



Minutes of the meeting of the MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on TUESDAY
10 NOVEMBER 2009 at 7.30 pm

Present: Councillor E Henderson (Mayor)
Councillors Barry, Bint, Box, Bristow, Brock, Burke, Butler-Ellis, Campbell, Carstens, S Clark, U Clarke, Coventry, Crooks, Dransfield, Drewett, Edwards, Exon, Ferrans, Fraser, Galloway, A Geary, P Geary, Gerrella, I Henderson, Hopkins, Hoyle, Jury, Klein, Lloyd, Mallyon, I McCall, McPake, Miles, A Morris, C Morris, O'Neill, Potts, Richards, Small, Tallack, Tamagnini-Barbosa, Tunney, Turnbull, Wharton, Williams and Wright.

Aldermen Howell and Saunders were also present

Apologies: Councillors Irons, Latham, D McCall and White and Alderman Ellis

Also Present: Mr C Fogden (Chair of the Standards Committee) and 4 members of the public

CL62 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13 October 2009 be approved and signed as a correct record, subject to the word 'Parish' being inserted before the word 'Review' in Clause (a) of Minute CL51(a).

CL63 ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Remembrance Day

The Mayor reminded Members that he would be leading a two minutes' silence in the entrance foyer at the Civic Offices on 11 November, in memory of those servicemen and women killed and injured in the service of their country. The Mayor invited Members and Senior Officers to join him.

2. Association of Public Service Excellence Award

The Mayor congratulated staff who had won the 'Best Service Team – Building / Facilities Cleaning' category at the Association of Public Service Excellence Awards after adopting a new system of keeping communal areas in the Council's flats much cleaner.

The Mayor announced that the Council had also reached the finals in the 'Best Service Team – Street Scene and Public Realm' and 'Overall Council of the Year in Service Delivery' categories.

3. Building Control Award

The Mayor congratulated the Council's Building Control team and PRP Architects who won the Best Partnership with a Local Authority Category at the recent national Local Authority Building Control Awards for their long standing work, which had resulted in more than 25 successful projects across Milton Keynes.

4. Youth Parliament

The Mayor announced that the two Youth MPs from Milton Keynes, Sean Barnes and Teja Bapuram, had recently attended a meeting of the National Youth Parliament which was held at the House of Commons. The Mayor congratulated the Youth MPs on attending the event.

The Mayor announced that Sean had participated in the debate about lowering the voting age to 16 and Dr Starkey had followed this up with a question to the Prime Minister.

5. "I'm a Councillor Get Me Out of Here"

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Potts who won "I'm a Councillor Get Me Out of Here", beating off strong competition from Councillors Butler-Ellis, Drewett, A Geary, Irons and White.

Councillor Potts had now become the Council's Youth Champion.

6. Milton Keynes Open for the World - World Cup Run

The Mayor announced that Members from both the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups had competed in the Milton Keynes Open for the World, World Cup Run on 31 October 2009, with the Conservative Group emerging triumphant.

CL64 BUSINESS REMAINING FROM LAST MEETING – STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2008/09

The Council noted the comments of the Audit Committee on the concerns of the District Auditor with regard to the Statement of Accounts 2008/09.

The Council also noted that the Cabinet had considered this matter at its meeting on 27 October 2009.

CL65 REPORTS FROM CABINET AND COMMITTEES

(a) Standards Committee Annual Report

The Council received the annual report of the Standards Committee.

The Chair of the Standards Committee answered questions from members of the public and Members of the Council.

In answer to questions, the Chair:

- (a) undertook to remind Parish Councils of the availability of training on Code of Conduct issues;
 - (b) provide Councillor Dransfield, if possible, with a comparison of costs in dealing with upheld complaints between Milton Keynes and other authorities;
 - (c) agreed to investigate the approach adopted by Buckinghamshire authorities in working with the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Parish Councils to provide advice to parish councils; and
 - (d) agreed to consider making representations to Standards for England about:
 - (i) developing advice for dealing with vexatious complaints; and
 - (ii) making Code of Conduct training compulsory for all Members.
- (b) Cabinet – 27 October 2009

Children and Young People's Plan 2009 - 11

Councillor S Clark moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet on 27 October 2009, which was seconded by Councillor Drewett:

“That the Children and Young People's Plan be approved and endorsed.”

The Council, in considering this item, heard from the Chair of the Children and Young People's Select Committee on that Committee's consideration of the Plan.

