



**WATCH LIVE**  
on MK Council's YouTube channel  
[www.youtube.com/MiltonKeynesCouncil](http://www.youtube.com/MiltonKeynesCouncil)



Minutes of the MEETING of the MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on  
WEDNESDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2021 at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Councillor Khan (Mayor)  
Councillors Alexander, Balazs, Baume, Bowyer, M Bradburn,  
R Bradburn, Brown, Carr, Clarke, Crooks, Cryer-Whitehead,  
Darlington, De Villiers, Ferrans, Fuller, P Geary, Gilbert, Hall,  
Hearnshaw, D Hopkins, V Hopkins, Hosking, Hume, Hussain, Imran,  
Jenkins, Lancaster, Legg, Marland, Marlow, McLean, McPake, Minns,  
Montague, Nazir, B Nolan, Z Nolan, Raja, Rankine, Reilly, Rolfe,  
Taylor, Townsend, Trendall, Verma, Walker, Wallis, Wardle and  
Wilson-Marklew.

Aldermen McKenzie and 11 members of the public.

**Apologies:** Councillors Baines, K Bradburn, Exon, A Geary, McQuillan, Middleton  
and Priestly and Aldermen Bartlett, Beeley, Bristow, Coventry,  
Henderson and Howell and Alderwomen Irons, Henderson, Lloyd and  
Saunders

**CL48 PROCEDURE**

RESOLVED:

That under Council Procedure Rule 2, Motion 6 (Afghan Refugees) be  
brought forward to become Motion 3 and that existing Motion 3  
(Fireworks) be moved back to become Motion 6.

**CL49 MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14 July 2021  
be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record, subject to  
the addition of the following words being added immediately before  
the resolution of Minute CL42 (g) (Question from Councillor McLean  
to Councillor Marland):

‘Prior to asking his question, and noting Councillor Wilson-Marklew’s  
absence, Councillor McLean enquired when he might receive an  
answer to his supplementary question to Councillor Wilson-Marklew  
from the previous Council meeting on 16 June’.

**CL50                   DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Jenkins disclosed a pecuniary interest in Item 5(b)(i) (Proposed Planning Reforms) as her business was impacted by the governments proposed planning changes.

**CL51                   ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor made announcements in respect of:

- (a) Local Paralympic success;
- (b) The recent wedding of Councillor Lancaster;
- (c) The International Festival;
- (d) The 'Summer of Play'; and
- (e) National architecture award for MK Gallery

**CL52                   PETITIONS**

The Council received a petition regarding the introduction of a 20 MPH speed limit on Watling Street and Great Brickhill Lane in Little Brickhill

Councillor Wilson-Marklew undertook to ask officers to investigate further and undertake a consultation with local residents.

**CL53                   QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

- (a) Question from Stephen Blakey to Councillor Wilson-Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate & Sustainability)

Stephen Blakey, referring to the extensive flooding in Stony Stratford in December 2020, asked Councillor Wilson-Marklew, what interventions did the Council believe were necessary at the bridge to improve the protection of Stony residents, when should these works happen and what steps were being taken by the Council to make them happen?

Councillor Wilson-Marklew indicated that the bridge and the nearby flood arches were the responsibility of Milton Keynes Council and were maintained by the Highways Team. The Council had no control over the river flow and no concerns about the riverbed or banks had been raised by the Environment Agency. The Council had reviewed the proposals suggested as part of the Section 19 investigation into the flood event and the consultants had made recommendations on work to the highways assets in the area. The investigation had also reviewed the raised land adjacent to the flood arches and identified opportunities to reduce flooding in the area by

carrying out capital works.

As a supplementary question, Stephen Blakey, asked Councillor Wilson-Marklew when physical intervention in the immediate vicinity of the arches would take place.

Councillor Wilson-Marklew indicated that she would provide a written response to this question.

- (b) Question from Ray Brady to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing & Healthy Communities)

Ray Brady, asked Councillor Darlington, why Milton Keynes homeless residents had been told that all applications had been stopped?

Councillor Darlington indicated that this was incorrect and the Council had not stopped homeless applications. Rather, that increased provision was being put in place for homeless people and rough sleepers.

As a supplementary question, Ray Brady asked Councillor Darlington, if that was indeed the case, why he had very recently been advised by a resident of the YMCA that all residents were being asked to leave their accommodation.

Councillor Darlington indicated that the YMCA was an independent organisation but as far as she was aware, they were not asking all residents to leave their accommodation. Councillor Darlington asked Mr Brady to put the relevant resident in touch with her directly if they had information to the contrary. Councillor Darlington stated that it was incorrect to say that the Council had changed their homeless services and to link it to the situation with the Afghan refugees, as Mr Brady had done in his written question.

