



Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on
MONDAY 6 JANUARY 2003 at 7.30 pm

Present: Councillor Pugh (Mayor)
Councillor Monk (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors Adderley, Bartlett, Box, Bristow, Burke, Campbell,
Carrington, Carruthers, Carstens, Sandra Clark, Coventry, Crooks,
Dransfield, Drewett, Eastman, Eaton, Edwards, Fraser, Geary,
Gerrella, Gillingham, Hardwick, E Henderson, I Henderson, Hopkins,
Hoyle, Irons, Legg, Lloyd, Long, A Mabbott, G Mabbutt, McCall,
Miles, Morsley, Saunders, Seymour, Tallack, Tamagnini-Barbosa,
Wicker, Williams, I Wilson and K Wilson

The following Alderman was also present:

Alderman Howell

Apologies: Councillors Benning, Stephen Clark, Exon, Jury, Pendry and Snell,
and Alderman Ellis

CL82 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members declared interests as follows:

- (a) Councillor Edwards declared a prejudicial interest in Item 3(a)
(i) - Public Private Partnership.
- (b) Councillor A Mabbott declared a prejudicial interest in Item
4(i) 4 - Parish Council Precepts.

CL83 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor thanked the Council's Head of Environmental Services and his staff and the staff from Synergy for their efforts during the recent flooding in Newport Pagnell.

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Hopkins on being awarded a Masters Degree in Marketing and Consultancy by the University College, Northampton.

The Mayor also congratulated Stephen Springer and Alan Noble both of Olney on the award of an MBE and OBE respectively in the New Year Honours. Mr Springer's award was for services to tourism

and Mr Noble's award was for services to adult and community education.

The Mayor apologised to members of the Labour Group for his accusations at the last meeting with regard to them releasing exempt information to the press which had been unfounded.

CL85 PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP - CONSULTATION WITH PARISH COUNCILS

Councillor Bristow requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12(g), the Council's consent to withdraw the following motion, which had been signed by Councillors Bristow, Campbell, Lloyd, Long and Saunders in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.1:

"That Milton Keynes Council, recognising the true value of Partnership Working with the Parish Councils, in its area, hereby confirms it will defer further consideration of its Public Private Partnership programme until it has undertaken proper and meaningful discussions with all Parishes, within this Council's area, on an individual basis, on all aspects and elements, of the current Public Private Partnership negotiations now in progress, that may or could be provided, or any part thereof, of services now provided by Milton Keynes Council and that it may wish to include within any Public Private Partnership contract, which could or might, be inherited by any Parish, by devolution or any other means, of that service, during the lifetime of any agreed contract by this Council, or one that this Council is minded to enter into, and:

1. hereby gives an undertaking that any such negotiations or discussions on the Public Private Partnership will not be concluded until such discussions have been completed with all Parishes within the Milton Keynes Borough;
2. confirms that all documents connected or associated with the Public Private Partnership process, will be made available and explained to all Parishes when entering into such negotiations, and that Milton Keynes Council agrees to provide, and pay for, any independent assessment of those papers if so requested by any Parish;
3. that such discussions be conducted on a full and 'equal partnership' basis and not one of 'this is what we have decided you are having';
4. confirms that if any Parish Council objects to the adoption of such services as are reasonably offered, or that are instructed by any other body, i.e. Central Government, neither the Parish, nor the electorate represented by that Parish will be penalised in any way whatsoever; and
5. includes within all elements of any final contract document agreed between Milton Keynes Council and the provider of

any and all such service provision under the Public Private Partnership agreement, clauses and adequate safeguards that will permit any Parish to terminate on reasonable grounds, any or all provision of elements of that agreement entered into by Milton Keynes Council under this arrangement, without any penalty or liability whatsoever falling upon that Parish.”

Councillor Bristow’s request to withdraw the motion was approved by acclamation.

RESOLVED -

That the Council’s consent to withdraw the motion be agreed.

CL85 FORWARD PLAN AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Council noted that Councillor K Wilson had withdrawn this motion.

CL86 MEMBERS’ QUESTIONS

(a) Question from Councillor Wicker to Councillor G Mabbutt:

“Can you state which Local Authority in the BBC Look East region has the lowest parking charges, and which has the highest amount of parking fines?”

