

9 SEPTEMBER 1999

**CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR OF
MILTON KEYNES**

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1. **Purpose**

1.1 To suggest a possible procedure for the annual selection of the Deputy Mayor.

2. **Summary**

2.1 At present, the Council has no particular criteria for the selection of Mayor, other than that the Deputy Mayor is normally elected as Mayor. This has its merits in that a year as Deputy Mayor provides a certain amount of training and relevant experience for a Mayor elect.

2.2 It therefore seems reasonable to apply a pre-determined set of criteria to the selection of the Deputy Mayor, rather than to the selection of Mayor, if it is accepted that the Deputy Mayor always succeeds as Mayor each year.

2.3 The uncertainty of not knowing who will be the next Mayor until the night of the Annual Council can make forward planning for the new Mayoral year difficult and can make the Council look a little disorganised when dealing with outside organisations. Knowing that the current Deputy Mayor would automatically succeed as Mayor would alleviate this problem.

3. **Recommendations**

3.1 That the criteria for the selection of the Deputy Mayor, be approved.

4. **Background**

- 4.1 Following a Member's Item submitted by Councillor Mabbutt to the Policy and Resources Committee on 8 July 1998 (Minute PR36/99 refers), a Mayoral Sub-Committee was set up with the remit of looking at the way candidates for the position of Mayor and Deputy Mayor are selected.
- 4.2 During December 1998 and January 1999, a survey of other Unitary Authorities was carried out, asking for information about their criteria, if any, for the selection of Mayor, and how the procedures were carried out.
- 4.3 The findings of this survey were presented to the Mayoral Sub-Committee at its meeting on 24 March 1999 and are attached in **Annex A** to the report.

5. **Issues and Choices**

- 5.1 Having discussed the information presented to them, the Mayoral Sub-committee asked the Officers present to devise a scheme based on the formula used by Medway Council. This scheme is attached at **Annex B**.
- 5.2 Members will be aware that the Council's political management structures are likely to be reviewed over the coming months in the light of the Government's proposals in the draft Local Government (Organisation and Standards) Bill. This review will need to include the position and role of the Mayor, both from a ceremonial point of view and as Chair for the Council.

6. **Implications**

6.1 Environmental

None.

6.2 Equalities

No-one should be excluded from being Mayor/Deputy Mayor on the grounds of race, colour, creed, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or age.

The procedure based on the Medway model would also ensure that all parties, would in time, be eligible for the Mayoralty.

6.3 Financial

None not already covered by existing budgets. Although not quantifiable, there could actually be savings in staff time, stationery etc if the uncertainty about who will be the next Mayor was removed.

6.4 Legal

The Council is required by Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1972, to elect a Chair at the Annual Council Meeting each year. As the Council has been granted Borough status the Chair of the Council is the Mayor.

6.5 Staff and Accommodation

Agreed criteria and selection procedures would greatly assist the Members' Services staff in the forward planning of the new Mayoral year.

7. **Conclusions**

7.1 That an agreed selection procedure for the election of the Deputy Mayor, who, the following year, would automatically become Mayor, would remove the uncertainty sometimes experienced in the past as to who would be elected. Removal of this uncertainty would enable the new Mayor to receive training in advance and allow Members' Services staff involved in the Mayor's Office to provide a better, planned service and improve the Council's image with outside organisations.

Background Papers: None