



Minutes of the meeting of the ECONOMY AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE held on TUESDAY 28 MARCH 2000 at 7.30 pm

Present: Councillor Irons (Chair)
Councillors M Clarke, Gillingham, Hardwick, Lloyd, Miles (substituting for Councillor Legg), Newcombe (substituting for Councillor Mabbutt) and White (substituting for Councillor Hopkins)

Officers: V Gwynn (Head of Community and Economic Development), B Pearson (Chief Librarian) D Cooper (Economy and Lifelong Learning Manager), C Chandler (Group Accountant, Community Services), S Ackland (Tourism Development Officer), B Charles (Lifelong Learning Officer), S Parker (Committee Administrator) and T Mabbott (Committee Manager)

Apologies: Councillors Hopkins, Legg and Mabbutt

EL36/00 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 January 2000, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

EL37/00 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors M Clarke, Hardwick, Miles and Newcombe declared non-pecuniary interests in Item 11 (Applications for Grant Aid).

EL38/00 LIBRARY SERVICES REVIEW

The Committee considered the final consultation report of the library services review, and noted that the exercise had demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with the service. The Committee welcomed the report, and considered priorities for the future of the service.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Irons, and seconded by Councillor Gillingham:

“That the Committee notes the issues arising from the conduct of the Review and wishes to address the following as a priority:

- (a) a condition survey of all libraries be commissioned;

- (b) Sunday opening to be explored at Central Milton Keynes Library with a view to opening as soon as practically possible;
- (c) detailed discussions to be opened with relevant local councils on their branch opening hours versus usage patterns;
- (d) the concept of libraries as the hub of the community also to be discussed with the local councils;
- (e) a detailed assessment of users and non-users be undertaken and a publicity and marketing programme be agreed;
- (f) measures be taken to improve the rotation of stock between, central, branch and mobile libraries;
- (g) staff training be assessed in the light of the Government's new policy initiatives, including ICT and widening the skills of staff; and
- (h) in response to the written request from the Wolverton Partnership, the implications of relocating the Wolverton Library be explored."

Councillor M Clarke moved the following amendment which was accepted by the mover and seconder of the motion:

"That the following additional clauses be added:

- (i) the principle of bringing charging practices in line with commercial practice be explored; and
- (j) the provision of library facilities, including mobile library facilities, on the East Flank continues to be explored using all avenues of finance in conjunction with any possible partners."

Councillor M Clark moved the following amendment, seconded by Councillor Hardwick, on which a recorded vote was requested:

"That absolute priority must be given to providing a permanent library to serve the East Flank of the city within two years"

FOR: Councillors M Clarke, Hardwick and Newcombe (3)

AGAINST: Councillors Gillingham, Irons, Lloyd and Miles (4)

The amendment was declared lost.

A recorded vote on the original motion, as amended, was requested and the voting was as follows:

FOR: Councillors Gillingham, Irons, Lloyd, Miles and White (5)

AGAINST: Councillors M Clarke, Hardwick and Newcombe (3)

The motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED -

That the Committee notes the issues arising from the conduct of the Review and wishes to address the following as a priority:

- (a) a condition survey of all libraries be commissioned;
- (b) Sunday opening to be explored at Central Milton Keynes Library with a view to opening as soon as practically possible;
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- (f) measures be taken to improve the rotation of stock between, central, branch and mobile libraries;
- (g) staff training be assessed in the light of the Government's new policy initiatives, including ICT and widening the skills of staff;
- (h) in response to the written request from the Wolverton Partnership, the implications of relocating the Wolverton Library be explored;
- (i) the principle of bringing charging practices in line with commercial practice be explored; and
- (j) the provision of library facilities, including mobile library facilities, on the East Flank continues to be explored using all avenues of finance in conjunction with any possible partners."

EL39/00

LIFELONG LEARNING DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2000/02

The Committee considered the Council's Lifelong Learning Plan for 2000/2002 and noted that it was required in order for the Council to be eligible for Standards Fund grant to support lifelong learning.

