

Minutes of the MEETING OF MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on WEDNESDAY  
25 November 2020 at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Councillor A Geary (Mayor)  
Councillors Akter, Baines, Baume, Bint, Bowyer, Brackenbury,  
K Bradburn, M Bradburn, R Bradburn, Brown, Cannon, Carr, Crooks,  
Darlington, Exon, Ferrans, P Geary, Gilbert, Gowans, Green,  
D Hopkins, V Hopkins, Jenkins, Khan, Lancaster, Legg, Long, Marland,  
Marlow, McCall, McLean, McPake, Miles, Minns, Montague, Nazir,  
Nolan, O’Neill, Petchey, Priestley, Raja, Rankine, Reilly, Trendall,  
Wales, Walker, Wallis, Williams, C Wilson-Marklew and J Wilson-  
Marklew

Alderman Bartlett

**Apologies:** Councillor Alexander, Cryer-Whitehead, Hosking, Middleton and  
Townsend and Aldermen Beeley, Bristow, Coventry, Henderson,  
Howell and McKenzie and Alderwomen Henderson, Irons, Lloyd and  
Saunders

**Also Present:** 95 members of the public

**CL63 MINUTES**

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 October  
2020 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**CL64 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

None disclosed.

**CL65 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor made announcements in respect of Covid-19 Community  
Champions and Councillor Alexander.

**CL66 ADDRESS OF THE LORD-LIEUTENANT FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

The Council received an address from the retiring Lord-Lieutenant for  
Buckinghamshire, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher.

The Council also heard from the Mayor and Councillors Marland,  
McCall, and McLean.

**CL67**

**PETITIONS**

The Council received a petition calling on the Audit Committee to commission external auditors with planning expertise to investigate the issues surrounding the approval of the Blakelands Warehouse (Griffen Park) and associated matters.

The Chair of the Audit Committee indicated that the issues raised would be considered by the Audit Committee at its special meeting on 1 December 2020.

**CL68**

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

(a) Questions from Bill Walford, Alan Hastings, Iain Layden and Tarun Goel to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council).

Bill Walford, referring to Evolve's proposals for changes to Windmill Hill Golf Course asked Councillor Marland to provide approximate current values for:

- (i) the minimum market value of the whole of Windmill Hill Golf Course as a going concern;
- (ii) the minimum market value of the whole of Windmill Hill Golf Course if sold off for housing and other developments; and
- (iii) the minimum likely annual income for MK Council from leasing Windmill Hill Golf Course to Evolve as per their latest plans.

Alan Hastings, referring to the Council's recent adoption of a motion submitted by Councillor Rankine relating to Windmill Hill Golf Course, asked Councillor Marland what steps were being taken or were planned to fully explore all commercial options for the site.

Iain Layden, referring to Councillor Middleton's response to the petition presented at the Council Meeting on 18 March 2020 in relation to retaining an 18-Hole Golf Course at Windmill Hill, asked Councillor Marland whether or not the Council had received the results of the consultation undertaken by Evolve and, if so, would the Council make those results available to members of the public and to Parish Councils in the areas that would be affected by the proposed development.

Tarun Goel, referring to statements made by Councillor Middleton that Windmill Hill Golf Course was not profitable and had not been unprofitable for years, asked Councillor Marland on what basis was Councillor Middleton basing his assessment.

Councillor Marland outlined that:

