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Minutes of the MEETING OF MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on WEDNESDAY
10 MARCH 2021 at 7.30 pm

Present: Councillor A Geary (Mayor)
Councillors Alexander, Baines, Baume, Bint, Bowyer, Brackenbury, K Bradburn, M Bradburn, R Bradburn, Brown, Cannon, Carr, Crooks, Cryer-Whitehead, Darlington, Exon, Ferrans, P Geary, Gilbert, Gowans, Green, D Hopkins, V Hopkins, Hosking, Jenkins, Khan, Lancaster, Legg, Long, Marland, Marlow, McCall, McLean, McPake, Middleton, Miles, Minns, Montague, Nazir, Nolan, O'Neill, Petchey, Priestley, Raja, Rankine, Reilly, Trendall, Townsend, Wales, Walker, Wallis, Williams, C Wilson-Marklew and J Wilson-Marklew

Apologies: Aldermen Bartlett, Beeley, Bristow, Coventry, Henderson, Howell and McKenzie and Alderwomen Henderson, Irons, Lloyd and Saunders

Also Present: 35 members of the public

CL101

MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24 February 2021 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record, subject to Councillor Carr, rather than Councillor McCall, being recorded as the seconder of the Amendment moved by Councillor R Bradburn at Minute CL97 (Council Budget for 2021/22 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2021/22 – 2024/25).

CL102

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Legg disclosed a prejudicial interest in Item 4(d) (The Annual Pay Policy Statement), as his wife was an employee of the Council.

Councillor Khan advised the Council that in relation to Item 4(d) (The Annual Pay Policy Statement), his daughter was an employee of the Council.

Councillor P Geary disclosed a personal interest in relation to Item 4(d), (The Annual Pay Policy Statement) as his sister in-law was an employee of the Council.

CL103

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made announcements in respect of:

- (a) the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Deal; and
- (b) the retirement of Geoff Snelson, the Council's Director of Strategy and Futures.

CL104

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- (a) Question from Nana Ofori-Atta Oguntola to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Nana Ofori-Atta Oguntola, referring to the recent fly-tipping prosecution by the Council, asked Councillor Darlington if she could confirm how much of the fly-tipping had been by rogue traders or was a result of local tax payers not being able to book a slot at the recycling centres?

Councillor Darlington indicated that the Council had taken many people to court for fly tipping this year and no one had used the booking system as an excuse for fly tipping.

As a supplementary question Nana Ofori-Atta Oguntola, asked Councillor Darlington, if she could confirm that in the last five years, the two record years for fly tipping were both before the current pandemic and before the introduction of the booking system?

Councillor Darlington indicated that this was correct and again reiterated that there was no evidence that the booking system had led to an increase in fly tipping and that Milton Keynes had only seen a 16% increase in fly tipping in the last year compared to much higher levels elsewhere.

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

Andrew Carr, referring to the end of the consultation period in relation to traffic calming measures for Tickford Street, Newport Pagnell, asked Councillor Darlington, if she could outline the proposals and what the timetable was for progressing the works?

Councillor Darlington indicated that she would like to thank all those who had engaged in the consultation process and to reassure them that she had listened to what they had said. Fifty-eight responses had been received with a mixed response to the proposed options. . The Council would investigate with the Town Council whether additional car parking sites could be provided and there would be more consultation with the community over this. A final report was being collated and it was anticipated that the measures that had the full support of the community would be implemented in May 2021.

As a supplementary question Andrew Carr, asked Councillor Darlington whether she would be willing to discuss with residents any further alternatives to avoid the loss of car parking spaces?

Councillor Darlington indicated that she would be happy to engage further with residents as she was aware that car parking was an issue and there were alternatives that could potentially be considered.

(c) Question from Shazna Muzammil to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Shazna Muzammil, asked Councillor Darlington, how many incidents of fly tipping had been reported in the Bletchley area over the last 3 months?

Councillor Darlington indicated that across the three Bletchley wards over the last three months, there had been 58 reported incidents in October, 66 in November and 40 in December, the majority of which had been cleared within 24-48 hours.

Councillor Darlington suggested that it should be noted that eighty percent of fly tipping was from household waste that had been put out on the wrong day and the Council would be working with residents to change behaviours along with doubling enforcement activity.

