



Minutes of the meeting of the MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on TUESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2010 at 7.30 pm

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

Apologies: Councillors Campbell, Edwards, Gerrella and Latham and Aldermen Ellis and Howell

Also Present: 13 members of the public

CL95 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Councillor Butler-Ellis declared a personal interest in Item 4 (Budget Report 2010/11) as a Director of the United Sustainable Energy Agency, which administered the Council's carbon offset fund.

Councillor White declared a personal interest in item 4 (Budget Report 2010/11) as Chair of the United Sustainable Energy Agency, which administered the Council's carbon offset fund.

CL96 ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. City of Milton Keynes Swim Club

The Mayor congratulated Emma Joyce and Ben Flaherty from the City of Milton Keynes Swim Club who had won the 800 and 1500 metre Freestyle Junior County Championships respectively for swimmers 16 and under across Oxfordshire and North Bucks. The Mayor also congratulated Matt Masters, from the Club, who came second in the 1500 metre Freestyle.

2. Anna Turney - British Paralympic Ski Team

The Mayor, announced that Anna Turney had thanked the Council for its letter of support and reported that her training was going well.

3. Kwame Nkrumah-Acheampong – Ghanaian Winter Olympic Team

The Mayor, was asked to pass on the Council's congratulations to Kwame Nkrumah-Acheampong of the Ghanaian Winter Olympic Team, who carried the Ghana national Flag at the opening ceremony and had worked and trained in Milton Keynes.

CL97

REPORTS FROM CABINET AND COMMITTEES

(a) Cabinet – 16 February 2010

Budget Report 2010/11

Councillor Crooks moved the following recommendation from the meeting of Cabinet on 16 February 2010, which was seconded by Councillor Williams:

“REVENUE BUDGET

1. That it be recommended to Council that Council Tax for 2010/11 be set at a 1.5% increase, viz. 32p per week, or £16.64 per year for a Band D tax payer, as a consequence of which Milton Keynes Council tax overall is estimated to be £54 per year lower than the national average.
2. That, in so doing, the new investment of £7.9 million which has been achieved in Council services be noted, such as:
 - Improved School Standards;
 - Children's Social Workers;
 - Environment;
 - Waste Procurement;
 - Community Well Being
 - Older People;
 - Physical Disability;
 - Learning Disability;
 - Mental Health;
 - Plusbus.
3. That it be noted that £10.3 million of savings had been achieved without affecting front line services.
4. That, in so doing, the following proposals of the Labour Party be accepted and funded within the budget, as follows:

- (a) an extension of the concessionary fare scheme for young people from 1 January 2011 so as to include bus users between the ages of 16 and a day below their 17th birthday as of right;
- (b) the re-instatement of the planned 4% expenditure savings for organisations under the community and third sector, arts and heritage heads of the budget;
- (c) a review of the personal fees and charges to confirm that they accord with the projected rate of inflation and do not withdraw previously agreed discounts;
- (d) that an element of the Parish Deprivation Fund be set aside to enable parishes prioritised within the Neighbour Regeneration Strategy to play a full part in ensuring their residents' engagement in regeneration plans;
- (e) the re-instatement of the Library Book Funds to its current level;
- (f) the re-instatement of the grant to the Youth Housing Network at its current level.

5. That the technical recommendations of the Corporate Director Finance and Risk Management be endorsed for consideration by the Council, as follows:

- (a) that the directorate estimates and estimates for the General Finance Account items, based on an indicative minimum Council Tax increase of 1.5% be approved, taking into account the comments arising from scrutiny of the budget by the Budget Review Group on 2 February 2010.
- (b) that it be noted that the budget is a financial exposition of the priorities set out within the Corporate Plan and the Directorate Service Plans.
- (c) that it be noted that, in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Corporate Director - Finance and Risk Management (subject to a minimum Council Tax increase of 1.5% as outlined above), is of the view that:
 - (i) The General Fund balances of £7.053m and the level of reserves, particularly in relation to capital, are adequate to meet the Council's financial needs for 2010/11. This view takes account of the reserves included in the Council's latest audited Accounts as

at 31 March 2009 and, the movements of those reserves since that date, which have been tracked through the monthly Budget Monitoring Reports. The projections in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) balance to maintain the balance at £4.729m by 31 March 2010 are also considered to be adequate at this point in time but will need to continue to be reviewed in the light of the challenges facing the HRA.