The Committee noted the achievements set out in the Plan, and expressed the hope that such progress could be continued. The Committee welcomed the Plan and noted that it needed to be linked with other plans produced by the Council, such as the Lifelong Learning Partnership Strategic Plan.

RESOLVED -

1. That the achievements during 1999/2000 be noted.
2. That the proposed programme of activities to support lifelong learning for adults for 2000/02 be noted.
3. That the development plan attached as an annex to the report

be endorsed, subject to any final amendments resulting from further DfEE guidance.

EL40/00 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2000/01

The Committee considered the Council's draft Economic Development Plan for 2000/2001. It was noted that it was a statutory requirement to plan and outline economic development activity in such a plan, and that both external influences and internal developments need to be taken into account.

It was suggested that the wording of the Plan needed to reflect the fact that the South East was already a world class region, and also English Partnerships' role within that.

RESOLVED -

1. That the Council's current economic development activity be noted.
2. That the draft Economic Development Plan 2000/01 be agreed for public consultation.

EL41/00 SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS THROUGH GRANTS AND SECONDMENTS

The Committee noted a report on the progress made by community partners in delivering the Economic Development Plan and Lifelong Learning Development Plan for 1999/00 and considered proposed grants and secondments for 2000/01.

The Committee requested that it be circulated with a list of all small businesses premises managed by Milton Keynes Council.

RESOLVED -

1. That the report detailing organisations' successes and aspirations for activity in the future be noted.
2. That the award of funding to organisations as detailed in the annex to the report be agreed.
3. That the continued secondment of staff to the Milton Keynes Women and Work Group be agreed.

(Councillors M Clarke and Miles, as members of the Board of Milton Keynes Business Link, declared non-pecuniary interests and did not take part in the debate or vote thereon. Councillors Hardwick and Newcombe also declared non-pecuniary interests.)

EL42/00 BUDGET SAVINGS FROM THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT BUDGET FOR 2000/01

The Committee noted that it had been agreed at its January meeting to report back on progress on the savings options from the Tourism

Development Budget for 2000/01. The Committee considered a report which outlined further options for savings.

RESOLVED -

1. That the operation of the Conference Desk be expanded in partnership with conference venue operators and the local agency, subject to a satisfactory Business Plan, further legal advice and union consultation.
2. That the Information and Marketing function be restructured to provide more support to the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) through:
 - (a) the sale of corporate gifts;
 - (b) sales of Milton Keynes souvenirs and gifts to local tourism businesses on a wholesale basis;
 - (c) linking with libraries for improved information provision and cost-effective joint stocking of souvenirs and other goods;
 - (d) promotion of sponsorship and advertising opportunities in the VIC; and
 - (e) the introduction of commission on accommodation booked in the VIC.
3. That any shortfall in the saving of £40,000 from the Tourism Development budget be found from within the Economy and Lifelong Learning budget.

EL43/00

MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SERVICE

The Committee considered a request from the Community Language Service for Council management of the service for the next year.

The Committee noted the development of the Community Language Service from its inception in 1996, but further noted that the Service currently had no legal status following the cessation of its original joint funding application.

The Committee agreed that it would be desirable for the Council to take over the management of the Community Language Service for a year, to allow issues relating to its future to be resolved.

RESOLVED -

1. That the role of the Service and its development to date be noted
2. That, for 2000/01, the Service formally becomes part of the Council to provide it with a legal status, while its future is considered.
3. That a further paper be requested during 2000/01 with longer

term plans for the service in the light of Council policies and other agencies.

EL44/00 COMMITTEE'S NEWS SHEET

The Committee noted its News Sheet and received details of the Department of Trade and Industry's announcement regarding the fund for new businesses in the regions.

EL45/00 VOTE OF THANKS

The Chair proposed a vote of thanks to the officers for their work in supporting the Committee and thanked Members for their support during her term of office. The Chair also thanked Members of the Committee for their commitment to the work of the Committee during its lifetime.

The Committee welcomed the constructive approach of Members from all sides to discussing the issues before the Committee on their merits.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9.21 PM