Councillor Darlington stressed that the majority of people did not fly tip and there was no excuse for any fly tipping.

As a supplementary question Shazna Muzammil, referring to a significant amount of waste dumped on private land on Queensway, asked Councillor Darlington whether she would investigate the issue further?

Councillor Darlington indicated that she would be happy to investigate.

- (d) Question from Edward Hume to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Edward Hume, asked Councillor Marland, if he could provide an update on the Bletchley Landfill planning application for a 15-year extension which had been refused.

Councillor Marland indicated that a committee of this Council made a decision to oppose the Bletchley landfill site due to the impact on the amenity of residents and the Council would defend that decision rigorously at appeal.

As a supplementary question Edward Hume, asked Councillor Marland whether the Council would be supporting the residents in opposing the extension and the Appeal.

Councillor Marland indicated that, yes, the Council would oppose the extension and any Appeal and that it was the desire of the Council that the landfill was turned into an area of green open space as soon as possible.

- (e) Question from Steve Murray to Councillor J Wilson-Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate Action and Sustainability)

Steve Murray, asked Councillor J Wilson-Marklew, what was the Council's plan to improve cycle safety on rural roads in the borough, in particular the road from Gayhurst to Newport Pagnell, where much of it was national speed limit with no footpath and as such completely unsafe for family cycling?

Councillor J Wilson-Marklew indicated that the Council was currently working on a Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. The link from Gayhurst to Newport Pagnell was one of the suggested schemes in this Plan and would go forward for public consultation in the summer.

- (f) Question from Scot Balazs to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Scot Balazs, referring to the fact that there had been a number of issues with notifying residents about an appeal hearing heard by the planning inspector in relation to Blakelands last month, asked Councillor Marland, how he could continue to defend the planning department when so many mistakes, even very simple ones, had been made in

relation to a single planning application?

Councillor Marland indicated that the Council did not recognise the statement that it had reissued the letter three times. As soon as the Council received the date of the appeal, it wrote to residents so they could make their cases to the hearing. The letter was reissued to clarify the email address of the inspector.

Councillor Marland accepted that there were areas that could be improved within the Planning Department and that was why the Council had commissioned an independent Peer Review to take place after the election.

As a supplementary question Scot Balazs, referring to the Peer Review, asked Councillor Marland whether this would be a full external audit?

Councillor Marland indicated that the Peer Review was just that, it was not an inspection or audit.

- (g) Question from Chris Taylor to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Chris Taylor, asked Councillor Darlington, what measures were the Council undertaking to ensure consistently missed refuse collections did not continue to happen.

Councillor Darlington indicated that a considerable number of the Refuse Collectors had contracted Covid-19 which had led to some missed collections. The Contractor had brought in additional workers or reallocated them from different teams. The contract, which was not signed by this administration, had very few penalties but Serco had been issued with an improvement notice when it had not met its obligations.

As a supplementary question Chris Taylor, referring to missed collections from cul-de-sacs in Furzton , asked Councillor Darlington if this could be rectified.

Councillor Darlington indicated that some areas had been missed due to changes in staff but if they were reported right away, they were cleared the next day.

- (h) Question from Ethan Wilkinson to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet Member for Public Realm)

Ethan Wilkinson, referring to the stronger parking enforcement measures in Loughton that residents had been campaigning for, asked Councillor Darlington, if she could

provide an update on the ANPR cars that had been promised in 2019?

Councillor Darlington indicated that she had asked the Head of Highways to review the current contracts and propose a more proactive approach to parking enforcement, particularly in residential areas where there had been problematic parking.

As a supplementary question Ethan Wilkinson, asked Councillor Darlington what would happen about parking enforcement in residential areas after lockdown when people started commuting again?

Councillor Darlington indicated that she had asked the Head of Highways to undertake an urgent review as to how the Council enforced parking, particularly in residential areas.

- (i) Question from Town Councillor Mo Imran to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet Member for Public Realm)

Town Councillor Mo Imran, referring to the increase in fly-tipping in Bletchley and the potential for lockdown restrictions to be eased, asked Councillor Darlington if the Council could look at scrapping the booking system and providing easier access to the tips?

