

# HOUSING AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

**30 NOVEMBER 2016**

**7.00 PM**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER  
CIVIC OFFICES,  
CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES**

**A G E N D A**

**[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/scrutiny)**

Councillor C Williams (Chair)  
Councillors Ganatra and Wallis (Vice-Chairs)  
Councillors Burke, Ferrans, Geaney, Hosking, Jenkins, Khan, D McCall, and Webb

For more information about the meeting please contact Elizabeth Richardson on (01908) 252629 or e-mail: [Elizabeth.Richardson@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.Richardson@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

## **What is Overview and Scrutiny?**

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise its executive arrangements.

Each scrutiny committee or task and finish group has its own remit as set out in its terms of reference and they meet to consider issues of local importance and have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy makers and decision makers
2. Enabling the voice and concerns of the public
3. Driving improvement in public services.

The scrutiny committees consider issues by receiving information from, and the questioning of, both council officers and external witnesses / partners to develop an understanding of proposals or practices. As scrutiny committees have no executive powers they often present their conclusions in the form of recommendations to the Cabinet, full Council, council officers, or external partners that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations. The Committee will often request a formal response and progress report on the implementation of recommendations that they have provided to various parties.

## **Attending Meetings of Scrutiny Committees / Task and Finish Groups**

Meetings of scrutiny committees and task and finish groups are held in public and are open for everyone to attend. If you would like to attend then please just turn up. However, if you would like to make a representation to councillors on behalf of yourself or others, then let us know you are attending before the meeting so that the Chair can be advised in advance.

If there are specific issues that the meeting must consider in private then they will be asked to agree this at the meeting.

After the meeting the recommendations and Minutes of the meeting, as well as agendas and reports for the majority of the Council's public meetings are available via the Council's website at:

[\(http://cmis.milton-keynes.gov.uk/cmiswebpublic/\)](http://cmis.milton-keynes.gov.uk/cmiswebpublic/).

## **The Scrutiny process aims to promote the vision, values and objectives set out in the Milton Keynes Council Plan**

The Council Plan 2016-20 ([Council Plan 2016-20](#)) sets out how Milton Keynes Council will work to achieve its ambitions for Milton Keynes. Within it are the priorities the Council will address between 2016 and 2020, together with a detailed delivery plan showing what will be done and the main milestones along the way.

Milton Keynes Council wants to enable a 21<sup>st</sup> Century city whilst preserving what makes us special; an internationally recognised centre of prosperity, economic innovation and cultural creativity, in a high quality green space and built environment.

### **Vision:**

To develop a thriving, dynamic European Destination City and to ensure a fair, hardworking and more equal Milton Keynes for all.

### **Values:**

To become a co-operative borough where customers are put first, everyone works as team and makes a difference every day.

### **Objectives:**

#### **A City of Opportunity**

Milton Keynes has limitless potential. We want every person to have the chance of a good, well paid job and the skills to do it in a more equal society; a prosperous Milton Keynes with a strong, diverse economy that has an international reputation for innovation. We are in the right place to succeed, taking advantage of our excellent links to the wider regional, national and international economies, building on our success in the service and professional industries and taking advantage of new opportunities in a knowledge-based, high skilled economy. We will support people to succeed, develop the skills they need to access well paid employment and have the opportunity to meet their potential.

#### **An Affordable City**

We want to create communities that can attract, retain and enable people from every background. Milton Keynes has been built on meeting the aspirations of people to live in a good home at a price they can afford to rent or buy, and businesses being able to access high quality, affordable premises that meet their needs. We will promote more affordable good quality housing and create the space for business to thrive. We want to ensure citizens have access to high quality services, a well maintained built environment and green space, and a range of facilities and cultural offers that are the fabric of any modern diverse and successful city.

#### **A Healthy City**

We will ensure lifelong wellbeing for all. We want Milton Keynes to be an active, vibrant place with people living long, healthy and fulfilling lives. We will support people and invest in services that promote prevention, choice and empowerment. We will reform public services to encourage aspiration, independence and resilience; ensure children and vulnerable people are protected from harm and neglect and work with partners to integrate services, improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

## **General Terms of Reference for Scrutiny Committees and Task and Finish Groups**

- (a) To review or scrutinise any decision made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any of the Executive Functions within the remit of the committee or task and finish group.
- (b) To make reports or recommendations to the Council or to the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of any of the Executive Functions within the remit of the committee or task and finish group
- (c) To review or scrutinise any decision made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any of the Non-executive Functions within the remit of the committee or task and finish group.
- (d) To make reports or recommendations to the Council or any Committee of the Council with respect to the discharge of any of the Non-executive Functions within the remit of the committee or task and finish group.
- (e) To make reports or recommendations to the Council, to the Cabinet or to a regulatory committee on matters within the remit of the committee or task and finish group
- (f) To consider any representations made in connection with the work of the committee or review group by a Member of the Council on behalf of her/his constituents.
- (g) To appoint advisers from outside the Council to advise the committees or task and finish groups.

