



Minutes of the meeting of the PARISHES ASSEMBLY held on THURSDAY
6 DECEMBER 2001 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor(s) Bristow, Long, Mabbutt and Tapp

K Underwood	-	Bradwell Parish Council
A Francis	-	New Bradwell Parish Council
I Fraser	-	Campbell Park Parish Council
T Fraser	-	Campbell Park Parish Council
D Pafford	-	Campbell Park Parish Council
R Nix	-	Central Milton Keynes Parish Council
G Mann	-	Emberton Parish Council
A McGrandle	-	Emberton Parish Council
C Allum	-	Great Linford Parish Council
R Payne	-	Hanslope Parish Council
M Keen	-	Haversham cum Little Linford Parish Council
K Maudsley	-	Kents Hill and Monkston Parish Council
M Franklin	-	Lavendon Parish Council
K Owen	-	Loughton Parish Council
N Richards	-	Moulsoe Parish Council
J Rawlings	-	Olney Town Council
D Warren	-	Stoke Goldington Parish Council
A Dnes	-	Stony Stratford Town Council
M Davies	-	Walton Parish Council
D Rumens	-	Wavendon Parish Council
M Galloway	-	Wolverton and Greenleys Town Council

Officers: C Godfrey (Senior Parish Liaison Officer), D Nickless (Head of Neighbourhood Services (Housing)), P Gibson (Housing Policy and Development Officer), M Vine (Housing Needs Manager), S Marsh (Corporate Communications Manager) and S Parker (Senior Committee Manager)

Also Present: WPC C McLaughin (Thames Valley Police NHW)
N Coolman (Thames Valley Police Partnership MOP)

Apologies: Councillors Day and McCall, M Small (Projects, Partnerships and Sponsorships Manager), D Scarland (Newport Pagnell Town Council) and J Jeffreys (Woburn Sands Town Council)

1.0 MINUTES

The Assembly received the Minutes of the last meeting held on 13 September 2001, and agreed them as a correct record, subject to

Emberton Parish Council being substituted for Olney Town Council in the wording of 1.0 of the Minutes.

2.0

VACATING MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL PROPERTIES IN RURAL AREAS

The Assembly considered a report on the Government's proposed measures arising out of its recent White Paper, detailing its policies on rural areas.

The Assembly noted that the Government's proposed measures included encouraging local authorities in rural areas to apply to the Secretary of State to be able to impose conditions on Right to Buy sales, and promoting more flexible lettings policies by local authorities, so as to take more account of specific rural needs in their area.

The Assembly noted the reform of lettings policies was in line with the objectives of the Housing Green Paper, and the subsequent Housing Policy Statement.

The Assembly also noted that the Government had funded a series of pilot schemes, commencing in April 2001, to look at alternative letting systems.

The Assembly noted that if the Council was to meet the Government's agenda, it needed to amend its Allocations Policy to allow greater opportunity for local people to access the social housing stock in rural areas.

It was agreed that the best way forward was to organise a one day Conference for the Parishes on the allocation of Milton Keynes Council properties. The Conference would give an opportunity for more detailed input from the Parishes and would provide an opportunity for further discussion on the comments/observations made by members of the Assembly, which included the following:

- (a) support for community element in local lettings;
- (b) difficulties that local people, particularly young people, have in getting on the housing ladder in rural areas;
- (c) there is a need to fully understand what are the housing needs in Milton Keynes;
- (d) the supply of affordable housing is too low in rural areas, which is forcing young people out;
- (e) the lack of social housing for rent in rural areas;
- (f) how can Parishes influence the allocation to properties; and
- (g) the extension of a community letting system on a pilot basis in an urban area, as well as a rural area.

3.0

MILTON KEYNES NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION

The Assembly received a presentation from WPC McLaughlin (Thames Valley Police) (with supporting information from Mary Davies of MK Neighbourhood Watch Association and N Coolman of Thames Valley Police Partnership MOB) on Neighbourhood Watch.

The Assembly noted that the idea behind Neighbourhood Watch was to create a community spirit and by educating people in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme reduce the opportunities for crime to occur.

Literature on the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme was provided to members of the Assembly.

The Assembly noted that the Scheme in Milton Keynes was based on the national model (i.e. on a street basis).

Police representatives were reminded that they could communicate with Parishes via Parish magazines.

The high demand on Police resources, which could be incurred by an extension of the Neighbourhood Scheme, was noted, and poor or no response from the Police to reported incidents in the past were mentioned.

It was agreed that members of the Assembly should report the information on the Milton Keynes Neighbourhood Watch Association to their Parish meetings.

