

COUNCIL DECISIONS / ACTIONS - 16 SEPTEMBER 2015

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	SUBJECT AND DECISION	DECISION REFERRAL	PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION
1(b).	<p>Minutes</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 15 September 2015 were not considered.</p>	Council 21 October 2015	Committee Services and Scrutiny Manager
1(c)	<p>Disclosures of Interest</p> <p>Councillor D McCall declared a personal interest in all items which referred to homelessness, as he worked for a homelessness charity.</p> <p>Councillor Bramall declared a personal interest in Item 5 (b)(i) (Right to Buy for Housing Association Tenants) as she was employed by a public relations company who had contracts with property developers.</p> <p>The Council also received advice in relation to disclosing interests in motions relating to private sector landlords.</p>		Committee Services and Scrutiny Manager
2(b)	<p>Questions from Members of the Public</p> <p>Mr M Galloway to be provided with a written response to his question to the Chair of the Development Control Committee concerning the quality of applications for planning permission submitted by the Council.</p> <p>Mr R Pearce to be provided with a written response to his question to the Cabinet member for Children and School Improvement concerning the availability of school places at Priory Rise School and why a an additional class has not be opened at Oxley Park Academy as it had been last year to help meet demand for school places.</p>		<p>Service Director (Planning and Transport) / Councillor A Geary</p> <p>Corporate Director – People / Councillor Miles</p>

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4(a)	<p>Constitution Commission – 22 July 2015</p> <p>Administrative Changes to the Constitution</p> <p>That the following words be added to Article 17 of the Constitution:</p> <p>‘The Service Director (Legal and Democratic Services) / Monitoring Officer is authorised to up-date the titles of officers and the management structure to ensure that they remain current and other consequential amendments to reflect Council decisions to ensure that the Constitution remains a contemporary document, provided that no changes undertaken by the Service Director will take effect until they have been agreed by the Council.’</p>		Committee Services and Scrutiny Manager
4(b)	<p>Cabinet – 8 June 2015</p> <p>(i) Wolverton Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>That the Wolverton Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan be ‘made’ pursuant to the provisions of section 38(A)(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p> <p>(ii) Investment in Property Fund for Temporary Accommodation</p> <p>It was noted that the Cabinet had deferred the item and as a result there was no recommendation for the Council to consider,</p>		Senior Planning Officer -

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5(a)	<p>Councillor's Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Councillor Marland to provide a written response to Councillor C Williams's question, with both to be published in Councillor's Weekly News. 2. Councillor Miles to provide a written response to Councillor Morla regarding possible measures to help alleviate the need for parents in search of a school place to apply on a daily basis. 3. Councillor Miles to provide a written response to the question from Councillor P Geary regarding the reasoning behind the closure of the Early Intervention Centre and when he (Councillor Miles) was first aware of the closure. Also Councillor Miles to meet Councillor Geary to discuss the closure. 4. Councillor Miles to arrange for officers to investigate the home to school transport difficulties being experienced by students attending Rickley Park Special Needs Pre-School and respond to Councillor Bradburn in order that he may respond to the families affected as soon as possible. 5. Councillor Hoskins to be advised why Ward Councillors were not made aware of the discovery of legionella at Clifton Court Sheltered Housing Scheme. 	-	<p>Councillor Marland</p> <p>Corporate Director – Place / Councillor Miles</p> <p>Corporate Director – Place / Councillor Miles</p> <p>Corporate Director – Place / Councillor Miles</p> <p>Service Director (Housing and Community)</p>
Urgent Item	<p>Refugee Crisis</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That this Council, mindful of the tragic events in the Mediterranean and elsewhere and noting the comments of the Prime Minister for the UK to fulfil its moral responsibility and give sanctuary to thousands of refugees from war, instructs the Chief Executive to advise the Government that - as with other local authorities - Milton Keynes will commit to receive and support its fair share of refugee families. 	-	

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Urgent Item (cont)	<p>2. That the Chief Executive be requested to reflect the position of the Local Government Association in her communication to the Government, highlighting the already stretched resources of local government and the extra resources such placements would require.</p> <p>3. That the Council also request the Director of Place to undertake a review of the likely cost to the Council of any such placements, noting the offer of financial help to councils from the Government.</p>		
5(b)(i)	<p>Right to Buy for Housing Association Tenants</p> <p>1. That the Council notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Conservative Government's proposal to extend the Right to Buy to Housing Association tenants, to be paid for by selling off the most expensive Council Housing stock; (b) the shortage of affordable rented homes in Milton Keynes (currently estimated to be at least 850 and due to rise to over 1,000 within the next three years) and expresses its concern that the Conservative government's plans will make matters far worse; (c) the recent Local Government Association "First 100 Days" campaign which highlighted there are 1.7 million households on waiting lists for affordable housing across England and that more than 3.4 million adults between 20 and 34 live with their parents; 	-	

