

Minutes of the meeting of the CABINET held on TUESDAY 1 NOVEMBER at 6.30pm.

Present: Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)
Councillors R Bradburn, Carr, Darlington, Z Nolan, Trendall and
Wilson-Marklew.

Apologies: Councillors Middleton and Townsend.

Also Present Councillors Crooks, D Hopkins, Hume and Priestley

Officers: M Bracey (Chief Executive), S Richardson (Director of Finance and
Resources), S Bridglalsingh (Monitoring Officer), L Wheaton (Senior
Finance Manager) and R Tidman (Committee Services Manager).

C24 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor R Bradburn made announcements in respect of an award that the Council had recently received from the Federation of Small Business (Eastern Region) for our Economic Recovery Plan and highlighted the opening of the 'Cozy Club' in a previously vacant restaurant in Centre MK.

C25 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5 July 2022 be approved and signed by the Leader of the Council as a correct record.

C26 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

None

C27 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None

C28 COUNCILLORS' ITEMS

None received

C29 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

None

C30-34 REFERENCES FROM OTHER BODIES

- (a) Referral from the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee – 22 June 2022

Councillor Priestley introduced the referral noting concerns the committee had about the lack of free parking for the vaccination centre at Midsummer Place.

Councillor J Carr noted her written response to the referral and that she had received a response from the BLMK ICB advising that the centre was generally fully booked and while they recognised it was a busy site they stressed they had spent £25,000 to create the vaccination hub and were unable to fund free parking. It was noted that there were alternative locations with free parking and there was also a free vaccination taxi service

RESOLVED:

That the referral and the written response and update provided, be noted.

- (b) Referral from the Regeneration and Renewal Scrutiny Committee – 23 June 2022

Councillor Crooks introduced the referral noting that the committee considered that there was a need to prepare a regeneration and renewal strategy across a broader front that encompassed a wider number of estates which could then target specific interventions. For example the alleyways on Fishermead could be regenerated without waiting for the full process. Councillor Crooks noted that there still seemed to be difficulties setting up a combined project team approach to whole estate across internal departments and external partners.

Councillor Darlington noted her written response to the referral and added that she absolutely did not see that work was only targeted at the seven regeneration estates. There was a key focus on empowering residents to make decisions on these estates and setting up Estate Renewal Forums to help residents drive decision making. It was noted that it had been difficult to engage other services and a lot of work had gone into trying to make sure they saw this work as part of their core work for example the NHS was coming on board with the benefits of this approach.

RESOLVED:

That the referral and the written response provided, be noted.

- (c) Referral from the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee – 12 July 2022

Councillor Hume thanked Councillor Wilson-Marklew for her response. Councillor Wilson-Marklew noted her written response to the referral.

RESOLVED:

That the referral and the written response provided, be noted.

- (d) Referral from the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee – 18 October 2022

Councillor Hume introduced the referral thanking members of the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee, the Finance team and the Overview and Scrutiny Officer for their support. It was noted that MKCC was one of only a few authorities that provided such a level of scrutiny to their budget. Uncertainty was going to have a key impact on the budget with the impact of inflation, cost of living, changes in government policy all not certain.

It was noted that a written response would be provided.

RESOLVED:

That the referral and the response provided, be noted.

- (e) Referral from Full Council – 19 October 2022

Councillor Marland noted that this referral would be taken together with the next item, the 'Cost of Living Crisis Winter Plan'

RESOLVED:

That the referral and the response provided, be noted.

C35 COST OF LIVING CRISIS WINTER PLAN

Councillor J Carr introduced the item indicating that the Council certainly did not want to be in a situation where this type of support was needed but thanked officers for developing the plan in such a timely fashion. The Plan provided a range of support that would allow town and parish councils to provide for example warm spaces and pop up activities for people to stay warm and socialise. There was also additional funding support to charity groups such as MK Food Bank and SOFEA.

Councillor Crooks noted that the Council wanted action taken quickly on their recent Cost of Living Crisis motion and it was reassuring to see this as an item here this evening.

It was noted that the support from the Council included activity outside of the plan such as: energy and housing costs advice; funds to support those in financial distress who needed support with bills; advice for private home owners to make homes more energy efficient or lower carbon which would help people be more sustainable and to save money on energy costs; help available to children and families including vouchers in the holidays for those children who receive free school meals; homework clubs and a winter holiday activities programme.

RESOLVED:

- 1 That the Cabinet approve the Winter Plan.
- 2 That the additional funding allocation, from reserves, of £280,000 to partners supporting residents through the winter be approved.

C36 UPDATE ON DELIVERY OF COUNCIL PLAN

Councillor Marland introduced the item highlighting the progress and achievements since the last update.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet note the progress being made on the Delivery Plan for 2022/23.

C37 UPDATE ON WHITE RIBBON MOTION

Councillor Darlington introduced the item noting how proud she was of the work the Council had done on seeking White Ribbon accreditation and those officers who had signed up to be champions and ambassadors.

RESOLVED:

- 1 That Cabinet notes:
 - a) the work undertaken to date to establish Milton Keynes City Council as a White Ribbon authority; and
 - b) the work to be undertaken regarding White Ribbon Day and the sixteen days of action.
- 2 That Cabinet refer the matter to Full Council on 23 November 2022 so that it may receive a full update in respect of the actions requested in its earlier motion, including details of planned activities associated with White Ribbon Day 2022.

C38 COUNCIL TAX BASE 2023/24

Councillor Marland introduced the item indicating that this was a technical paper that indicated what the Council Tax Base was likely to be and the continuation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

Councillor Hume noted in respect of his role as a Parish Councillor, thanking the Council for making this information available to town and parish councils so that they are able to make decisions about their own budgets.

Councillor Marland thanked the Senior Finance Manager for all her hard work over the years which had contributed to the Council's sound financial position.

RESOLVED:

1. That the 2023/24 Council Tax Base be set at 94,196.22 Band D equivalent properties.
2. That the provision for uncollectable amounts of Council Tax for 2023/24 be set at 1.30% producing an expected collection rate of 98.7%.
3. That the proposed 2023/24 funding contribution to parish and town councils of £0.325m, as set out in Annex D, be noted, and recommended to Council for approval as part of the final Budget in February 2023.
4. That the Cabinet recommends to Council that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, as adopted by the Council on 16 February 2022, be continued for 2023/24, with amendments that reflect changes to related benefits and to the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations; retaining the delegation to the Director Finance and Resources to make technical legislative changes.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 7.06 PM.