Members of the Assembly were invited to a Conference on the Scheme in January 2002. Information on the Scheme could be obtained via WPC McLaughlin on MK686169.

4.0

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The Assembly received a presentation from Simon Marsh (Corporate Communications Manager) on the work being carried out by Milton Keynes Council with Northamptonshire County Council, to explore the potential for Public Private Partnerships.

The Assembly noted that Milton Keynes Council had drawn up a shortlist of potential partner companies, to assess their suitability. These are:

- (a) Amey;
- (b) Capita;
- (c) Hyder Business Services (HBS); and
- (d) SERCO.

Members of the Assembly expressed concern at the proposal and it was requested that a full list of the Council services affected by the proposal be forwarded to the Parish Clerks (attached at **Annex A** to these Minutes.

It was also agreed that a copy of the Nick Raynsford's speech concerning Public Private Partnerships was circulated the Parish Clerks (attached at **Annex B** to these Minutes).

5.0 PARISH COUNCIL CONFERENCE - 29 SEPTEMBER 2001

The Assembly noted a report on the Parish Council Conference held on 29 September 2001.

6.0 MILTON KEYNES AND SOUTH MIDLANDS STUDY

The Assembly received an update on the Milton Keynes and South Midlands study from A Francis (New Bradwell Parish Council) (representing urban associations on the Stakeholding Group)).

The Assembly noted that the Working Group included I Fraser (Campbell Park Parish Council) and Councillor Bristow.

The Assembly also noted that themed meetings were being held on the following subjects:

- (a) Economic Development;
- (b) Transport;
- (c) Environment;
- (d) Leisure and Retail;
- (e) Housing; and
- (f) Education.

A Francis stated that he was happy to circulate briefing papers on request, which provided background information.

The Assembly noted that after Christmas, a series of scenarios would be discussed and a one day Conference would be held in April/May 2002, with a final report in the Summer.

I Fraser (Campbell Park Parish Council) stated that she attended the recent meeting on Economic Development, which had been held in Kettering. She was concerned that Milton Keynes Council was not represented and its voice was, therefore, not heard, whilst other Councils were staking their claim.

I Fraser also felt that it was important that, as the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Study was such a key study, Milton Keynes Council was represented at meetings relating to it.

7.0 NEW DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES

The Assembly noted that the three pilot Area Consultative Forums for Newport Pagnell, Danesborough and Hanslope, were operating across the Borough until March 2002.

The Assembly noted that the Cabinet would be considering the future of Area Consultative Forums in January 2002.

8.0

SIX MONTHLY REPORT ON COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

C Godfrey reported that no complaints/compliments were received in the preceding 6 months.

a) Experimental Closure of Emberton Lay-by

G Mann (Emberton Parish Council), requested that a complaint be recorded that correspondence on the lay-by matter sent to John Best (Strategic Director Environment) and Mark Jones (Head of Legal and Property Services) (dated 15 November 2001) had received no acknowledgement.

It was agreed that Councillor Long would ensure that the concerns of the Parish Council about the matter, would be drawn to the attention of Councillor O'Sullivan (Cabinet Member responsible for Environmental Services).

(b) Environment Directorate - Budget and Communications Issues

I Fraser (Campbell Park Parish Council) suggested that a meeting could be arranged with the Parishes to discuss the Council's Environment Directorate, including funding issues and how to improve communication.

(c) Central Heating Services - Council Residents in Villages

Councillor Tapp informed the Assembly of an incident in Hanslope, where a constituent, in a Council property, had received an unsatisfactory service from the Council's central heating contractors.

It was suggested that any complaints could be put formally, in writing, to the Head of Housing or via the Parish Councils complaints procedure.

9.0

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Issues Surrounding Expenditure

R Nix (Central Milton Keynes Parish Council) stated that there were fundamental issues to be discussed around expenditure of the Council?

(b) Urban Capacity Study

I Fraser (Campbell Park Parish Council) stated that she felt that the Urban Capacity Study was a deeply flawed document, and she would be making her views known to John Best (Strategic Director Environment).

(c) Section 136 Meeting

C Godfrey (Senior Parish Liaison Officer) informed the Assembly that a special Section 136 meeting would be held on Monday 17 December 2001 at 7.00 pm, to discuss a

request from Newport Pagnell Town Council for an explanation of Section 136 figures recently circulated to Parish/Town Councils.

10.0

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the date of the next meeting of the Assembly was Thursday 7 March 2002 at 7.00 pm.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10.24 PM