



Minutes of the meeting of the CABINET held on TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2020 at 6.30 pm.

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

Officers: M Bracey (Chief Executive), T Aldworth (Deputy Chief Executive), S Richardson (Director Finance and Resources), A Rulton (Head of Finance [Deputy S151 Officer]), K Hulatt (Acting Head of Legal Services) and S Muir (Committee Manager).

Also Present: Councillors Alexander, R Bradburn, Ferrans, P Geary, Miles and Rankine and 3 members of the Public.

C94 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 January 2020 be approved and signed by the Leader of the Council as a correct record.

C95 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) advised with reference to Item 10 (Draft Council Budget), that his wife was a key holder for New Bradwell Community Centre.

C96 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(a) Question from Ethan Wilkinson to Councillor Nolan (Cabinet member for Children and Families)

In response to a written question submitted from Ethan Wilkinson, who asked if the Council would support families to teach their children about the safety of young people at school and in the community, Councillor Nolan (Cabinet member for Children and Families) indicated that she would supply a written response.

(b) Question from Mr Robert Excell (MK Heritage Association) to Councillor Gowans (Cabinet member for Planning and Transport).

who stated, with reference to the MK New Town Heritage Register, that MK Heritage Association was pleased to be invited to participate on the Panel in developing the potential Register in November 2017 and asked when the Panel was next going to be convened to fully consider all the nominations to the Register and who was to be invited to Chair the Panel.

Councillor Gowans summarised his written response and indicated that the Council would be bringing forward the New Town Heritage Register in manageable phases, in order that assets could be added to the Register sooner and the logistical challenges presented by bringing forward all the nominations in one version could be overcome. It was anticipated that the first phase would consist of about fifty assets that would represent the diverse nature of the nominations; these could then be considered by the selection Panel during the first six months of 2020.

Councillor Gowans also indicated that the project was explicitly referred to in Plan:MK, the current consultation document Milton Keynes Strategy for 2050, and contributed to Project Six of the Milton Keynes: Making a Great City Greater Report and as such, the New Town Heritage Register was considered an important project that Milton Keynes Council would progress and complete.

Mr Excell thanked Councillor Gowans for the informative written response.

C97

COUNCILLORS' ITEMS

The Cabinet considered an item from Councillor Ferrans (Chair of the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee) which referred to the Call-in of a Delegated Decision on 26 November 2019 in respect of Buckland Lodge Sheltered Housing Scheme which had been withdrawn following the Mediation meeting.

Councillor Ferrans summarised the concerns from the Mediation meeting and indicated that at the meeting, it had been reported that a protocol for considering and assessing the options to refurbish or repurpose any building being considered for demolition was currently being produced by the Housing and Regeneration Team for Housing Revenue Account properties.

Councillor Ferrans asked the Cabinet to consider a consistent approach by adopting a similar policy for all Council buildings and to

also introduce a policy on the re-use of building materials from any demolished property.

Councillor Long (Cabinet member for Housing and Regeneration) thanked Councillor Ferrans for her work in chairing the successful Mediation meeting and indicated that the issues that had been identified at that meeting supported the Administration's ambition to reduce the Council's carbon footprint by assessing all options to refurbish buildings for different uses and recycle materials wherever possible.

Councillor Long also requested that this approach be investigated for all Council properties.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) indicated that the recycling and re-use of materials from obsolete buildings and sites supported the Circular Economy strand of the MK Sustainability Strategy 2019-2050 adopted on 8 January 2019 (Minute C131 refers) to increase the efficient use of resources, to re-use materials, use less water, and ensure the best use of land.

RESOLVED –

1. That the current work to prepare a protocol for considering and assessing the options to refurbish or repurpose any building being considered for demolition, by the Housing and Regeneration team for Housing Revenue Account buildings be noted.
2. That the request to consider adopting such a protocol, or a similar protocol Council-wide, and to introduce a policy on the re-use of building materials freed up by demolition, be actioned.

C99

COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

Question from Councillor R Bradburn to Councillor Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate Action and Sustainability).

Councillor R Bradburn stated that many Councillors had received emails from members of the public concerning the decision to rescind the invitation to Franklin Graham to attend an event at the Marshal Arena, and asked Councillor Marklew in her role of Cabinet member for Culture, Sport and Leisure, to confirm, noting that the Marshal Arena was not a Council facility, what action the Council could take.

Councillor Marklew confirmed that the Marshal Arena was not a Council facility, the decision had not been taken by the Council and she would respond to this effect on behalf of the Council.