Answer from Councillor G Mabbutt:

“BBC Look East carried out a survey in their television region and found that Milton Keynes has the lowest car parking charges in the area. I thought you would all like to know that. You may also like to know that Labour controlled Luton has the highest charges and the highest record for issuing parking fines.”

(b) Question from Councillor Dransfield to Councillor G Mabbutt:

“Which Council has the greatest confusion over the organisation of parking and which has the least?”

Answer from Councillor G Mabbutt:

“There has not been any survey carried out of Local Authorities in this area to give those facts.”

Councillor Dransfield asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor G Mabbutt.

(c) Question from Councillor K Wilson to Councillor McCall:

“Could you enlighten this meeting as to the programme for the Graffiti Removal Team, given that the one published timetable expired at the end of December 2002, i.e. for the next three months at least?”

Answer from Councillor McCall:

“Officers have actually devised a programme for the next six months and also we have just come back from the Christmas break, and the Strategic Director Environment will arrange for that to be e-mailed to all Members of the Council tomorrow.”

Councillor K Wilson asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor McCall.

(d) Question from Councillor Campbell to Councillor McCall:

“Can you assure me that Central Bletchley is not continually being overlooked with regard to wiping off graffiti? It hasn't been visited yet and people in Central Bletchley are constantly ringing me up. We are constantly feeding in graffiti sites. There is a feeling that Central Bletchley should be prioritised because it is not local people doing graffiti. Central Bletchley is somewhere that is a centre for people who hang around; it's a centre for being visited and places like the Bus Station are very much an interchange, and we haven't seen sight or sound of the Graffiti Busters at all yet. So can you assure me that it will be prioritised over the next six months?”

Answer from Councillor McCall:

“As I said, tomorrow we will publish the timetable for the next six months, and if you look at that you will see exactly when your Ward will be getting done. I would encourage all Parish Councils and Ward Councillors to report any specific graffiti they have. It's clearly going to take us sometime to clear up the years of neglect and backlog left behind by yourselves, but it will be done and, as I say, a second team will come on stream in April 2003. We are determined to get on top of this, but it will take some time to clear the years of neglect.”

Councillor Campbell asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor McCall.

(e) Question from Councillor Hoyle to Councillor McCall:

“Before you start re-visiting Wards, could you come and visit Loughton Park Ward?”

Answer from Councillor McCall:

“I can assure you that one of the principles I have asked the officers to take on board when they put together the detailed timetable, is to ensure that all Wards are visited before we start going back re-visiting places for a second time, with the exception of Central Milton Keynes, which I've mentioned before.”

(f) Question from Councillor Hoyle to Councillor Tallack:

“Why does the Council Tax go up year after year beyond the rate of inflation?”

Answer from Councillor Tallack:

“One of the things that clearly this Council and every Council has suffered from over the last few years, is the fact that the Government is gradually withdrawing the level of grants and assuming a level of Council Tax that Councils will be charging. I think it is fair to say in past years, the majority of Councils have put Council Tax up more than the Government’s expectation, but it is very much the case that the Government’s expectation in recent years of Local Authorities has been significantly above inflation because the Government is pursuing a policy of moving the burden from Central Government to the local Council Tax payer. That’s a matter of Government policy.

What I will say is that the proposals the Cabinet passed just before Christmas, assumed a budget whereby the Council Tax increase will be 5.88%. I fully accept that is more than the rate of inflation. I believe for the first time, it is below the Government guidance, which is 6.2% this year. Therefore, I suspect that the proposed Council Tax increase in Milton Keynes may well be less than neighbouring authorities. The real answer behind the figure is the thrust of Government policy and it is obviously a pattern that’s being followed by most Local Authorities.”

(g) Question from Councillor E Henderson to Councillor Long:

“I am sure that the Leader of the Labour Group will agree with me that some of the inspections that we have of the Authority are extremely important, and I have in mind two inspections recently; one by OFSTED of our Education Department and one by the Social Services Inspectorate of our Children’s Services. It is always a very important occasion when the Inspectors come back after the inspection and give their feedback to the Authority. It has always been the practice, in the past, for Members or representatives of all Parties to be invited to attend those feedback sessions, as indeed the opportunity was offered on these occasions recently. Opportunities which I am pleased to say, obviously, to relevant leading Members of the Administration who attended and also on both occasions, the Leader of the Conservative Group.