- (c) Question from Tim Skelton to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Tim Skelton, referring to the recent government grant to the Council of £665,000, asked Councillor Marland to provide more information on this – in particular how the money would be spent and whether the Council would be engaging with the wider public as part of the feasibility exercise?

Councillor Marland indicated that the Council had ambitious plans for the next stage of Milton Keynes' growth and this money would help the Council explore ways to do this better including putting the 'I before E' – infrastructure before expansion. Councillor Marland indicated that the funding was to allow the Council to explore what may be needed to deliver

the long term growth strategy not a grant to fund the set up costs and processes for a new development corporation. The new funding would be utilised alongside the significant budget commitments to pay for the right kind of advice and support that was needed to determine what was needed to ensure the sustainable growth of Milton Keynes. The Council would work with a range of bodies and engage with the development and house building industry to consider how a stronger public-private partnership approach could share risk and reward and provide better quality development. Councillor Marland indicated that the Council would work with local communities and other stakeholder groups to ensure the benefits were shared and understood and to demonstrate that this was about delivering the Councils existing and emerging plans in the best possible way.

- (d) Question from Mary Lea (on behalf of Nick Burton) to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Mary Lea, asked Councillor Marland to provide assurance that this Council would do all in its power, including writing to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Transport, to ensure that as part of the East West Arc proposals the East West Rail was electrified from the start of operation, that Woburn Sands station was retained in its current position in order to minimise carbon based travel to the station and that Edgewick Farm and the nearby allotments were completely retained as green spaces in all future plans as Woburn Sands already had proportionally significant less green space than the rest of Milton Keynes.”

Councillor Marland indicated that it was already the policy of this Council to support Day 1 electrification of East West Rail. The matter had been raised consistently, including with a number of the Secretaries of State through the Central Area Growth Board and the Arc Leaders Group and the Council had also made a submission on the recent East West Rail consultation making the same point. Councillor Marland indicated that with regard to the position of the station that it would not be wise to make the undertaking that had been asked for as there was concern that inflexible opposition to any movement of the station would not result in the enhancement of the existing station but downgrading or removal of services completely. Councillor Marland added that he thought the Council should wait to see what the options might be for a

station at Woburn Sands rather than making any statements now. However he considered that any proposals to relocate the station significantly would have to demonstrate not just benefits to any new communities but continued easy walking access for the existing Woburn Sands community. Councillor Marland indicated that he was aware that ensuring that there was a future ability to cross the line at what was now Newport Road level crossing was also a high priority of the local community and there was strong opposition to East West Rail consultation plans to permanently close the level crossing. It was considered that it may not be possible to retain the current station position and some form of road crossing given the restrictions of the space. In terms of the allotments Councillor Marland did support their retention but noted that this consultation and work is the policy of East West Rail and they would have the final say and any compulsory purchase powers which may result from any decisions they make.

As a supplementary question, Mary Lea, asked Councillor Marland to clarify his response about Edgewick Farm and the allotments as she had been unable to hear it.

Councillor Marland advised that he would send a written response on the matter. However he did indicate that the Council would support the retention of the green space in principle but any final decision would ultimately be for East West Rail.

**CL54 BUSINESS REMAINING FROM THE LAST MEETING**

None.

**CL55 MAKING THE CASTLETHORPE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Councillor Marland (Cabinet member responsible for planning) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7 September 2021, which was seconded by Councillor Bowyer:

“Making of the Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan Review

That Council be recommended to make the Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan Review pursuant to the provisions of Section 38(A)(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.”

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

That the Council makes the Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan Review pursuant to the provisions of Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**CL56**

**COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS**

- (a) Question from Councillor Alexander to Councillor Wilson Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate & Sustainability)

Councillor Alexander, referring to the Demand Responsive Transport service, asked Councillor Wilson-Marklew, as the service progresses were there any plans to improve the service particularly with regard to accessibility.

Councillor Wilson-Marklew indicated that the Council continued to look to increasing vehicle numbers as wait times were not currently where she would like them to be. At the six month review she would request officers to address accessibility issues particularly for those who were in wheelchairs or had hidden disabilities.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Alexander asked Councillor Wilson-Marklew whether there were now plans to pick up more than one passenger at a time as his driver on a recent trip had informed him this wasn't the current practice.

Councillor Wilson-Marklew advised that this information was not correct and she would review with officers to ensure that drivers had the correct information about the service.

- (b) Question from Councillor Rankine to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Rankine, referring to proposals from Evolve for the Windmill Hill Golf Course, asked Councillor Marland what the current status of the proposals was and what were the plans for it going forward.

Councillor Marland indicated that he would ask Councillor Middleton to provide a written response to Councillor Rankine.