**REFERRAL FROM STRATEGIC PLACEMAKING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
- 15 JANUARY 2020****Milton Keynes Bus Network: Contract Performance, Network Review and Access to Health Facilities**

The Cabinet considered a referral from the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee held on 15 January 2020, in respect of Milton Keynes Bus Network: Contract Performance, Network Review and Access to Health Facilities, which was presented by Councillor P Geary (Chair of the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee).

Councillor P Geary summarised the conclusions of the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee and indicated that as Councillor Gowans (the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport) had attended the meeting he was aware of the issues that had been discussed that included the worsening performance of the bus service, concerns about accessibility for wheelchair users of the popular ViaVan service, accessibility to bus stops at the MK Hospital, and a lack of clear criteria for the provision or maintenance of bus shelters.

Councillor Gowans thanked the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee for its work and indicated that following the Transport Act 1985, the role of local councils in providing bus services had been limited. However, since the introduction of a Voluntary Partnership in Milton Keynes with the primary operator Arriva, who operated the significant majority of commercial services some good outcomes had been achieved. Nonetheless, it was a concern that there had been a considerable deterioration of service punctuality and reliability, cleanliness and maintenance in buses over recent months.

Councillor Gowans also indicated that all of the Council's Bus Service Contracts were due to end in October 2020 and it was intended that there would be a more rigorous contract management and monitoring regime to react more quickly to inadequate services and poor quality. Additionally, a report detailing the current position regarding public transport including a review of the approach to Bus Partnerships and accessibility to bus stops, was anticipated to be considered by the Cabinet later in 2020.

Councillor Gowans clarified that there was an objective in the Council Plan to lobby the Local Government Association and political parties to seek support for additional powers to be granted by Central Government to local authorities to regulate bus service provision and this would be pursued.

RESOLVED –

1. That it be noted that a report detailing the Public Transport Position including a review of the approach to Bus Partnerships would be considered by the Cabinet later 2020.
2. That the Council Plan objective to lobby the Local Government Association and political parties to support representations Central Government for additional powers to regulate bus service provision be actioned.

C101 REFERRAL FROM BUDGET AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 21 JANUARY 2020 DRAFT COUNCIL BUDGET 2020/21

It was noted that the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee - 21 January 2020 report in respect of the draft Council Budget 2020/21 would be presented as part of the Council's draft Budget, later on the agenda.

C102 REFERRAL FROM COUNCIL - 22 JANUARY 2020

Pedestrian Accessibility Issues

The Cabinet considered a referral from the Council meeting held on 22 January 2020 arising from a motion from Councillor Alexander in respect of Pedestrian Accessibility Issues.

Councillor Alexander summarised the main points of his motion requesting that the Cabinet take measures to end the inequality and the difficulties experienced by many residents with mobility issues who relied on mobility aids, and those with prams and buggies, or similar, when using the pavements and pathways in Milton Keynes.

Councillor Alexander specifically referred to the request to Council for the Cabinet to undertake a 5 year programme starting in 2020/21 to install dropped kerbs at all road crossings, ensuring that there was adequate budget provision in each of the next 5 financial years to support the programme and also to ensure that access needs were given due consideration when adopting future planning policies.

Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm) thanked Councillor Alexander for raising the issues at the Council meeting and indicated that a considered approach on an area by area basis that achieved the improvements rather than a piecemeal approach would be a better use of resources and be less disruptive to residents.

Councillor Darlington also indicated that accessibility issues were predominately issues in the historic and more established parts of the borough such as Newport Pagnell, Stony Stratford and Bletchley as safe and accessible footways and Redways, as required by the

Equality Act of 2010 , were a key feature of the planning and design of newer areas in the borough.

Councillor Darlington clarified that a proposal for an Integrated Transport Grant to enable works to be undertaken to provide a safe and accessible footway network for all residents of Milton Keynes had been included in the draft Council Budget to be recommended to Council at its February meeting.

RESOLVED –

That a long term programme and funding to improve accessibility for pedestrians with mobility aids, prams and buggies on footpaths be investigated on an area by area basis.

C103

COUNCIL BUDGET 2020/21, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2020/21 TO 2023/24 AND THE REFERRAL FROM THE BUDGET & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 21 JANUARY 2020

The Cabinet considered the draft Council Budget 2020/21, the Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24 and the report from the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the draft Budget 2019/20.

Councillor R Bradburn (Chair of the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee) introduced the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee report on the Draft Budget 2019/20, thanked all those who had contributed to the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee report and indicated that whilst commending the ambition of the Budget proposals to make Milton Keynes a better environment in which its residents could live, work and play, the Scrutiny Committee had a duty to ensure that the proposals were robust, financially viable and would achieve their objectives.