- (ii) The General Fund estimates are sufficiently robust to set a balanced budget for 2010/11. This takes into account the adequacy of the level of balances and reserves outlined above and the assurance gained from the comparisons of the 2009/10 budget with the projected spend identified in the December 2009 (Period 9) Budget Monitoring Report which shows an underspend of £4.179m against the agreed budget for 2009/10. The Corporate Director - Finance and Risk Management's view also takes into account the issues raised in the Audit Commission's most recent Annual Letter.

(d) that it be noted that at its meeting on the 26 January 2010, the Cabinet agreed its Council Tax Base for the 2010/11 financial year in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(e) that the policy requiring the Corporate Director - Finance and Risk Management to seek to mitigate the impact of significant changes to either resources, such as Formula Grant changes, or expenditure requirements be continued.

(f) that the summary of the HRA Budget and Rent Setting report agreed by Cabinet on 26 January 2010 be noted.

(g) that the approach of using reserves to manage emerging risks and liabilities and to use one-off monies released from the review of reserves and other funding sources to support the capital programme or other one-off expenditure, be continued.

- (h) that Council be recommended to agree:
- (i) that the following calculation of the Council's budget requirement in terms of its gross revenue and income including transactions on the Housing Revenue Account as required by Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 be agreed:

CALCULATIONS UNDER SECTION 32 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1992		
		£m
(a)	Aggregate of amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) a) to e) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	561.448
(b)	Aggregate of amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3) a) to c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	367.014
(c)	Aggregate of amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(4), being the amount by which the sum aggregated at (a) above exceeds the aggregate of (b) above.	194.434

- (ii) that the following amounts be calculated by the Council for 2010/11 in accordance with Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

- £194.434m, being the amount calculated under Section 32(4) of the 1992 Act as the Council's budget requirement for 2010/11.
- £103.616m, being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for 2010/11 into its General Fund in respect of redistributed NNDR, Revenue Support and Area Based Grant increased by the amount the Council estimates will be transferred from its Collection Fund to its General Fund pursuant to the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) Regulations under Section 97(3) of the Local

Government Finance Act 1988 made on 21 January 2010.

- £90.818m, being the amount at (a) above less the amount at (b) above, all divided by the amount which has been calculated by the Council as its Council Tax Base for 2010/11, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of the Council Tax for 2010/11.

(iii) that the following amounts be calculated by the Council for 2010/11 in accordance with Section 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

VALUATION BANDS							
A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
740.53	863.96	987.38	1,110.80	1,357.64	1,604.49	1,851.33	2,221.60

Being the amounts given by multiplying the agreed Council Tax Base for 2010/11 (81,759.38 Band D equivalent properties) which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for 2010/11 in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

(iv) that it be noted that the Thames Valley Police Authority, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992, has stated the following amounts of precepts issued to the Council for 2010/11:

VALUATION BANDS							
A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
102.87	120.01	137.16	154.3	188.59	222.88	257.17	308.6

- (v) that it be noted that the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992, has stated the following amounts of precepts issued to the Council for 2010/11:

VALUATION BANDS							
A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
39.42	45.99	52.56	59.13	72.27	85.41	98.55	118.26

- (vi) That as a result of items h(iii) to h(iv) above, the amounts of Council Tax shown in Schedule C to Annex O be set, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown in the Schedule.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

6. That the Capital Programme and funding thereof be endorsed for recommendation to Council, as set out in Annex G of the officer report and the table below:

Funding for Capital Programme 2010/11

Funding Source	£m
Government supported borrowing allocations (SCE (R))	20.411
Capital receipts	2.419
Major Repairs Reserve	4.897
Other Government Grants	37.164
Third party contributions	5.743
Revenue contributions	3.002
Prudential borrowing	5.822
Sub-total	79.458
Applied to 2009-10 overspends	(3.355)
Funding available for programme	76.103

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

7. That the Treasury Management Strategy and Policy Statement for 2010/11 – 2012/13 be endorsed for recommendation to Council, as set out in Annex M of the officer report.

