

COUNCIL DECISION NOTICE

The following decisions were taken by COUNCIL at its meeting held on WEDNESDAY 9 MARCH 2022 at 7.30 pm.

CL116 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 16 February 2022 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

CL120 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

ACTIONS:

1. Councillor Wilson Marklew undertook to ask officers to follow up on parents who were parking in the School Streets Scheme area prior to it coming into effect each morning and were keeping their car engines running.

(Cabinet member for Climate & Sustainability / Director of Planning & Placemaking)

CL122 REPORTS FROM CABINET & COMMITTEES – LICENCING COMMITTEE – 9 FEBRUARY 2022 – CONSIDERATION OF STATEMENT OF GAMBLING PRINCIPLES 2022/2025 (GAMBLING ACT 2005)

RESOLVED:

That the Council adopt the Statement of Gambling Principles 2022/2025 (Gambling Act 2005).

(Cabinet member for Customer Services / Director of Customer & Community Services)

CL123 REPORTS FROM CABINET & COMMITTEES – JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE EMPLOYERS SIDE – 21 FEBRUARY 2022 – STATEMENT OF PAY POLICY FINANCIAL YEAR 2022-23

RESOLVED:

That the Council approve the Pay Policy Statement.

(Leader of the Council / Director of Finance & Resources)

CL124 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

Questions were received from Councillors Clarke, Balazs, Fuller, Rolfe, Wallis, McPake, Baume and Baines.

ACTIONS:

1. Councillor Townsend undertook to ask officers to provide members with a full breakdown of flood defence spending by ward.

(Cabinet member for Public Realm / Director of Environment & Property)

CL125 INVASION OF UKRAINE

1. That this Council:
 - a) Expresses its shock and sadness over the hostile and unprovoked attack on Ukraine by Russia.
 - b) Supports the Ukrainian people in their fight to maintain democracy and self-determination as a nation.
 - c) Welcomes the sanctions placed on Russia by the government of the United Kingdom and other nations to target those Russian individuals responsible for the aggression and the organisations which benefit from, and fund, the corrupt and oppressive Russian regime.
2. That this Council therefore agrees and affirms:
 - a) We stand with Ukraine and offer our full support for the people and their government in the face of unprovoked aggression.
 - b) To provide any reasonable help and support to all Ukrainian nationals living in Milton Keynes.
 - c) To request the Director of Finance and Resources review the Treasury Management policy of the council to ensure we divest of any financial interest it may hold in Russian companies and investments.
 - d) To call on the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Local Government Pension Fund to divest of any such similar interests, particularly in gas, oil and energy.
 - e) To write to the Secretary of State for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities to clarify the powers open to the council on the actions it may take, and information that it can be provided, to ensure that no pathway is left available for opaque Russian financial investment.
 - f) Call on the government to impose even tougher sanctions on oligarchs and individuals who benefit from the patronage of the Russian leadership.

(Leader of the Council / Chief Executive / Director of Finance & Resources)

CL126 RECRUITMENT OF FOSTER CARERS

1. That this Council recognises:
 - a) the best place for our children in care and looked after children, where suitable, is with families in Milton Keynes;
 - b) Milton Keynes Council utilises the early help model, ensuring that families receive proper support as soon as possible, and that children coming into care is a last resort;
 - c) Milton Keynes Council thinks carefully about the placements of our looked after children; and
 - d) Milton Keynes Council has many unique selling points to offer people who become foster carers.

2. That this Council also recognises:
 - a) there has been a recruitment crisis of foster carers nationally and the situation is worsening;
 - b) there is stiff competition in the market to recruit the best foster carers and we must take action to sustain our service; and
 - c) outsourcing of fostering placements is costly and often takes our children away from Milton Keynes.
3. That this Council resolves to:
 - a) highlight the recruitment of foster carers as a priority for Children's Services;
 - b) encourage every councillor as a corporate parent to help the Council recruit the best for our children; and
 - c) request the Cabinet Member for Children and Families, the Chair of Corporate Parenting and the Champion for Fostering to work with the Fostering team on a new marketing campaign and recruitment drive for foster carers, while also considering the whole offer for foster carers."

