

COUNCIL DECISIONS / ACTIONS – 21 OCTOBER 2020

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	SUBJECT AND DECISION	DECISION REFERRAL	PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION
1(b)	<p>Minutes</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 16 September 2020 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.</p>	-	-
1(c)	<p>Disclosure of Interests</p> <p>None disclosed.</p>	-	-
1(d)	<p>Announcements</p> <p>The Mayor to write to recipients of Queen’s Birthday Honours to express the Council’s thanks and congratulations.</p>	-	- Head of Democratic Services
2(a)	<p>Petitions</p> <p>None.</p>	-	-
2(b)	<p>Questions from Members of the Public</p> <p>13 questions received.</p> <p>Written responses to be provided to Sharon Ghouila and Adam Rolfe</p>		- Councillor O’Neill / Director Policy, Insight and Communications Councillor Darlington / Director Housing and Regeneration

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3	<p>Business Remaining from Last Meeting</p> <p>None</p>	-	-
4.	<p>Reports from Cabinet and Committees</p> <p>None</p>	-	-
5(a)	<p>Councillors' Questions</p> <p>Councillor Townsend to liaise with Councillor McPake to prepare a joint response to the Environment Agency about concerns regarding the maintenance arrangements for the Great Ouse, the Ouse and Water Eaton Brook.</p>	-	Councillor Townsend / Councillor McPake / Head of Environment and Waste
5(b)(i)	<p>The Economic Impact of Brexit and COVID-19</p> <p>1. That this Council notes that:</p> <p>(a) on 31 December 2020 the Brexit transition period finishes, ending British membership of the EU single market and customs union.</p> <p>(b) the ending of this transition period and the potential of a no-deal Brexit, combined with the fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic, will have drastic economic impacts on Milton Keynes, the country and worldwide trade as:</p>	-	-

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5(b)(i) (cont)	<p>The Economic Impact of Brexit and COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Milton Keynes has a high number of small businesses who trade internationally; bureaucracy and restrictions on the movement of people and goods, as well as tariffs, will impact heavily on them as they struggle with the impact of COVID-19; (ii) many local companies and organisations draw on the skills and expertise of people worldwide, and a return to work permits is likely to cause delays to, or to prevent, recruitment; (iii) Milton Keynes has a large financial services sector that will may be impacted by the expected move of European and American businesses to mainland Europe, with if no trade agreement covering services or free movement of personnel; (iv) Milton Keynes has many companies who are world leaders in international research and extra conditions, involving guarantees against the possible effects of Brexit, for which companies can get no insurance, are now routinely being imposed on UK participants even before the end of the transition period. In addition, the viability of some contracts may be damaged by restrictions on movement and possible tariffs on research material movement; and 	-	-

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5(b)(i) (cont)	<p>The Economic Impact of Brexit and COVID-19</p> <p>(v) many Milton Keynes residents aspire to study or get work experience abroad; the lack of funding agreements and freedom of movement will impact them heavily.</p> <p>2. That this Council also notes that worldwide trade and freedom of movement will be severely impacted. The effect of ending British membership of the EU single market and customs union is not just on business and freedom of movement in relation to the EU, but on international arrangements. Many of our international agreements depend on EU-wide agreements; when Britain exits those agreements, the country also exits the subsidiary agreements.</p> <p>3. That this Council resolves to request Cabinet to:</p> <p>(a) work with Milton Keynes businesses and service organisations to identify their particular concerns and lobby the Government alongside them;</p> <p>(b) factor in the effect of the Government’s replacement for furlough, as well as the potential of a no-deal Brexit in its continuing work on the COVID-19 Recovery Plan;</p> <p>(c) lobby the Conservative Government to financially support councils during this time to help mitigate the impact of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic; and</p>	Cabinet	Head of Democratic Services

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5(b)(i) (cont)	<p>The Economic Impact of Brexit and COVID-19</p> <p>(d) lobby the Government for continued support of viable businesses forced to remain closed by Government COVID restrictions and for more honesty and clarity on the terms of Brexit.</p>		
5(b)(ii)	<p>Becoming the World's Greenest City</p> <p>1. That this Council:</p> <p>(a) is fully committed to its ambition to be the world's greenest city, carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050;</p> <p>(b) believes that there is a once in a lifetime opportunity offered by the COVID-19 emergency to change the lifestyle of residents in ways that will reduce carbon emissions;</p> <p>(c) is supportive of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcements in July and August this year launching the Green Homes Grant scheme; and</p> <p>(d) is aware of the Council's bid for funding under the Local Authority Delivery (LAD) arrangements to set the grant scheme up locally on which a decision is expected shortly.</p>		

