



Minutes of the MEETING OF MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on WEDNESDAY  
18 MARCH 2020 at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Councillor Crooks (Mayor)  
Councillors Brackenbury, R Bradburn, Darlington, Exon, A Geary,  
P Geary, Gilbert, D Hopkins, Marland, McLean, Middleton, Rankine,  
Townsend, Trendall and Walker  
Alderman McKenzie and Alderwoman Lloyd

**Apologies:** Councillors Akter, Alexander, Baines, Baume, Bint, Bowyer,  
K Bradburn, M Bradburn, Brown, Cannon, Carr, Cryer-Whitehead,  
Ferrans, Gowans, Green, V Hopkins, Hosking, Jenkins, Khan,  
Lancaster, Legg, Long, Marklew, Marlow, McCall, McPake, Miles,  
Minns, Montague, Nazir, Nolan, O'Neill, Petchey, Priestley, Raja,  
Reilly, Wales, Wallis, Williams and Wilson and Aldermen Bartlett,  
Beeley, Bristow, Coventry, Henderson, Howell and Alderwomen  
Irons, Henderson and Saunders

**Also Present:** 8 members of the public

**CL109**

**MINUTES**

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on  
26 February 2020 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct  
record.

**CL110**

**DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors R Bradburn, P Geary and Middleton advised the Council  
that in respect of Item 11 (LGSS Review) they were Council  
appointed members of the LGSS Joint Committee, but they did not  
have any interest in the item that would preclude them from taking  
part in any discussions or votes the Council might have.

**CL111**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(a) Recording of the Meeting

The Mayor advised that the proceedings of this meeting were  
being filmed and would subsequently be made publically  
available on the Council's website to allow this meeting to be  
accessible for those who were unable to attend because of  
Government advice about self-isolation, or non-essential  
travel and gatherings.

(b) Civic Reception – Friday 6 March

The Mayor thanked those who attended the Civic Reception, together with Musica, the Charity Choir who entertained guests on the evening, staff and suppliers at Jury's Inn and Angie Deacon and Sionhan Pitkin in the Democratic Service Team for organising the event.

The Mayor announced that the raffle, which included a cricket bat signed by Sir Alastair Cook, raised £635 for his designated charities.

(c) Housing Infrastructure Fund

The Mayor announced that as part of the budget last Wednesday, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced £95 million pounds of funding to support infrastructure associated with the Milton Keynes East Sustainable Urban Extension Area.

The Mayor thanked the core members of the team who worked tirelessly to develop the bid, which included Sarah Gonsalves, Sophie Lloyd, Paul Van Geete and Andrew Turner.

(d) Covid -19 and the Impact on Elections and Meetings

The Mayor, referring to the Government's announcement deferring the 7 May elections for one year, informed the Council that further details were awaited on the effect of the deferral including on councillors who were due to retire in May and any by-elections triggered by casual vacancies.

The Mayor announced that, in light of the Government advice, all but committee meetings with essential business had been cancelled. Going forward it was anticipated that the Coronavirus legislation would address a number of governance issues including remote attendance at meetings.

(e) High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire

The Mayor announced that Andrew David Farncombe had been appointed as the new High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire.

(f) Retirement of former Councillor Gerald Small

The Mayor announced that Councillor Small had resigned from the Council. Former councillor Small was first elected in 2008 for the Emerson Valley Ward and then represented Tattenhoe Ward from May 2016.

The Mayor expressed the Council's good wishes to former councillor Small.

**PETITIONS****(a) Reduced speed limit on Abbey Way, Bradville**

The Council received a petition from Councillor Petchey, requesting that the speed limit on Abbey Way, Bradville is reduced from 30mph to 20mph.

Councillor Darlington, the responsible Cabinet member for Public Realm, confirmed that the request would be taken forward for potential inclusion in the 2020/21 works programme, when it would be assessed by the Council's Highway Engineers as to its suitability of the reduced speed limit, including consultation with local residents.

**(b) Proposed Development at Springfield Park**

The Council received a petition presented by Judith Ward, concerning a proposed Development at Springfield Park.

Judith Ward also submitted a question to Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation).

Judith Ward, referred to two separate planning applications for housing by the Council in respect of the green space on Springfield located to the south of the former Springfield Pub, behind Stamford Avenue and known locally as "Springfield Park" and drew the attention to the importance of the open space to both local residents and the local community, particularly because of the community activities which were staged, the children's play area and the fact that the open space provided the 'lungs' for what was a high-density housing estate.

Judith Ward asked Councillor Middleton to do what he could to protect this green space for future generations.

Councillor Middleton explained that the site had been identified for potential development to help fulfil the commitment given by the current Labour Administration to build 500 new Council homes.

Councillor Middleton, on behalf of Councillor Long, Cabinet member for Housing and Regeneration, indicated that the strength of public feeling was recognised and it was for this reason the planning application had been withdrawn.

Councillor Middleton undertook to arrange a meeting between, Councillor Long, the Council's Director of Housing and Regeneration, Judith Ward and himself to discuss the situation.