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

8. That the prudential indicators for Capital Expenditure and the Capital Financing Requirement, the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt, the Affordability Prudential indicators and the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for the years 2010/11 to 2013/14 as set out in Section 8 and Annex M be endorsed for Council approval.
9. That the Council be recommended that the authorised limit for external debt of £415m agreed above for 2010/11 will be the statutory limit determined under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.
10. That the following technical comments by the Corporate Director – Finance and Risk Management in respect of funding and the process of the Capital Programme and Treasury Management be noted:
 - (a) that this programme takes no account of the one-off funds that are likely to be available as additional funding to the programme from 2010/11 onwards, as it is prudent not to anticipate resources until they are clearly achievable and that if funding is not secured this will be funded from slippage and addressed through the development of the 2011/12 Capital Programme.
 - (b) that the Council will create and maintain, as the cornerstones for effective treasury management
 - (i) treasury management policy statement, stating the policies, objectives and approach to risk management of its treasury management activities; and
 - (ii) suitable treasury management practices (TMPs), setting out the manner in which the organisation will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, and prescribing how it will manage and control those activities.
 - (c) That the Council nominates its Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and policies.
11. That, having regard to the future, officers be instructed to develop a workforce strategy that will effect further staff reductions with particular regard to tiers of middle management, subject to the preservation of front line services, performance management, regular reporting and the approval of the Cabinet at every relevant stage of the process.

12. That officers be thanked for their efforts in assisting the development of the proposed budget.”

Councillor D McCall moved the following amendment, which was seconded by Councillor Richards and on which a recorded vote was requested:

“That the following wording be added to Clause 1 of the recommendation:

‘and that the Council notes the damage caused to Milton Keynes highways during the severe winter we have had this year, and the potholes in our roads that this has caused, and also notes residents' desire that action be taken immediately to resolve this problem, and therefore resolves to increase Council Tax by an additional 0.5%, approximately 10p per week, to add an additional £445,000 to the budget specifically to put this damage right without delay.’”

The voting was as follows:

FOR: Councillors Barry, Burke, S Clark, Crooks, Drewett, Exon, Ferrans, Fraser, Galloway, E Henderson, I Henderson, Mallyon, D McCall, I McCall, McPake, Potts, Richards, Tallack, Tamagnini-Barbosa and Williams (20)

AGAINST: (0)

ABSTENTIONS: Councillors Bint, Bristow, Brock, Butler-Ellis, Carstens, U Clarke, Coventry, Dransfield, A Geary, P Geary, Hopkins, Hoyle, Irons, Jury, Klein, Lloyd, Miles, A Morris, C Morris, O'Neill, Small, Tunney, Turnbull, Wharton, White and Wright (26)

The amendment was declared carried.

On being put to the vote the recommendation, as amended, was declared carried, with 20 Members voting in favour, 18 Members voting against and 8 Members abstaining from voting.

The Council heard from 1 member of the public on this item.

RESOLVED –

REVENUE BUDGET

1. That the Council Tax for 2010/11 be set at a 1.5% increase, viz. 32p per week, or £16.64 per year for a Band D tax payer, as a consequence of which the Milton Keynes Council Tax overall is estimated to be £54 per year lower than the national average, and that noting the damage caused to Milton Keynes highways during the severe winter this year, and the potholes in

the roads that this has caused, together with the desire of residents that action be taken immediately to resolve this problem, an additional increase in the level of Council Tax of an additional 0.5%, approximately 10p per week, be approved adding an additional £445,000 to the budget specifically to put this damage right without delay.

2. That, in so doing, the new investment of £7.9 million which has been achieved in Council services be noted, such as:

- Improved School Standards;
- Children's Social Workers;
- Environment;
- Waste Procurement;
- Community Well Being
- Older People;
- Physical Disability;
- Learning Disability;
- Mental Health;
- Plusbus.

3. That it be noted that £10.3 million of savings had been achieved without affecting front line services.

4. That, in so doing, the following proposals of the Labour Party be accepted and funded within the budget, as follows:

- (a) an extension of the concessionary fare scheme for young people from 1 January 2011 so as to include bus users between the ages of 16 and a day below their 17th birthday as of right;
- (b) the re-instatement of the planned 4% expenditure savings for organisations under the community and third sector, arts and heritage heads of the budget;
- (c) a review of the personal fees and charges to confirm that they accord with the projected rate of inflation and do not withdraw previously agreed discounts;
- (d) that an element of the Parish Deprivation Fund be set aside to enable parishes prioritised within the Neighbour Regeneration Strategy to play a full part in ensuring their residents' engagement in regeneration plans;