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5(b)(ii) (cont)	<p>Becoming the World's Greenest City</p> <p>2. That this Council:</p> <p>(a) With regard to homeowners:</p> <p>(i) publicise as widely as possible the availability of vouchers under the scheme, and to do as quickly as possible in view of its end date on 31 March next year; and</p> <p>(ii) ask Trading Standards to publicise a list of TrustMarked traders on the Council website with a local email and telephone address for enquiries rather than the present national numbers.</p> <p>(b) With regard to public assets to welcome the Council's intention to apply for further funding under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund, including the retro-fitting of social housing, taking advantage of the Re:fit Energy Performance contract already in place through the Local Partnerships Framework.</p> <p>3. That locally, this Council further resolves to request Cabinet to:</p> <p>(a) establish without delay the Milton Keynes citizens' action panel envisaged in clause 17 of the Council Plan as a means of promoting resident engagement with the task ahead;</p> <p>(b) work with local schools and parents to embed the practice of a carbon-neutral lifestyle within the curriculum;</p>	Cabinet	<p>Head of Communications</p> <p>Head of Regulatory Services</p> <p>Head of Democratic Services</p>

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5(b)(ii) (cont)	<p>Becoming the World's Greenest City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) work with the College of Education in enhancing training and apprenticeships for young people to work in green industries, such as renewable energy, home insulation, tree planting and rewilding and encourage the employing body to pay at least the National Living Wage for young people after their first year and the Real Living Wage from 24 upwards; (d) investigate and take further new schemes for local electricity generation; and (e) insofar as is legally possible, build on the results of the Council's BEIS study to determine whether Council Tax and/or business rate incentives would encourage local people to be more energy efficient. <p>4. That nationally, this Council resolves to request Cabinet to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) urge the Government to raise capital by introducing a new system of climate bonds; (b) promote tax incentives on savings and pensions for investing in green areas; (c) advocate zero-rating VAT on home insulation and other energy saving products and services; and (d) play a full part in raising the national ambition to the level commensurate with the scale of the crisis facing us. 	Cabinet	Head of Democratic Services

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5(b)(iii)	<p>Community at Work</p> <p>1. That this Council:</p> <p>(a) applauds the work done by individuals and informal local groups who, during the current Covid-19 emergency, have undertaken litter picking and basic landscape maintenance work in their towns, villages and estates, including areas unadopted by the Council which have been ignored and neglected by developers and managing agents; and</p> <p>(b) acknowledges that they have rendered valuable assistance to their communities and to the Council by undertaking work which needed to be done or was overdue, at no cost to the Council.</p> <p>2. That this Council therefore resolves to request that Cabinet actively support these individuals and informal groups by providing:</p> <p>(a) mentoring, so that the work may continue to be carried out correctly;</p> <p>(b) the loan of equipment wherever possible; and</p> <p>(c) logistical support, primarily in regard to the removal of collected litter and green waste.</p>	Cabinet	Head of Democratic Services

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	SUBJECT AND DECISION	DECISION REFERRAL	PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION
5(b)(iv)	<p>Urgent Planning Improvements</p> <p>1. That this Council notes:</p> <p>(a) The concerns voiced by Blakelands Residents Association, former planning officers, Ward Councillors, Town & Parish Councillors and other groups and individuals regarding the performance of our planning department over the past three years.</p> <p>(b) The perceived absence of visible action from the Leader of the Council (in that capacity and in his additional capacity as Portfolio-holder for planning), and his apparent reluctance to take any measures to restore faith in the planning department by the main opposition party do not take into account the improvement work taking place across the service, which should be highlighted to alleviate those concerns.</p> <p>(c) The work of the Planning Improvement Board, welcomes the Planning Improvement Action Plan as noted by Development Control Committee, highlights the recent improvement on enforcement issues and the current consultation taking place on the restructure of the Planning Department to address performance issues, and believes these improvements should be welcomed.</p>		

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5(b)(iv) (cont)	<p>Urgent Planning Improvements</p> <p>(d) Concerns highlighted most recently by the Walnut Tree Reserve A & D, Hindhead Knoll application and asks the Chair of Planning to make a statement at the next Development Control Committee on the matter.</p> <p>(e) The lack of public trust and confidence in the independent report into the 1 Yeomans Drive, Blakelands, development due to severe delays and apologises unreservedly to residents for that delay.</p> <p>(f) The work of the Newport Pagnell South ward councillors in seeking the answers the residents want on the issue of 1 Yeomans Drive, Blakelands and their disappointment with the delay in the review.</p> <p>(g) The finding by Internal Audit that there is no basis to corroborate a specific allegation of officer interference in the independent report.</p> <p>(h) The public statement by Mr Dorfman that he has not encountered any undue interference in his investigation and awaits his report.</p>	Development Control Committee	Head of Democratic Services