I wonder if the Leader of the Labour Group would like to give consideration in the future to why Labour is not being represented on occasions like that. It is actually quite embarrassing, would you not agree, for Members of the

Council to see the Inspectors clearly fazed by the fact that the official Opposition are not represented?"

Answer from Councillor Long:

"Yes and no."

(h) Question from Councillor Legg to Councillor McCall:

"Could you please explain what steps are currently being taken to eradicate the problems of the pink bags being left on the side of the road if they've got the wrong waste materials in them, which appears to be happening on a regular basis?"

Answer from Councillor McCall:

"If members of the public put out a contaminated sack then they get a notice through the door from the contractor, explaining what the problem is and asking them to re-sort the contents of the bag. That's what should be happening. If you could specify instances where this isn't happening, then I suggest you e-mail the details to Andy Hudson."

Councillor Legg asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor McCall.

(i) Question from Councillor Adderley to Councillor McCall:

"With regard to the restructuring of the estate and street cleansing by Cory's, can you advise as to what consultation has taken place, or will take place, with Parishes, Residents Associations, etc.?"

Answer from Councillor McCall:

"We are trying to use more effectively the resources available. So rather than keep cleaning areas of the Borough, purely on a time basis, so you might re-visit a street and clean it weekly or fortnightly, we are trying to concentrate on resources where we are cleaning the dirty areas more often and the clean areas less, so that the shopping centres, etc. are cleaned more frequently. The frequencies are not on time but on the dirtiness of the area, as to the standards set down by what was the Tidy Britain Group. It is now not on a time basis but on how dirty the streets are."

Councillor Adderley asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor McCall.

(j) Question from Councillor K Wilson to Councillor Tallack:

"Can you enlighten us what the total level of debts owed to this Council are at this moment in time?"

Answer from Councillor Tallack:

"I can't answer that off the top of my head, but obviously I will find out and reply to you in writing."

Councillor K Wilson asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor Tallack.

(k) Question from Councillor Bristow to Councillor McCall:

“About 12 months ago we employed a member of staff to ensure that things like unsolicited street signs were taken down, those that advertise raves and dances etc. Although we have a member of staff in post, these signs seem to be proliferating and I’m wondering whether or not you can give me an assurance that the sort of sign I saw today, for example, down the H8, a great big sign ‘Windshield Double Glazing - Come to North Furzton for Demonstration’ will be removed? If we can actually ask the officers to assist in getting those removed, because it’s no good us banging on about graffiti if we are actually condoning other unofficial graffiti. So I would to ask you if you would pay specific attention to that?”

Answer from Councillor McCall:

“The Graffiti Busters also tackle fly-posting as well as graffiti, just in case Members didn’t realise that. When they go round they remove fly-posting as well. I fully agree with what you say and we should be taking action to remove those and clearly we need to know of them. If people know specific details then they should e-mail them in. Also, the enforcement officer we have has actually spent a lot of time tackling fly-tipping and has issued a considerable amount of £50 fines to people for fly-tipping. It was some months ago when I got the figures and it was 50 then, so it’s well over that now. We are taking enforcement action against all these things.”

(l) Question from Councillor Bristow to Councillor McCall:

“Are you able to give us some indication of the timescale involved before you are able to come forward with some proposals, and I do appreciate it is a thorny issue, for cemetery provision in West Bletchley. We are now up to the gunnels. There are some options open to us. We may, and I’m not going to pre-judge that issue, close those options down in the next week or two and I would like to ask what strategy we have for actually looking at this, because it is now becoming extremely acute in the Bletchley area?”

Answer from Councillor McCall:

“I agree that it is a major problem. Within the first month of taking over this portfolio, I, knowing that there was a problem, addressed the issue of cemetery provision in the Borough with officers. Within the next 12 months, 1,900 spaces will come on board. I did identify that West Bletchley was a problem. We need local people to come forward with realistic sites that

we can actually put forward and use. The officers have been trying for some time to find sites and are vigorously looking. One of the problems in the past has been, when they've tried to identify sites, local opposition. We need to find a site that local people would support. I look forward to any realistic proposals coming forward from local Ward Members or Parish Councils."

Councillor Bristow asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor McCall.

- (m) Question from Councillor Coventry to Councillor I Henderson:
"How many families will be drawn into the Housing Benefit trap because of the pending increases in rent?"