## **Housing and Community Committee Terms of Reference**

1. To scrutinise the planning and provision of housing services in Milton Keynes and the Council's role as landlord, to ensure that these services provide good quality, affordable accommodation for the Council's tenants and to create a sense of place for all citizens of Milton Keynes.
2. To review the availability and provision of housing in Milton Keynes, including the impact of the Council's planning policies.
3. To review and assess measures to address homelessness and rough sleeping in Milton Keynes.
4. To seek to ensure that the anticipated needs and aspirations of future Milton Keynes' residents are met in the planning and delivery of new housing developments.
5. To scrutinise the planning and provision of leisure and cultural services provided by the Council and its partners.
6. To scrutinise the involvement of the Council in regional and national organisations operating within the remit of the Committee to ensure that the involvement provides value and benefit to Milton Keynes.

## **Health and Safety**

Please take a few moments to familiarise yourself with the nearest available fire exit, indicated by the fire evacuation signs. In the event of an alarm sounding during the meeting you must evacuate the building immediately and follow all instructions provided by the fire evacuation officer who will identify him/herself should the alarm sound. You will be assisted to the nearest designated assembly point until it is safe to return to the building.

## **Mobile Phones**

Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched to silent or is switched off completely during the meeting.

## **Agenda**

Agendas and reports for the majority of the Council's public meetings can be accessed via the Internet at: <http://milton-keynes.cmis.uk.com/milton-keynes/> Wi-Fi access is available in the Council's meeting rooms.

Users of Windows 7 and above can simply click the link to any documents you wish to see. Users of Windows XP will need to right click on the link and select 'open in browser'.

## **Recording of Meetings**

The proceedings at this meeting may be recorded for the purpose of preparing the minutes of the meeting.

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, you can film, photograph, record or use social media at any Council meetings that are open to the public. If you are reporting the proceedings, please respect other members of the public at the meeting who do not want to be filmed. You should also not conduct the reporting so that it disrupts the good order and conduct of the meeting. While you do not need permission, you can contact the Council's staff in advance of the meeting to discuss facilities for reporting the proceedings and a contact is included on the front of the agenda, or you can liaise with staff at the meeting.

Guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government can be viewed at the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/343182/14\\_0812\\_Openness\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/343182/14_0812_Openness_Guide.pdf)

## **Comments, Complaints and Compliments**

Milton Keynes Council welcomes comments, complaints and compliments from members of the public in order to make its services as efficient and effective as possible. We would appreciate any suggestions regarding the usefulness of the paperwork for this meeting, or the conduct of the meeting you have attended.

Please e-mail your comments to [scrutiny@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

If you require a response please leave contact details, ideally including an e-mail address. A formal comments / compliments / complaints form is available online at <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/complaints/> .

## AGENDA

### 1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The Chair to welcome councillors, officers of the Council, witnesses and the public to the meeting and introduce councillors, officers and witnesses who are present.

### 2. **Apologies**

### 3. **Disclosures of Interest**

Councillors to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, or personal interests (including other pecuniary interests), they may have in the business to be transacted, and officers to disclose any interests they may have in any contract to be considered.

### 4. **Minutes**

To approve, and the Chair to sign as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Housing and Community Committee held on 10 October 2016 (Item 4) (**Pages 10 to 18**).

### 5. **Community Issues: Syrian Refugees in Milton Keynes**

At its meeting on 16 September 2015, Milton Keynes Council agreed to participate in the Government's Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme and provide accommodation for refugee families from Syria (Minute CL54 refers).

The Government has allocated a proportion of the country's international aid budget to be used to help local authorities cover the costs of housing refugees. The Council's work to provide homes, school places and other local authority services to the refugee families moving to Milton Keynes after becoming displaced due to the war in Syria is underway and is being co-ordinated by Jeremy Beake, the Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Officer.

Apart from the Council, there is a range of other organisations, charities and individuals currently working alongside each other to provide essential help, services and support for the Syrian refugees allocated to Milton Keynes.

The British Red Cross is providing the support and advice necessary to help the families experience a smooth integration into British society, providing case-workers, interpreters and mentors to help the families have a good start when arriving in Milton Keynes.

The Refugees Welcome MK Group (a part of Citizens MK) is a campaign group connecting and mobilising informal volunteers to support and welcome refugees in Milton Keynes. The White Clarke Group, a company based in Milton Keynes which develops automotive and asset finance software, has been raising money to buy household items and other essentials to help these families to resettle. They have also organised volunteer days to help with the refurbishing of properties being used to house the refugees, donating spare household goods to the families, including bicycles in order to help with transportation and integration within their new communities.

The Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Officer, together with representatives of the Red Cross, Refugees Welcome and the White Clarke Group have been invited to attend the meeting to discuss with the Committee how

the resettlement programme is progressing, what the problems in delivering the programme are, and what needs to be done.