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5(b)(iv) (cont)	<p>Urgent Planning Improvements</p> <p>(i) The importance of an effectively functioning planning department that has the confidence and trust of MK's residents and their elected representatives, ahead of any large-scale infrastructure projects such as the proposed new bridge over the M1.</p> <p>(j) That the two MK MPs and the Leader of the largest opposition group on the Council have written to the Secretary of State asking for an external review into the planning service and expressing concerns over the ability of this Council to deal with systematic failures within the planning department although they did not approach the Council, Leader or Chief Executive before doing so with their concerns, did not provide Milton Keynes Council with a copy of the letter which was then circulated to the media and expresses disappointment at this poor behaviour.</p> <p>(k) The failure of the immediate former Chair of Development Control Committee to bring forward any clear actions to address issues within the planning department and their failure to constructively address these issues with all councillors and officers and welcomes the more constructive and positive approach by the new Chair of the Development Control Committee.</p>		

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5(b)(iv) (cont)	<p>Urgent Planning Improvements</p> <p>(l) That there have been clear problems in the planning service in the past and reiterates the commitment of this council to improve the service and address any issues that may arise from the independent report.</p> <p>(m) That the Development Control Committee exercises a quasi-judicial function and the creeping attempts to politicise its proceeding, or to use it as a forum to criticise council officers who have no right of reply, impedes its ability to function properly and badly services MK residents.</p> <p>2. That this Council therefore calls on the Leader of the Council:</p> <p>(a) to give a written statement at Cabinet on 15 December, or before if appropriate, on the Blakelands review, and</p> <p>(b) to give a written statement at Cabinet on 15 December of his plans to improve the Council’s planning service and repair its reputation, whether or not the Dorfman report has been published.</p>	Cabinet	Leader of the Council

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	SUBJECT AND DECISION	DECISION REFERRAL	PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION
5(b)(v)	<p>Saving Golf at Windmill Hill will benefit all MK Citizens</p> <p>1. That this Council notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Milton Keynes is the 2020 European City of Sport with the aim that this will allow MK Council to unlock more opportunities for investment into sports and physical activity that will provide local people with enjoyable, active and healthy lifestyles; (b) golf is a popular sport in England just behind football in terms of levels of participation. Golf is not in decline, in fact over the last five years the number of people playing golf in England has slightly increased; (c) golf courses in the UK and locally have seen a surge in memberships and levels of participation since being given a green light to reopen after lockdown; (d) properly managed, affordable full-size municipal 18-hole golf courses with family oriented supporting facilities are recognised as being the most economically sustainable and play an important role in promoting social interaction, health, fitness and wellbeing from young to old; (e) full size 18-hole golf is a popular sport but is under threat in Milton Keynes with only two courses in the city to serve a growing and ageing population; 		

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5(b)(v)(cont)	<p>Saving Golf at Windmill Hill will benefit all MK Citizens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (f) the cost of building a new course on a green field site is prohibitive due to the high cost of land and is unlikely to happen in Milton Keynes; (g) Milton Keynes will be left with only one full size 18-hole golf course if the course at Windmill Hill is lost; and (h) inter-club league competition is not possible without the facility of a full size 18-hole golf. Competition golf is essential for growing young sporting talent. <p>2. That this Council agrees that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Windmill Hill Golf Course is an important community asset and green space for Bletchley and Milton Keynes and provides affordable golf in a convenient location for local citizens; (b) Windmill Hill Golf course has suffered from a lack of investment and strategic direction and, as a result, has performed poorly compared to other local courses; (c) Windmill Hill golf course is dependent on pay and play. Membership numbers alone are not a good financial performance indicator for this golf course; (d) Windmill Hill plays an important role in promoting social interaction, health, fitness and wellbeing across all sections of the community and golf is one of the few sports that provides an active social outlet for an ageing demographic; 		

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5(b)(v)(cont)	<p>Saving Golf at Windmill Hill will benefit all MK Citizens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (e) it is important that this Council commits to preserving the remaining two full size 18-hole golf courses in Milton Keynes for the benefit of the local community; (f) all options to redevelop the Windmill Golf course site should guarantee the retention of a full size 18-hole golf course and investment to secure the golf course's long-term economic viability; and (g) the redevelopment of the Windmill Hill site should be sympathetic to the concerns of neighbouring residents and not add unnecessary access restrictions. <p>3. That this Council calls upon the Cabinet to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) acknowledge that golf as a participation sport is NOT in decline and to acknowledge that participation of this sport exceeds that of most other sports; (b) recognise the social and wellbeing benefits of retaining more than one affordable, full size 18-hole golf course within the boundaries of an ageing and growing city; (c) acknowledge the importance of retaining full size, competitive 18-hole golf as a means to enable young talent and future golf professionals to emerge and to potentially put Milton Keynes on the international golfing map; 	Cabinet	Head of Democratic Services

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5(b)(v)(cont)	<p>Saving Golf at Windmill Hill will benefit all MK Citizens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (d) conduct a full independent investigation into the finances of the Windmill Course that includes analysis of membership and pay and play / tee occupancy data; (e) unreservedly commit to the retention of a 18-hole full size golf course on the Windmill Hill site; and (f) ensure that all commercial options for the regeneration of the Windmill Site are fully explored to find a proposal that satisfies the commercial viability of the site, delivers for golfers and properly addresses the concerns of Windmill Hill neighbours. 		