Answer from Councillor I Henderson:

"It is impossible to say how many exactly, but there certainly will be some. The rent increase has been, in the past, something like 18% a couple of years ago and then another one at 5%, and this year one at 15%, all far too high and far too much to cope with. I hope that people will apply for Housing Benefit and take advantage of hopefully getting the help they may be able to access. It is not possible, at this stage, to say how many people will be drawn into the Housing Benefit net."

- (n) Question from Councillor Coventry to Councillor McCall

"In my Ward, Woughton, I know myself and Councillor K Wilson reported hundreds of sites to the Graffiti Busting Team before their visit to Woughton. I also know there were many, many sites that were missed, including some in the local centres, so I wondered how many reported sites were actually cleaned during the visit to Woughton and how many were actually missed?"

Answer from Councillor McCall:

"I know that they cleaned 1,600 graffiti tags when they visited Woughton. I don't know how many were reported."

Councillor Coventry asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor McCall.

CL87

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Mayor moved, and the Deputy Mayor seconded: 'That in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12c, Item 4(a)(ii) 1(Members' Questions) be brought forward to this point in the meeting'.

The motion was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED -

That, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12c, Item 4(a)(ii) 1(Members' Questions) be brought forward to this point in the meeting.

CL88

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

- (a) Question from Councillor Dransfield to Councillor I Henderson:

"On 10 December 2002, as a result of the Cabinet recommendations from 3 December 2002, which had emanated from when the Council considering the Housing Revenue Section 114 Notice on 12 November 2002, we considered the Housing Revenue Account The original report now goes back over two months. What else has gone wrong since then?"

Answer from Councillor I Henderson:

"I actually think I would prefer to turn that and be asking what else has gone right, because an awful lot of things have gone right since then. The rent arrears are down; 1,500 fences have been replaced; window repairs and window replacement programmes are about to happen; the Lakes Estate is on the verge of getting its fitted kitchens; and the restructuring is well on the way and is about to be implemented as of January 2003.

There are a lot of things that are going right in housing just now, and it is really about time that some of this Council turned around and offered the support that officers and the tenants need to try and get this right, instead of always carping on the things that have gone wrong."

Councillor Dransfield asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor I Henderson.

- (b) Question from Councillor Long to Councillor I Henderson:

"On 23 December 2002, the Cabinet recommended that fees and charges across the board were increased by 3%. An exception to that was the increase in home care charges which were increased by 11%. Please could you outline and explain why there should be an 11% increase in the home care charges, but only a 3% increase in the other fees and charges?"

Answer from Councillor I Henderson:

"The changes in the home care charges came in as a result of Labour Government National Legislation, called Care Charging For Services, and it is based on the promise that those people who can afford to pay will pay a reasonable

amount, whilst those on benefits will be taken out of the net altogether, and it is a principle which, I have to say, I can support and we, on this side, support. Where people can afford to pay, they pay.

The problem that this Authority had in coming into line with all the other Authorities under National Legislation, was that we were starting from an extremely low base, the base that was inherited way back from Buckinghamshire County Council, where people were paying a totally unrealistic £3 per hour. In fact, the cost of home care is £14 per hour. So even with a gradual increase, which is what we are trying to do rather than go for the top whack immediately, there is still a subsidy for everybody across the board, even for those who can afford to pay a higher price.”

Councillor Long asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor I Henderson.

(c) Question from Councillor Irons to Councillor Seymour:

“Performance Indicator 45 on unauthorised absences in secondary schools has a red performance status, and it’s well above the annual target. Which strategies are you intending to pursue to address this issue?”

Answer from Councillor Seymour:

“I am aware of this and have been discussing with officers. I will write to you once my discussions are completed.”

(d) Question from Councillor Hoyle to Councillor McCall:

“Can you confirm that any new cemeteries will not mean that there is a shortage of allotments in the Borough?”

Answer from Councillor McCall:

“I can confirm that allotment land will not be used for cemetery provision.”

(e) Question from Councillor Edwards to Councillor I Henderson:

“How many priority one housing repairs are currently outstanding?”

Answer from Councillor I Henderson :

“I will write to you giving details of the number of repairs, by category, which are outstanding.”

Councillor Edwards asked a supplementary question, which was answered by Councillor I Henderson.