Councillor Darlington indicated that the booking system was introduced to keep people safe and to prioritise the use of the tips for Milton Keynes residents. Since introducing the booking system, it had become obvious how abused the tips were in terms of commercial waste and use by people outside the borough. There were over 800 slots available every day, increasing to 1000 a day during the summer hours, there had been no queueing and social distancing had been maintained.

As a supplementary question Town Councillor Mo Imran, asked Councillor Darlington whether a litter picker had been employed for Bletchley as promised in 2018?

Councillor Darlington. indicated that littering was not acceptable behaviour and the Council would move to ticket people including those who litter in parks.

- (j) Question from Adam Rolfe to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet Member for Public Realm)

Adam Rolfe, referring to Bletchley residents who were disappointed that she voted against quadrupling the local pothole fund in the budget meeting last month, asked

Councillor Darlington, given there were potholes in the Bletchley West Ward that have been reported, but never fixed, when did she plan on addressing the pothole problem.

Councillor Darlington indicated that Milton Keynes spent nearly £3 million a year fixing potholes and at the last budget provided an additional £150,000 despite a £1.3 million reduction by Central Government of the highway's maintenance budget. Under this Administration, pothole complaints had more than halved and at any one time only 4% of the roads in the Borough needed to be fixed, putting Milton Keynes in the top ten local authorities for good road condition.

As a supplementary question Adam Rolfe, referring to a large pothole on Sutherland Grove and Whaddon Way which had been reported numerous times but had still not been fixed, asked Councillor Darlington whether she would commit to it being repaired?

Councillor Darlington indicated that if she was sent the report numbers for the pothole, she would have it investigated.

CL105

AUDIT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Councillor Cannon (Chair of the Audit Committee) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 27 January 2021, which was seconded by Councillor Gilbert:

“That the revised Audit Committee Terms of Reference be adopted.”

In response to a query as to the scope of the revised Terms of Reference, Councillor Cannon (Chair of the Audit Committee) undertook to liaise with officer colleagues to confirm whether the revised Terms of Reference for the Committee gave it adequate scope to consider other than financial issues and to communicate the outcome to Councillor Bint

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

That the revised Audit Committee Terms of Reference be adopted.

CL106

STANDARDS COMMITTEE – SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Councillor Brackenbury (Chair of the Standards Committee) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 28 January 2021, which was seconded by Councillor Raja:

“That the Social Media Guidance be adopted.”

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

That the Social Media Guidance be adopted.

CL107

BUDGET AND RESOURCES AND REGENERATION AND RENEWAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

Councillor McClean (Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Committee held on 17 February 2021, which was seconded by Councillor R Bradburn:

“That the changes to the Budget and Resources and the Regeneration and Renewal Scrutiny Committees’ Terms of Reference be adopted.”

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

That the changes to the Budget and Resources and the Regeneration and Renewal Scrutiny Committees’ Terms of Reference be adopted.

CL108

ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Councillor Middleton (Chair of the Joint Negotiating Committee Employers Side) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee Employers Side held on 22 February 2021, which was seconded by Councillor Carr:

“That the Annual Pay Policy Statement be adopted, with effect from 1 April 2021.”

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

That the Annual Pay Policy Statement be adopted, with effect from 1 April 2021.

CL109

COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

- (a) Question from Councillor Trendall to Councillor J Wilson-Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate and Sustainability)

Councillor Trendall, referring to the introduction of the new demand responsive transport service, asked Councillor J Wilson-Marklew if she would agree to investigate the possibility of providing free transport on this service to NHS staff for six months, as a mark of the city's gratitude for their service during the Pandemic

Councillor J Wilson-Marklew indicated that she thought this was a good idea which would also need to extend to commercial services.

Councillor J Wilson-Marklew undertook to discuss the suggestion with officers and respond back when she had more information.

- (b) Question from Councillor Nazir to Councillor Walker (Conservative Group Leader)

Councillor Nazir asked Councillor Walker if he would associate himself with the thanks to the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Deal Board, including MP Iain Stewart and local Conservative councillors, for their exceptional work in driving investment into Bletchley with the announcement of £22.7 million Town Fund announced in the budget.

Councillor Walker indicated that he thanked those involved with the Town Deal Board, including John Cove, the local MP and other local leaders and congratulated them on the successful bid.