- (e) the re-instatement of the Library Book Funds to its current level;
 - (f) the re-instatement of the grant to the Youth Housing Network at its current level.
5. That the technical recommendations of the Corporate Director - Finance and Risk Management be endorsed, as follows:
- (a) that the directorate estimates and estimates for the General Finance Account items, based on an indicative minimum Council Tax increase of 1.5% be approved, taking into account the comments arising from scrutiny of the budget by the Budget Review Group on 2 February 2010.
 - (b) that it be noted that the budget is a financial exposition of the priorities set out within the Corporate Plan and the Directorate Service Plans.
 - (c) that it be noted that, in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Corporate Director - Finance and Risk Management (subject to a minimum Council Tax increase of 1.5% as outlined above), is of the view that:
 - (i) The General Fund balances of £7.053m and the level of reserves, particularly in relation to capital, are adequate to meet the Council's financial needs for 2010/11. This view takes account of the reserves included in the Council's latest audited Accounts as at 31 March 2009 and, the movements of those reserves since that date, which have been tracked through the monthly Budget Monitoring Reports. The projections in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) balance to maintain the balance at £4.729m by 31 March 2010 are also considered to be adequate at this point in time but will need to continue to be reviewed in the light of the challenges facing the HRA.
 - (ii) The General Fund estimates are sufficiently robust to set a balanced budget for 2010/11. This takes into account the adequacy of the level of balances and reserves outlined above and the assurance gained from the comparisons of the 2009/10 budget with

the projected spend identified in the December 2009 (Period 9) Budget Monitoring Report which shows an underspend of £4.179m against the agreed budget for 2009/10. The Corporate Director - Finance and Risk Management's view also takes into account the issues raised in the Audit Commission's most recent Annual Letter.

- (d) that it be noted that at its meeting on the 26 January 2010, the Cabinet agreed its Council Tax Base for the 2010/11 financial year in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (e) that the policy requiring the Corporate Director - Finance and Risk Management to seek to mitigate the impact of significant changes to either resources, such as Formula Grant changes, or expenditure requirements be continued.
- (f) that the summary of the HRA Budget and Rent Setting report agreed by Cabinet on 26 January 2010 be noted.
- (g) that the approach of using reserves to manage emerging risks and liabilities and to use one-off monies released from the review of reserves and other funding sources to support the capital programme or other one-off expenditure, be continued.

6. That the following calculation of the Council's budget requirement in terms of its gross revenue and income including transactions on the Housing Revenue Account as required by Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 be agreed:

CALCULATIONS UNDER SECTION 32 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1992		£m
(a)	Aggregate of amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) a) to e) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	569.144
(b)	Aggregate of amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3) a) to c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	374.262
(c)	Aggregate of amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(4), being the amount by which the sum aggregated at (a) above exceeds the aggregate of (b) above.	194.881

7. That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for 2010/11 in accordance with Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:
- (a) £194.881m, being the amount calculated under Section 32(4) of the 1992 Act as the Council's budget requirement for 2010/11.
 - (b) £103.616m, being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for 2010/11 into its General Fund in respect of redistributed NNDR, Revenue Support and Area Based Grant increased by the amount the Council estimates will be transferred from its Collection Fund to its General Fund pursuant to the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) Regulations under Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 made on 21 January 2010.
 - (c) £91.266m, being the amount at (a) above less the amount at (b) above, all divided by the amount which has been calculated by the Council as its Council Tax Base for 2010/11, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of the Council Tax for 2010/11.
8. That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for 2010/11 in accordance with Section 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

VALUATION BANDS							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
744.18	868.21	992.24	1,116.27	1364.3	1612.3	1860.4	2232.5
				3	9	5	4

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 1.4 above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for 2010/11 in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

9. That it be noted that the Thames Valley Police Authority, in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992, has stated the following

amounts of precepts issued to the Council for 2010/11 (subject to confirmation following the meeting of the Police Authority on 19 February 2010):

VALUATION BANDS							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
102.87	120.01	137.16	154.3	188.59	222.88	257.17	308.6

10. That it be noted that the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority, in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992, has stated the following amounts of precepts issued to the Council for 2010/11:

VALUATION BANDS							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
39.42	45.99	52.56	59.13	72.27	85.41	98.55	118.26