The Council also received the following statement from the Chief Executive in response to concerns by Members at the way in which the Select Committee's comments had been dealt with in the preparation of the Plan:

“With regard to the Children and Young People's Plan 2009-11, I would give Council an assurance that the Children's Trust and Children's Improvement Board will both formally see the comments from the Children and Young People's Select Committee and that an opportunity will be given for them to consider the items that officers have not included, with the reasons, and as set out in the note circulated to Members.

I would also express my support, and that of senior managers, for the new select committee structure and will ensure that the Corporate Leadership Team and all officers will have proper regard for the select committee process. The requirements / resolutions made by Councillors in that process will be given the consideration that is expected.”

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

RESOLVED –

That the Children and Young People's Plan be approved and endorsed.

CL66

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

- (a) Question from Councillor P Geary to Councillor Crooks (Leader of the Council)

Councillor P Geary referred to his previous questions concerning WiMax Broadband in Olney and asked Councillor Crooks if he accepted that he had never sent the original e-mail in response to his first question and when would Olney benefit from WiMax Broadband.

Councillor Crooks responded that he did not accept that the original e-mail had never been sent. With regard to the provision of WiMax Broadband in Olney, Councillor Crooks reported that as there was an Earth Station near to Bedford permission was needed from Ofcom to install WiMax Broadband in Olney and while this had been applied for the application could take a considerable time to be determined.

Councillor P Geary asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor Crooks.

- (b) Question from Councillor Bristow to Councillor Crooks (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Bristow asked Councillor Crooks if he could explain why the Council appeared to be charging residents a fee for them to report problems with rats.

Councillor Galloway (Cabinet Member for Environment, Planning and Growth), on behalf of Councillor Crooks, indicated that the current price for the service was £40, with reductions for persons on benefits. Councillor Galloway undertook to investigate and inform Councillor Bristow when any charge for dealing with reports of problems with rats was made, together with details of the number of reports received.

Councillor Bristow asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor Galloway.

- (c) Question from Councillor Hoyle to Councillor Crooks (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Hoyle asked Councillor Crooks, after giving an example, if it would not make sense to co-ordinate works to Council properties so that one set of works did not compromise and cause potential damage to other works recently completed.

Councillor Williams (Cabinet Member for Housing and Adult Social Care), on behalf of Councillor Crooks, agreed with Councillor Hoyle.

Councillor Hoyle asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor Williams.

- (d) Question from Councillor U Clarke to Councillor S Clark (Cabinet Member for Children)

Councillor U Clarke asked Councillor S Clark when he would be receiving an answer to the question he asked at the last meeting of the Council.

Councillor S Clark apologised that she had not responded and undertook to do so before the end of the week.

Councillor U Clarke asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor S Clark.

- (e) Question from Councillor Edwards to Councillor S Clark (Cabinet Member for Children)

Councillor Edwards asked Councillor S Clark as to the overall costs, the amount of any additional costs to the Council and the affect on schools of privatising the School Meals Service.

Councillor S Clark indicated that she would respond to Councillor Edwards if he provided the detail of his question in writing. However, since September she was not aware of any complaints from schools about the new provider of school meals.

Councillor Edwards asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor S Clark.

- (f) Question from Councillor A Geary to Councillor Crooks (Leader of the Council)

Councillor A Geary asked Councillor Crooks, if the upfront fee being asked for by the Football Association as part of the Council's bid to be a host city for England's bid to host the World Cup 2018, could be paid in conjunction with partners.

Councillor Crooks indicated that there were two sums of money associated with the City's bid. A sum of £15m which would be used to run the event, if England's bid was successful and would be met by partners across Milton Keynes and would include such costs as providing the Stadium, the FanFest site and other supporting infrastructure and services.

Councillor Crooks reported that there would also be a sum of £250,000 payable over the next two years to support the marketing of England's bid, which would be divided between the Council, Milton Keynes Partnership, the Business Community and MK Dons.

Councillor Crooks stressed that while it was important that the Council was seen to support the bid and the economic advantage it would potentially bring to Milton Keynes, there would be no levy on the Council Tax payer to fund these sums and any contribution should be capped.

Councillor A Geary asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor Crooks.

- (g) Question from Councillor Coventry to Councillor Ferrans (Cabinet Member for Community Strategy and Regeneration)

Councillor Coventry asked Councillor Ferrans for her definition of what regeneration should include on estates such as Tinkers Bridge.

Councillor Ferrans indicated that the regeneration would include the four types of capital identified by the Regeneration Strategy, which were broadly included people and skills, community relations, and the state of the estate, amongst others.

Councillor Coventry asked a supplementary question which Councillor Ferrans asked be provided in writing.

- (h) Question from Councillor Dransfield to Councillor Crooks (Leader of the Council).