- (i) the Council had recently instructed valuers to assess the value of the property for the purposes of the proposed development lease transaction with Evolve. This work had not been completed and was likely to take a few weeks;
- (ii) the Council had been exploring all commercial options, which included the Evolve proposal as well as marketing for a new golf course operator and or golf course developer. However, the specialist advice obtained suggested that by marketing the site Council was unlikely to secure a purchaser to improve or invest in the golf course nor was the Council likely to find a purchaser to commit to developing a new golf course. Also, according to 1 Life's financial statements the Golf Centre had made a loss over both the last two financial years. Although the site would be seen as having potential for investment by housebuilders;
- (iii) the Council had concluded that a new golf course at Windmill Hill, in the present market, was unlikely to be viable and the Council was unlikely to attract a buyer to develop a new golf facility, particularly if a condition of the sale was that the Course was improved and there was investment in a Sports Hub and the wider community;
- (iv) the public consultation carried out by Evolve ended in March and Evolve had adjusted its proposals to reflect public comments /opinions, the last adjustment being to re design the Sports Hub to include a new 18 hole golf course and high tech driving range. Evolve had attended a number of Parish Council meetings to update on the outcome of the public consultation events and to explain how it had responded and changed the proposals to reflect public opinion. As there was not one document that covered the responses from the public consultation events the

Council could request Evolve to prepare one and make the results available.

As a supplementary question Bill Walford, referring to the fact that the issue of Windmill Hill Golf Course was clearly important to residents, asked Councillor Marland whether he felt that this was really a matter to be delegated to a single Cabinet member.

Councillor Marland indicated that he would not reconsider who made the decision as it was allowed for by the scheme of delegation.

As a supplementary question Alan Hastings, referring to the fact that the Council had only approached one company to provide options for the site, asked Councillor Marland if the Council would request outline proposals from three companies for the regeneration of Windmill Hill Golf Course.

Councillor Marland indicated that the Council was under no obligation to do this as long as the Council got best value for the asset.

As a supplementary question Iain Layden, referring to the results of the consultation carried out by Evolve, asked Councillor Marland to advise how the results of the consultation would be provided.

Councillor Marland advised that the consultation results would be provided in the format that Evolve submitted them. Before the Council took any decision on this issue the Cabinet member would insist on seeing the consultation responses and it would be shared with residents, parish councillors and ward councillors.

As a supplementary question Tarun Goel, referring to his Freedom of Information request to 1 Life that indicated they were making a quarterly profit of £50,000, asked Councillor Marland how old the Council's information was that indicated a £150,000 annual loss.

Councillor Marland responded that the Council's information was from Evolve and it related to the last two financial years.

- (b) Question from Virginia Bell to Councillor J Wilson-Marklew (Cabinet Member for Climate and Sustainability)

Virginia Bell, referring to claims that the production and consumption of meat and dairy was one of the biggest drivers of climate change, contributed to land; water; and air pollution, and was also a factor in ill health, asked Councillor J Wilson-Marklew to give a commitment for the Council to lead by example by enacting a policy of not serving meat and dairy on Council premises, and of offering plant-based meals instead, preferably organic.

Virginia Bell also sought a commitment for the Council, to require schools to reduce servings of meat and dairy, phasing them out in favour of plant based, meals, so promoting improvements to the City's nutrition and health, and more generally improvements for the health of the planet.

Councillor J Wilson-Marklew indicated that this was a thought-provoking question and not one she had previously considered as an area for the Council to explore. However, she undertook to have discussions more widely with the relevant parties. Councillor J Wilson-Marklew also indicated that the Council's ambitions around carbon neutrality were not just for action by the Council but by residents more widely. The Council therefore had a role in education on matters such as this to help residents make choices that were better for the environment.

As a supplementary question Virginia Bell, referring to Enfield Council, Lewisham Council and Faversham Town Council who had all taken the decision to no longer serve meat at Council events and Leeds City Council who had arranged for 180 schools in their area to have at least one meat free day per week, asked Councillor J Wilson-Marklew to consider these examples as small actions that the Council could do to lead by example.

Councillor J Wilson-Marklew agreed that she would take this forward and discuss with officers as to what next steps could be taken.

- (c) Question from Phil Gerrella to Councillor Baume (Cabinet Member for Economy and Culture)

Phil Gerrella, referring to RoRE support for the estate renewal programme and the Estate Renewal Forums and welcoming the revised Terms of Reference, asked Councillor Baume what Key Performance Indicators were to be used and how would the targets be communicated.