Councillor R Bradburn summarised the conclusions of the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee report and added that for the first time the Committee had considered the Cabinet Investment Proposals, including individual Ward based schemes and requested that, in future budgets, any Cabinet investment proposals included a narrative explaining what the proposed funding was expected to achieve, or if this information was not available, a note indicating that business case was being developed.

Councillor R Bradburn further indicated that he would respond more fully to the Council's Budget on behalf of Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee, at the meeting of the Council on 26 February 2020.

Councillor Middleton, the Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation, thanked Councillor R Bradburn and those concerned in producing the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee report and referred to his written response.

Councillor Middleton indicated that the proposals included within the draft Budget were consistent with the Council Plan adopted by the Council in the summer of 2019 (Minute CI27 of 19 June 2019 refers), and were in many cases supported by an adopted strategy, for example the Sustainability Strategy. In line with normal practice, Cabinet members had worked alongside senior officers to develop supporting documentation to evidence the benefits and risks of proposals.

Councillor Middleton recognised that the Scrutiny Management Committee was best placed to consider the Cabinet's proposals that it wished to explore as part of its Scrutiny work programme for the coming Council year.

Councillor Middleton indicated that the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan had been prepared in the context of continued Government austerity, and a substantial increase in demand for critical Council services.

Councillor Middleton emphasised that the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement had been announced on 20 December 2019, after the draft Budget had been published. The settlement confirmed details of the funding to the Council for 2020/21, which were in line with the draft Budget report and included:

- The New Homes Bonus provisional allocations; and
- the additional funding for social care announced in the September 2019 Spending Round.

Councillor Middleton also indicated that the draft Revenue Budget proposed a Council Tax at Band D of £1,429.86, for the Milton Keynes element. This was an increase of 3.49%, consisting of a 1.99% general increase and 1.50% Adult Social Care Precept.

Councillor Middleton clarified that the proposed Council tax increase was lower than those being proposed by neighbouring local authorities due to judicious financial planning by the Cabinet and senior officers.

Councillor Middleton further outlined that:

- That it was intended to recommend to Council a Housing Revenue Account Dwelling Rent 2020/21 increase of 2.7% , which was an average of £2.32 per week;
- That the Council Tax requirement to be recommended to Council for the Council's own purposes for 2020/21 (excluding Parish Precepts) was £123.954m; and
- The estimated position for the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2020/21.

That the following be recommended to Council for adoption:

- (a) The Housing Revenue Account Revenue Budget 2020/21;
- (b) The advance payment of £16.986m employer pension contributions for 2020/21;
- (c) The fees and charges for 2020/21 (including those fees and charges which are exceptions to the Income and Collection Policy);
- (d) The Capital Programme for 2020/21 to 2023/24;
- (e) That the resource allocation for the 2020/21 Tariff programme;
- (f) The Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 to 2024/25 and the Treasury Policy Statement, including the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy;
- (g) The financial forecast set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), in relation to both resources and expenditure; and
- (h) The equalities impact assessments for the Revenue Budget 2020/21.

Councillor Middleton clarified that under current Pension Regulations, it was possible to pay employer pension contributions in advance rather than monthly, the Council was able to pay the non-schools employer's contributions for 2020/21 on 1 April 2020 as a cash lump sum at a cost of £16.986m. It was anticipated that the resulting discounted rate would generate an estimated one off saving of £0.405m. This would be transferred into the Pension Reserve to mitigate any potential risk on future pension revaluations.

Councillor Middleton stated that the revised draft 2020/21 budget proposals now included £8.966m funding for a range of one-off investment proposals put forward by the Cabinet to be funded from the 2019/20 forecast surplus on the Collection Fund and changes to local authority funding announced in the Government's September 2019 Spending Round. Additionally, in response to the crisis in temporary housing accommodation, £1m had been included to be made available to provide additional support; £50k was proposed to support Woughton Community Council with Public Realm; and an additional £50k was proposed to support the Redway network.

Councillor Middleton also thanked the Youth Cabinet for its thorough and comprehensive response which highlighted the issues that were important to young people across the borough, in particular those difficulties young people had in accessing public transport.

Councillor Middleton indicated that the funding for the 16-21 Concessionary Travel Scheme would be reviewed.