QUESTIONS TO POLICE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE

(a) Question from Councillor Eastman to Councillor Coventry:

“A resident has provided evidence of alleged drug dealing from a house close to where they live but no action has been taken. This alleged drug dealing has been going on for some months and there are numerous visitors to the house, including school children:

1. What is the Police policy in dealing with such cases where there is evidence that drug dealing is taking place?
2. What support do the Police offer residents when they report such incidents, in particular by bringing such dealing to an end?
3. If the reason to be provided is lack of resource, when do the Police expect to have sufficient resource to remove this menace from society?”

Answer from Councillor Coventry:

“1. Police receive information on almost a daily basis from numerous sources: members of the public, schools, other public bodies and neighbourhood watch, to name but a few. This information may concern drugs, burglary, vandalism or indeed other community safety issues, such as nuisance youths etc. Every effort must be made to validate this information before it is acted upon.

In the case of alleged drugs offences it is common for Officers to observe the activity for themselves for evidential and identification purposes before arrests can be made. Good evidence is vital to secure convictions and can take some time to collect.

2. Some people contacting the police wish to remain anonymous whilst others are happy to reveal their identities. However, it is recognised that people who supply such information may be concerned for their own safety and every attempt is made to ensure that these people are given as much support as deemed necessary, and that their identities are not made known, should a fear of reprisals exist. The Milton Keynes Police Area takes a very serious view of drug dealing on any level, but also recognises the important role that partnership agencies can play in addressing the problem in a holistic way.
3. The overall level of resources is determined by the Police Authority and not the Police and in view of the

finite nature of those resources, strategic operational priorities will be determined by the Chief Constable. The issue of drugs is taken very seriously at both Force level and at Area level and resources are apportioned appropriately to reflect this. The issue of Tackling Drugs is likely to be a key feature of the Thames Valley Police Three-Year Policing Strategy.

Any person who has any queries or concerns regarding the issue of drugs within the Milton Keynes Police Area should refer them to the Area Commander. Any person wishing to do so will be given complete confidentiality and anonymity.”

(b) Question from Councillor Eastman to Councillor Coventry:

“In the last three months over 4000 graffiti tags have been removed, but the vandals return and apply more graffiti:

1. What is the Police policy in managing the problem of graffiti vandals?
2. How many graffiti vandals have been ‘caught’ in the past three months?
3. What is the most common action taken against them?
4. What action do the police take when residents or the council provide them with leads on graffiti vandals and what support can the residents expect?

If the reason to be provided is lack of resource, when do the Police expect to have sufficient resource to manage this vandalism from society?”

Answer from Councillor Coventry:

- “1. Police policy is to deal robustly with criminal damage, in particular any which might be construed as falling into the category of ‘hate crime’. In addressing the problems the Police work with its partners, principally the Graffiti Team at Milton Keynes Council.
2. Over 150 people have been arrested in the last three months in relation to various offences of criminal damage.
3. Of these, a good number have been bailed pending further enquiries, in 41 cases there was insufficient evidence to justify proceedings and 55 have been charged and 7 cautioned.
4. Dependent upon such factors as the severity of the offence, the nature of the victim and the offender details the Police respond appropriately based upon the National Intelligence model. The information is

evaluated and tasked to the most appropriate resource, which could range from the Graffiti team to photograph (for possible later evidence) and remove, to detectives to investigate the damage involving serious racist graffiti. All residents now have a Beat Officer covering their area and as such we would expect the Beat officer to be involved and to be aware of all local issues, including graffiti. If the issue is school related the new Safer Schools Partnership police officer covering that school would also be involved.

5. In view of the finite resources available to the Police, all demands have to be prioritised accordingly. Issues such as graffiti are best tackled through working in partnership with other agencies.”

(c) Question from Councillor G Mabbutt to Councillor Coventry:

"Can the Council's representative on the Thames Valley Police Authority please confirm, or deny, that Thames Valley Police has taken a policy decision to reduce the level of policing in the rural areas of Milton Keynes in favour of increasing police presence in Central Milton Keynes?"

Answer from Councillor Coventry:

"I am advised by the Area Commander, who has responsibility for operational matters, that there is no policy decision to reduce levels of policing in rural areas. On the contrary, all but one of the officers freed-up as a result of the ongoing Police Redeployment Programme, have gone to the 'sectors' which include our rural areas. Additional city-based patrols, which are particularly required at the weekends when up to 40,000 people come to the area for evening entertainment, have been resourced by 'visibility patrols', which use staff who normally perform office-based duties."

