

Minutes of the meeting of the PARTNERSHIPS AND GROWTH SELECT COMMITTEE held on THURSDAY 28 OCTOBER 2010 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillor P Geary (Chair)  
Councillors Bradbury, Hopkins (substitute for Councillor Wharton), Long, Morris, Tamagnini-Barbosa, White and Zealley.

**Officers:** N Fenwick, (Assistant Director Planning), I Haynes (Chief Spatial Planner), R Payne (Housing Needs Manager), A Hodson-Curran (Operational Manager) and S Parker (Senior Committee Manager)

**Apologies** Councillors D McCall and Wharton

**PG13 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

The following disclosures of personal interest were made:

Councillor Galloway: Trustee of MK Parks Trust

Councillor Peter Geary: Trustee of MK Parks Trust. Director of United Sustainable Energy Foundation

Councillor Hopkins: Milton Keynes Partnership Board Member

Councillor White: Milton Keynes Partnership Board Member

Lead on LEP for Small Businesses

Chair United Sustainable Energy Foundation

Board Member National Fuel Agency

**PG14 MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting of the Partnerships and Growth Select Committee held on 28 July 2010 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**PG15 REGIONAL STRUCTURES – OPPORTUNITIES AND ISSUES**

The Committee considered a report and received a presentation on the current issues for Milton Keynes following the abolition of regional structures and work in progress.

The Committee considered, in particular, issues related to housing growth, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the Core Strategy.

The Committee noted that Councillor Hopkins (Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee) had contacted every local authority in England requesting information on their methodology of calculating local housing need (and the replies he had received to date).

The Committee also noted that Central Government had granted approval for Milton Keynes Council together with neighbouring councils and businesses to create the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP).

The Committee was informed of the publication of the White Paper on Local Growth which provided detail on the role of the Local Enterprise Partnerships which had now been confirmed and the Regional Growth Fund.

Comments from Members included:

- The need to assess and update the Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment methodology in relation to housing needs prior to the independent examination stage of the Core Strategy in early 2011. This would entail a detailed discussion on the methodology used in SHMAs.
- The Strategic Housing Market Assessment should provide a robust, shared evidence base.
- All strategies should relate to the Core Strategy and be consistent and not contradictory to it.
- A Task and Finish Group should be set up on a 1:1:1 basis with a formal focus around Housing Needs Methodology based on evidence from expert witnesses and the content of the Core Strategy (to fulfil its aims and objectives).
- Key issues to be addressed in the SHMA include the housing needs of both a very young and an ageing population and the continued growth of the city.
- The impact caused by failing to meet housing needs included rising house prices, increases in HMOs and people living in the family home for longer as they were unable to purchase their own property as house prices were out of their reach.
- The Local Enterprise Partnerships should be business-led and should not be the sub region re-invented.
- The key drivers that keep the Milton Keynes economy successful should be protected and focused on to ensure continued prosperity avoiding the decline some new towns had experienced over time. The reason for any change in key drivers should be understood.
- Engagement with the business community is crucial.

- Consideration should be given to how areas could be regenerated rather than concentrating development on 'greenfield' sites.
- There was a need to ensure engagement with the development community to work together in ensuring future housing needs are met.
- The need for skills to match jobs as the MK economy begins to grow.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) should provide a robust shared evidence base to be considered alongside other evidence.
2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee be requested to set up a Task and Finish Group to be appointed on a 1:1:1 basis (to comprise Councillors P Geary, Long and Tamagnini-Barbosa) to review and, where necessary, develop the SHMA evidence base.
3. That Cabinet be requested to provide the appropriate resources to enable a review/update of the SHMA methodology to be carried out as soon as possible.

**PG16**

**LOW CARBON**

The Committee considered a briefing paper on the Council's Low Carbon Strategy.

An updated Milton Keynes Low Carbon Living Programme Management Structure was circulated.

The Committee noted the following:

- A project co-ordinator for the Strategy was now in place.
- Collaborative work on the Smart Grid scheme included work with colleges, the Open University, Milton Keynes Partnership and the business community.
- A Low Carbon prospectus for a Low Carbon MK had been published.
- Cabinet had approved the strategy at its meeting on 27 October 2010.

Comments from Members included:

- Cabinet's adoption of the Low Carbon Strategy was welcomed.
- The projects within the Low Carbon Strategy should be co-ordinated with matching timescales and reporting systems.

Though project management had improved somewhat in the Council there was still improvement to be made. The Portfolio Office should have involvement in ensuring projects in the Strategy were satisfactorily delivered.

- The Council should provide leadership and facilitate networking.
- Work in the area of transport including LTP should not be carried out in isolation.
- Housing stock should be at the core of the project work being carried out. Design of houses for example to promote energy efficiency was a key issue. Retrofitting was also an important element in energy efficiency.
- The Council should keep up-to-date with technological innovations.
- All strategies should have relation to, and fit in to, the Core Strategy.

The Committee noted the work that had been carried out by staff from within the Council to assist with the Low Carbon Strategy and the need for staff resources to ensure its continued success.

**RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet be requested, as part of the budget making process, to redeploy sufficient resources to ensure the success of the Low Carbon Strategy.

CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9.31 PM