Councillor Baume indicated that the Delivery Plan would be published in the New Year that would contain a suite of KPI's. Between now and then, officers would be working with stakeholders to develop these indicators including data and information that was reliable and as up to date as possible. Councillor Baume noted that KPI's may differ slightly between estates and progress against them would be communicated to the estate renewal forums and their subgroups, the Council website and other communication methods.

As a supplementary question Phil Gerrella, referring to the fact that 18 out of 21 housing indicators presented to the last scrutiny committee either failed to be green or have any information available, asked Councillor Baume how the Council would ensure that this would not be the fate of the estate KPI's.

Councillor Baume indicated that she and officer colleagues would work with stakeholders to develop what were the important KPI's for the Forums.

- (d) Question from Alderman Bartlett to Councillor Walker (Leader of the Conservative Group)

Alderman Bartlett, referring to the support provided by Central Government for some of the most vulnerable children and their families in Milton Keynes through special funds for free school meals during the Covid-19 pandemic and the additional sums for Universal Credit and continuing special vouchers for the purchase of food, asked Councillor Walker, who he understood had been active along with Councillors Bowyer and Cryer Whitehead and others in supporting the delivery of food, if he would confirm his commitment to supporting the most vulnerable and in particular school children, and ensure that the £722,000 pounds, which equates to over £6000 per child who were assessed as living in poverty in Milton Keynes, recently allocated to Milton Keynes Council by the Government reached those children.

Councillor Walker indicated that they were absolutely committed to making sure that no vulnerable child or family went hungry in Milton Keynes and that they got the support they needed. It was great news the Government had provided further support on top of the £9 billion pounds extra that had been put into the welfare system this year. These additions, plus the Covid Winter Grant scheme would allow higher quality local support, ensuring that children and their families were provided with a comprehensive support package. The virus had unfortunately highlighted the inequalities in our society, both the public health and economic crisis hurt those on the lowest income and the most vulnerable the hardest. That was why at a local level they had been in full support of the Foodbank Xtra project and as the main opposition group they would do everything they could to ensure the needs of our most vulnerable were met and the government funding made its way through the system as effectively as possible to those that needed it.

As a supplementary question Alderman Bartlett, asked Councillor Walker to take the opportunity to publicly thank all the people of Milton Keynes, including councillors and the private sector, who had helped by supporting vulnerable people, including children, during the Pandemic.

Councillor Walker indicated that he recognised the outstanding response from the community of Milton Keynes and took the opportunity to thank all who contributed.

- (e) Question from Adam Rolfe to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet Member for Public Realm)

Adam Rolfe's question, welcoming the fire warden who was now on site 24/7, referred to the lack of a sprinkler system at Mellish Court flats, despite it being recommended by the Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, and the £300,000 being put aside for its installation, asked Councillor Darlington why had a sprinkler system not been installed and, if it was not to be installed, what was to happen to the £300,000 budget allocation.

As Adam Rolfe was unable to participate in the meeting the Mayor indicated that Mr Rolfe would receive a written reply from Councillor Darlington.

- (f) Question from Turan Turan to Councillor McCall (Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group)

Turan Turan, referring to the repeated failures to produce a report into the Blakelands Warehouse, asked Councillor McCall if he supported the call for a further audit and if not, why not.

Councillor McCall indicated that yes, he did and that he would be attending the Audit Committee to make his points there.

As a supplementary question Turan Turan, referring to Councillor McCall recently describing on Facebook the external audit report into the Blakelands Warehouse as a joke, asked Councillor McCall whether he would agree that the Council had once again failed residents with this review.

Councillor McCall responded that he felt that it was fair to say that everyone was disappointed with the content of the report and that it failed to answer the key questions.

- (g) Question from John Fernandez to Councillor Cannon (Chair of the Audit Committee)

John Fernandez, referring to what he said was 15 missed deadlines, the failure to produce a report after 20 months and the error ridden preliminary findings, asked Councillor Cannon how he thought the residents of Blakelands and Milton Keynes could have any confidence in the Council's ability to review the what he claimed was the biggest planning blunder in its history.