Judith Ward commented that it appeared that the submission of the planning applications was preventing the open space area being registered as a village green as previously promised.

(c) Save Windmill Hill 18-Hole Golf Course

The Council received a petition presented by Ian Laydon, on behalf of Friends of Windmill Hill Golf Course, requesting that the 18 Hole Golf Course at Windmill Hill was saved.

Ian Laydon referred to the proposal to close the 18 Hole Golf Course and to build a 9 Hole Course, a 9 Hole Par 3 Course, together with housing a hotel and a sports club. The proposal also involved fencing of the site, which was well used by residents walking their dogs.

Ian Laydon outlined that it was his belief that neither Evolve, the company which managed the site and which was submitting the development proposals, nor the proposals were suitable for the site as Evolve did not have an understanding of the value of the site to the local community and the proposals did not take account of the development of 5,000 homes in the area and two large warehouse developments which would create demand for the 18 hole Course.

Ian Laydon also referred to the potential detrimental effect on the local community of ever increasing traffic numbers in the area, and expressed concern that the development proposals would only add to this.

Councillor Middleton explained that he understood the depth of feeling within the local community about the proposals having attended a recent meeting with West Bletchley Parish Council and having also met with Councillor Wales, one of the local ward councillors. As a result it was his intention to take a step back to allow him to review the arguments both for and against the development and to take account of the consultation currently being undertaken by Evolve.

Councillor Middleton drew attention to the fact that in its current form the Golf Course was making a loss.

Councillor Middleton undertook to meet with Ian Laydon, once his review had been completed.

Ian Laydon urged Councillor Middleton, as part of his review, to consider proposals from companies with a track record in successfully managing 18 hole golf courses and to look at alternative locations for the proposed non-golf sports facilities.

Ian Laydon pointed out that its contract with Evolve meant that the Council was at no financial detriment if the golf course was making a loss, therefore the Council had time to make a considered decision that took account of the needs of all stakeholders.

**CL113 FORMER COUNCILLOR REG EDWARDS**

Further to Minute CL102 of the Council's meeting held on 26 February 2020, the Council heard contributions from Councillors R Bradburn, Darlington, A Geary and McLean and Alderwomen Lloyd about former Councillor Reg Edwards.

**CL114 REPORT ON SITE VISITS BY THE REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Trendall (Vice-Chair of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 19 December 2019, which was seconded by Councillor Exon:

"That as regeneration is a long term process, the Council agrees that its approach to regeneration needs to be based on a cross-party consensus in order to mitigate any political risk to the regeneration programme due to changes in Administration."

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

RESOLVED -

That as regeneration is a long term process, the Council agrees that its approach to regeneration needs to be based on a cross-party consensus in order to mitigate any political risk to the regeneration programme due to changes in Administration.

**CL115 PAY POLICY STATEMENT - 2020/21**

Councillor Middleton moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee (Employers) held on 24 February 2020, which was seconded by the Councillor Marland:

“That the Pay Policy Statement 2020/21 be agreed.”

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

RESOLVED -

That the Pay Policy Statement 2020/21 be agreed.

**CL116**

**MAKING THE LAVENDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Councillor Marland moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 March 2020, which was seconded by the Councillor P Geary:

- “1. That the Council makes 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 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.”

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

RESOLVED -

1. That the Council makes 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 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.

**CL117**

**MILTON KEYNES HOSPITAL – PLANS FOR GROWTH TO MEET POPULATION INCREASES**

Councillor Walker (Vice-Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee held on 6 February 2020, which was seconded by Councillor Gilbert:

- “1. That the significant amount of funding that the Government has released to date for the expansion of Milton Keynes Hospital be acknowledged.
2. That the Government be lobbied for the full amount of funding requested to ensure that the Hospital can continue to meet the needs of the growing population of Milton Keynes.”

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

RESOLVED -

1. That the significant amount of funding that the Government has released to date for the expansion of Milton Keynes Hospital be acknowledged.
2. That the Government be lobbied for the full amount of funding requested to ensure that the Hospital can continue to meet the needs of the growing population of Milton Keynes.

**CL118**

**REVIEW OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES’ TERMS OF REFERENCE - HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Brackenbury (Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Committee held on 19 February 2020, which was seconded by Councillor Walker:

“That the Terms of Reference for the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee be updated to recognise the Committee’s Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Sub-Committee, the Quality Accounts Panel and Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.”

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

RESOLVED –

That the Terms of Reference for the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee be updated to recognise the Committee's Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Sub-Committee, the Quality Accounts Panel and Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### **CL119 ANNUAL REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

The Council received the Annual Scrutiny Report from the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee, together with reports from the Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committees and the Chair of the Standards Committee.

#### **CL120 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS**

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

Councillor Walker ask Councillor Marland to provide the Council with an update as to the steps the Council had already taken and the steps it was planning to take in response to the Coronavirus outbreak.

In asking the question, Councillor Walker expressed both his support and the support of the Conservative Group to the actions being taken by the Council to address the many challenges to be faced by its residents and the local economy.