CL90 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

The Council noted that Councillor Geary had replaced Councillor Bartlett on the Development Control Committee and Councillor Jury had replaced Councillor Geary on the Appeals Commission.

CL91 COUNCILLOR P BARTLETT

The Council noted that Councillor Bartlett had served notice, in accordance with Regulation 10 of the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1989, that he no longer wished to be treated as a member of the Conservative Group.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT JUNCTION 14 OF M1

Councillor Bartlett moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Irons:

“That the Council is asked to note that Junction 14 of the M1 is subject to very poor traffic management and it will often take one hour to travel from Northfield roundabout to the junction at peak times, a distance of about 300 yards.

That the Council is further asked to note that:

1. as a result, there are delays to coaches and schedules become meaningless so operators may pull out of Milton Keynes;
2. passengers (many of whom may be elderly or have a disability) exit from cars and taxis laden with their luggage to stagger across the carriageway so as not to miss their coach;
3. coach and commercial vehicle drivers could find themselves having to stop work due to hours of work constraints;
4. car drivers become frustrated;
5. air quality is poor;
6. businesses will pass on additional costs to their customers; and
7. emergency vehicles to Newport Pagnell and to the M1 become snarled up in the congestion.

That the Council calls on the Cabinet Member for Environment (Transport) to convene an emergency meeting of all interested stakeholders (Coach operators, emergency services, Council Officers, English Partnerships, Chamber of Commerce, road users, interested Milton Keynes Council Councillors) prior to Christmas 2002, the site to be visited by car or minibus so as to experience the problems first hand, in order that urgent consideration to this problem can be given, with a defined programme for action and improvement being produced and implemented by the end of the financial year 2002/03”.

Councillor G Mabbutt moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Eastman and accepted by the mover and seconder of the motion:

“That the third paragraph of the motion be deleted and replaced with:

‘That the Council also notes the actions of the Traffic Management Team who are urging the Highways Agency to indicate its programme for the implementation of the medium and long-term measures relating to improvements to Junction 14 and Northfield Roundabout.

That the Council agrees to work with the Highways Agency and English Partnerships to seek a comprehensive solution to the congestion problems at Junction 14 and Northfield Roundabout’.”

On being put to the vote the motion, as amended, was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED -

That the Council notes that Junction 14 of the M1 is subject to very poor traffic management and it will often take one hour to travel from Northfield roundabout to the junction at peak times, a distance of about 300 yards.

That the Council further notes that:

1. as a result, there are delays to coaches and schedules become meaningless so operators may pull out of Milton Keynes;
2. passengers (many of whom may be elderly or have a disability) exit from cars and taxis laden with their luggage to stagger across the carriageway so as not to miss their coach;
3. coach and commercial vehicle drivers could find themselves having to stop work due to hours of work constraints;
4. car drivers become frustrated;
5. air quality is poor;
6. businesses will pass on additional costs to their customers; and
7. emergency vehicles to Newport Pagnell and to the M1 become snarled up in the congestion.

That the Council also notes the actions of the Traffic Management Team who are urging the Highways Agency to indicate its programme for the implementation of the medium and long-term measures relating to improvements to Junction 14 and Northfield Roundabout.

That the Council agrees to work with the Highways Agency and English Partnerships to seek a comprehensive solution to the congestion problems at Junction 14 and Northfield Roundabout.

CL93

CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES - PAY AND DISPLAY PARKING

Councillor Dransfield moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Geary:

“That the Council, recognising the tremendous damage being done to the retail sector in Central Milton Keynes and the potential for significant job losses, by the recently imposed extended parking regime, agrees to suspend immediately all parking charges in

Central Milton Keynes, East of Saxon Gate, until the next meeting of this Council”.

Councillor Hoyle moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Carstens and accepted by the mover and seconder of the motion:

“That all the words after the word ‘regime’ be deleted and replaced with the words ‘agrees urgently to review the scheme with the intention of reducing the detrimental impact on the retail sector in Milton Keynes’

On being put to the vote the motion, as amended, was declared lost with 7 Members voting for and 39 Members voting against.