Councillor Walker outlined that Iain Stewart MP had been an advocate for Bletchley driving forward the East West Rail project, supporting the investment in the Institute of Digital Technology at Bletchley Park alongside the local Conservative ward councillors.

- (c) Question from Councillor M Bradburn to Councillor Nolan (Cabinet member for Children and Families)

Councillor M Bradburn asked Councillor Nolan, whether she had written to the local MP to request that he raise concerns

with the Department of Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner about Stantonbury International School and the failure of the Trust running the school.

Councillor Nolan indicated that she had consistently raised concerns with the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Department of Education over the last several years about the unacceptable position in respect of Stantonbury International School and the impact of inadequate education provision.

Councillor Nolan outlined that the Director of Children's Services had catalogued the history of decline since the School had become a Trust and that after the last, worrying, OFSTED inspection the Regional Schools Commissioner had agreed to close the Trust, but progress was slow.

As a supplementary question, Councillor M Bradburn asked Councillor Nolan what could be done to fill the communication vacuum as parents and carers were not getting any information from the school.

Councillor Nolan responded that the Trust had advised that parent ambassadors had been appointed to help with communication and the Council continued to press the Trust and the Regional Schools Commissioner to sort out the unsatisfactory situation at the school.

(d) Question from Councillor Rankine to Councillor Darlington
(Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Rankine, referring to waste from gardening or home do it yourself work, asked Councillor Darlington whether she could confirm that the Council planned to charge residents for each sack of rubble and that it was the Council's intention that residents wanting to dispose of such waste would pay up front when making the booking.

Councillor Darlington indicated that the policy was not to charge residents for their domestic waste disposal but to crack down on commercial operators who were carrying out major work but leaving the waste behind to avoid paying for commercial waste disposal. The Council would be learning from other authorities who had implemented similar proposals to ensure that residents were not caught out.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Rankine asked Councillor Darlington if she could confirm that rubble disposal

would be prepaid via the booking system.

Councillor Darlington responded that the policy was to capture major works, not minor residential waste. The Council would learn from the experience of others who had implemented similar systems to ensure that those carrying out home DIY were not captured by the charges.

- (e) Question from Councillor Baines to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Baines asked Councillor Darlington, if she would agree that a definite education plan needed to be in place to help make sure residents' use of the recycling collections was improved and that the Council needed to work with town and parish councils as part of this.

Councillor Darlington indicated that she agreed this was needed especially with the Council's ambition to be the greenest city. The Council was working with Keep Britain Tidy and would work with other organisations, including parishes who were closer to their residents and real partners in the work, to improve local recycling rates.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Baines asked Councillor Darlington if she would support individual parish councils for example those that are looking to run green recycling days where residents could sign up and get a green bin on the same day.

Councillor Darlington responded that she thought this was a very good initiative and she would discuss with officers as to the best way they could provide support.

- (f) Question from Councillor Raja to Councillor Nolan (Cabinet member for Children and Families)

Councillor Raja, referring to Caroline Haslett Primary School not being open for vulnerable children or the children of keyworkers due to an issue with the boiler, asked Councillor Nolan why the Council did not provide alternative arrangements for these families during this lockdown.

Councillor Nolan indicated that the school had been closed due to an issue with the boiler and she would circulate a more detailed response to Councillor Raja.

- (g) Question from Councillor Ferrans to Councillor Darlington

(Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Ferrans, referring to the fact that Milton Keynes had aspirations to become the greenest city, suggested that it was inevitable that trees would be lost each year and that her Parish Council was surprised to learn that there was no list of those trees which remained which would enable a Parish Council to identify where replacements were necessary and look at funding replacements.

Councillor Ferrans asked Councillor Darlington if she could ensure that officers kept a list of trees that have had to be removed so that they could be replaced.

Councillor Darlington indicated that as Milton Keynes wanted to be the greenest city, trees were an important part of achieving this. As part of this the Council was doing a tree survey so a list should be able to be provided to parish councils shortly. The Biodiversity Strategy included policies such as 'right tree – right place' and the Council intended that for every tree removed it would replant two trees. The Council had started a tree planting programme with West Bletchley Parish Council and was hopeful that it could work with more parish councils on similar programmes.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Ferrans asked Councillor Darlington why there was also no list of missing street name plates and asked Councillor Darlington to ensure that this was rectified.