A copy of the response from Councillor Marland is attached as an **Annex** to these minutes.

Councillor Walker thanked Councillor Marland for the comprehensive statement and also thanked the Chief Executive and officer colleagues for the speed with which they had acted to take measures to face the challenges being faced.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Walker asked Councillor Marland if he would provide a weekly statement to councillors on the issues connected with the Corona Virus and the actions the Council was taking.

Councillor Marland gave an undertaking to provide a weekly statement as requested and thanked Councillor Walker for his support.

(b) Question from Councillor D Hopkins to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor D Hopkins asked Councillor Marland if the Council could establish a dedicated resource to gather details of those who were organising local support groups for the elderly and vulnerable in their communities and provide a single point of contact email to help coordinated efforts throughout the Coronavirus crisis.

Councillor Marland indicated that consideration had been given to this issue and individuals, community and voluntary organisations wishing to support their communities would be signposted to Community Action, as Community Action was best placed to co-ordinate both existing and new volunteers and maximise the support available. To assist Community Action in this role the Council would be seconding officer colleagues.

Councillor Marland also indicated that such an approach would allow Community Action to add to its database of local community groups which would benefit the residents of Milton Keynes after the Coronavirus crisis was over.

Councillor Marland stressed that if residents had particular concerns about the wellbeing of individuals they should inform the Council's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub which would triage the referral and ensure the appropriate action was taken.

Councillor Marland stressed that the Council had robust safeguarding procedures in place and if residents were at risk the Council would provide the necessary support.

As a supplementary question, Councillor D Hopkins asked Councillor Marland if details for individuals and local community groups signposting them to Community Action could be available on the Council's website as early as Thursday and social media messages issued also providing the signposting.

Councillor D Hopkins also asked that a template be provided for councillors which could be passed to local community groups to enable them to contact Community Action.

Councillor Marland indicated that the Council would be issuing on Friday, details of the signposting, together with guidance for councillors on what they could do to help and support their local communities. This would also be provided

to parish councils and other community organisations to help them support their communities.

(c) Question from Councillor Brackenbury to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Brackenbury thanked councillor Marland for his statement and assured Councillor Marland that he had the full support of the Liberal Democrat Group.

Councillor Brackenbury asked Councillor Marland for an assurance that no member of the Council's staff was being put in the position that if they were not able to work they would not be paid.

Councillor Marland assured Councillor Brackenbury that the Council had very few, if any staff colleagues on zero hour contracts.

Councillor Marland outlined that the Council's contracts were being monitored and the Council would be liaising with suppliers and contractors, as it was important that going forward supply chains and contractors were available to resume their relationships with the Council once the Coronavirus crisis was over. As an example Councillor Marland referred to the Home to School Transport contracts and that transport providers would be paid a retainer to ensure the service was available when schools were next open.

However, Councillor Marland stressed that the Council was only planning for a one or two month timescale, if the crisis went beyond that period the greater the pressure there would be on the Council's budgets and resources would have to be targeted at critical services. It was therefore important that councils and the Government worked together to ensure the necessary resources were available.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Brackenbury asked Councillor Marland if the Council would be taking account of the current circumstances and the pressures on individuals when it chased payment of Council Tax arrears.

Councillor Marland indicated that the Council's approach needed to be wider than Council Tax arrears as the Council provided a number of services, including Council housing, which required payments to the Council and the Council needed to take a sympathetic approach which recognised the circumstances of individuals.

Councillor Marland referred to the £500m made available to councils for the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, but recognised that this sum when shared across all councils meant that, dependent on the Government's objectives for the monies, the Council needed to make sure the support was targeted at those most in need.

**CL121 OXFORD TO CAMBRIDGE EXPRESSWAY**

The Council noted that the motion had been withdrawn by Councillor D Hopkins in advance of the meeting.

**CL122 RETURNING OFFICER'S FEES**

The Council considered the fees for the Council's Returning Officer for any Borough or Parish elections and Neighbourhood Plan Referendums during 2020/21.

The Mayor moved and the Deputy Mayor seconded that:

"That the schedule of fees and disbursements for Principal Area and Parish elections for 2020/21 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 2020/21 be adopted.

**CL123 BIODIVERSITY UPDATE**

Further to Minute CL78 of the Council's meeting held on 24 October 2019, the Council received an update on the delivery of the Biodiversity Action Plan.

**CL124 WARD BASED BUDGETS 2019/20**

The Council noted that for the period 1 April 2019 to 28 February 2020, applications totalling £53,549.94 had been approved.

**CL125 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 1 January 2020 to 6 March 2020.

**CL126 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

That the public and press representatives be excluded from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 3 (Information Relating to the Financial or Business Affairs of the Authority) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, in order that the Council may consider the report in respect of the LGSS Review.

**CL127 LGSS REVIEW**

The Council considered the recommendation arising from the delegated decision taken by Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation), on 17 March 2020 relating to the review of the LGSS operating model.

RESOLVED –

That the recommendations from the Delegated Decision held on 17 March 2020 be agreed.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 8:54 PM