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**ITEM 1**

Minutes of the MEETING of the MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on WEDNESDAY 14 JULY 2021 at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Councillor Khan (Mayor)  
Councillors Alexander, Baines, Balazs, Bowyer, M Bradburn, R Bradburn, Carr, Clarke, Cryer-Whitehead, Darlington, Exon, A Geary, P Geary, Gilbert, Hall, Hearnshaw, D Hopkins, Hosking, Hume, Hussain, Imran, Jenkins, Lancaster, Legg, Marland, Marlow, McLean, McPake, McQuillan, Middleton, Minns, Montague, Nazir, B Nolan, Z Nolan, Priestly, Rankine, Reilly, Townsend, Trendall, Walker, Wallis and Wardle.

Aldermen McKenzie and 10 members of the public.

**Apologies:** Councillors Baume, K Bradburn, Brown, Crooks, De Villiers, Ferrans, Fuller, V Hopkins, Raja, Rolfe, Taylor, Verma and Wilson-Marklew and Aldermen Bartlett, Beeley, Bristow, Coventry, Henderson and Howell and Alderwomen Irons, Henderson, Lloyd and Saunders

**CL31 MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 16 June 2021 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**CL32 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors D Hopkins and Middleton advised for transparency, that in relation to Item 5(c)(i) and (ii) they were their groups representatives on the Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) Board. Neither councillor had taken any part in the decision making on these matters by the MKDP Board.

Councillors Hussain and Townsend advised for transparency, that with regard to Item 5(c)(ii) they were residents of Wolverton. Having taken advice, they did not believe that this constituted a disclosable pecuniary interest, or personal interest as the decision would not affect them to a greater extent than the majority of residents in the electoral ward of Wolverton.

**CL33 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor made announcements in respect of:

- (a) The Civic Service;
- (b) The European Championships; and
- (c) The death of Richard Woodcock.

**CL34 PETITIONS**

The Council received a petition regarding the introduction of traffic calming measures for Newton Road, Bletchley.

The Leader of the Council undertook to ask Highways Officers to continue their investigations and explore options with residents.

**CL35 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

- (a) Question from Nana Oguntola to Councillor Townsend (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Nana Oguntola, referring to a lack of road signs in Lascelles Close, Venable Lane and Orne Gardens, asked Councillor Townsend if she considered this was a valid concern and would she place it on an urgent to do list so residents can get some relief.

Councillor Townsend undertook to meet residents to understand their issues with the lack of road signs.

- (b) Question from Andrew Carr to Councillor Townsend (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Andrew Carr, referring to the floods in December and again in June, asked Councillor Townsend to provide assurances that the road side drains would be cleaned, especially in those areas that regularly flood and that all storm drains in Newport Pagnell would be cleaned annually, with priority given to those roads that regularly flood.

Councillor Townsend indicated that the highways gully cleaning programme was moving towards an asset led approach so would be prioritised on the basis of most in need. Any roads that had experienced flooding recently or in the past fall into that category. There had been some budget allocated to bring a second gully cleaning team on board so this would provide greater capacity than in previous years. Drain maintenance overall was about much more than just gullies so the Council was also liaising with Anglian Water and other Lead Local Flood Authorities to ensure maintenance of full and deeper drainage

systems was carried out regularly.

**CL36 BUSINESS REMAINING FROM THE LAST MEETING**

None.

**CL37 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Mayor moved and the Deputy Mayor seconded “that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the confidential annexes in respect of item 5(c)(ii) on the grounds that the report involves the likely disclosure of information as defined in Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the Financial or Business Affairs of the Authority) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972”.

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

RESOLVED:

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the confidential annexes in respect of item 5(c)(ii) on the grounds that the report involves the likely disclosure of information as defined in Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the Financial or Business Affairs of the Authority) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972.

**CL38 CORPORATE PARENTING REPORT**

Councillor M Bradburn (Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 22 June 2021, which was seconded by Councillor McQuillan:

“That the Council receive the Corporate Parenting Annual Report”

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Annual Report be received.

**CL39 ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT**

Councillor Montague (Chair of the Audit Committee) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 30 June 2021, which was seconded by Councillor Minns:

“That the Council receive the Annual Audit Report.”

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Audit Report be received.

