
PUBLIC QUESTIONS
BY THE BLAKELANDS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING 22 MARCH 2021

1. Why did you not contact any stakeholders, such as the Blakelands Residents Association or Councillors, as part of your audit?
2. Did you review the YouTube video recording of the Audit Committee meeting of 1 December 2020 and if not, why?
3. Could you list the documents you have reviewed as part of your audit?
4. Have you reviewed Marc Dorfman's contract with Milton Keynes Council, its very short specification ("Independent review on planning applications") and the contract liaison (the former Director of Planning)?
5. Were you made aware of the existence of a confidential document produced by Marc Dorfman on 10 March 2019 where he concluded the warehouse scheme was "poor" and the officer recommendation "was not correct"?
6. Does it concern you that Marc Dorfman is now backtracking on the document of 10 March 2019 and his views of the warehouse scheme?
7. Do you believe it was appropriate for Milton Keynes Council to seek the preliminary views and conclusions of Marc Dorfman before instructing him? Is this normal practice in auditing and would it be normal for four legal officers to be present (Director of Law, Head of Legal, Deputy Head of Legal and the Principal Solicitor for Planning and Highways)?

8. Do you believe it was appropriate of Marc Dorfman during his review to not speak to, or even attempt to contact, the Council's auditor who did most of the work for the internal audit?
9. Do you believe it was appropriate for Marc Dorfman to refuse to work with the Council's auditors during his review? Do you believe there was a conflict of interest in his administrative point of contact being an officer within the planning service that reported to the Director of Planning?
10. Do you believe there was any conflict of interest in the role of the previous Director of Planning in overseeing Marc Dorfman's appointment and the external review into the warehouse scheme?
11. Is it normal practice in audit work for the department being audited to be responsible for and in control of the audit?
12. Do you believe there was any conflict in interest in Marc Dorfman being recommended by a former Director of Planning at Milton Keynes Council (now working for the LGA/PAS) who was in that role at the time the warehouse scheme was approved in May 2017?
13. Do you believe it was appropriate of Milton Keynes Council to not mention the connection with the LGA/PAS and its former Director of Planning (emails show that senior officers did not want residents to "find out the connection")?
14. Are you aware that there are multiple emails showing that Milton Keynes Council wanted to distance itself from the appointment of Marc Dorfman through the Planning Advisory Service (in case residents found out about the connection with the former Director of Planning)?

15. Do you believe there is a lack of transparency by Milton Keynes Council in refusing to publish copies of the minutes or notes from meetings with Marc Dorfman after he was appointed?
16. Have you reviewed the letter from Milton Keynes Council to Marc Dorfman of 3 November 2020 (where he was told that it was imperative his preliminary findings were released and the Audit Committee meeting took place before the Director of Planning left in December 2020)? Do you believe this letter was appropriate?
17. Does it concern you that Marc Dorfman appears to be unable to produce a document showing a list of individuals he has interviewed, met or communicated with electronically and the respective dates of any meetings?
18. Were you made aware that the original case officer for the warehouse application was changed at a very late stage and only after the developer was told that the recommendation would be for refusal?
19. Have you reviewed the additional document produced by Marc Dorfman on 1 December 2020 in which he states the replacement case officer alleges to have been coerced into putting a recommendation of approval forward for the warehouse application contrary to her professional planning judgement?