- (c) Question from Councillor Reilly to Councillor Darlington  
(Cabinet member for Adults, Housing & Healthy Communities)
- Councillor Reilly, referring to the increase in National Insurance, asked Councillor Darlington whether this tax increase would solve the social care crisis facing Milton Keynes Council.
- Councillor Darlington indicated that while she supported more money for the NHS and for Adult Social Care there were fairer ways to raise these funds and what was proposed would make no improvement to the social care services delivered by local government.
- (d) Question from Councillor Hussain to Councillor Robin Bradburn  
(Cabinet member for Economy, Recovery & Renewal)
- Councillor Hussain, asked Councillor R Bradburn if he could advise the Council what further support would be available for our high streets after a difficult eighteen months.
- Councillor R Bradburn indicated that Councillor Marland had recently taken a delegated decision that set out £2.335 million from the Additional Restrictions Grant to continue supporting businesses including funding for promoting the city centre and towards supporting our town high streets.
- (e) Question from Councillor Lancaster to Councillor Townsend  
(Cabinet member for Public Realm)
- Councillor Lancaster, referring to unauthorised encampments, asked Councillor Townsend why the Council had not spent the remaining budget to improve security at sensitive sites.
- Councillor Townsend indicated that bunds had been put in place at older hot spots. Several places had been identified for security gates and bunds however discussion was required with the land users as to whether these would be appropriate methods to restrict access. If Ward Councillors had any specific sites they were concerned about they should contact Councillor Townsend who would ensure they were investigated.
- (f) Question from Councillor Rolfe to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing & Healthy Communities)
- Councillor Rolfe, referring to the demolition of Mellish Court, asked Councillor Darlington what measures would be put in place to minimise the impact on neighbouring streets and the local community.

Councillor Darlington indicated that as part of the plans for the demolition, everything possible was being done to minimise disruption for local residents.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Rolfe asked Councillor Darlington, whether she would investigate residents' concerns about access problems in streets surrounding the school if Mellish Avenue was closed as part of the demolition work.

Councillor Darlington indicated that the health and safety of children and their parents travelling to schools was a priority and that she would check the exclusion plans for this area. Road closures and diversions would be published when they had been confirmed.

- (g) Question from Councillor Hall to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Hall, referring to the lack of progress with progressing the New Town Heritage Register over the last 18 months, asked Councillor Marland what was the target date for completing this exercise.

Councillor Marland indicated that unfortunately the process had been delayed due to other priorities as a result of the impact of Covid-19. Officers were beginning work to review the nominations, develop a process and would look to appoint a panel before the end of the year.

- (h) Question from Councillor P Geary to Councillor Z Nolan (Cabinet member for Children & Families)

Councillor P Geary, referring to the fact that home to school transport was not provided for the first day of term for students at Olney Middle School, asked Councillor Z Nolan why a significant number of pupils were not provided with transport.

Councillor Z Nolan indicated that she was not aware of this particular issue and would ask officers to investigate.

As a supplementary question, Councillor P Geary asked Councillor Z Nolan were officers aware when schools started back and why this particular school and the parents were not informed that there would not be a bus to take them to school on the first day of term.

Councillor Z Nolan indicated that she would ask officers to investigate the concerns raised.

- (i) Question from Councillor Hume to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing & Healthy Communities)

Councillor Hume, referring to the recent government announcement on funding for adult social care, asked Councillor Darlington if she had been given any detail on how this would affect services the Council provided?

Councillor Darlington indicated that there had been very little detail provided by the government to date. However, it was understood that the majority of the funding would go to the NHS and it was unfair that social care had been identified as the reason for the increase but not for the government to be clear as to how the increase in tax would improve the social care sector.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Hume, asked Councillor Darlington, as more people want to live in their homes longer and as independently as possible, will the government's plan fund people to live their best life as they age or if they have a disability?

Councillor Darlington indicated that unfortunately it did not seem that this area of social care would be funded and that the government announcement would do nothing to meet the need for services that residents were asking for.

- (j) Question from Councillor Walker to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Walker, referring to the fact that Oakbridge Estate had missed out on the latest rollout of fibre optic broadband due to the number of roads on the estate that were yet to be adopted, asked if the Cabinet member responsible would encourage highways to adopt the remaining roads on the estate so the area could secure super-fast broadband in the next project round?

Councillor Marland indicated that he was aware of the issue and was in contact with City Fibre. The roads did meet the standard for adoption however there was an issue with the developer which officers were addressing. Councillor Marland would ask officers to provide Councillor Walker with an update.

- (k) Question from Councillor D Hopkins to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing & Healthy Communities)

Councillor D Hopkins, referring to recent incidents at supported living accommodation at Glebe Farm, asked Councillor Darlington if she would work with him to identify how these issues came about and why the Council had commissioned an operator to provide these services in this location and whether the use of the buildings for this was a breach of planning rules.