The Cabinet heard from Councillor R Bradburn who requested that the following range of smaller, one-off projects be added to the draft Budget Proposals to be recommended to Council:

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------|
| (a) | Campbell Park and Old Woughton resurfacing the roundabouts on Downs Barn Boulevard at the junctions with Byerley Place and Pasterns Place then Farrier and Pannier Place (two in total) | £60,000 |
| (b) | Newport Pagnell South - Tickford Lay-by Scheme | £40,000 |
| (c) | Newport Pagnell South - Tickford parking restrictions scheme | £25,000 |
| (d) | Bradwell - Heelands Local Centre Bus Shelter – North bound buses | £25,000 |
| (e) | Bradwell - Two Mile Ash High Street Linear park tarmac scheme | £25,000 |
| (f) | Bradwell - Loughton Road Corner Common Lane footpath | £25,000 |
| (g) | Monkston Speed restrictions scheme to 20mph | £15,000 |
| (h) | Disabled Toilet Provision at Downs Barn School | £7,000 |

Total £222,000

Councillor Marland, Leader of the Council, indicated that, as the funding for the Concessionary Fares Scheme for 16-21 years old was

being reviewed, the Concessionary Fares Scheme for people over 65 to travel before 9.30am should be reintroduced and that one off funding in 2020/21 for concessionary fares, would be added to the base budget, and for 2021/22 onwards £25k would be added.

The Cabinet also heard from a member of the public with reference to Bus Service issues and from members of the Cabinet in support of the Housing Revenue Rent Rise of 2.7% to support investments in housing stock, and an increase of £100k for Safer MK to support partnership working with knife crime issues. Cabinet members also thanked the Youth Cabinet for its detailed contributions to the draft Budget 2020/21 consultation.

In response to a comment from Councillor P Geary, who indicated that at a recent Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting, he had been advised that there was no funding available for smaller projects, Councillor Middleton indicated that should the proposal to increase Council Tax be agreed by the Council, this would increase the contingency fund to help with Community Projects such as those suggested by Councillors Marland and R Bradburn and by Councillor D Hopkins at the Delegated Decisions meeting on 23 December 2019 when the consultation of the draft Budget 2020/21 was approved.

Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council) expressed the thanks of the Cabinet to officer colleagues for their efforts in constructing the draft Budget and noted that the Director of Finance and Resources, the Council's Chief Finance Officer, was satisfied with the robustness of the draft Budget.

Councillor Marland recognised that the Cabinet was proposing an increase in Council Tax, but, unlike neighbouring local authority areas, this Council was opening new libraries and improving community facilities. It was anticipated that Milton Keynes residents would be £120 per annum better off and the Budget was making funds available to respond to the needs of and improve the lives of, local residents.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Revenue Budget 2020/21 totalling £209.534m be approved and recommended to Council.
2. That the Council Tax at Band D of £1,429.86, for the Milton Keynes element of the Council Tax, be approved and recommended to Council, noting that this is an increase of 3.49%, consisting of a 1.99% general increase and a 1.50% Adult Social Care Precept.

3. That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2020/21 (excluding Parish Precepts) of £123.954m, be noted.
4. That the estimated position for the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2020/21 be noted.
5. That the Housing Revenue Account Revenue Budget 2020/21 be recommended to Council for adoption.
6. That the Housing Revenue Account Dwelling Rent 2020/21, an increase of 2.7%, an average of £2.32 per week, be recommended to Council.
7. That the advance payment of £16.986m employer pension contributions for 2020/21 be approved and recommended to Council.
8. That the fees and charges for 2020/21 (including those fees and charges which are exceptions to the Income and Collection Policy) be approved and recommended to Council.
9. That the Capital Programme for 2020/21 to 2023/24 be approved and recommended to Council.
10. That the resource allocation for the 2020/21 Tariff programme be approved and recommended to Council.
11. That the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 to 2024/25 and the Treasury Policy Statement, including the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, be approved and recommended to Council.
12. That the financial forecast set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), in relation to both resources and expenditure, be noted.
13. That the equalities impact assessments for the Revenue Budget 2020/21 be noted.
14. Budget Amendments

That the following be added to the Draft Budget Proposals to be recommended to Full Council:

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------|
| (a) | Campbell Park and Old Woughton resurfacing the roundabouts on Downs Barn Boulevard at the junctions with Byerley Place and Pasterns Place then Farrier and Pannier Place (two in total) | £60,000 |
| (b) | Newport Pagnell South - Tickford Lay-by Scheme | £40,000 |

(c)	Newport Pagnell South - Tickford parking restrictions scheme	£25,000
(d)	Bradwell - Heelands Local Centre Bus Shelter – North bound buses	£25,000
(e)	Bradwell - Two Mile Ash High Street Linear park tarmac scheme	£25,000
(f)	Bradwell - Loughton Road Corner Common Lane footpath	£25,000
(g)	Monkston Speed restrictions scheme to 20mph	£15,000
(h)	Disabled Toilet Provision at Downs Barn School	£7,000
	Total	£222,000
(i)	One Off funding in 2020/21 for concessionary fares to be added to the base for 2021/22 onwards onwards	£25,000

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 7.17pm