be congratulated on the successful outcome of the referendum.

C117

CHILD POVERTY COMMISSION INTERIM REPORT

The Cabinet considered the Child Poverty Commission Interim report that was presented by Councillor Nolan (the Cabinet member for Children and Families).

Councillor Nolan summarised the reasons for forming the Commission and thanked Hannah Markham QC and the Commissioners for their work and progress so far.

It was reported that the Commission was originally tasked to produce a set of evidence and consultative-based recommendations by autumn 2020. However, recognising the public policy development advantages to be gained, Councillor Nolan requested

that an interim report be provided by March 2020. The Commissioners had broadened the Commission's scope by undertaking an examination of the effects, or consequences of child poverty, as well as its causes. As the Commission's work had been curtailed by the General Election period in late 2019, the interim report was only able to provide a summary of the evidence collected so far which provided a useful perspective into the Commission's methodology and analysis.

The Cabinet heard from a member of the public (David Lee) who indicated that he was very saddened that the report did not take the opportunity to offer more immediate resolutions to the many problems and issues that families across Milton Keynes were experiencing in relation to poor housing, lack of opportunity and training, jobs and future prospects to improve their lives. Mr Lee quoted the Housing Regeneration Programme which unfortunately would take some years before its benefits were really seen. Mr Lee suggested that many of the issues that were raised in the report were too important to wait and should be actioned immediately.

The Cabinet also heard from Councillor Carr who indicated that she understood David Lee's points as did the Commission and that the Council was being seen as a pioneer by setting up the Commission. 75% of children in the borough were from both urban and rural families in work, in low paid jobs.

Councillor Long indicated that from work that was carried out 10 years ago in Bletchley and Netherfield, it had been recognised that those who had support from grandparents and wider families, seemed to do better.

Councillor Priestley summarised the initiatives and projects being carried out in Regeneration Areas as part of the Skills Agenda.

Councillor Darlington indicated that the Cabinet members saw many residents each week at their surgeries and fully understood the problems that residents were facing.

Councillor O'Neill reflected that the report also illustrated the correlation between child poverty and poor health.

Councillor Marland, (Leader of the Council) thanked David Lee for his comments and indicated that the report highlighted the struggles that families had to earn decent wage however many hours they worked.

Councillor Marland highlighted examples of existing good practice and initiatives that were being carried out across the borough and indicated that a Group could be set up to document and co-ordinate the existing evidence and advise the Commission.

Councillor Marland requested that solutions to some of the interim suggestions should be brought back to the Cabinet in six months' time.

Councillor Marland also indicated that the outline for Phase 2 of the Commissions work should be agreed.

RESOLVED:

1. That Hannah Markham QC and the Commissioners be thanked for their work and the progress so far.
2. That the interim report of the Milton Keynes Child Poverty Commission "Our Children Deserve Better" be commended to all services, partners and interested parties in Milton Keynes.
3. That the outline for Phase 2 of the Commission's work be agreed.
5. That the work of the Commission, using the outline to show how the evidence could be put into practice be continued, capturing both the expectations of children and parents and highlighting what was feasible.
6. That the Director Policy, Insight and Communications be asked to bring forward actions from the suggestions made at the Cabinet meeting and report progress to the Cabinet in six months' time.
7. That it be noted that the work of the Commission, including highlighting existing good practice examples in Milton Keynes, detailing solutions that could be achieved through smaller changes, be adopted by a wide group of organisations and individuals.

C118

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2019-2050

The Cabinet considered the report from the Climate Change Task and Finish Group of 20 February 2020 that was presented by Councillor D Hopkins (Chair of the Climate Change Task and Finish Group) who thanked the Task and Finish Group and officer colleagues for their work in producing a very detailed and comprehensive report.

Councillor D Hopkins highlighted the key areas from the report:

- where the Council had direct control over the outcome through estate management and policy making powers;
- where the Council worked with contractors, suppliers and delivery partners;
- areas where the Council worked locally with residents, business and other organisations such as Parish Councils; and
- areas where the Council could lobby national and local government and its agencies.

Councillor D Hopkins outlined that the Task and Finish group had made 28 recommendations, which covered many areas across the Council, for the Cabinet to evaluate. He also suggested that all councillors should work together to achieve the outcomes and asked the Cabinet to endorse the recommendations.

The Cabinet, along with the report from the Task and Finish Group, considered the Draft Sustainability Strategy Action Plan.

It was reported that Milton Keynes Council's Sustainability Strategy 2019 – 2050 was the long-term vision to create a world-leading sustainable city which embraced innovation, created high quality jobs and recognised that Milton Keynes had a vital role in tackling the global challenges of climate change.