Councillor Cannon indicated that the Council would be holding a special meeting of the Audit Committee on the 1 December 2020 and hoped that all interested residents, other stakeholders as well as ward councillors and members of the Development Control Committee would attend. It was expected that they would get some answers from the author of the interim report and be able to respond to concerns and recommend further steps to take going forward.

As a supplementary question John Fernandez, referring to a social media post by Councillor McCall that indicated that the Deputy Chief Executive had asked Mr Dorfman to give the Council whatever he had available resulting in an incomplete report being submitted, asked Councillor Cannon if he felt as the Chair of the Audit Committee whether this was an acceptable way to submit a document of such importance.

Councillor Cannon indicated that the Deputy Chief Executive had made a commitment to publish on the particular date and it was considered important that this commitment was honoured.

**CL69**

**COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS**

- (a) Question from Councillor Rankine to Councillor Walker (Leader of the Conservative Group)

Councillor Rankine, referring to the Strategy for 2050 which included Salden Chase as part of the Council's recommended spatial strategy, asked Councillor Walker whether he was concerned that the Labour Administration was dropping its opposition to the development at Salden Chase.

Councillor Walker indicated that in terms of the Spatial Strategy, the wider challenge was creating a constructive environment and relationship with our neighbouring authorities to be able to progress developments that could, might, or did straddle boundaries. Council policy was against development at Salden Chase and it was hoped that the Administration would clarify why it had been included in the Strategy at the next Cabinet meeting.

- (b) Question from Councillor Nolan to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Nolan asked Councillor Darlington to provide an update on when the refurbishment of the playpark in Ashpole Furlong, Loughton would be completed.

Councillor Darlington indicated that things were progressing rapidly and it was hoped that in early December, shortly after the end of the lockdown, the playpark would be available for use.

- (c) Question from Councillor P Geary to Councillor J Wilson-Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate and Sustainability)

Councillor P Geary, referring to the Council's ambition to be the greenest city in the world, asked Councillor J Wilson-Marklew whether she agreed with him that if a bus with space on it was going past a person's house and to the place that they wanted to go, that it was better for that person to use that bus rather than drive a car.

Councillor J Wilson-Marklew indicated that yes, she did agree with that.

As a supplementary question, Councillor P Geary asked Councillor J Wilson-Marklew if she would therefore help him by taking up the case of a child from Lathbury who, due to a bureaucratic problem, was unable to use the school bus that passed his house and had to be driven to school.

Councillor J Wilson-Marklew indicated that she would be happy to receive the details and discuss it with her colleagues.

(d) Question from Councillor McPake to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor McPake, referring to problems with repairing lights in bus shelters, including in those shelters where the lighting had failed shortly after being, asked Councillor Darlington if the issue could be investigated.

Councillor Darlington indicated that as lighting in bus shelters crossed a number of portfolios the best way forward was for Councillor J Wilson-Marklew, Councillor McPake and herself to meet with officers to get to the bottom of the issue.

As a supplementary question, Councillor McPake asked Councillor Darlington if resolving the issues with lighting in bus shelters outside schools could be prioritised.

Councillor Darlington agreed, particularly as secondary school students were encouraged to use sustainable forms of transport and indicated that again the best way forward was for the three councillors to meet with officers to resolve the issue.

(e) Question from Councillor Nazir to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Nazir, referring to the road closures at Queensway Bletchley, asked Councillor Darlington when these would be lifted.

Councillor Darlington indicated that she had recently met with town councillors and spoken to local businesses. The key issue was where the market would be located and this was still to be finalised, but she hoped that she would be able to clarify the changes that would be made to Queensway soon.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Nazir asked Councillor Darlington whether the changes would be done once lockdown ended.

Councillor Darlington responded that she would be able to provide an update once the Town Council was happy with the plans.

- (f) Question from Councillor McLean to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor McLean asked Councillor Darlington whether she would agree to remove the booking system for the Household Waste Recycling Centres in order to increase capacity and improve the customer experience.

