

**POLICY AND RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE**

**19 OCTOBER 1999**

**SUMMARY OF POINTS MADE IN PUBLIC DISCUSSION GROUPS**

This is a summary of key points. Verbatim records of each meeting were not made.

Each meeting was attended by the Leader of the Council, an officer from the Chief Executive's Office and an officer from the Treasurer's Department.

**7.30 - 9pm, Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, BLETCHLEY**

- If tax rises by 5% yearly - adds up to a lot over 4-5 years. Pensions don't keep up.
- Spend too much money on schools - should spread money around.
- I'm also on pension - I get poorer every time rates go up. Emigration is only option! I applied for help with my Council tax bill - didn't get a reply. I can't advise you where to cut down. You spend a lot of money from the comfort of your offices.
- Every year, you hear of deputation going up to Government to make case about annual figures. Case should have been made by now.
- What about under-registration of people on electoral register?
- This is a young town that's evolving quickly.
- Wrong that should have to pay for care services when old when they've been paying taxes all their lives.
- Situation in respect of population figures is ridiculous .
- Where's our grammar school? What do you do with bright kids. You can't let boys out at night because of violence.
- Grammar school issue is political. Bletchley is not policed.
- You can't walk up Queensway without problems. No youth facilities in Bletchley.
- You don't see policemen on streets.
- When is market going to move? We have seen Bletchley decline from busy town into a dump. I hope there will be meetings to consult on how the (SRB) money is to be spent.
- What about the buses? Terrible trying to get to work.

- People who don't pay rates voted in Council Tax referendum. You also fixed the result as most people like to take the middle line. People who don't pay the rates would always vote for the higher level.
- I belong to minority who can't afford to pay.
- What is regeneration in relation to services?
- Big supermarkets took small shops out of Bletchley.
- Not amused that Amusement Arcade being opened.
- Street lighting is a real problem, I'm frightened to go out at night.
- Refuse collection and recycling is first class, but why are skips put in certain areas - builders put all their rubbish in these. Householders could use the "request to collect" service.

### **7.30-9pm, Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September, WOLVERTON**

- Issue of population figures - we're still not being treated fairly. Should campaign to government to get fairer treatment.
- Where does the 5% figure come from? Does it mean you're aiming for no growth in the budget - isn't this unambitious?
- Would you be allowed by government to raise tax higher?
- How much does 1% increase for a band D property represent - not an enormous amount of money to ask from each household for a £400,000 increase in tax income for the council .
- When you sent out the (referendum) consultation leaflet - public were making judgement on basis of no information. Councillors should be in close communication with the community and should make up their own mind. Only consult the public if you inform them fully. Referendum was taking them too far. Let's use initiative instead of cut-backs.
- Democracy means making direct personal contact with electors.
- One area that has suffered from cut-backs disproportionately is the Environment directorate. Would like to see money put back into Environment.

### **11am-12.30 pm, Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September, MILTON KEYNES CENTRAL LIBRARY**

(Comments at this meeting were captured in a questionnaire format)

- I think that Milton Keynes is a wonderful city to live. However I am upset by the lack of support the theatre, dance and artists get. Priority is arts development. Traffic and car parking is not much of a problem in Milton Keynes and more money placed in these areas would only be wasted.
- Keep the environment nice. Priorities - libraries, schools, environment.

- Nothing should be cut. Referendums are a waste of money. Priorities are - public transport, primary school support, under 5's provision, library.
- Priorities - education, housing (stopping empty houses), social services, maintaining historic buildings. Roads low priority.
- Priorities - street cleaning, schools.
- I'm quite happy with the council . Schools and social services should be top priority.
- More money to all services. Education is priority
- Priorities - street cleaning and maintaining green areas. Remove subsidy from sports centres.
- The more money the council has, the more it will spend. Priorities are - refuse, education, landscape, highway maintenance. Landscape and highway give the first impression of Milton Keynes. Traffic calming and nursery education the least important.
- The recycling scheme is good and the parks are very good. Priorities - libraries, community centres, recycling, parks. All services make a difference.
- Sort out travellers. Priority is education.
- The council should be more balanced in their views on the expansion of Milton Keynes. Keep it smaller and therefore near the countryside. Stay within our boundaries.
- Priorities - Adult Education, road maintenance, play areas for children.
- No major issues about how the council does things - broadly the balance is right.
- I like Milton Keynes and the council generally do a good job.
- Please get on with the job, it's a difficult task.
- Special needs eg. dyslexia, aphasia, support whilst at school is very important. Adult Education. Buses, especially no.4 and in the evenings. Dreadful on Sunday.
- Poor housing and difficulties due to break-up of society. Many "no-go" estates - need mix of houses.