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Minutes of the meeting of the CABINET held on TUESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2021 at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)  
Councillors R Bradburn, Carr, Darlington, Middleton, Z Nolan,  
Townsend and Trendall

**Apologies:** Councillor Wilson-Marklew

**Officers:** M Bracey (Chief Executive), T Aldworth (Deputy Chief Executive),  
S Bridglalsingh (Director of Law and Governance), V Collins (Director of  
Adult Services), S Richardson (Director Finance & Resources),  
P Thomas (Director of Planning & Placemaking), A Rulton (Head of  
Finance), N Hutchin (Head of Finance), N Hannon (Head of  
Environment & Waste), S Young (Head of Asset Management &  
Investment), M Hancock (Group Head of Commissioning),  
T Chapman (Commissioning Manager), L Wheaton (Senior Finance  
Manager), D Blandamer (Senior Urban Designer), P Brown (Head of  
Democratic Services) and R Tidman (Committee Services Manager).

**Also Present:** Councillors M Bradburn, Crooks, Ferrans and Rankine and seven  
members of the public

#### **C34 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Deputy Leader of the Council made announcements in respect of the  
Heritage Open Days and the Alina Orchestra.

#### **C35 MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 July 2021 be  
approved and signed by the Leader of the Council as a correct record.

#### **C36 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

None.

### **C37 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

None Received

### **C38 COUNCILLORS' ITEMS**

None received

### **C39 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS**

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

Referring to requests from residents to Crest Nicholson to carry out grass cutting on the Oakgrove estate, Councillor Crooks asked Councillor Townsend to write to the Chief Executive of Crest Nicholson to ask for action to be taken.

Councillor Townsend indicated that she would write to Crest Nicholson about landscaping issues at Oakgrove and would ensure that the wording used was as firm as legally allowed.

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

Referring to the cessation of indoor bookings for activities at the Broughton and Brooklands pavilions, Councillor Crooks asked Councillor Carr if she would intervene to help make progress in this matter.

Councillor Carr indicated that she would take up the matter with officers and would provide Councillor Crooks with a full explanation.

### **C40-42 REFERENCES FROM OTHER BODIES**

- (a) Referral from the Regeneration & Renewal Scrutiny Committee – 24 June 2021

The referral was introduced by Councillor Crooks, the Chair of the Committee, who firstly thanked the Cabinet member for attending the meeting and for her written response. Councillor Crooks indicated that he had concerns that regeneration might be seen to be slipping down the list of the Council's priorities and had concerns about the delay with the production of the Delivery Plan.

Councillor Darlington, in addition to noting her written response, indicated that regeneration was definitely seen as an overall Cabinet commitment and she considered there was great synergy across her portfolio.

**RESOLVED:**

That the referral and the written response provided, be noted.

- (b) Referral from the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee –  
15 July 2021

The referral was introduced by Councillor M Bradburn, the Chair of the Committee.

The written response from Councillor Z Nolan and Councillor Carr was noted.

RESOLVED:

That the referral and the written response provided, be noted.

- (c) Referral from the Community & Housing Scrutiny Committee –  
20 July 2021

The referral was introduced by Councillor Ferrans, the Chair of the Committee

Councillor Darlington, in addition to noting her written response, indicated that there was a Private Sector Housing Strategy due to be completed before the end of the year that would pick up a number of the concerns that had been raised in Councillor Ferrans comments to Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

That the referral and the written response provided, be noted.

#### **C43 MAKING THE CASTLETHORPE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Councillor Marland introduced the item and indicated his thanks to those involved in developing the Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan Review and that after a successful referendum recommended that the Plan be made and that the Plan therefore becomes part of the policy of the Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Council be recommended to make the Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan Review pursuant to the provisions of Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

#### **C44 FLY TIPPING ACTION PLAN**

Councillor Townsend introduced the item. Tackling fly tipping was a priority of this Council. The Action Plan included fifteen action points including a tougher approach to enforcement with the appointment of additional enforcement officers. As part of the Plan the booking system for the Household Waste Recycling Centres and bulky waste collections will be reviewed.

One member of the public spoke on this item on behalf of the Residents of Renewal Estates. Fly tipping had been identified as an issue on all of the renewal estates. Concern was expressed that the Plan set out high aspirations but had no associated Key Performance Indicators and that it was focused on enforcement activities.

The Cabinet also heard from Councillor Rankine who commented that he considered that the Fly Tipping Action Plan was a missed opportunity that included actions that the Council was or should already be doing.

Councillor Z Nolan indicated that unintentional fly tipping, for example black sacks put out after the bin lorry could be productively tackled by the Action Plan and that moving fly tipped waste quickly stops other fly tipped waste appearing in the same location.

Councillor Townsend indicated that the purpose of the Action Plan was to get to a point where there was no fly tipping in Milton Keynes and this would be done in a number of ways including working with community groups and initiatives that could be undertaken in partnership.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Fly-Tipping Action Plan 2021-2023 be approved for implementation and delivery.
2. That it be agreed that the reporting data for the fly-tipping action plan be received, monitored and reviewed by the newly formed officer led Fly-Tipping Action Group, which will meet on a monthly basis to ensure delivery of the action plan and that they can present findings to the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee as required.