Councillor Darlington indicated that the Council had been able to keep the Waste Recycling Centres open during the latest lockdown because they were using a booking system. The use of the booking system would be reconsidered once social distancing guidelines were lifted.

Councillor Darlington also indicated that there were savings from the using a booking system as it had reduced incorrect use of the Centres and a new online booking system was in the process of being developed and tested that did not rely on third party software.

- (g) Question from Councillor Crooks to Councillor Walker (Leader of the Conservative)

Councillor Crooks, referring to the revision in the Internal Market Bill relating to the Northern Ireland protocol, asked Councillor Walker whether, being mindful of the number of Irish residents in Milton Keynes, he would be prepared to say that this was a Government measure that he could not support and that he hoped would be withdrawn.

Councillor Walker indicated that as a councillor on Milton Keynes Council and not an MP, or in the House of Lords he did not have a vote or a position on this issue and would rather be talking about matters that related to the power and influence the Council had locally.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Crooks, referring to the fact that in the event of a no deal Brexit that it would be necessary to enact a hard border between Northern Ireland and the Republic, asked Councillor Walker was this really a

scenario he wanted to see happen.

Councillor Walker indicated that of course no one wanted to see a return to that situation and he was confident that there would be a deal by the end of December.

- (h) Question from Councillor Walker to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Walker, referring to the cost of the 24 hour Fire Wardens at Mellish Court and The Gables, asked Councillor Darlington to give an honest explanation as to why fire sprinklers had not been were not installed in the.

Councillor Darlington indicated that the Council had been working closely with the Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service to consider all options and following discussions with the Service had considered that updating the fire doors and detectors amongst other measures was the best option available at the time. The use of fire sprinklers alone would not have brought the building up to the modern safety standards expected. The Council continued to work with the Fire and Rescue Service which was satisfied with the current measures the Council were taking, including the Fire Wardens. Councillor Darlington also indicated that she had met with residents and would be taking a Delegated Decision on 1 December which would set out the next steps.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Walker asked Councillor Darlington whether she would apologise to the residents of these buildings for failing to invest in their safety over the last four years.

Councillor Darlington indicated that there had been significant investment in both buildings including upgrades to fire doors, detectors and waste systems.

- (i) Question from Councillor D Hopkins to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor D Hopkins, referring to flooding at Cranfield/Newport Pagnell Road and the timetable for highway drainage work which wouldn't see work carried out in the Wavendon and Woburn Sands area until May 2023, asked Councillor Darlington if she would support the Conservative Group's suggestion in the 2021/22 Budget for the Council to invest in a second set of drainage equipment and to expand the highways drainage team.

Councillor Darlington indicated that the flooding referred to by Councillor D Hopkins was believed to have been caused by issues on Network Rail land. As a result the Council had been putting pressure on Network Rail to carry out clearance work to see if this was the source of the issue.

As a supplementary question, Councillor D Hopkins asked Councillor Darlington whether given the changing climate and that there were ongoing flooding issues throughout Danesborough and Walton Ward and no programmed maintenance work until 2023, the Administration would commit to investing more in highways drainage maintenance and repair in the budget going forward.

Councillor Darlington indicated that she was having discussions with officers as to how highways maintenance was presented in the budget, although this was under investigation it would need to go through the proper budget processes.

(i) Question from Councillor Jenkins to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Jenkins asked Councillor Marland to provide an update on the levels of Covid-19 infection across Milton Keynes.

Councillor Marland indicated that the latest figure was around 190 people per 100,000, however infection rates were rising as was the number of people in hospital. In terms of any decision about which Tier the borough would be placed in this would depend on a number of factors including, the rate per 100,000, the rate of transmission, the age and demographic of the population and of those with the virus, together with the number of people in hospital. The Council had recently secured a walk-through testing centre in the south of the city. Councillor Marland stressed that people should stay at home, make sure they took care of both their physical and mental health and follow the rules.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Jenkins asked Councillor Marland what advice he would give residents to ensure that they could enjoy Christmas preparations safely in Milton Keynes.