Councillor Darlington indicated that it was not a breach of planning rules and she had made herself available to meet with the local MPs and with Councillor D Hopkins to discuss any concerns. Councillor Darlington noted that care in the community was an important part of allowing disabled people to live as normal lives as possible.

As a supplementary question, Councillor D Hopkins, asked Councillor Darlington whether she thought now was a good time to undertake a consultation and general review of supported living services in the borough.

Councillor Darlington indicated that while she wasn't against reviewing services the focus of the team was on opening up and increasing services post the pandemic and ensuring that people being cared for in the community received the right support and were welcomed by the local community.

- (l) Question from Councillor McLean to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor McLean, referring to the major system outage that the Council recently experienced, asked Councillor Marland, were the Council systems protected by uninterruptable power supply and when was a disaster recovery test last carried out to simulate a power outage?

Councillor Marland indicated that he would ask Councillor Middleton to provide Councillor McLean with a written response on this matter.

As a supplementary question, Councillor McLean, referring to the fact that systems were recovered at various points during the day so that tip bookings became available very early on but people could not access the call centre to book a DRT trip, asked would the Cabinet member review the priority of restoration of services?

Councillor Marland indicated that an answer to this would be included in the written response from Councillor Middleton.

- (m) Question from Councillor Wardle to Councillor Townsend (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Wardle, referring to the weekly emails he receives from residents on missed waste collections, asked Councillor Townsend would the administration reassure residents that services would improve?

Councillor Townsend indicated that there were issues with food and waste collections due to the 'Pingdemic' and the HGV driver shortages. The Council was liaising closely with Serco who had put new local management in place and hoped that normal service would resume shortly. Councillor Townsend further noted that Councillors should make contact if there were any missed streets in their wards as there was now a system in place to flag individual streets.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Wardle, asked Councillor Townsend how was Serco being held accountable and could she provide reassurance to residents that Serco would be held to account for their underperformance.

Councillor Townsend indicated that the contract with Serco was not signed by the current administration and the penalty clauses in the current contract were poor. As she had previously indicated there was new local management in place and communication had improved and she was hopeful that the service would be back to normal in a few weeks.

**CL57**

### **PROPOSED PLANNING REFORMS**

Councillor Crooks moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Ferrans:

- “1. That this Council notes the widespread opposition to the government's proposed planning reforms, as evidenced in the Chesham & Amersham by-election result.
2. That this Council re-iterates its commitment in the September 2020 'Planning for the Future' motion, to build more houses approved through a community-led planning system where decisions throughout the process are taken by elected councillors balancing policies in Neighbourhood Plans with a Council-wide Local Plan, and the views of residents.
3. That this Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to send this motion to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government, and to the city's two Members of Parliament,

to invite their comments.”

Councillor Walker moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Bowyer

- “1. That the word ‘opposition’ be removed and replaced with ‘concern’ in clause 1.
2. That the words “as evidenced in the Chesham & Amersham by-election result” be removed from clause 1.
3. That an additional clause 3 be added:  
‘that this Council does, however, recognise the need for a modern planning system that improves the quality of placemaking and increases the engagement from local residents by supporting the rights of communities to be able to engage easily in the planning process.

and that existing clause 3. be renumbered accordingly.”

On being put to the vote the amendment to the motion was lost.

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

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes the widespread opposition to the government's proposed planning reforms, as evidenced in the Chesham & Amersham by-election result.
2. That this Council re-iterates its commitment in the September 2020 ‘Planning for the Future’ motion, to build more houses approved through a community-led planning system where decisions throughout the process are taken by elected councillors balancing policies in Neighbourhood Plans with a Council-wide Local Plan, and the views of residents.
3. That this Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to send this motion to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government, and to the city's two Members of Parliament, to invite their comments.

## **CL58**

### **BETTER RESOURCING FOR MK POLICE**

Councillor Trendall moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Townsend:

- “1. That this Council notes:
  - a) that Milton Keynes is the largest town in the eastern region by both size and population;
  - b) that Milton Keynes has a unique urban environment which includes over 1,200km of roads, 1,400km of

footpaths, 350 kms of redways, and over 200,000 homes, whilst still being 40% rural in nature;

- c) that complaints concerning drug-related crime, theft from and of vehicles, distraction thefts from homes, street racing on the grid roads, excessive speed on our estate roads, illegal parking on our streets, and violent offences, including knife crime, are on the increase;
  - d) that police stations have been closed to the public or had their operating hours curtailed;
  - e) that policing numbers have failed to recover, as promised, from the disastrous headcount cuts inflicted on all police services by the government; and
  - f) that the fear of crime in the borough is rising, and as it does quality of life declines.
2. That this Council resolves to request the Leader and Chief Executive to write to the Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley to ask by when the police service in Milton Keynes will be sufficiently resourced commensurate with a town of its size and population and fit for purpose.”