The Action Plan set out what actions it was anticipated the Council would undertake against each of the eleven priorities in the Strategy. The Climate Change Task and Finish Group had been gathering evidence for six months and its recommendations to Cabinet would need to be assessed alongside the report to ensure a golden thread of continuity was achieved.

The actions had been grouped into short, medium and long term and would each need to be developed to understand their full cost and the carbon reduction that could be achieved.

Councillor Marklew indicated that the Cabinet was being asked to recommend to Council adoption of the Sustainability Strategy Action Plan 2019-2050 noting that the Action Plan would still need to incorporate any agreed recommendations from the Climate Change Task and Finish Group.

In response to comments from a member of the public (Alan Francis) which including welcoming the Action Plan and suggesting that it was only a first step and needed to be broader, Mr Francis pointed out that it was only about what the Council could achieve which was a

very small percentage of what was needed to be achieved in terms of reducing carbon emissions, and quoted the Oxford Citizens Assembly on Climate Change as an exemplar, along with suggesting that more should be done to increase sustainable transport.

Councillor Marklew indicated that she agreed in principle with the Mr Francis but this was the start of the process and other ideas such as an Energy and Carbon Hub were being investigated in addition to the approach taken by the Oxford Citizens Assembly on Climate Change.

Councillor Marklew also indicated that she was happy to continue to receive and discuss ideas from all members of the community.

The Cabinet also heard from Councillors Brackenbury and Ferrans during consideration of the item.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) indicated that the issues were not ones that the Council could resolve on its own and required close involvement with residents to be successful.

Councillor Marland also indicated that sustainability was wider than carbon reduction and required a circular economy approach to reuse, share, repair, refurbish, remanufacture and recycle to minimise the use of resources.

Councillor Marland also indicated that the action plan should be reviewed six months' time.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Action Plan be approved.
2. That the Action Plan be reviewed by Cabinet in six months to incorporate any of the endorsed recommendations of the Task and Finish Group
3. That the action plan be recommended to Council for approval.

C119

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY: CORE OUTCOMES – ACTION PLAN
(GREENEST CITY: PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT –
VISION)**

The Cabinet considered the Action Plan principles which would cover the Policy outcomes underpinning the Council's vision to be the world's leading greenest city, which was introduced by Councillor Darlington (the Cabinet member for Public Realm).

Councillor Darlington thanked all those who had taken part in the workshops for their contributions, and indicated that the Council's Sustainability Strategy (2019 – 2050) set out a vision for Milton

Keynes to become a world-leading sustainable city. The “Greenest City” Position Statement was linked to this and recognised Milton Keynes as an ambitious and innovative green city, taking the action necessary to mitigate, adapt and respond to this environmental crisis. The Cabinet was committed to the development of an action plan working with partners to deliver the principles and objectives set out in the vision.

Councillor Darlington also indicated that key partners included the Parks Trust; Parish and Town Councils and specialist organisations such as The Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust, Canal and River Trust and local organisations such as the MK Community Trust; all of whom had been instrumental to developing the Action Plan.

Councillor Darlington clarified that a baseline action plan with costings for 2021/22 through to 2025 would be developed as the next step. This included consideration of the conservation and enhancement of the habitats on the land within the control of the Council and a mapping and survey exercise which would be undertaken to assess biodiversity in Milton Keynes and to identify key sites for enhancement within a prioritisation matrix.

Councillor Darlington also clarified that a number of actions could be taken immediately such as the Council not cutting grass too short to encourage wildflowers and insects.

In response from comments from a member of the public, Councillor Darlington indicated that the targets and timescales would be monitored and a report on progress would be brought to the Cabinet in February 2021.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) requested that the name of the Action Plan should be amended to the Milton Keynes Council Biodiversity Action Plan.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Action Plan principles to underpin the vision of the Greenest City – Core Policy Outcomes document be agreed.
2. That it be recognised that The Parks Trust and Parish and Town Councils have been instrumental in the co-production of this Action Plan and to have ownership of the deliverables.
3. That the valued contribution from community groups and residents through workshops and events to identify and co-produce Action Plan principles be recognised.

4. That the actions be agreed with short term (12 month) actions being delivered during 2020/21.
5. That a baseline action plan with costings for 2021/22 through to 2025 be developed as the next step that considers conservation and enhancement of the habitats on the land within the control of the local authority.
6. That a mapping and survey exercise be undertaken to assess biodiversity in Milton Keynes, identifying key sites for enhancement along with a prioritisation matrix.