Councillor Marland indicated that his advice was for people to take personal responsibility, to socially distance, not mix with other households and to avoid all but essential travel. If they had symptoms they should stay home and get a test.

Councillor Marland emphasised that if testing positive it was the law to self-isolate.

- (k) Question from Councillor Ferrans to Councillor O’Neil (Cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing)

Councillor Ferrans, referred to the fact that today was ‘White Ribbon Day’ in recognition of those who had experienced domestic abuse, asked Councillor O’Neill what the Council was doing to reduce the levels of domestic abuse in Milton Keynes. Councillor O’Neill indicated that a Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership had been established about a year ago and that it had recently published a Domestic Abuse Strategy which would prioritise early support and prevention.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Ferrans asked Councillor O’Neill what budget had been allocated to deliver the Strategy.

Councillor O’Neill indicated that all the strategic partners understood the value of prevention work in this area and had agreed to pool resources to allocate to programmes and projects as needed. MK-ACT was a full member of the partnership and it might be able to access funding that the statutory bodies might not necessarily be able to.

**CL70**

### **TESTING FOR COVID-19 IN MILTON KEYNES**

In accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Mayor decided that the Council should consider this motion as an urgent item of business because of the very recent increase in Covid-19 infection rates in Milton Keynes.

Councillor Walker moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Jenkins:

- “1. That this Council notes:
- (a) the recent and rapid increase in infection rates of COVID-19 across Milton Keynes;
  - (b) the rise in the number of hospital admissions and the pressure this places on Milton Keynes University Hospital;

- (c) the tragic news of eleven recorded deaths in Milton Keynes, reported on 17 November, related to COVID-19; and
  - (d) the following statement issued by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) in August 2020:  
'Robust testing capacity, prompt isolation of cases and timely and effective contact tracing and quarantine of identified contacts, along with other measures such as social distancing, are currently the main pillars of the COVID-19 public health response.'
2. That this Council resolves to call on the Leader of the Council to apply for inclusion in the mass testing programme as quickly as possible for the benefit of the people of Milton Keynes in line with advice from the Director of Public Health."

On being put to the vote the motion was declared by acclamation.

RESOLVED -

1. That this Council notes:
- (a) the recent and rapid increase in infection rates of COVID-19 across Milton Keynes;
  - (b) the rise in the number of hospital admissions and the pressure this places on Milton Keynes University Hospital;
  - (c) the tragic news of eleven recorded deaths in Milton Keynes, reported on 17 November, related to COVID-19; and
  - (d) the following statement issued by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) in August 2020:  
'Robust testing capacity, prompt isolation of cases and timely and effective contact tracing and quarantine of identified contacts, along with other measures such as social distancing, are currently the main pillars of the COVID-19 public health response.'
2. That this Council resolves to call on the Leader of the Council to apply for inclusion in the mass testing programme as quickly as possible for the benefit of the people of Milton Keynes in line with advice from the Director of Public Health.

CL71

## **THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Councillor Jenkins moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Reilly:

- “1. That this Council notes:
  - (a) the significant impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on people’s mental health;
  - (b) that demand for mental health services, from people never having accessed services before, is forecast to increase by 1.3 million people for moderate-severe anxiety and 1.8 million for moderate to severe depression across the UK; and
  - (c) that the NHS will be under greater strain, as researchers estimate that more than 230,000 NHS workers may need treatment and support due to the mental health impact of Covid-19.
2. That this this Council resolves to:
  - (a) ask the Health and Wellbeing Board to establish a Mental Health Taskforce that focuses on planning for the long-term impacts from Covid-19 on the mental health of the residents of Milton Keynes;
  - (b) request that the Cabinet member responsible continue to prioritise mental health services; and
  - (c) make representations to the Minister for Mental Health, Suicide Prevention and Patient Safety, to ask that the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) review resources that will be needed for mental health services as the impact of Covid-19 on mental health grows.”