(Cabinet member for Children & Families / Chair of Corporate Parenting / Champion for Fostering / Director of Children's Services)

CL127 THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD

1. That this Council notes:
 - a) the pandemic has highlighted the significant health, wellbeing and the economic inequalities in our city;
 - b) the increase in the cost of living will impact on that vast majority of residents of the borough;
 - c) the tax burden is the highest today than at any point since World War Two and that the Conservative Government have consistently increased the direct and indirect tax burden on families;
 - d) those on the lowest incomes will be hardest hit as incomes are squeezed by inflation and increased taxation;
 - e) the government ended the uplift in Universal Credit and that the changes to the taper will not compensate for the reduction in income of the poorest and most vulnerable people in society;
 - f) an estimated 11million people in the UK live in food poverty;
 - g) an estimated 4000 households in MK go without food once a week and 10,000 households are eating smaller meals; and
 - h) if you cannot afford food, you will be unable to buy clothes, pay bills and have less money to spend supporting the wider economy.

2. That this Council also notes:
 - a) the support the Progressive Alliance is giving residents living in poverty through its crisis support helping with food, rent and fuel bills, but that the Conservative Group voted against an additional £500,000 to help those in the worst fuel poverty;
 - b) the support the Progressive Alliance has given to children in school holidays;
 - c) the support the Progressive Alliance has given to partners to help tackle food poverty; and
 - d) the amazing work that other organisations such as Food Banks, Community larders, parish and town councils and charities do to help people eat.
3. That this Council further notes:
 - a) the National Food Strategy was a wasted opportunity to tackle this issue;
 - b) the plan lacks a clear vision and strategy on how to improve the crisis; and
 - c) that opportunities to set out legal ways to enforce the strategy have been missed and need to be enshrined in law.
4. That this Council agrees:
 - a) no one should go hungry in Milton Keynes;
 - b) food poverty in the United Kingdom is disgraceful and a shaming indictment of the policies of the Conservative government;
 - c) it is time to enshrine the human right to food into law;
 - d) to continue efforts to reduce and mitigate the impact of food poverty;
 - e) to express concern that the Conservative Cost of Living Crisis will increase the levels of food poverty, hungry children and malnutrition in Milton Keynes;
 - f) to write to government to ask that the right to food should and National Food Strategy be enshrined in law; and
 - g) to continue to work with local partners to support the campaign for the national right to food.

(Leader of the Council / Chief Executive)

CL128 GREAT BRITISH RAIL HEADQUARTERS

1. That this Council notes:
 - a) the recent announcement to form a single organisation, Great British Rail, to operate the national rail network; and
 - b) the announcement of a competitive process to host the headquarters of this new organisation.

2. That this Council further notes:
 - a) the current Network Rail operation at The Quadrant MK, currently hosting around 4000 skilled rail jobs;
 - b) the concern the announcement has created regarding the short, medium and long-term future of these jobs, and the concern this has caused current employees and the negative impact it may have on future recruitment;
 - c) the highly skilled rail workforce in Milton Keynes;
 - d) the long history of this area's association with the rail industry;
 - e) that Wolverton was the world's first purpose-built railway town;
 - f) the continued operation of rail works at Wolverton;
 - g) the long association of Bletchley with the rail industry;
 - h) the government's stated aim of moving jobs out of London and the South East to 'level up' the economy;
 - i) significant inequalities exist in Milton Keynes;
 - j) the recent submission of a bid by Milton Keynes Council to host the new headquarters of Great British Rail; and
 - k) the support the bid has received from a broad range of partners including Members of Parliament, Town and Parish Councils, rail stakeholders and the public.
3. That this Council agrees:
 - a) that 'levelling up' should not mean 'levelling down' other areas;
 - b) to fully support the bid to host the headquarters of Great British Rail; and
 - c) to oppose any future plans to reduce the operational size of Network Rail staff based in Milton Keynes.

(Leader of the Council / Chief Executive)

CL129 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE PROPORTIONALITY

RESOLVED:

That the Council note the revised political makeup of the Council and agree the revised Committee allocations and appointments.

(Director of Law and Governance)

CL130 RETURNING OFFICERS FEES

RESOLVED:

That the schedule of fees and disbursements for Principal Area and Parish elections be adopted for 2022/23.

(Director of Law & Governance)

CL131 QUARTERLY REPORT ON SPECIAL URGENCY PROVISIONS

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

CL132 WARD BASED BUDGETS 2021/22

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.