



Minutes of the MILTON KEYNES VOLUNTARY SECTOR CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY  
held on TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 1999 at 10.00 am

<b>Present:</b>	Councillor B Barton -	Milton Keynes Council
	C Chapman	- Milton Keynes Council
	G Edwards	- Milton Keynes Council for Voluntary Organisations
	L Kendrick	- Milton Keynes Council
	C Palmer	- Buckinghamshire Health Authority
	D Savage	- City Counselling Centre
	P Scrimshaw	- Milton Keynes Council
	F Skelton	- Relate MK
<b>Apologies:</b>	K Bland	- Milton Keynes Council
	T Hill	- Milton Keynes Community Trust
	J Spargo	- Buckinghamshire Health Authority
<b>Also Present:</b>	A Donovan	- Volunteer Connections
	S Heap	- Milton Keynes Council

## **1.0 ELECTION OF CHAIR**

AGREED -

That Ms G Edwards be elected Chair of the Consultative Assembly for the remainder of the Council Year 1999/2000.

## **2.0 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

AGREED -

That Councillor B Barton be appointed Vice-Chair of the Consultative Assembly for the remainder of the Council Year 1999/2000.

## **3.0 CONSTITUTION, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS**

- 3.1 The Assembly noted that it had been upgraded from the Liaison Group to recognise the important and key role the Voluntary Sector played in Milton Keynes. As a result Councillor Barton (Chair of the Grant Aid Committee) had been appointed by the Council as a Member representative.

- 3.2 It was recognised that as a result of becoming a Consultative Assembly it would be necessary to review the Terms of Reference and Constitution.  
AGREED -

That the Chair be requested, in conjunction with the Policy and Interagency Liaison Manager, to prepare revised draft Terms of Reference and Constitution, including extended membership for consideration at the next meeting of the Assembly.

#### **4.0 RELATIONSHIP WITH MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL GRANT AID COMMITTEE**

- 4.1 The Assembly considered its relationship with the Council's Grant Aid Committee, particularly how it, and the Voluntary Sector more generally, could influence budget decisions affecting the Voluntary Sector.
- 4.2 It was noted that the Grant Aid Committee would be considering both its future role and reviewing the Voluntary Sector Strategy at its next meeting.
- 4.3 It was also noted that the Council was currently considering its budget for 2000/01, which it was recognised could considerably impact on the future funding for the Voluntary Sector.

AGREED -

- (a) That the Grant Aid Committee be requested to consider the co-option of the Chair of the Consultative Assembly as a non-voting Member.
- (b) That a further meeting of the Consultative Assembly be held to consider budget issues, if considered necessary by the Chair.

#### **5.0 'VOLUNTEERING IN MILTON KEYNES'**

- 5.1 The Assembly received a presentation from Alison Donovan of 'Volunteer Connections' on both the role of the organisation in overseeing and advising on the use of volunteers and the positive contributions volunteers can bring to a wide range of organisations and services.
- 5.2 The presentation also referred to the opportunities volunteers provided and some of the potential barriers which either prevented people from becoming volunteers or meant that their experiences were not as positive as they might be.
- 5.3 It was noted that there was a significant problem in attracting volunteers generally, but specifically from younger age groups and ethnic minorities. It was suggested that this could be helped if a more positive image of volunteers was put forward.

5.4 It was recognised that there was a particular problem in getting persons to volunteer to take responsible roles in organisations such as Chair and Treasurer. It was suggested that secondments for business could help this and also provide positive opportunities for secondees.

5.5 Mrs Donovan was thanked for her presentation.

## **6.0 MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL PROPERTY STRATEGY - UPDATE**

6.1 An example of a lease between the Council and a voluntary group was received.

AGREED -

That any comments should be passed to Peter Smeaton in the Council's Property Services Section.

## **7.0 PARTNERSHIP - A DISCUSSION PAPER**

7.1 The Assembly considered a discussion paper prepared by Ken Dixon on the possibility of a 'Compact' between the statutory agencies and the Voluntary Sector in Milton Keynes, which could provide the framework for future partnership agreements.

7.2 It was recognised that the Voluntary Sector did need to re-appraise its relationships with the statutory providers and review the Voluntary Sector Strategy to ensure it supported the relationship. However, the Strategy did very much reflect the 'Compact' suggested in the discussion paper.

7.3 It was considered that there was a need to re-launch the Strategy which could be staged around a conference.

7.4 It was noted that the Primary Care Group was seeking Trust Status. It was considered essential that a close working relationship was developed between the Voluntary Sector and the Trust, and was suggested that the Trust could be represented on the Assembly.

AGREED -

(a) That a representative of the Primary Care Group be invited to a future meeting of the Assembly to discuss its relationship with the Voluntary Sector.

(b) That Mr Dixon be thanked for his discussion paper.

## **8.0 MEMBER (COUNCILLOR) INVOLVEMENT IN VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**

- 8.1 The Assembly considered the position of Councillors on the management bodies of many voluntary organisations.
- 8.2 It was noted that there was a particular issue concerning the insurance liability for Councillors serving on Trusts.
- 8.3 It was also noted that the Council's link officer with the Voluntary Sector was often unaware of other Council representatives appointed to liaise with particular Voluntary Organisations which received grants or which had a partnership agreement with the Council.

AGREED -

That this matter be considered further at a future meeting.

## **9.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

AGREED -

That the next meeting be held on 1 December 1999 at 10.00 am.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 11.56 AM