On being put to the vote the motion was declared by acclamation.

**RESOLVED –**

1. That this Council notes:
  - (a) the significant impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on people’s mental health;
  - (b) that demand for mental health services, from people never having accessed services before, is forecast to increase by 1.3 million people for moderate-severe

anxiety and 1.8 million for moderate to severe depression across the UK; and

- (c) that the NHS will be under greater strain, as researchers estimate that more than 230,000 NHS workers may need treatment and support due to the mental health impact of Covid-19.

2. That this this Council resolves to:

- (a) ask the Health and Wellbeing Board to establish a Mental Health Taskforce that focuses on planning for the long-term impacts from Covid-19 on the mental health of the residents of Milton Keynes;
- (b) request that the Cabinet member responsible continue to prioritise mental health services; and
- (c) make representations to the Minister for Mental Health, Suicide Prevention and Patient Safety, to ask that the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) review resources that will be needed for mental health services as the impact of Covid-19 on mental health grows.

**CL72**

### **NO CHILD SHOULD GO HUNGRY**

Councillor Carr moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Montague:

“1. That this Council notes that:

- (a) on 21 October 2020 Milton Keynes MPs Ben Everitt and Iain Stewart voted against a Labour motion that would have extended free school meals for children throughout school holidays, up until Easter 2021;
- (b) 322 MPs voted against the motion and 261 voted for it;
- (c) on 8 November 2020 the Conservative Government U-turned on this decision, setting up a Covid Winter Grant Scheme and extending the Holiday Activities and Food Programme to Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021;
- (d) the basic annual salary for an MP from April 2020 is £81,932;
- (e) in their 2020 Vital Signs Report, the MK Community Foundation found that an estimated 10,900 (17.7%) of children are living in poverty, and some areas of Milton Keynes show child poverty rates as high as 32%; and

- (f) in March 2020, the Child Poverty Commission Interim Report found that:
  - (i) Child poverty is rising. Latest figures suggest that there are currently high levels of child poverty in Milton Keynes. Child poverty has also started to rise in absolute terms;
  - (ii) Child poverty is multi-faceted;
  - (iii) Children move in and out of poverty: and
  - (iv) In Milton Keynes, more than 75% of all children in poverty are in households where at least one person is working.
- 2. That this Council resolves to:
  - (a) publicly condemn the decision of Milton Keynes MPs Ben Everitt and Iain Stewart to vote against the Labour motion to extend free school meals on 21st October 2020; and
  - (b) request the Leader of the Council write to Milton Keynes MPs Ben Everitt and Iain Stewart to convey the disappointment and anger over this decision on behalf of the Council.
- 3. That this Council resolves to request Cabinet to:
  - (a) reaffirm its own commitment to fight child poverty; and
  - (b) lobby the Conservative Government and the Milton Keynes MPs for:
    - (i) Free school meals to every pupil whose parents or guardians are in receipt of Universal Credit;
    - (ii) Food vouchers for every one of those pupils in every school holiday and during any period of lockdown;
    - (iii) Free school meals to pupils from low-income families whose parents or guardians have no recourse to public funds and destitute asylum seekers under S4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.”

On being put to the vote the motion was declared by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

- 1. That this Council notes that:
  - (a) on 21 October 2020 Milton Keynes MPs Ben Everitt and Iain Stewart voted against a Labour motion that would

have extended free school meals for children throughout school holidays, up until Easter 2021;

