

This report may be of interest to:

PARISH COUNCIL CONFERENCE 29 SEPTEMBER 2001

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To inform the assembly of the outcome of the Conference.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Conference was attended by a total of 81 delegates representing 29 Parish and Town Councils in Milton Keynes, Milton Keynes Council and other local bodies. The theme of the day was 'Visions for the Future – Building on the Past'. The speakers were: Brian Salter from MK Parks Trust, who spoke about Partnership working for the future and Sarah Thomas from NALC who gave a presentation on The Ethical Framework – Standards Committees. Delegates attended a 'nominated' morning Workshop – chosen from the following:

- ◆ Looking Ahead/Community Planning
- ◆ District Audit Procedures
- ◆ Planning & Transport Matters

All delegates attended a Communications Workshop in the afternoon.

3. Background

- 3.1 The event last September was the third Parish Conference, arranged by representatives from the Parish Councils and facilitated by Milton Keynes Council. They are viewed as an opportunity for Parish Councillors, Clerks and others involved in the working of Local Councils to get together and share views and experiences. There is also an opportunity to develop a particular topic within the Conference agenda.

4 **Overview of Conference Evaluation**

4.1 Feedback from the Conference showed the most useful aspects of the event to be equally split between :

- ◆ Networking/making contacts/food and the Speakers and the Workshops
- ◆ District Audit and Planning/Transport Workshops were regarded as the best of the workshops.

4.2 The feedback also showed:

- ◆ The Conference should continue to be held every year
- ◆ The day should be shortened
- ◆ There should be less time taken handing out leaflets etc.
- ◆ There should be smaller groups for the workshops
- ◆ Shorten the time for the workshops to enable delegates to attend more workshops
- ◆ More interaction/problem solving

4.3 The annual Conference has become a centre piece for Parish Councils within Milton Keynes as an opportunity to network and to develop new topics.

5. **Recommendations**

5.1 That the Assembly notes the outcome of the Conference and that the planning for the next annual Conference in 2002 will start next March.