Councillor McLean moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Walker:

- “1. That the words ‘complaints concerning’ be removed and replaced with ‘concerns about’ in clause 1. (c)
- 2. That the words ‘are on the increase’ be removed and replaced with ‘have increased since the lockdown restrictions have been removed’ in clause 1. (c)
- 3. That clause 1. (d) be removed and replaced with a new clause 1. (d):  
  
over the past decade police forces have responded the change in trends policing such as online crime which has increased significantly in the past decade;
- 4. That clause 1. (e) be removed and replaced with a new clause 1. (e):  
  
acknowledges that the number of police officers fell across the country from 2010-2019, but remained stable in Milton Keynes, and praises the government for its drive to hire 20,000 more police officer, with nearly 9,000 officers already having been recruited and 245 of these being in the Thames Valley region;

5. That an additional clause 1. (f) be added:  
praises the government for increasing funding to Thames Valley Police by £12.6m for 2021/22;  
and that existing clause 1. (f) be renumbered accordingly
6. That the words 'to ask by when the police service in Milton Keynes will be sufficiently resourced commensurate with a town of its size and population and fit for purpose' are removed and replaced with 'to ensure that Milton Keynes is always appropriately resourced to tackle the level of crimes we are facing' in clause 2.
7. That an additional clause 3. be added:  
That this Council resolves to ask Cabinet and officers to play an active part in tackling crime and the perception of crime in MK and to use its assets and partnerships to engage with communities and drive down crime."

The Council heard from one member of the public during consideration of this item.

On being put to the vote the amendment to the motion was lost.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That this Council notes:
  - a) that Milton Keynes is the largest town in the eastern region by both size and population;
  - b) that Milton Keynes has a unique urban environment which includes over 1,200km of roads, 1,400km of footpaths, 350 kms of redways, and over 200,000 homes, whilst still being 40% rural in nature;
  - c) that complaints concerning drug-related crime, theft from and of vehicles, distraction thefts from homes, street racing on the grid roads, excessive speed on our estate roads, illegal parking on our streets, and violent offences, including knife crime, are on the increase;
  - d) that police stations have been closed to the public or had their operating hours curtailed;
  - e) that policing numbers have failed to recover, as promised, from the disastrous headcount cuts inflicted on all police services by the government; and

- f) that the fear of crime in the borough is rising, and as it does quality of life declines.
2. That this Council resolves to request the Leader and Chief Executive to write to the Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley to ask by when the police service in Milton Keynes will be sufficiently resourced commensurate with a town of its size and population and fit for purpose.

**CL59**

**AFGHAN REFUGEES**

Councillor Darlington moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Carr:

- “1. That this Council notes:
- a) Milton Keynes grew from families who came from somewhere else, searching for a better life, just like those who are fleeing the Taliban. In MK they have been met with love, and open arms and received with an open mind. We are already home to the Hazarra community and so many others which enrich our culture;
  - b) As a city which welcomes, it was no surprise that the most recent arrivals would be met with immense generosity; and the scale of donations has been unprecedented. Families who have arrived with little but the clothes on their backs have found a city which has channelled the spirit of the foodbank and the community fridge into donations ranging from clothes to toys and toiletries to telephones;
  - c) We cannot expect local charity to sustain our new citizens over the long-term. The Council has responded, but emergency accommodation needs to be followed by sustainable support; and
  - d) Many will move on to new cities, after their welcome to Britain in MK, but the government must support councils to support, resettle and integrate them fully into the communities in which they will start their new lives. If these needs are not met with new and additional funding, councils will be forced to make cuts in order to provide for new arrivals.
2. That this Council calls on the Government to:
- a) Immediately update the official guidance on whether people from Afghanistan are accepted as refugees in the UK; to reflect the new context ensuring those fleeing

persecution in are granted rapid protection;

- b) Implement a, fast-track procedure producing rapid decisions through safety-first processes to provide protection to the approximately 3,000 Afghans already in the UK asylum system, and for those lodging new claims for protection;
- c) Immediately suspend all forcible returns of Afghans who have sought asylum in the UK to Afghanistan, and release any in detention given that we cannot return anyone now;
- d) Commit that no Afghan will have their claim for asylum ruled inadmissible or face extradition to a third country, regardless of how they have had to travel to the UK;
- e) Allow family members from Afghanistan to join those already settled in Britain; and ensure existing applications for family reunion are fast-tracked;
- f) Provide emergency humanitarian visas for people who need to get out of Afghanistan and come to the UK safely to claim asylum;
- g) Ensure funding for councils to help house their fair share of families;
- h) Additional support for schools to ensure English catch up especially for girls;
- i) Adequately fund councils and the NHS to provide mental health programmes focussing in post-traumatic stress being experienced by these families;
- j) Ensure that those Afghans that also have British citizenship receive the same housing financial support from the government as the Afghan refugees;
- k) The council recognises these arrivals are heroes, and they deserve a hero's welcome. Many refugees must risk their lives to escape from the horrors they face. Many are simply not able to do this through official schemes such as a resettlement programme;
- l) The Council calls upon the government to listen to the United Nations concerning asylum, and withdraw the Nationality and Border Bill before it becomes law and costs people seeking protection in the UK their lives; and

- m) Now that the Kabul airlift is over, the government needs to agree to a fundamental rethink of the Bill which would criminalise genuine refugees fleeing for their lives anyway they can.”