**CONSTRUCTION WORKS AT THE LAKES, BLETCHLEY AND THE DEMOLITION OF SERPENTINE COURT**

Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities) moved the following recommendations from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 July 2021, which was seconded by Councillor Marland:

1. "That the remaining capital resource allocation needed to construct the revised Phase A project at the Lakes Estate of £61,650,000, which includes the demolition of Serpentine Court and acquisition of additional land for the Stoke Road development (being brought forward from Phase B) from MKDP, and £2.35m in disruption payment, be approved; and
2. Specific allocation of this capital resource to be delegated to the Director of Environment and Property and the Director of Finance and Resources in consultation with Cabinet Member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities, with a spend approval of £0.950m being agreed immediately, to allow the re-appointment of the professional team to undertake the outstanding detailed design work and production of the information and documents required to tender the works in this financial year."

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

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

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the remaining capital resource allocation needed to construct the revised Phase A project at the Lakes Estate of £61,650,000, which includes the demolition of Serpentine Court and acquisition of additional land for the Stoke Road development (being brought forward from Phase B) from MKDP, and £2.35m in disruption payments be approved; and
2. That specific allocation of this capital resource to be delegated to the Director of Environment and Property, and the Director of Finance and Resources in consultation with Cabinet Member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities, with a spend approval of £0.950m being agreed immediately, to allow the re-appointment of the professional team to undertake the outstanding detailed design work and production of the information and documents required to tender the works in this financial year be approved.

**CL41**

**INVESTING IN THE REGENERATION OF THE AGORA AND WOLVERTON'S HIGH STREET**

Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 July 2021, which was seconded by Councillor Marland:

“To consider the Cabinet recommendation that Resource Allocation is made within the Capital Programme for £36,590,668 as detailed at Annex B of the Cabinet Report.

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

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

RESOLVED:

That resource allocation is made within the Capital Programme for £36,590,668 as detailed in Annex B [Cabinet report 13/07/21] be approved.

**CL42**

**COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS**

- (a) Question from Councillor McPake to Councillor Townsend (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor McPake, referring to the balancing lakes across the borough, asked Councillor Townsend if she would set up a meeting to focus on a variety of issues related to the balancing lakes.

Councillor Townsend indicated she would facilitate a meeting with stakeholders on the subject of the balancing lakes.

- (b) Question from Councillor M Bradburn to Councillor Carr (Cabinet member for Tackling Inequalities and Child Poverty)

Councillor M Bradburn, referring to the Council Plan commitment to tackle inequality and poverty through practical support, asked Councillor Carr if she could provide an update on the community larder scheme.

Councillor Carr indicated that the initial aim of five community larders had now been increased to sixteen. The Council would support people to join the schemes and provide three months subsidised support.

- (c) Question from Councillor Trendall to Councillor Walker (Leader of the Conservative Group)

Councillor Trendall, referring to Council Walker's comments regarding the need to introduce free parking in the city centre to save retail, asked Councillor Walker to remind the Council how free parking would have saved the many retail businesses that have gone into administration over the last year.

Councillor Walker indicated that he was always delighted to talk about the importance of free parking in a places economic recovery. Many authorities have introduced free parking since the start of the pandemic and it was one of the tools a Council could use to stimulate local economic activity.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Trendall, asked Councillor Walker if he had read his own election material that referred to free parking as the single solution to save the retail industry.

Councillor Walker advised that free carparking was one of the tools local authorities can use and the Council had failed to consider introducing it. Footfall and spend in Milton Keynes was performing badly compared to other areas that had introduced free carparking.

- (d) Question from Councillor Walker to Councillor Townsend (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Walker, referring to the commitment in the Council Plan to produce a fly tipping action plan by September of this year, asked Councillor Townsend when the action plan would appear on the forward plan and what additional steps the Cabinet were taking to avoid fly tipping over the summer.

Councillor Townsend indicated that the fly tipping action plan would be in the public domain shortly. Additional funding had gone into CCTV to target fly tipping sites and additional enforcement officers were being employed. The Council was also supporting parishes to put out skips and to run local waste amnesty's.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Walker, referring to the waste amnesty currently running in Bradville, asked Councillor Townsend if she could give a commitment to explore further waste amnesty's across Milton Keynes and to look at funding that could be provided to parishes to help with this initiative.