Councillor Darlington responded that she had spoken to the Head of Highways as she believed the Council needed a more comprehensive programme of maintenance for street name plates.

(h) Question from Councillor Walker to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Walker, referring to former Councillor Akter and the criminal proceedings against her, asked Councillor Marland to confirm why he had taken no action when Councillor Akter pleaded guilty in November 2020.

Councillor Marland indicated that he had nothing further to add to his correspondence with Councillor Walker or the statement that he had made at the time. Appropriate action was taken at the proper stage of the process when a Crown Court had

passed judgement and all the facts were clear.

Councillor Marland added that should anyone have intervened or prejudiced a criminal proceeding or sought information that was not on a Council operational matter would be acting wholly inappropriately.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Walker asked whether the Leader of the Council knew that Councillor Akter admitted her guilt in November 2020.

Councillor Marland responded that action was taken when it was appropriate to do so.

- (i) Question from Councillor McPake to Councillor J Wilson-Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate and Sustainability)

Councillor McPake, referring to the introduction of Demand Responsive Transport service, asked Councillor J Wilson-Marklew how the Council could improve the information provided to regular bus users.

Councillor J Wilson-Marklew indicated that she appreciated this being brought to her attention and she would bring the matter to the attention of the Demand Responsive Transport Communications Group to see what other methods could be used to improve communication.

As a supplementary question, Councillor McPake suggested that the Council needed to have people at the major bus stations to provide information and to update people whose routes were going to change.

Councillor J Wilson-Marklew indicated that she was happy to discuss this further with Councillor McPake and that she was always open to suggestions and ideas as to how things could be improved.

- (j) Question from Councillor R Bradburn to Councillor Townsend (Cabinet member for Community Safety)

Councillor R Bradburn, referring to information being shared, particularly on social media, that dog thefts were a growing problem in Milton Keynes, asked Councillor Townsend if she had a meaningful update she could provide on the issue.

Councillor Townsend indicated that information from Thames Valley Police suggested that there had been a rise in dog theft crimes nationally during the Pandemic but that this was not the case in Milton Keynes. In the last twelve months there were

five dog related incidents but none of these were considered to be dog theft by a stranger.

As a supplementary question, Councillor R Bradburn asked whether the Cabinet member would agree that the emphasis of Thames Valley Police should be on violent crime rather than dog crimes.

Councillor Townsend indicated that she would continue to monitor the situation in Milton Keynes, but it was not currently an issue and instead the focus was on violent crime, youth crime and carrying knives.

- (k) Question from Councillor Bowyer to Councillor McCall (Leader of the Liberal Democrats)

Councillor Bowyer, referring to the Liberal Democrat ward councillors for Newport Pagnell South that had decided to hand deliver leaflets in contravention of the lockdown guidance, asked Councillor McCall whether the councillors were going to resign.

Councillor McCall indicated that, the legal advice was that as this action was carried out by the councillors in their role as a ward councillor it was perfectly legal and suggested that it was inappropriate to make such a false accusation.

Councillor Bowyer suggested that, given the leaflets were delivered on Liberal Democrat headed paper with Liberal Democrat reply information, they were in fact political documents and not Council documents .

Councillor McCall indicated that the letters were delivered by the councillors in their capacity as ward councillors and that this was perfectly within the rules.

- (l) Question from Councillor Brackenbury to Councillor Walker (Leader of the Conservative Group)

Councillor Brackenbury, referring to the Town Deal award to Bletchley and Fenny Stratford asked Councillor Walker what he meant by his statement 'imagine what we could get done with a Conservative Council.'

Councillor Walker indicated that he found it amazing that Liberal Democrat Councillors and local Labour Councillors were criticising the funding that had been awarded to Bletchley and under a Conservative Council fly tipping would be tackled, roads repaired and small businesses supported as part of the

economic recovery.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Brackenbury asked, if Councillor Walker got his dream of a Conservative Council, would he be a champion of localism?

Councillor Walker indicated that he certainly would be a champion of localism.

(m) Question from Councillor McLean to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor McLean, referring to pothole repairs, asked Councillor Darlington whether she was confident that the Council were repairing potholes appropriately, adequately and that the repairs would last?

Councillor Darlington indicated that the Council received £3 million a year to fix potholes and the Labour Administration had added an additional £150,000 to this. Government data showed that only 4% of Milton Keynes' roads needed fixing and complaints about potholes had halved under the Labour Administration.