- (b) 322 MPs voted against the motion and 261 voted for it;
  - (c) on 8 November 2020 the Conservative Government U-turned on this decision, setting up a Covid Winter Grant Scheme and extending the Holiday Activities and Food Programme to Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021;
  - (d) the basic annual salary for an MP from April 2020 is £81,932;
  - (e) in their 2020 Vital Signs Report, the MK Community Foundation found that an estimated 10,900 (17.7%) of children are living in poverty, and some areas of Milton Keynes show child poverty rates as high as 32%; and
  - (f) in March 2020, the Child Poverty Commission Interim Report found that:
    - (i) Child poverty is rising. Latest figures suggest that there are currently high levels of child poverty in Milton Keynes. Child poverty has also started to rise in absolute terms;
    - (ii) Child poverty is multi-faceted;
    - (iii) Children move in and out of poverty; and
    - (iv) In Milton Keynes, more than 75% of all children in poverty are in households where at least one person is working.
2. That this Council resolves to:
- (a) publicly condemn the decision of Milton Keynes MPs Ben Everitt and Iain Stewart to vote against the Labour motion to extend free school meals on 21st October 2020; and
  - (b) request the Leader of the Council write to Milton Keynes MPs Ben Everitt and Iain Stewart to convey the disappointment and anger over this decision on behalf of the Council.
3. That this Council resolves to request Cabinet to:
- (a) reaffirm its own commitment to fight child poverty; and
  - (b) lobby the Conservative Government and the Milton Keynes MPs for:

- (i) Free school meals to every pupil whose parents or guardians are in receipt of Universal Credit;
- (ii) Food vouchers for every one of those pupils in every school holiday and during any period of lockdown;
- (iii) Free school meals to pupils from low-income families whose parents or guardians have no recourse to public funds and destitute asylum seekers under S4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

**CL73**

**KEEPING AFFORDABLE HOMES AFFORDABLE**

Councillor Ferrans moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Trendall:

- “1. That this Council notes:
- (a) that shared ownership, underwritten by this Council or registered social landlords, is the only means whereby many residents are ever able to get their foot onto the ladder of home ownership;
  - (b) that some owners, when selling their share on, charge a premium above the sale price, making the homes less affordable to those that need them;
  - (c) that some registered social landlords have outlawed such premiums; and
  - (d) that in other cases huge premiums have been requested.
1. That the Council resolves to request that Cabinet:
- (a) investigates whether the planning system, either by conditions on permissions, or by policy in the next Local Plan, can be used to outlaw such premiums or to restrict their value;
  - (b) investigates whether the Council, when selling new shares in Council properties, can outlaw such premiums or restrict their value; and
  - (c) investigates whether the Council, when handling requests to sell existing shares, can outlaw such premiums or restrict their value.
2. That this Council then requests Cabinet to do all it can to stop the practice of charging, via any mechanism, amounts excessively beyond the value of the homes and contents being sold, when shared ownership properties are sold on, striking a

balance between compensating the owner for the share of the market value of improvements made that they will not retain, and keeping the home affordable for subsequent owners.”

On being put to the vote the motion was declared by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes:
  - (a) that shared ownership, underwritten by this Council or registered social landlords, is the only means whereby many residents are ever able to get their foot onto the ladder of home ownership;
  - (b) that some owners, when selling their share on, charge a premium above the sale price, making the homes less affordable to those that need them;
  - (c) that some registered social landlords have outlawed such premiums; and
  - (d) that in other cases huge premiums have been requested.
2. That the Council resolves to request that Cabinet:
  - (a) investigates whether the planning system, either by conditions on permissions, or by policy in the next Local Plan, can be used to outlaw such premiums or to restrict their value;
  - (b) investigates whether the Council, when selling new shares in Council properties, can outlaw such premiums or restrict their value; and
  - (c) investigates whether the Council, when handling requests to sell existing shares, can outlaw such premiums or restrict their value.
3. That this Council then requests Cabinet to do all it can to stop the practice of charging, via any mechanism, amounts excessively beyond the value of the homes and contents being sold, when shared ownership properties are sold on, striking a balance between compensating the owner for the share of the market value of improvements made that they will not retain, and keeping the home affordable for subsequent owners.

**CL74**

**HELPING CARE LEAVERS IN THEIR NEXT STEPS**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12(g) and with the consent of the Council the motion was withdrawn.

**CL75**

**BIODIVERSITY UPDATE**

The Council received an update on the delivery of the Biodiversity Action Plan.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10:32 PM