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5(b)(i) (cont)	<p>(d) the research carried out by the National Housing Federation which shows that just 16% of the public believed that extending Right to Buy to housing association tenants would be the most useful way of tackling the affordability crisis, and that the public's top choice, selected by 46% of the people, was to help housing associations and / or councils to build more affordable homes;</p> <p>(e) a report by the Financial Times on 14 June 2015 which shows that there could be a funding gap of over £1 billion to pay for the scheme; and</p> <p>(f) and agrees with the following warning from UNISON: <i>“Solving the housing crisis requires a significant increase in all types of housing – particularly affordable social housing – to meet housing demand, and will not be solved by selling housing association homes and depleting the nation’s social housing stock. The acute shortage of housing is leading to spiralling housing costs, which families across the nation are struggling to meet”</i>.</p> <p>2. That the Council opposes the forced sell off of council housing to pay for this Conservative plan and is concerned that the Conservative Government has also:</p> <p>(a) failed to address the situation for many local authorities which no longer have any housing stock to sell as they have transferred theirs to housing associations;</p> <p>(b) failed to address the situation in areas of high housing demand where there are often few suitable sites to build replacement social housing stock; and</p>		

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5(b)(i) (cont)	<p>(c) failed to recognise that this means housing associations will simply be trying to catch up with replacing homes rather than building affordable housing to give more people homes they need.</p> <p>3. That the Council notes that even the Conservative Mayor of London has said he did not want to see councils “deprived at a rapid rate of their housing stock” if more homes were not being built to replace them.</p> <p>4. That the Council recognises the desire by many to own their own homes, and suggests that proposals put forward by the Liberal Democrats for a “Rent to Own” model and Shared Ownership housing would represent a better way of reaching this goal.</p> <p>5. That the Council also notes that there are existing routes for housing association tenants to own their own properties – some Housing Association tenants already have the Right to Acquire.</p> <p>6. That the Council condemns the Conservative Government’s scheme and resolves to:</p> <p>(a) work with other neighbouring authorities and housing associations to oppose the current Conservative government proposals;</p> <p>(b) work with housing associations, developers and other ‘interested parties’ to find innovative ways to build more affordable homes and to begin to redress the chronic shortage; and</p> <p>(c) write to both Members of Parliament to insist that they:</p> <p>(i) show their public support for this Council’s position;</p> <p>(ii) speak up in Parliament for more social and affordable housing, and not less; and</p>		<p>Service Director (Housing and Community)</p> <p>Service Director (Housing and Community)</p> <p>Committee Services and Scrutiny Manager</p>

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5(b)(ii)	(iii) demand a genuine “one for one” replacement but not at the cost of losing more Milton Keynes Council housing.”		
	Housing in Milton Keynes Motion withdrawn with the consent of the Council.	-	
5(b)(iii)	MK Futures 2050 Commission 1. That this Council believes that: (a) the time is right to initiate an ambitious project to explore potential long-term futures, as part of the emergence of Milton Keynes as a UK city and economy of increasing significance, and as it continues to grows as a place; (b) external experts with a strong connection to Milton Keynes and the region should be engaged in the project to provide wider perspectives, knowledge and external challenge, including insights from national and international benchmark cities; (c) such a project must ensure the full range of Milton Keynes residents and communities are engaged, especially young people; and (d) consideration of the future of Milton Keynes through such a project should be integrated with the process for developing Plan:MK, to allow the two distinct work streams to take full benefit from each other as part of a formal process.		