The Council heard from one member of the public during consideration of this item.

The Motion was carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

1. That this Council notes:
  - a) Milton Keynes grew from families who came from somewhere else, searching for a better life, just like those who are fleeing the Taliban. In MK they have been met with love, and open arms and received with an open mind. We are already home to the Hazarra community and so many others which enrich our culture;
  - b) As a city which welcomes, it was no surprise that the most recent arrivals would be met with immense generosity; and the scale of donations has been unprecedented. Families who have arrived with little but the clothes on their backs have found a city which has channelled the spirit of the foodbank and the community fridge into donations ranging from clothes to toys and toiletries to telephones;
  - c) We cannot expect local charity to sustain our new citizens over the long-term. The Council has responded, but emergency accommodation needs to be followed by sustainable support; and
  - d) Many will move on to new cities, after their welcome to Britain in MK, but the government must support councils to support, resettle and integrate them fully into the communities in which they will start their new lives. If these needs are not met with new and additional funding, councils will be forced to make cuts in order to provide for new arrivals.
2. That this Council calls on the Government to:
  - a) Immediately update the official guidance on whether people from Afghanistan are accepted as refugees in the UK; to reflect the new context ensuring those fleeing persecution in are granted rapid protection;

- b) Implement a, fast-track procedure producing rapid decisions through safety-first processes to provide protection to the approximately 3,000 Afghans already in the UK asylum system, and for those lodging new claims for protection;
- c) Immediately suspend all forcible returns of Afghans who have sought asylum in the UK to Afghanistan, and release any in detention given that we cannot return anyone now;
- d) Commit that no Afghan will have their claim for asylum ruled inadmissible or face extradition to a third country, regardless of how they have had to travel to the UK;
- e) Allow family members from Afghanistan to join those already settled in Britain; and ensure existing applications for family reunion are fast-tracked;
- f) Provide emergency humanitarian visas for people who need to get out of Afghanistan and come to the UK safely to claim asylum;
- g) Ensure funding for councils to help house their fair share of families;
- h) Additional support for schools to ensure English catch up especially for girls;
- i) Adequately fund councils and the NHS to provide mental health programmes focussing in post-traumatic stress being experienced by these families;
- j) Ensure that those Afghans that also have British citizenship receive the same housing financial support from the government as the Afghan refugees;
- k) The council recognises these arrivals are heroes, and they deserve a hero's welcome. Many refugees must risk their lives to escape from the horrors they face. Many are simply not able to do this through official schemes such as a resettlement programme;
- l) The Council calls upon the government to listen to the United Nations concerning asylum, and withdraw the Nationality and Border Bill before it becomes law and costs people seeking protection in the UK their lives; and

- m) Now that the Kabul airlift is over, the government needs to agree to a fundamental rethink of the Bill which would criminalise genuine refugees fleeing for their lives anyway they can.

**CL60**

**TACKLING VIOLENT CRIME**

Councillor McLean moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Raja:

- “1. That this Council notes:
  - (a) Milton Keynes has in recent months witnessed a number of disturbing incidents of violent crime in our communities;
  - (b) violent crime causes mental health repercussions, potentially life-changing or life-altering injuries and in some cases, death;
  - (c) the impact that violent crime has on the families of the victims and the perpetrators of the crime.; and
  - (d) violent crime can cause communities to be fearful and anxious of safety in their areas and the affect this can have on mental wellbeing.
- 2. That this Council:
  - (a) understands that despite there being a perception of violent crime incidents increasing, there should be an acknowledgement that violent crime has fallen with knife crime down 11%, robbery down 34.5% and violence with injury down 5.1% from July 2020 to June 2021;
  - (b) notes that in overall terms crime in Milton Keynes has reduced by 9%, excluding fraud, in the same period;
  - (b) praises the Government for introducing The Beating Crime Plan focused on tackling serious violence and neighbourhood crimes; and
  - (c) acknowledges the Government’s efforts to tackle violent crime and the root causes of violent crime, most recently through their £1.8m additional funding for the Thames Valley Police Violence Reduction Unit for 2021/22.
- 3. That this Council resolves to:
  - (a) request that the SaferMK board renews its focus and develops a strategy to combat violent crime and the root causes of violent crime;

- (b) encourages the Cabinet to use all available assets to support the PCC, Thames Valley Police and other local stakeholders in tackling violent crime; and
- (c) request that as part of the 2022/23 budget, the Cabinet looks at all potential options to reduce incidents of violent crime, the impact it has on victims and the communities in which it occurs, across the Borough of Milton Keynes.”