## **6. Draft Revenue and Capital Budget (Housing) Proposals 2017/18**

Scrutiny of the draft 2017/18 budget proposals in relation to Housing is included as a standing agenda item until the budget process is complete, in order to allow the Committee an opportunity to review the proposals and feed any comments it may have into the consultation process on the budget in advance of its final adoption.

The identified pressures for 2017/18 were subjected to the usual pre-budget setting scrutiny by the Budget Scrutiny Committee during October 2016. At the meeting on 13 October the Budget Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from Councillor Long, Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Housing, outlining the pressures in the Housing budget. The slides from this presentation are included for your information as Item 6a (**pages 19 to 26**). The Medium Term Financial Pressures and the one-off financial pressures for the Housing and Community Service Group are included as Item 6b (**page 27**).

However, the pressures faced by the Council in respect of the current housing crisis are not confined to the Housing Service Area, cutting across several other council departments, including Children and Families and Resources. In the Foreword to its October report, the Budget Scrutiny Committee commented:

*“The largest pressure affecting the Council is the cost of temporary accommodation, impacting areas across the Council. The Committee believes that should demand continue to increase at current rates, this issue alone will undermine the Council’s ability to manage its cost and budget in time, and that this should be the first priority for the Administration in managing demand. Several approaches have been taken to address this, however the Council is still projecting an increased spend each year across the medium term. The Committee makes a recommendation to designate a single area as a preferred option for locating accommodation outside Milton Keynes where this is required. The Committee also believes a fresh approach is needed to managing demand for Home to School transport which relates to accommodation costs outside Milton Keynes.”*

In the report, the Budget Scrutiny Committee made 4 housing related recommendations, numbers 6, 8, 13 and 19, which can be found on pages 8-10 of the report. Detailed analysis of the Committee’s reasons for making these recommendations starts on page 13 of the attached report under the heading “Variety of Temporary Accommodation Pressures” (Recommendation 6), followed by “Home to School Transport” on page 15 (Recommendation 8), “Housing and Community” on page 17 (Recommendation 13) and “Resources” on page 22 (Recommendation 19).

The report, which makes 24 recommendations on the 2017/18 budget pressures was presented to Cabinet on 8 November 2016 (Item 6c) (**pages 28 to 55**)

Members of the Housing and Community Committee are asked to note that the Budget Scrutiny Committee will be scrutinising the Housing Revenue Account in detail at its meeting on 14 December 2016. It will also be reviewing the Council’s policies, and the amount held, on reserves and contingencies, some of which are associated with housing provision at the same meeting.

Detailed scrutiny of the proposed saving in the 2017/18 draft budget will take place during January 2017.

## 7. Items to Note

### a) Housing Mix in Milton Keynes

To receive and note a briefing paper on the mix of different types of housing available / required in Milton Keynes (Item 7a) (**pages 56 to 58**).

Planning to meet local housing needs in Milton Keynes must cover both the existing residents, and those people who are expected to move here in the future, thus there is a need to ensure an adequate range of household sizes, styles, price bands, tenure type and residential density into the future.

Due to nearly 50 years of growth as a New Town, Milton Keynes tends not to follow national household profiles or trends. The number of households has risen from 21,900 in 1971 to 108,127 in 2015. Those choosing to move to the city have predominantly been young adults and young families, resulting in a continued pressure for “first-time homes” for young adults and larger homes for growing families. However those who moved here in the 1970s and 1980s are now approaching retirement age and for the first time Milton Keynes is facing a significant increase in elderly residents who also need to have their housing requirements considered. The Council has already identified the need for more bungalows into which older people can downsize once they no longer need a family sized home.

The Council commissioned Opinion Research Services to provide an update of the Council’s Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This includes an assessment of the mix and type of housing needed in Milton Keynes.

The attached briefing paper summarises the main findings of the Council’s new Strategic Housing Market Assessment in respect of the mix of housing required in the Borough over the next twenty years.

### b) An Introduction to Choice Based Lettings

To receive and note a report from the Acting Head of Housing and Community on the introduction of a Choice Based Lettings Scheme for Milton Keynes (Item 7b) (**to follow**).

### c) Update on the Milton Keynes Homelessness Partnership

To receive and note an update on the progress of the Milton Keynes Homelessness Partnership. This update was presented to Cabinet on 8 November 2016 (Item 7c) (**page 59**)

### d) Work Programme

To receive and note the updated Work Programme for 2016/17 (Item 7d) (**pages 60 to 67**).

The Committee’s attention is drawn to two additional columns, ‘Proposed Outcomes’ and ‘Actual Outcomes’ for each item. The Committee’s attention is particularly drawn to the Actual Outcomes column which will be updated after each meeting and the revised programme circulated as a standing item on the agenda for the following meeting.



The Committee is also reminded that this is a provisional Work Programme which may change at the discretion of the Committee's Planning Group if an urgent matter arises.