Councillor Dransfield asked Councillor Crooks if he agreed that Councillor Clark had given a misleading impression earlier in the meeting by saying that schools' exam results in Milton Keynes were the eleventh most improved in the country when they were still in the lowest quartile and had only moved from 115th to 95th.

Councillor Crooks expressed the view that he did not understand why Councillor Dransfield and his colleagues continually sought to run down the achievements of the children of Milton Keynes. Councillor Crooks referred to a recent letter from an Education Minister commending the improvements being made by the Council over the last few months as a result of its new management team.

Councillor Dransfield asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor Crooks.

- (i) Question from Councillor Bint to Councillor Galloway (Cabinet Member for Environment, Planning and Growth)

Councillor Bint asked Councillor Galloway if he could confirm that he was aware:

- (i) of the increasing size of cars over the last decade;
- (ii) that the average size of garages in new properties receiving planning permission in Milton Keynes had not been increased; and

(iii) of the resulting trend for parking cars on the road

Councillor Galloway indicated that planning policy was set by the Council not the Cabinet, but agreed that the issue might need to be looked at as a result of a more general review of development control policies.

(j) Question from Councillor Small to Councillor S Clark (Cabinet Member for Children)

Councillor Small, referring to a previous question from him, asked Councillor S Clark if she was now able to provide details of the likely levels of compensation the Council would receive as a result of the early cancellation of the school meals contract by Sedexo.

Councillor Clark indicated that the information was almost available and she would hope to be able to supply an update by the end of the week.

CL67

BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

Councillor I Henderson moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor S Clark:

- “1. That this Council notes that:
 - (a) the buildings and facilities of many of the secondary schools in the Borough are among the finest in the UK;
 - (b) by contrast, four secondary schools (Leon, Lord Grey, the Newport Pagnell campus of Ousedale, and Radcliffe) and much of our secondary special provision are no longer fit for educating students in the 21st century;
 - (c) in addition, a number of other relatively old schools (such as Denbigh and Stantonbury) would benefit from significant capital investment;
 - (d) in the Government’s recent review of its Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, Milton Keynes just missed being included in the 2010/11 BSF starts programme; and
 - (e) the Council may well be offered inclusion in the first quarter of the 2011/12 BSF starts programme.
2. That the Council therefore recommends that the Cabinet:
 - (a) instructs the Director of Children’s Services to ensure that the necessary preparatory work is done so that the Council can respond credibly and positively to an invitation to submit a “Readiness to Deliver” bid at the first opportunity; and
 - (b) agrees to make every effort to invest the resources necessary to enable the Council to take full advantage

of the BSF programme at the earliest possible opportunity.”

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

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes that:
 - (a) the buildings and facilities of many of the secondary schools in the Borough are among the finest in the UK;
 - (b) by contrast, four secondary schools (Leon, Lord Grey, the Newport Pagnell campus of Ousedale, and Radcliffe) and much of our secondary special provision are no longer fit for educating students in the 21st century;
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 - (b) agrees to make every effort to invest the resources necessary to enable the Council to take full advantage of the BSF programme at the earliest possible opportunity.

CL68 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

The Council noted that Councillor Barry had been appointed as a member of the Health and Community Wellbeing Select Committee.

CL69 THE CROSS BOUNDARY MEMBERS’ REFERENCE GROUP

Further to Minute CL54(2)(b) of the meeting held on 13 October 2009, the Council received the Minutes of the meetings of the Cross Boundary Members’ Reference Group held on 21 February 2007, 28 February 2008, 23 June 2008, 8 September 2008, 3 December 2008, 16 March 2009, 9 July 2009 and 13 October 2009.

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

“That the resolution of the Council recorded in Minute CL54(2)(b) be taken forward in the first instance by referring the minutes of the meetings of the Cross Boundary Members' Reference Group, circulated with the agenda, to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, to be allocated for consideration by the appropriate Select Committee, with a view to developing appropriate guidelines for future Member and Officer engagement with the Cross Boundary Members' Reference Group and the process of developing Supplementary Planning Documents in relation to the South East and South West Special Development Areas.”

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried with 22 Members voting in favour, 18 Members voting against and 0 members abstaining from voting.

RESOLVED –

That the resolution of the Council recorded in Minute CL54(2)(b) be taken forward in the first instance by referring the minutes of the meetings of the Cross Boundary Members' Reference Group, circulated with the agenda, to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, to be allocated for consideration by the appropriate Select Committee, with a view to developing appropriate guidelines for future Member and Officer engagement with the Cross Boundary Members' Reference Group and the process of developing Supplementary Planning Documents in relation to the South East and South West Special Development Areas.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9.57 PM