Councillor Trendall moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Townsend.

- “1. That existing clause 2. (a) be deleted and replaced with a new clause 2. (a):
 

‘welcomes that reported violent crime has fallen in the period July 2020 to June 2021, but notes this period includes extended periods of lockdown, during which crime fell nationally, largely because of the reduced number of opportunities for violent incidents to occur or for people to associate in groups’
2. That the words ‘excluding fraud’ be removed from clause 2. (b) and additional wording ‘but notes also that this excludes fraud and accurately recorded incidents of domestic abuse which have both increased’ be added at the end of clause 2. (b).
3. That the word ‘praises’ be removed and replaced with ‘is pleased’, that the words ‘for introducing’ be removed and replaced with ‘has brought forward’ and that the words ‘and wants to see this plan become reality’ be added at the end of clause 2. (c).
4. That the words ‘most recently through their £1.8m additional funding for the Thames Valley Police Violence Reduction Unit for 2021/22’ be removed and replaced with ‘requires more funding to be effective, and the recent additional funding of £1.8m for 2021/22 for the Thames Valley Police Violence Reduction Unit must be increased to be effective’ in clause 2. (d).
5. That the words ‘renews its focus and’ be removed and the words ‘aligned with the police responsibility’ be added after ‘strategy’ to clause 3. (a).
6. That the words ‘to use all available assets’ and ‘Thames Valley Police and other local stakeholders in tackling violent crime’ be removed from clause 3. (b) and that the words ‘in their efforts to adequately resource policing in Milton Keynes’ be added at the end of the same clause.

7. That the words 'how best to use current resources to assist the PCC in fulfilling their duty to tackle' be added after the words 'the Cabinet looks at', that the words 'all potential options to reduce incidents of' be deleted and that the word 'and' be added after the words 'violent crime,' in clause 3. (c)."

The Council heard from one member of the public during consideration of this item.

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

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

RESOLVED:

1. That this Council notes:
  - (a) Milton Keynes has in recent months witnessed a number of disturbing incidents of violent crime in our communities;
  - (b) violent crime causes mental health repercussions, potentially lifechanging or life-altering injuries and in some cases, death;
  - (c) the impact that violent crime has on the families of the victims and the perpetrators of the crime.; and
  - (d) violent crime can cause communities to be fearful and anxious of safety in their areas and the affect this can have on mental wellbeing.
2. That this Council:
  - (a) welcomes that reported violent crime has fallen in the period July 2020 to June 2021, but notes this period includes extended periods of lockdown, during which crime fell nationally, largely because of the reduced number of opportunities for violent incidents to occur or for people to associate in groups;
  - (b) notes that in overall terms crime in Milton Keynes has reduced by 9% in the same period but notes also that this excludes fraud and accurately recorded incidents of domestic abuse which have both increased;
  - (c) is pleased the Government has brought forward "The Beating Crime Plan" focused on tackling serious violence and neighbourhood crimes, and wants to see this plan become reality; and

- (d) acknowledges the Government's efforts to tackle violent crime and the root causes of violent crime requires more funding to be effective, and the recent additional funding of £1.8m for 2021/22 for the Thames Valley Police Violence Reduction Unit must be increased to be effective.
3. That this Council resolves to:
- (a) request that the SaferMK board develops a strategy aligned with the police responsibility to combat violent crime and the root causes of violent crime;
  - (b) encourages the Cabinet to support the PCC in their efforts to adequately resource policing in Milton Keynes; and
  - (c) request that as part of the 2022/23 budget, the Cabinet looks at how best to use current resources to assist the PCC in fulfilling their duty to tackle violent crime, and the impact it has on victims and the communities in which it occurs, across the Borough of Milton Keynes.