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5(b)(iii)(cont)	<p>2. That the Council therefore resolves to:</p> <p>(a) establish a MK Futures 2050 Commission comprising experts from a range of sectors and backgrounds to engage local people, organisations, businesses, parish and town councils and the Elected Members of Milton Keynes Council in a process to explore the long-term future of Milton Keynes;</p> <p>(b) ask the Commission to deliver the following key outcome, based on the Terms of Reference for the Commission that were developed with contributions from key stakeholders: ‘A view of potential longer term futures for Milton Keynes, noting the need to ensure flexibility for as yet unknown possibilities; making recommendations to the Council for its consideration in development of its medium and longer term policy framework’;</p> <p>(c) consider the Commission’s report at a dedicated Council meeting at an appropriate time in the next municipal year, where it will be used as the basis for the Council to seek the following outcomes through engagement with the Government and other relevant stakeholders to:</p> <p>(i) re-establish Milton Keynes as a project of national importance (as when the city was first designated in 1967);</p> <p>(ii) develop a framework and/or “deal” with Government and other relevant stakeholders that will provide optimal arrangements to deliver the vision for the city’s future; and</p>	-	

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5(b)(iii)(cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (iii) fully inform and complement the process for developing key strategies and policies, including the parallel programme of work on Plan:MK (the Council's spatial plan). (d) invite Sir Peter Gregson, Vice Chancellor of Cranfield University, to Chair the Commission and deliver by July 2016 a report and recommendations for the Council to consider; (e) ask the Commission to consider a range of possible futures for Milton Keynes through to 2050 and address the following three key questions in order to provide focus to its work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) what might be the role and significance of Milton Keynes as a place and economy in the region, the UK and more widely including how it relates to other major places, cities and nearby large towns? (ii) what might be the character of Milton Keynes as defined by its people, environment and culture? (iii) what are the opportunities to pursue and challenges to address if we are to compete with other UK and international benchmark cities economically and in quality of life?; (f) require that the work of the Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) recognises the unique character of Milton Keynes; (ii) challenges both positive and negative preconceptions about the city, whether held by internal or external stakeholders; 		

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5(b)(iii)(cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (iii) makes provision to test its thinking and emergent recommendations and allow input from the political leaders of the Council; (iv) ensure the process is transparent, with evidence gathering in public and made publicly available, but with deliberations being in a closed environment, with a summary of these deliberations being made publicly available; (v) to be responsible for ensuring the engagement and input of the full range of MK residents, communities and Milton Keynes Council Elected Members, especially young people; (vi) engages regional (including neighbouring councils), national and international stakeholders and seeks insights from national and international benchmark cities; and (vii) is timetabled such that it can formally draw from, complement and inform the work to develop Plan:MK, including the consultation on the Plan:MK Vision and Development Options and feed into the development of the Preferred Options stage. 		
5(b)(iv)	<p>Legal Action - Removal of Asbestos Contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That this Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) takes very seriously the role that the Administration and every councillor have in ensuring that tax payers' money is carefully managed and stewarded; (b) against this backdrop, notes that: 		

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5(b)(iv) (cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the Council was taken to Court by Woods Building Services regarding the award of an £8m contract for the removal of asbestos which they claimed had been incorrectly scored; (ii) the Council decided to defend its position in court; (iii) it appears that the Council did this without first thoroughly investigating and reviewing the scores awarded; (iv) in so doing the Council failed to protect tax payers against a claim for costs; and substantial legal costs; (v) the Court (July 15) ruled against the Council in favour of Woods and awarded costs against the Council of £122k; and (vi) the Court ordered the tender to be rerun and left open a potential challenge for loss of profit from Woods, arising from flawed procurement. <p>2. That having due regard to the fact that contracts of more than £100k are determined by the Council's Cabinet Committee (Procurement and Commissioning), Council believes that this failure may signpost a systemic weakness in the Procurement process for large contracts which needs to be thoroughly investigated.</p> <p>3. That the Council further notes that despite the very significant value of contracts being considered by the Procurement and Commissioning Committee, meetings rarely last more than 30mins.</p>		

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5(b)(iv) (cont)	<p>4. That the Council believes that the Procurement and Commissioning Committee may be taking the approach of rubber stamping recommendations, rather than adopting a more challenging and rigorous process with difficult questions being asked and the Council further believes that this approach has potentially serious financial consequences in terms of securing value for money for tax payers and in the safeguarding of public funds.</p> <p>5. That the Council therefore asks the Audit Committee to mount an investigation into what went wrong on this particular contact and based on these findings, to recommend any changes/ actions with regards to the Procurement process overall; with the aim of this investigation being to safeguard tax payers money and to protect the Council's reputation.</p> <p>6. That the Council calls for a full financial evaluation of the costs of this judgement, including legal cost, potential claims for damages and the costs of rerunning the tender process.</p>		
6.	<p>Leader's Executive Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>The Council received the revised Leader's Executive Scheme of Delegation.</p>	-	Committee Services and Scrutiny Manager