11. That as a result of items 8 to 10 above, the amounts of Council Tax shown in Schedule C to Annex O be set, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown in the Schedule.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

12. That the Capital Programme and funding thereof be approved, as set out in Annex G of the officer report and the table below:

Funding for Capital Programme 2010/11

Funding Source	£m
Government supported borrowing allocations (SCE [R])	20.411
Capital receipts	2.419
Major Repairs Reserve	4.897
Other Government Grants	37.164
Third party contributions	5.743
Revenue contributions	3.002
Prudential borrowing	5.822
Sub-total	79.458
Applied to 2009/10 overspends	(3.355)
Funding available for programme	76.103

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

13. That the Treasury Management Strategy and Policy Statement for 2010/11 – 2012/13 be approved, as set out in Annex M of the officer report.

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

14. That the prudential indicators for Capital Expenditure and the Capital Financing Requirement, the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt, the Affordability Prudential indicators and the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for the years 2010/11 to 2013/14 as set out in Section 8 and Annex M be approved.
15. That the authorised limit for external debt of £415m agreed above for 2010/11 will be the statutory limit determined under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.
16. That the following technical comments by the Corporate Director – Finance and Risk Management in respect of funding and the process of the Capital Programme and Treasury Management be noted:
 - (a) that this programme takes no account of the one-off funds that are likely to be available as additional funding to the programme from 2010/11 onwards, as it is prudent not to anticipate resources until they are clearly achievable and that if funding is not secured this will be funded from slippage and addressed through the development of the 2011/12 Capital Programme.
 - (b) that the Council will create and maintain, as the cornerstones for effective treasury management
 - (i) a treasury management policy statement, stating the policies, objectives and approach to risk management of its treasury management activities; and
 - (ii) suitable treasury management practices (TMPs), setting out the manner in which the organisation will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, and prescribing how it will manage and control those activities.
 - (c) that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee be nominated to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and policies.

17. That, having regard to the future, officers be instructed to develop a workforce strategy that will effect further staff reductions with particular regard to tiers of middle management, subject to the preservation of front line services, performance management, regular reporting and the approval of the Cabinet at every relevant stage of the process.

18. That officers be thanked for their efforts in assisting the development of the proposed budget.

(b) Development Control Committee – 18 February 2010

Council Constitution - Changes to Access to Information Procedure Rules

Councillor C Morris moved the following recommendation from the meeting of Development Control Committee on 18 February 2010, which was seconded by Councillor Bristow:

“That Part (b) of Annex A of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, be amended to enable applicants to speak in favour of planning applications where the planning officer has recommended refusal and there have been no requests from members of the public to speak in objection. Each applicant will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes to speak.

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared carried, with 43 Members voting in favour, 1 Member voting against and 1 Member abstaining from voting.

RESOLVED –

That Part (b) of Annex A of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, be amended to enable applicants to speak in favour of planning application where the planning officer has recommended refusal and there have been no requests from members of the public to speak in objection. Each applicant will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes to speak.

(c) Development Control Committee – 18 February 2010

Council Constitution - Responsibilities and Functions

Councillor C Morris moved the following recommendation from the meeting of Development Control Committee on 18 February 2010, which was seconded by Councillor Bristow:

“That Part 3 of the Council's Constitution (Responsibilities and Functions) be amended to enable the Development Control Committee to receive, consider and make recommendations to the Council, Cabinet or other appropriate body on consultation papers relating to all aspects of development control.”

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared carried, with 44 Members voting in favour, 0 Members voting against and 1 Member abstaining from voting.

RESOLVED –

That Part 3 of the Council's Constitution (Responsibilities and Functions) be amended to enable the Development Control Committee to receive, consider and make recommendations to the Council, Cabinet or other appropriate body on consultation papers relating to all aspects of development control.

CL98

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

- (a) Question from Councillor P Geary to Councillor Galloway (Cabinet Member for Environment, Planning and Growth)

Councillor Geary asked Councillor Galloway if he agreed with the inspector's decision to dismiss an appeal for the building of a wind farm at Poddington close to the Borough's boundary.

Councillor Galloway indicated that he had not seen the inspector's decision, but would give Councillor Geary a view once he had had the chance to read it.

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

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

Councillor Jury asked Councillor Crooks which teams competing in the 2012 Olympics had been secured to base their training camps in Milton Keynes.