## **CL61**

### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

Councillor D Hopkins moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Walker:

- "1. That this Council notes:
- a) the very real commitment across the chamber to support measures as set out in this Council's unanimously agreed 2019 declaration of a climate emergency, the subsequent Task and Finish Group recommendations and the Council's 2030 carbon reduction commitments: and
  - b) as recently set out in the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change working group report<sup>1</sup> that if left unchecked, climate change will render vast swathes of the world (including parts of the United Kingdom) uninhabitable and trigger a huge upsurge in poverty, mass migration and political instability that will have ramifications across the planet.
2. That this Council asks the leaders of all Political Groups to jointly sign a letter to the Prime Minister which reflects the above and that additionally:

---

<sup>1</sup> Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis (The Working Group I contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)

- a) sets out the expectations of residents and businesses in Milton Keynes for real, measurable, and accountable progress to be made at COP26;
  - b) calls upon the Prime Minister and the COP26 President, Alok Sharma MP to lead by example, by mandating priorities and enabling solutions, such as has been achieved with offshore wind (which is now proving to be cheaper than gas fired electricity generation);
  - c) calls upon government to support Milton Keynes in its desire to attract new emerging green technology-based companies to invest in the so-called Oxford / Cambridge Arc and in Milton Keynes in particular; and
  - d) calls upon the Prime Minister and COP26 President to fully support the three ambitions of COP26:
    - i) Secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach.
    - ii) Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats.
    - iii) Mobilise finance internationally.
3. That this Council further resolves:
- a) to add its voice to calls by all parties at the Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport for the creation of a joint local and national government task force to plan action to reach net zero emissions; and
  - b) agrees that work of the task force should be focused on assisting and enabling local communities and economies to decarbonise whilst remaining resilient and sustainable by setting appropriate regulations, benchmarks and targets, and creating much-needed long-term funding mechanisms.
4. That this Council requests that the Cabinet commit to produce a Climate Emergency Supplementary Planning document (SPD) as part of the Plan:MK 2 preparatory work that, among many other elements, would contain commitments to deploy nature-based solutions to tackle climate change such as extensive tree planting and the revitalisation of our hedgerows.”

The Council heard from three members of the public during consideration of this item.

The Motion was carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

“1. That this Council notes:

- a) the very real commitment across the chamber to support measures as set out in this Council’s unanimously agreed 2019 declaration of a climate emergency, the subsequent Task and Finish Group recommendations and the Council’s 2030 carbon reduction commitments: and
- b) as recently set out in the United Nation’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change working group report<sup>2</sup> that if left unchecked, climate change will render vast swathes of the world (including parts of the United Kingdom) uninhabitable and trigger a huge upsurge in poverty, mass migration and political instability that will have ramifications across the planet.

2. That this Council asks the leaders of all Political Groups to jointly sign a letter to the Prime Minister which reflects the above and that additionally:

- a) sets out the expectations of residents and businesses in Milton Keynes for real, measurable, and accountable progress to be made at COP26;
- b) calls upon the Prime Minister and the COP26 President, Alok Sharma MP to lead by example, by mandating priorities and enabling solutions, such as has been achieved with offshore wind (which is now proving to be cheaper than gas fired electricity generation);
- c) calls upon government to support Milton Keynes in its desire to attract new emerging green technology-based companies to invest in the so-called Oxford / Cambridge Arc and in Milton Keynes in particular; and
- d) calls upon the Prime Minister and COP26 President to fully support the three ambitions of COP26:
  - i) Secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach.
  - ii) Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats.
  - iii) Mobilise finance internationally.

---

<sup>2</sup> Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis (The Working Group I contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)

3. That this Council further resolves:
  - a) to add its voice to calls by all parties at the Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport for the creation of a joint local and national government task force to plan action to reach net zero emissions; and
  - b) agrees that work of the task force should be focused on assisting and enabling local communities and economies to decarbonise whilst remaining resilient and sustainable by setting appropriate regulations, benchmarks and targets, and creating much-needed long-term funding mechanisms.
4. That this Council requests that the Cabinet commit to produce a Climate Emergency Supplementary Planning document (SPD) as part of the Plan:MK 2 preparatory work that, among many other elements, would contain commitments to deploy nature-based solutions to tackle climate change such as extensive tree planting and the revitalisation of our hedgerows.

**CL62**

**FIREWORKS**

Councillor Clarke moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor R Bradburn:

- “1. That this Council resolves to ask the Cabinet member for Customer Services and the Director of Policy, Insight and Communications:
  - a) to encourage all public firework displays within our boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people;
  - b) actively to promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks; and
  - c) to encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display.

2. To ask the Chief Executive to write to the Government urging it to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays.”

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

RESOLVED:

1. That this Council resolves to ask the Cabinet member for Customer Services and the Director of Policy, Insight and Communications:
  - a) to encourage all public firework displays within our boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people;
  - b) actively to promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks; and
  - c) to encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display.
2. To ask the Chief Executive to write to the Government urging it to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays.

**CL63 QUARTERLY REPORT SPECIAL URGENCY**

The Council received a quarterly report on special urgency decisions.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

**CL64 WARD BASED BUDGETS**

The Council received a report on the Ward Based Budgets for 2020/21.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10:42 PM

[The recording of this meeting is available to view on the Council’s YouTube Channel at: https://www.youtube.com/user/MiltonKeynesCouncil](https://www.youtube.com/user/MiltonKeynesCouncil)