CL94 MILTON KEYNES TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP - PARKING SUB-GROUP

Councillor Dransfield moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Carstens:

“That the Council strongly urges the Cabinet Member responsible for Pay and Display parking to attend future meetings of the Parking Sub-Group of the Milton Keynes Transport Partnership so that he can face up to the realities of the damage being done to the economy of Milton Keynes by the extended Pay and Display scheme in Central Milton Keynes”.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared lost with 17 Members voting for, 23 Members voting against and 2 Members abstaining from voting.

CL95 PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPTS

Councillor K Wilson moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Long:

“That the Council requests that the Cabinet address the issues identified by the MK13 Group of Parish Councils within the forthcoming year’s budget considerations.

That the Council recognises the unfairness created to Parish Councils with low Council Tax valuations being forced, as a consequence, into setting higher precept levels than areas with relatively high Council Tax valuations.”

Councillor Fraser moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Williams:

“That all the words after:

‘That the Council requests that the Cabinet address the issues identified by the MK13 Group of Parish Councils within the’ be deleted and replaced with:

'Best Value Review of Parish Councils, also recognising the different concerns of the Rural Parish Councils'."

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared carried with 27 Members voting for and 14 Members voting against.

On being put to the vote the substantive motion was declared carried with 43 Members voting for and 1 Member abstaining from voting.

RESOLVED -

That the Council requests that the Cabinet address the issues identified by the MK13 Group of Parish Councils within the Best Value Review of Parish Councils, also recognising the different concerns of the Rural Parish Councils.

(Councillor A Mabbott declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting during consideration of this item.)

CL96 PERFORMANCE DATA AND CABINET PLANS, PROPOSALS AND POLICIES

Councillor K Wilson moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Long:

"That the Council notes all the latest performance data as well as the pressures and problems facing the Authority and notes the latest plans, proposals and policies of the Cabinet."

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried unanimously.

RESOLVED -

That the Council notes all the latest performance data as well as the pressures and problems facing the Authority and notes the latest plans, proposals and policies of the Cabinet.

CL97 QUESTIONS TO POLICE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE

Questions from Councillor Bartlett to Councillor Coventry:

1. "How many prosecutions and or penalty tickets have been issued in the Milton Keynes area in the last twelve months for:
 - (a) Car Tax evasion;
 - (b) non wearing of seat belts;
 - (c) driving without headlights on in relevant weather conditions;
 - (d) speeding but not caught by speed cameras;
 - (e) driving with fog lights on in inappropriate conditions;and

- (f) failing to have headlights on in appropriate conditions?"
- 2. "What percentage of police officer time is spent 'walking the beat' per officer in the Milton Keynes area each calendar month?"
- 3. "What is the average number of police officers on duty and able to respond to calls for assistance or instances per head of the population in Milton Keynes in any 24 hour period?"

Answers from Councillor Coventry:

- "1. The totals for the Milton Keynes Police Area from 1 November 2001 to 30 October 2002 are as follows:
 - (a) Car tax evasion statistics are not held by the Police Area and need to be obtained from the DVLA.
 - (b) Non-wearing of seatbelts - 446.
 - (c) Driving without headlights on in relevant weather conditions - 0.
 - (d) Speeding but not caught by speed cameras:
 - Excess speed above 30 miles per hour - 332.
 - Excess speed above 40 miles per hour - 5.
 - (e) Driving with fog lights on in inappropriate conditions - 102.
 - (f) Failing to have headlights on in appropriate conditions - this is the same question as (c) above.
- 2. The only formally recorded information held regarding police officer patrol time is from an activity analysis which was obtained during a two week snapshot in October 2001. This particular study showed that 13.9% of police constable time was spent on visible patrol and 2% on targeted patrol.
- 3. An estimated average number of police officers on duty responding to calls for assistance would be as follows:
 - (a) 45 Core Reactive Shift Officers
 - (b) 8 CID officers
 - (c) 10 Traffic officers
 - (d) 2 Dog Handlers
 - (e) 20 Area Beat Officers

This provides a total of 85 officers. Milton Keynes currently operates a three shift system and so the numbers of officers actually on duty can vary due to, for example, court commitments, deployments elsewhere, training courses, etc. In addition, the shifts pattern is geared to demand and it is

expected to have more officers on duty during these busier periods.”

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10.08 PM