Councillor Crooks referred the question to Councillor McPake (Cabinet Member for Communities) who stated that a delegation from Barbados had viewed local facilities, and another delegation had expressed an interest and it was hoped that they would also visit to view the facilities available.

Councillor Jury asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor McPake.

- (c) Question from Councillor White to Councillor S Clark (Cabinet Member for Children)

Councillor White asked Councillor S Clark if she could inform the Council of the percentage of children who cycled to school in Milton Keynes.

Councillor S Clark indicated that she did not have the information to hand, but would try to find out and provide a written response.

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

- (d) Question from Councillor Miles to Councillor Mallyon (Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways)

Councillor Miles asked Councillor Mallyon whether he could provide any indication as to when he expected further information to be available on the reorganisation of bus services by Arriva.

Councillor Mallyon indicated that he was not aware at present, but was trying to arrange a meeting with Arriva, following the cancellation of a previous one. Councillor Mallyon undertook to invite Councillor Miles to the meeting if possible.

Councillor Miles asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor Mallyon.

- (e) Question from Councillor Dransfield to Councillor Crooks (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group)

Councillor Dransfield asked Councillor Crooks if he believed a change of Leader would return the Council to a state of turmoil evident a number of years ago and remove the harmonious relationship between the political groups since he had been Leader.

Councillor Crooks indicated his belief that any leader of the Liberal Democrat Group would be better than the Leader of any other Group.

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

- (f) Question from Councillor Williams to Councillor A Morris (Chair of the Budget Review Group)

Councillor Williams asked Councillor A Morris if in his opinion the Review Group had all the information it requested and all the information it was supposed to.

Councillor A Morris indicated that he did not know what he did not know so could not say yes or no, but he had not suggested as part of the Budget debate that there had been a lack of transparency around the information provided to the Review Group, rather around the political processes.

Councillor Williams asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor A Morris.

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

Councillor Hoyle asked Councillor Crooks for his views on fortnightly rubbish collections.

Councillor Crooks indicated that he was against them and this was a long standing Liberal Democrat policy.

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

- (h) Question from Councillor I Henderson to Councillor A Geary (Leader of the Conservative Group).

Councillor I Henderson asked Councillor Geary if the Conservative Group supported a by-pass for Olney.

Councillor Geary indicated that he believed that the issue of the by-pass was a matter for the people of Olney, and the Group would listen to the views of the people before forming a judgement.

Councillor I Henderson asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor Geary.

- (i) Question from Councillor Wright to Councillor S Clark (Cabinet Member for Children)

Councillor Wright asked Councillor S Clark if she had access to the work undertaken by the Safer Neighbourhoods Deliverance Committee on the schools survey.

Councillor S Clark indicated that she had not yet had the opportunity.

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

- (j) Question from Councillor Ferrans to Councillor A Morris (Chair of the Budget Review Group)

Councillor Ferrans asked Councillor A Morris, bearing in mind his wish for transparency around the budget proposals from the political groups, whether the Conservative Group was willing to make any changes it would make to the budget if it was to take control of the Council, available to the other parties.

Councillor A Morris indicated that the Budget Review Group would start its work on the 2011/12 budget in June of this year and it would be his intention to share with the Review Group the Conservative Group's policies and thoughts in as much as they related to the budget.

Councillor Ferrans asked a supplementary question which was answered by Councillor A Morris.

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

Councillor Bristow asked Councillor Crooks if he would enter into discussions with the Community Partnership about how to approach Government with regard to innovative ways to meet the unmet demand in Milton Keynes not being taken up by private sector housing.

Councillor Crooks referred the question to Councillor Williams who indicated that a Housing Strategic Partnership had been formed in Milton Keynes to address the unmet demand by providing the right homes for the right people across Milton Keynes.

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

- (l) Question from Councillor P Geary to Councillor Mallyon (Cabinet Member for Member for Transport and Highways)

Councillor P Geary asked Councillor Mallyon if he acknowledged that the Liberal Democrat Administration had failed the people of Olney by failing to progress a by-pass of the town.

Councillor Mallyon indicated that he was not fully conversant with the issues around a by-pass for Olney, but supported a by-pass and agreed that something needed to be done because of the congestion and its affect on the town's air quality.

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

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10.20 PM