Councillor Townsend indicated that the initiative in Stantonbury was supported by the Council Housing department and they were in conversation with Woughton Community Council about taking part in a similar scheme and hopefully it could also be rolled out to other areas

- (e) Question from Councillor Jenkins to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Jenkins, referring to comments Councillor Marland had made on the Dorfman Report alongside figures related to the number of planning officers who had left the authority in the last four years, asked Councillor Marland, what evidence did he have that the planning function in the Council was not broken.

Councillor Marland indicated that the evidence that the planning system was not broken was that the Council meets all the targets set by the government with regards to planning. The Council would be taking part in an LGA Peer Review of the Planning Service and Councillor Marland advised that any suggestions or comments on the Planning Service should be directed to those undertaking the Peer Review.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Jenkins, referring to, Northampton Borough Council and Luton Borough Council who had both published details that none of their officers who had left their authorities had signed any non-disclosure agreements or had been paid out any additional money, asked Councillor Marland if Milton Keynes Council would publish similar information.

Councillor Marland indicated that he would be led by the Council HR team as to whether it was appropriate or not to publish details of HR matters.

- (f) Question from Councillor Hearnshaw to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Hearnshaw, referring to funding allocated in the budget for the restoration of Galley Hill Community Centre, asked Councillor Marland, would the Council communicate with residents and the Residents Association to ensure the community was informed and involved in the restoration of the centre.

Councillor Marland indicated that the Council had needed to be at a point where they understood the extent of the full remediation works and the costs of these. Councillor Marland advised that he had recently received information from the Head of Property that had also been sent to the Residents Association which also had offered a meeting to go through the details of the works.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Hearnshaw asked Councillor Marland would the Council publish the timetable for the works.

Councillor Marland indicated that when the Council understood what the programme of works would be a timetable would be published. The works are in the Council Plan and are scheduled to be completed by March 2022.

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

Councillor McLean, referring to the publication on data related to MK Connect, asked Councillor Marland when this information would be publicly available.

Councillor Marland indicated that he understood that the service was at a gateway point and that the information would be published shortly.

- (h) Question from Councillor Bowyer to Councillor Townsend (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Bowyer, referring to the new policy of leaving grass verges uncut for longer and whether this would be reviewed to understand whether this had led to the hoped for improvements in biodiversity, asked Councillor Townsend in particular to review the policy of allowing the grass to grow long right up to the side of the road.

Councillor Townsend indicated that this was the first time that the Council had let the grass grow long to achieve biodiversity aims. From the next cut there would be a 1m gap from the side of the road.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Bowyer asked Councillor Townsend that he would appreciate the opportunity to input into any review of the strategy.

Councillor Townsend indicated that she would be happy to pass on any concerns to officers that Councillor Bowyer had about the mowing regime for the grass verges.

- (i) Question from Councillor P Geary to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor P Geary, referring to a local resident who was aged 16, who not eligible for home to school transport and now had to rely on MK Connect service to get to school, asked Councillor Marland whether come September MK Connect would be able to offer a reliable form of transport to get the resident to school on time every day.

Councillor Marland indicated that the Council and the contractor were working to improve the service every day. The service was currently running at reduced capacity due to the current social distancing requirements which had been causing some issues.

As a supplementary question, Councillor P Geary, referring to, the fact that some people were reliant on getting to work or school on time and did not have flexibility around their schedule, asked Councillor Marland to provide an assurance that the service would work consistently when people needed it to.

Councillor Marland indicated that he could not give that assurance about a bus service so he could not give it about MK Connect. He could however offer his assurance that MK Connect would be an improvement on the current public transport system.

- (j) Question from Councillor B Nolan to Councillor Trendall (Cabinet member for Customer Services)

Councillor B Nolan, referring to 'What3Words' which was an App that was an easy way to provide an exact location, asked Councillor Trendall whether residents could use this to report issues to the Council.

Councillor Trendall indicated that he would be advising Councillors on the use of 'What3Words' with the Councillor Casework System before potentially rolling its use out to members of the public via the customer contact centre.

**QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE – CITY STATUS FOR MILTON KEYNES**

Councillor Marland moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Walker:

1. “That this Council notes the announcement that to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the government have announced that formal city status will be granted to a number of towns in 2022.
2. That this Council further notes:
  - (a) that the New Town of Milton Keynes was designated and has been fully developed during the reign of Her Majesty;
  - (b) the importance of Milton Keynes as a growing and vibrant regional, national and international centre for economic, social and cultural activity;
  - (c) all the communities which make up Milton Keynes, both historical and more recent, are unique and encapsulate the principles shown by Her Majesty over her reign, such as stability, continuity and civic pride while also embracing change and innovation;
  - (d) the strong and important role community, voluntary and cultural organisations play in the civic life of Milton Keynes; and
  - (e) the diversity of Milton Keynes, including many people from the Commonwealth of Nations.
3. That this Council believes:
  - (a) the contest provides the opportunity to showcase the civic pride of Milton Keynes, our record of innovation, our thriving, diverse and multi-faith communities and our exciting heritage and history, particularly as the most successful post-war New Town;
  - (b) that Milton Keynes is a flourishing hub for sports including hosting a number of high profile international sporting events such as the Rugby World Cup in 2015, is a host venue of the for the UEFA Women’s Euro 2022, and was European City of Sport in 2020;
  - (c) that Milton Keynes is a centre for culture and history as the home of Bletchley Park, the Milton Keynes International Festival, a 21-day arts, music and comedy

celebration held biennially, and many other cultural institutions and events

- (d) Milton Keynes history and commitment to inclusive higher education with the Open University, the largest university in the UK for undergraduate education, and the ambitious MK:U plans for a modern 21st century university;
  - (e) that Milton Keynes is at the forefront of tackling the climate crisis and is home to more green space per person than any of the UK's other towns and cities;
  - (f) that Milton Keynes has an innovative and inventive economy with thousands of small businesses and several national and international companies - embracing the town's slogan 'different by design'.
4. That this Council therefore agrees to:
- (a) undertake a bid to the process for formal recognition as a city with full support on a cross-party basis;
  - (b) request the Leader of the Council and the Executive submit a bid on behalf of Milton Keynes; and
  - (c) that the bid engages the wider public and civic institutions of Milton Keynes, including Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire, Parish Councils, the VCSE sector, schools, the Members of Parliament and local media to support the bid.

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

RESOLVED –

- 1. That this Council notes the announcement that to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the government have announced that formal city status will be granted to a number of towns in 2022.
- 2. That this Council further notes:
  - (a) that the New Town of Milton Keynes was designated and has been fully developed during the reign of Her Majesty;
  - (b) the importance of Milton Keynes as a growing and vibrant regional, national and international centre for economic, social and cultural activity;

- (c) all the communities which make up Milton Keynes, both historical and more recent, are unique and encapsulate the principles shown by Her Majesty over her reign, such as stability, continuity and civic pride while also embracing change and innovation;
  - (d) the strong and important role community, voluntary and cultural organisations play in the civic life of Milton Keynes; and
  - (e) the diversity of Milton Keynes, including many people from the Commonwealth of Nations.
3. That this Council believes:
- (a) the contest provides the opportunity to showcase the civic pride of Milton Keynes, our record of innovation, our thriving, diverse and multi-faith communities and our exciting heritage and history, particularly as the most successful post-war New Town;
  - (b) that Milton Keynes is a flourishing hub for sports including hosting a number of high profile international sporting events such as the Rugby World Cup in 2015, is a host venue of the for the UEFA Women's Euro 2022, and was European City of Sport in 2020;
  - (c) that Milton Keynes is a centre for culture and history as the home of Bletchley Park, the Milton Keynes International Festival, a 21-day arts, music and comedy celebration held biennially, and many other cultural institutions and events
  - (d) Milton Keynes history and commitment to inclusive higher education with the Open University, the largest university in the UK for undergraduate education, and the ambitious MK:U plans for a modern 21st century university;
  - (e) that Milton Keynes is at the forefront of tackling the climate crisis and is home to more green space per person than any of the UK's other towns and cities;
  - (f) that Milton Keynes has an innovative and inventive economy with thousands of small businesses and several national and international companies - embracing the town's slogan 'different by design'.

4. That this Council therefore agrees to:
  - (a) undertake a bid to the process for formal recognition as a city with full support on a cross-party basis;
  - (b) request the Leader of the Council and the Executive submit a bid on behalf of Milton Keynes; and
  - (c) that the bid engages the wider public and civic institutions of Milton Keynes, including Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire, Parish Councils, the VCSE sector, schools, the Members of Parliament and local media to support the bid.

