



**MILTON KEYNES
COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of the EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY PANEL held on WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH 2012 at 6.00 PM

Present: Councillor Tallack Chair)
Councillors Bald (substitute for Councillor), Barney, Brackenbury, Coventry, Jury, Lloyd, Maric, Williams (substitute for Councillor Shafiq) and Wright (substitute for Councillor Klein)

Officers: G Snelson (Director of Strategy), J Reed (Assistant Director [Housing]), J Moffoot (Assistant Director [Democratic Services]), J Beake (Corporate Equality and Diversity Officer), P Gibson (Housing Policy and Development Officer) and S Heap (Democratic Services Manager)

Apologies: Councillors Hoyle, Klein and Shafiq

Also Present: Councillors Dransfield, A Geary, P Geary, Kennedy, Miles, I McCall and O'Neill and 12 members of the public

ES07 MINUTES

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 28 September 2011 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

ES08 CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION – FENNY LOCK REVIEW – MINUTE C158

The Panel noted that the decision of the Cabinet made on 28 February 2012, relating to the outcome of the Fenny Lock Review, had been called-in by 20 residents or local government electors of the Borough.

It was noted that the Cabinet had decided:

- “1. That the scheme to develop a travellers’ site at Fenny Lock be stopped as the site represents poor value for money in terms of meeting priority housing need.
2. That the £1.2m be invested in new Council-owned ‘wheelchair standard’ bungalows, targeted to release social rented family homes units for households in the highest level of need (i.e. “Band 1”).
3. That the commitment to meet the needs of gypsies and travellers in a cost effective and sustainable manner be re-affirmed.

4. That, in the Site Allocations/Development Management part of the Core Strategy process, alternative sites to Fenny Lock and Bottle Dump, which are capable of cost-effective and sustainable development, be considered.
5. That the needs of the three gypsy and traveller households in the highest need ("Band 1") be met by making a more cost-effective bid to the Homes and Communities Agency to refurbish/expand the existing site at Willen Road."

The reasons cited for the call-in were that:

- "1. The site has full planning permission.
2. The decision offends the principles of equality and diversity.
3. The decision not to build a travellers site is contrary to the local plan.
4. The money was awarded specifically for a travellers site.
5. £600,000 has already been spent on preparing the site.
6. The money allocated was ring-fenced in the Council's Budget for the Site.
7. Financial comparisons on which the outcome of review is based are misleading as they exclude consideration of the New Homes Bonus, cost of land for Council houses and other already identified funding for other schemes."

The Panel heard from a representative of the residents or electors who presented the call-in, together with a response from the responsible Cabinet Member. The Panel also heard from witnesses called by both parties, other Members and members of the public.

The Panel considered the reasons submitted for the call-in, together with evidence presented at the meeting by Members and witnesses.

The Panel noted that it could either:

- (a) refer the item back to the Cabinet, setting out the nature of the Panel's concerns;
- (b) not refer the item back; or
- (c) refer its views directly to the Council.

Councillor Williams, proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Maric, on which a recorded vote was requested:

"That the decision of the Cabinet (Fenny Lock Review - Minute C158) be referred to the Council for consideration on the basis that the Panel is not convinced that the Cabinet's decision does not offend the principles of equality and diversity, and to give the opportunity for the Council to consider establishing a Citizen's Jury to review the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller Community in Milton Keynes."

The voting was as follows:

FOR: Councillors Brackenbury, Coventry, Lloyd, Maric, Tallack and Williams (6)

AGAINST: Councillors Bald, Barney, Jury and Wright (4)

ABSTENTIONS (0)

The motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED –

That the decision of the Cabinet (Fenny Lock Review - Minute C158) be referred to the Council for consideration on the basis that the Panel is not convinced that the Cabinet's decision does not offend the principles of equality and diversity, and to give the opportunity for the Council to consider establishing a Citizen's Jury to review the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller Community in Milton Keynes.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9.30 PM