#### **C45 IMPROVEMENTS TO HOUSING REPAIRS AND PLANNED MAINTENANCE SERVICES**

Councillor Darlington introduced the item by indicating that the Council owns over 11,000 homes and manages a further 16,000 leasehold properties. There had been an historical lack of investment in Council homes. The changes proposed took account feedback from tenants and the contractor and included reducing the average repair time per repair, increasing the customer satisfaction rating and reducing void times.

The Committee heard from one member of the public who spoke on behalf of the Residents of Renewal Estates. The group welcomed the recommendations and the inclusion of the key performance indicators. It was questioned as to whether Council tenants had the opportunity to input into the recommendations and the KPI's and whether the Council Tenant Panel would be re-established.

Councillor Darlington indicated that informal input was sort from tenants and also as part of the consultation that occurred on the new Tenancy Agreement. There did use to be a Tenants Panel and the Council would be looking at how they can get more engagement for example a surgery with the Ward Councillor, Mears and the Council Asset team.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed changes to the housing repairs and maintenance Key Performance Indicators be agreed.

#### **C46 TACKLING DOMESTIC ABUSE IN MILTON KEYNES**

Councillor Darlington introduced this key piece of partnership work that was taking place in Milton Keynes. The aim of the Strategy was to eradicate domestic abuse in Milton Keynes and ensure that victims felt supported.

The Cabinet heard from the Chief Executive of MK Act and from two members of the public who spoke in support of the Strategy and the work the Domestic Abuse Partnership was undertaking in the borough.

RESOLVED:

1. That the actions and priorities arising from implementation of the Milton Keynes Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2020-25 and meeting the new duties placed on MKC by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 be noted.
2. That the projects funded by the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board be agreed.

#### **C47 FORECAST OUTTURN FOR QUARTER 1 2021/22: GENERAL FUND REVENUE, HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT, DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Councillor Middleton introduced the item which was the Forecast Outturn for Quarter 1 2021/22. It was indicated that the Autumn Statement would occur in October and it was hoped that there would be enough detail to allow the Council to plan the budget and allow the Draft Budget to be in place by December. There were a number of pressures particularly in Adult Social Care, impacts from the pandemic including parking income and the cost of working from home which had resulted in increased waste costs. Despite these pressures the Council continued to invest in the expansion of the borough by way of a number of infrastructure projects.

The Cabinet heard from Councillor Rankine who noted the unprecedented support from Central Government. Concern was expressed about the collection of business rates, public transport services and the ongoing underspend on capital projects.

Councillor Middleton indicated that officers had worked hard to ensure that the Council was as well placed financially as possible and that given there had been a pandemic it was not surprising that capital projects had slipped slightly.

RESOLVED:

1. That the GFRA forecast outturn of £0.737m underspend be noted, together with the associated management actions.
2. That GFRA savings of £5.060m savings are forecast to be achieved (97% of budget) be noted.
3. That it be noted that the outturn on the HRA is break even, after an increase in the transfer to reserves together with the associated management actions.
4. That the DSG forecast surplus carry forward of £3.431m be noted, together with the associated management action.
5. That the reserves position be noted.
6. That the forecast outturn on the Capital Programme of £3.011m underspend for the total project of which £2.619m underspend is in 2021/22 be noted.
7. That the draft outturn position of the 2020/21 tariff programme be noted.
8. That the debt position of the Council at the end of quarter 4 be noted.
9. That the Treasury Management report including prudential indicators be noted.
10. That the virements to the original budget be noted.
11. That the current position on the Collection Fund be noted.
12. That the procurement waiver decisions be noted.
13. That the additions and amendments to resource allocation and spend approval for the 2021/22 capital programme and Tariff Programme be approved.

#### **C48 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL OUTLOOK**

Councillor Middleton introduced the item which was the Medium Term Financial Outlook. There would be an ongoing focus on how the Council would deal with uncertainty over the next couple of years. Inflation was impacting on many of the Council's costs including contract and staffing costs. A number of long term settlements from Central Government had been delayed which was unfortunate and meant additional uncertainty. Over the long term there was an approximate £15 million deficit that would not be able to be addressed by additional efficiencies.

Councillor Rankine echoed the concerns that Councillor Middleton had expressed about the long term uncertainties. It was noted that despite the pandemic the Council finances remained quite strong although it was questioned as to whether the Council was being overly prudent with for example the removal of unidentified pressures line. The waste contract and refurbishment of the Materials Recycling Facility would be of particular interest in the short term.

RESOLVED:

1. That the financial forecast in relation to both resources and expenditure, be noted.
2. That the approach proposed to setting a balanced budget for 2022/23 and steps to support the budget in future years be agreed.
3. That the Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) continue to develop detailed proposals to facilitate the delivery of a robust and sustainable Medium Term Financial Plan.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 7.58 PM.