

**MEMBERS' ITEMS**

(a) Community Legal Services

Councillor I Henderson has requested that:

“A report be submitted to this Committee on how Milton Keynes Council became an associate member of the Community Legal Services Committee, the resources required and where they have to come from.”

Officer's Background Note:

See Agenda Item 16.

(b) Probate Office for Milton Keynes

Councillor Barton has asked that the Committee consider the following proposal:

“To seek the Committee's approval, to corporately lobby the Lord Chancellor's office, to seek a Probate Office for the Milton Keynes area, as the nearest office is in Aylesbury, which is open three days a week and has a long waiting period for an appointment. The next location is in Oxford.

As a growing city, it is a facility sadly needed, as those families who have approached me, who have lost loved ones, told me the journey to those locations can be difficult, in what is already an emotional and stressful time in their lives.”

Officer's Background Note:

The local controlling Probate Registry is located in Oxford, with local offices at Aylesbury, High Wycombe, Reading, Slough and Swindon. The Leicester Registry has local offices at Kettering and Bedford.

Councillor Barton first raised the matter with officers of the Council in 1997, and representations were made to the Lord Chancellor's Office to consider establishing a Probate Registry, or at least a local office in Milton Keynes, but there has been no evident progress.

Contact Officer: John Moffoot (Head of Corporate Administration) MK 252314

(c) Special Responsibility Allowances

Councillor E Henderson has asked the Committee to consider the following:

“(a) request the Leader of the Council to bring revised proposals for special responsibility allowances for 1999/2000 to the July meeting of the Council; and

- (b) set up a further Independent Panel to review Members' allowances from 2000/01 onwards.

Member's Note:

The proposals tabled by the Leader of the Council at the Annual meeting on 18 May 1999, departed in two significant ways from the recommendations of the Independent Panel that were adopted by the Council in 1996:

1. The differential between first and second tier Committees has been significantly reduced.
2. The allowance for Vice-Chairs of Committees has been hugely increased.

In addition, contrary to the assurance given by the Leader of the Council on 18 May 1999, the total cost of Special Responsibility Allowances for 1999/00 has been increased by 2.5% from the 1998/99 figure.”