**CL44**

**TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY – CARBON FEE AND DIVIDEND**

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

1. That this Council, having declared a Climate Emergency and its commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050, welcomes the recently published MK Sustainability Action Plan, but recognises wider carbon neutrality and meaningful climate action will require bolder national policies.
2. That this Council notes:
  - (a) that stated current government policy is to reduce carbon emissions by 68% on 1990 levels by 2030;
  - (b) the deeply felt concerns of MK residents who are aware that national and international expert advisory bodies report that progress to date is insufficient to meet the global challenge on climate change by 2030; and
  - (c) the commitment given by each political group on Milton Keynes Council at the Citizens:MK Accountability Assembly in April 2021 to discuss the Carbon Fee and Dividend system as introduced in Canada and Switzerland.
3. That this Council agrees:
  - (a) with the widely understood principle that polluters should pay for the damage they cause;
  - (b) on the importance of levelling up and of ensuring a solid social and political consensus to sustain the transition to a low carbon way of life;
  - (c) that Milton Keynes should continue as a leading green city; and

- (d) that we wish to see the UK set an example to the world in the year that the UK hosts the United Nations climate change conference (COP 26).
4. That this Council therefore resolves to:
    - (a) broadly support the principle of the Carbon Fee and Dividend system;
    - (b) call on HM Government to appraise the likely impacts of carbon pricing based on this approach and publish the results; and
    - (c) ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to express these views and ask that the work is undertaken prior to COP 26.

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

- “1. That the words ‘ - the highest reduction target made by a major economy to date;’ be added to the end of clause 2. (a)
2. That the word ‘some’ be added after the words ‘concerns of’ to clause 2. (b)
3. That the words ‘and that decarbonisation costs are eventually passed through to households via higher tax, energy and product costs’ be added to the end of clause 3. (a)
4. That an additional clause 3. (b) and 3. (c) be added:
  - that the Office for Budget Responsibility study which was published this month and predicts the cost of achieving net zero by 2050 will be £1.408 trillion or £50,647 for every UK home is very concerning;
  - that climate policies should not create energy and transport inequalities and that the deployment of new technologies must guarantee affordability, equal access, value for money and at least performance equivalence with existing technologies before being deployed;and that existing clauses 3. (b) – (d) be renumbered accordingly”

The Council heard from three members 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, having declared a Climate Emergency and its commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050, welcomes the recently published MK Sustainability Action Plan, but recognises wider carbon neutrality and meaningful climate action will require bolder national policies.
2. That this Council notes:
  - (d) that stated current government policy is to reduce carbon emissions by 68% on 1990 levels by 2030;
  - (e) the deeply felt concerns of MK residents who are aware that national and international expert advisory bodies report that progress to date is insufficient to meet the global challenge on climate change by 2030; and
  - (f) the commitment given by each political group on Milton Keynes Council at the Citizens:MK Accountability Assembly in April 2021 to discuss the Carbon Fee and Dividend system as introduced in Canada and Switzerland.
3. That this Council agrees:
  - (e) with the widely understood principle that polluters should pay for the damage they cause;
  - (f) on the importance of levelling up and of ensuring a solid social and political consensus to sustain the transition to a low carbon way of life;
  - (g) that Milton Keynes should continue as a leading green city; and
  - (h) that we wish to see the UK set an example to the world in the year that the UK hosts the United Nations climate change conference (COP 26).

4. That this Council therefore resolves to:
- (d) broadly support the principle of the Carbon Fee and Dividend system;
  - (e) call on HM Government to appraise the likely impacts of carbon pricing based on this approach and publish the results; and
  - (f) ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to express these views and ask that the work is undertaken prior to COP 26.

**CL45 PROPOSED PLANNING REFORMS**

RESOLVED:

The Motion was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

**CL46 BETTER RESOURCING FOR MK'S POLICE**

RESOLVED:

With the consent of the Council the Motion was withdrawn.

**CL47 APPOINTMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY OFFICER**

The Mayor moved the following recommendation which was seconded by the Deputy Mayor:

“That the Council appoint the postholder of Committee Services Manager as the Scrutiny Officer in order to ensure that the Council's duties in respect of this role are being discharged.”

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

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of the postholder of Committee Services Manager as Scrutiny Officer be agreed.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10:46 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)