C120

BUSINESS CASE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL HOUSING COMPANY

The Cabinet considered the Business Case For The Establishment Of a Local Housing Company that was introduced by Councillor Long (the Cabinet member for Housing and Regeneration).

Councillor Long summarised that the establishment of a local housing company would offer the Council additional flexibilities in its housing offer to residents, and set a “good landlord” standard to positively influence other providers of housing. It was anticipated that nominations to a Local Housing Company would provide another route through which the Council could discharge its Homelessness Reduction Act duties and reduce the costs of temporary accommodation.

Councillor Long clarified that there were a few significant implications of a Local Housing Company being a direct (wholly owned) subsidiary of the Council, or of being a subsidiary of another council-owned entity. To reinforce the commercial nature of a Local Housing Company, and to ensure synergies were achieved in the use of potential housing sites, it was recommended that the board of Milton Keynes Development Partnership should be requested to establish the Local Housing Company with support from the Council.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) indicated, in response to a question from Councillor Rankine, other options had been considered and that this could be a joint venture. Officer colleagues were investigating appropriate delivery models and partnership working.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) also indicated, in response to comments from Councillor Ferrans, that a report detailing the progress made by the Milton Keynes Development Partnership in establishing the Housing Company would be considered at the July 2020 meeting of the Cabinet.

The Cabinet also heard from a member the public during consideration of the item.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Board of the Milton Keynes Development Partnership be requested to explore the opportunity to establish a local housing company, identify an appropriate delivery model, and submit a business case for the Council's consideration.
2. That a report detailing the progress made by the Milton Keynes Development Partnership be considered at the July 2020 meeting of the Cabinet.

C121

MILTON KEYNES SKILLS STRATEGY 2020

The Cabinet considered the Milton Keynes Skills Strategy that was introduced by Councillor Priestley (the Cabinet member for Economic Growth and Community Partnerships).

Councillor Priestley summarised that the Skills Strategy had been developed through extensive consultation with key partners. The Strategy aimed to provide a comprehensive picture of skills provision within Milton Keynes. An Action Plan would be developed over three to six months to identify the actions required to support skills provision for residents, employers and other stakeholders.

Councillor Priestley added that the Skills Strategy had a fundamental role to play in supporting the aims of the Council Plan 2016-2022. The Strategy would play a vital role, directly and indirectly, in meeting the priorities of the current Economic Development Strategy.

The Cabinet also heard from a member the public and Councillors Ferrans and Rankine during consideration of the item

RESOLVED:

That the Milton Keynes Skills Strategy 2020 be adopted.

C122

FRAUD POLICY REVIEW 2019/2020

The Cabinet considered agreeing the Revised Fraud Policy 2019/20 following an annual review to ensure it reflected up to date legislation, which was introduced by Councillor Middleton (the Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation).

Councillor Middleton thanked Councillor Cannon (Chair of the Audit Committee) and the Audit Committee for the work done to ensure the Council had an effective corporate anti-fraud service underpinned by a suite of simple core policies that provided staff, service users and the public with easy to understand guidance.

Councillor Cannon (Chair of Audit Committee) indicated that it was important that the documents were easily accessible to residents, employees and suppliers and clarified that the Counter Fraud policies were key documents that demonstrated the Council's approach to fraud and corruption and the arrangements in place to capture allegations of irregularity. The Council through these policies had a zero tolerance stance towards fraud.

Councillor Cannon clarified that once approved, these policies would be presented to the Chief Executive and himself as Chair of the Audit Committee for signature and then published on both the Council's website and the Staff Intranet, replacing the current policies.

RESOLVED:

That the following revised Council Fraud Policies be agreed:

- (a) Anti-Money Laundering Policy
- (b) Whistleblowing Policy
- (c) Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

C123

PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE COUNCIL PLAN

The Cabinet considered the progress report of measures in the Council Plan that was introduced by Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council).

Councillor Marland summarised that the Council Plan 2016 -22 was adopted by the Council on 19 June 2019. The Delivery Plan, which formed part of the Council Plan, set out actions that covered this municipal year. This report presented the quarterly update covering the period December 2019 to February 2020.

Councillor Marland indicated that it was important to monitor the Delivery Plan and update progress to councillors, stakeholder and residents.

RESOLVED:

That the progress being made on the Council's Plan 2016-2022 be noted.

C124

FORECAST OUTTURN FOR QUARTER 3, 2019/20: GENERAL FUND REVENUE, HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT, DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Cabinet considered the 2019/20 Quarter 3 forecast outturn for the General Fund, the Dedicated Schools Grant, the Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme, based upon income and expenditure as at 31 December 2019.

Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation) indicated that the General Fund Revenue Account was currently forecasting an underspend of £0.31m. Planned savings of £2.670m had been delivered, which was 42% of the annual savings target. It was anticipated that by the 31 March 2020, savings of £5.860m (93%) would have been achieved, leaving a shortfall of £0.467m which had been reflected in the forecast position.

Councillor Middleton also indicated that the Housing Revenue Account was currently forecasting a £0.003m underspend, which it was anticipated would be offset by an increase in the planned level of Revenue Contribution to Capital.

Councillor Middleton reported that:

- (a) The Dedicated Schools Grant budget was set with an estimated surplus carry forward into 2020/21 of £2.956m, the forecast position at Quarter 3 was a surplus carry forward of £2.636m;
- (b) The Public Health budget was set with the planned use of £0.329m Reserves and the forecast position was a contribution to Reserves of £0.164m;
- (c) The Capital Programme, (2019/20 -2023/24) had been rebased as at 30 June 2019. The overall project forecast of £552.671m compared to a budget £554.695m, a £2.024m underspend; £135.549m of the forecast expectation was in 2019/20 compared to a budget of £165.638m which would give a £30.089m underspend. £28.405m of the forecast underspend was projected to be re-phased into later years, resulting in a net £1.684m underspend in 2019/20.
- (d) The Cabinet was being asked to amend the 2019/20 and 2020/21 Tariff Programme and 2019/20 Capital Programme.

Councillor Middleton also indicated that the Council was responsible for the management of the Milton Keynes Tariff, which was a forward funding mechanism to deliver infrastructure in the expansion areas of the borough and requested that the virements to the original budget be approved.

Councillor Middleton summarised the amendments to the Council's Capital programme and highlighted the following Resource Allocation and Spend Approvals that included:

- £0.380m in 2019/20 and £0.140m in 2020/21 to provide 4 new grass playing fields, including tailored drainage at Fairfields Pitches;
- £0.100m in 2019/20 to resurface the car park, upgrade the lighting, provide a new children's play area and landscape at Greenley's Local Centre; and
- £0.015m in 2019/20 to upgrade the internal ceiling above the swimming pool at Redway special school.

The Cabinet heard from Councillor Petchey who requested funding, subject to outturn, for deep cleans & public realm maintenance of £25,000 in each of Stantonbury and Bradville.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) indicated that representations had been received from Fullers Slade and Beanhill for deep cleans & public realm maintenance of £25,000 in each area, subject to outturn of the Revenue Budget.

Councillor Marland also indicated that, following the request from Andy Carr for the pavement outside of Lawnsmead Retirement complex in Newport Pagnell to be resurfaced, the footpath works adjacent to the Retirement Complex in Newport Pagnell (£60,000) be added to the Capital Programme for 2020/21 subject to outturn of the Revenue Budget.

Councillor Marland further indicated that £100,000 would be released immediately from Reserves to fund Borough wide Pothole maintenance below intervention levels that would result in longer term savings.

RESOLVED:

1. That the General Fund Revenue Account forecast outturn of underspend and the management actions be noted.

2. That the forecast outturn on the Housing Revenue Account of break even, after an increase in the transfer to reserves and the management actions be noted.
3. That the Dedicated Schools Grant surplus carry forward of £2.636m and the management actions be noted.
4. That the forecast outturn spend on the Capital Programme of £552.671m total project of which £135.549m is in 2019/20 be noted.
5. That the additions and amendments to resource allocation and spend approval for the 2019/20 Capital Programme, be approved.
6. That the current position of the 2019/20 Tariff Programme be noted.
7. That the additions and amendments to resource allocation and spend approvals for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 tariff programmes be approved.
8. That the virements to the original budget as detailed be noted.
9. That the current high risk vacancies areas be noted.
10. That the procurement waiver decisions be noted.
11. That Footpath works adjacent to Lawnsmead Retirement Complex in Newport Pagnell (£60,000) be added to the Capital Programme for 2020/21 funded, subject to outturn of the Revenue Budget.
12. The following be added to Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2020/21 subject to outturn:
 - (a) Fullers Slade Deep Clean and Public Realm Maintenance of £25,000; and
 - (b) Beanhill Deep Clean and Public Realm Maintenance £25,000.
13. That the following be added to Revenue Budget for 2020/21 funded subject to outturn of the Revenue Budget:
 - (a) Stantonbury Deep Clean and Public Realm Maintenance £25,000; and
 - (b) Bradville Deep Clean and Public Realm Maintenance £25,000.

14. That £100,000 be released immediately from Reserves to fund Borough wide Pothole maintenance below intervention levels that would result in longer term savings.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 8.48 PM.