As a supplementary question, Councillor McLean asked whether the Cabinet member could review the way the Council repaired roads to ensure that the repairs lasted.

Councillor Darlington indicated that the Council took a proactive approach to the road maintenance programme in order to try to prevent potholes forming in the first place and where the Council did need to carry out repairs this was done as part of a large patch repair for efficiency and because that method lasted. While 4% of roads needing repair was still too high, the Council was always looking to innovate and improve on this.

CL110

LONG COVID

Councillor Reilly moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Montague:

1. "That this Council notes that:
 - (a) a growing number of people who have had COVID-19 go on to experience Long COVID, or Post-COVID Syndrome, where they continue to feel effects of the virus weeks or even months after initially falling ill. Symptoms can include "breathlessness, chronic fatigue, "brain fog", anxiety and stress", according to NHS England;

- (b) the Office for National Statistics found an estimated 1 in 5 people testing positive for COVID experienced symptoms for five weeks or longer, and 1 in 10 experienced symptoms for 12 weeks or longer;
 - (c) research into Long COVID should include both those who were and were not hospitalised to understand the true scale of the issue; and
 - (d) 72 MPs signed an Early Day Motion calling on the government to collect and regularly report on the number of people living with Long COVID; and to consider measures to support those living with Long COVID.
2. That this Council welcomes the news from December 2020 that Milton Keynes will be home to one of 69 specialist Long COVID clinics across the country.”
3. That this Council resolves to:
- (a) Support employees with Long COVID and explore in detail what options there are for more specific assistance;
 - (b) Request the Health and Wellbeing Board to consider collecting and reporting on data on Long COVID;
 - (c) Request the Leader and Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to ask the Government to:
 - (i) Collect and regularly report on the number of people living with Long COVID, and to publish the data by principal authority; and
 - (ii) Consider measures to support those living with Long COVID, including the possibility of protection for workers by offering incentives to employers to retain recovering staff.

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes that:
- (a) a growing number of people who have had COVID-19 go on to experience Long COVID, or Post-COVID Syndrome, where they continue to feel effects of the virus weeks or even months after initially falling ill. Symptoms can

- include “breathlessness, chronic fatigue, “brain fog”, anxiety and stress”, according to NHS England;
- (b) the Office for National Statistics found an estimated 1 in 5 people testing positive for COVID experienced symptoms for five weeks or longer, and 1 in 10 experienced symptoms for 12 weeks or longer;
 - (c) research into Long COVID should include both those who were and were not hospitalised to understand the true scale of the issue; and
 - (d) 72 MPs signed an Early Day Motion calling on the government to collect and regularly report on the number of people living with Long COVID; and to consider measures to support those living with Long COVID.
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 - (i) Collect and regularly report on the number of people living with Long COVID, and to publish the data by principal authority; and
 - (ii) Consider measures to support those living with Long COVID, including the possibility of protection for workers by offering incentives to employers to retain recovering staff.

CL111

RETURNING OFFICER’S FEES 2021/22

The Council considered the fees for the Council’s Returning Officer for any Borough or Parish elections and Neighbourhood Plan

Referendums during 2021/22.

The Mayor moved and the Deputy Mayor seconded that:

“That the schedule of fees and disbursements for Principal Area and Parish elections for 2021/22 be adopted.”

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

That the schedule of fees and disbursements for Principal Area and Parish elections for 2021/22 be adopted.

CL112 WARD BASED BUDGETS 2020/21

The Council noted that for the period 1 April 2020 to 25 February 2021, applications totalling £52,250 had been approved.

CL113 QUARTERLY REPORT ON SPECIAL URGENCY DECISIONS

The Council noted that, in accordance with Access to Information Procedure Rule 17.4, the Provisions for Special Urgency, as set out in Access to Information Procedure Rule 16, were not used during the period 8 January 2020 to 25 February 2021

The Council was also advised that Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16(j), which provides for the call-in procedure to not apply, subject to the agreement of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Scrutiny Management Committee, was not used during the period 8 January 2021 to 25 February 2021.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9:30 PM

The recording of this meeting is available to view on the Council's YouTube Channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/MiltonKeynesCouncil/videos>