

ITEM 1(b)



Minutes of the MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL held on WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2017 at 7.30 pm

Present: Councillor D Hopkins (Mayor)
Councillors Alexander, Bald, Betteley, Bint, Brackenbury, M Bradburn, R Bradburn, Burke, Cannon, Clancy, Clifton, Coventry, Crooks, Dransfield, Eastman, Ferrans, Ganatra, Geaney, A Geary, P Geary, Gifford, Gowans, V Hopkins, Hosking, Jenkins, Khan, Long, D McCall, I McCall, McKenzie, McLean, McPake, Middleton, Miles, Morris, Nolan, O'Neill, Patey-Smith, Petchey, Small, Walker, Wales, Wallis, Webb, C Williams, P Williams, C Wilson and K Wilson

Alderman Bartlett and Alderwomen Irons and Saunders

Apologies: Councillors Brunning, Buckley, Exon, Green, Legg, Marland, McDonald and Morla and Aldermen, Beeley, Bristow, E Henderson and Howell and Alderwomen I Henderson and Lloyd

Also Present: c200 members of the public

CL36 MINUTES

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 July 2017 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record, subject to Minute CL34(o) being amended to record that the response was provided by Councillor Gifford.

CL37 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Petchey disclosed a personal interest in item 5(b) 3 (Urban Capacity Study) as a member of Campbell Park Parish Council, as the Amendment to the Motion reference to Springfield which was within the Campbell Park Parish area.

Councillors Gowans, McLean, Middleton, Nolan, Small, Walker and P Williams disclosed personal interests in item 5(b) 2 (Public Sector Pay) as public sector employees.

CL38 ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Alderwomen Janet Irons

The Mayor announced that Alderwoman Janet Irons would be moving to live in Shrewsbury to be closer to her daughter. Janet served on Milton Keynes Council and currently served on New Bradwell Parish Council and Wolverton Town Council.

The Council joined with the Mayor in thanking Janet for her years of dedicated service to Milton Keynes and her community in particular her beloved New Bradwell and Wolverton.

The Council heard from Alderwomen Irons and Saunders.

2. Former Councillor and Mayor Joan Butterworth

The Mayor announced the death on 17 July 2017 of former Councillor and Mayor Joan Butterworth aged 90. Joan was a councillor from 1979 to 1986 and Milton Keynes' first female Mayor in 1982/83.

The Council heard from Councillor Dransfield.

3. Michael Murray – Former Chief Executive

The Mayor also announced It is also with great sadness that I announce the death on 22 July of Michael Murray the Council's former Chief Executive. Michael was Chief Executive between 1984 and 1996.

The Council heard from Councillors Crooks, Dransfield and Saunders.

The Council stood for a minutes silence as a mark of respect for former Councillor and Mayor Joan Butterworth and former Chief Executive Michael Murray.

CL39

PETITIONS

(a) Road Safety Issues - St Ledger Drive, Great Linford

The Council received a petition in connection with road safety issues in St Ledger Drive, Great Linford, which was presented by Councillor Walker.

The Council noted that the petition would be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

(b) Urban Capacity Study - Land in Campbell Park and Old Woughton Ward

The Council received a petition in connection with land in Campbell Park and Old Woughton Ward identified in the Urban Capacity Study which was presented by Mr T Baines.

The Council noted that the petition would be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

(c) Change of Use of Part of the Co-op Shop on Grange Farm to a Funeral Parlour

The Council received a petition in connection with the change of use of part of the Co-op Shop on Grange Farm to a Funeral Parlour which was presented by Mrs Susan Galloni.

The Council noted that the petition would be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- (a) Question from Mr Peter Rothery to Councillor Gifford (Cabinet member for Place)

Mr Rothery, referring to a meeting of Loughton and Great Holme Parish Council at which Councillor Gifford, when answering question from local residents, had suggested that residents could raise a petition about the residents parking charge, asked Councillor why, after presenting the Petition at the last Council meeting, he had received such a dismissive response from Council officers, stating that they were only applying the Council's policy, which suggested that the petition had not been given due consideration, particularly as Councillor Gifford had suggested submitting the petition in the first place.

Councillor Gifford indicated that she believed that residents had a right to air their concerns, one way being to submit a petition.

Councillor Gifford, in respect of the response sent to Mr Rothery, indicated that the Council's policy had been agreed by councillors as part of the Council's Budget. The Council would monitor the impact of the residents' parking scheme and could review its operation in the light of evidence.

Councillor Gifford thanked Mr Rothery for agreeing to attend a site visit with the Council's officers.

Mr Rothery, indicating that Councillors A Geary and Dransfield had undertaken to overturn the charges for the residents' parking permits if the Conservative Group was to form the Council's Administration next May and bearing in mind the high level of opposition to the charges amongst residents, asked Councillor Gifford, as a supplementary question, what she recommended residents to do to overturn the charges.

Councillor Gifford indicated that residents should work with the Council's officers to ensure the scheme worked as well as it could.

- (b) Questions from Ms Mirosława Bilinska, Mrs Susan Galloni, Mr Steve Weller, Mr Aaron Miller and Ms Tina Harvey to Councillor Legg (Cabinet member for Customer Service)

The questions to Councillor Legg were as follows:

Ms Mirosława Bilinska asked whether Councillor Legg would like to have a view from his house which looked out on dead bodies and whether he recognised the stress that would cause to her and her family.

Mrs Susan Galloni, outlining the impact of the Funeral Parlour on local residents, asked how a food shop in a small community could suddenly be turned into a funeral parlour without any neighbourhood consultation.

Mr Steve Weller asked what had been done about the concerns expressed about the Funeral Parlour to Milton Keynes Council by the Parish Council and Ward Councillors.

Mr Aaron Miller asked how many objections to this development were necessary to start an appeal process and whether the stress caused to residents was recognised.

Ms Tina Harvey asked what action the Council would take to alleviate the additional traffic problems which would be caused by the Funeral Parlour.

In the absence of Councillor Legg, Councillor O'Neil (Deputy Leader of the Council) indicated that she would arrange for Councillor Legg to provide a written response on his return.

(c) Question from Mr Anand Asopa to Councillor A Geary (Leader of the Conservative Group)

Mr Asopa, referring to increasing Council Tax and declining performance by the Police, asked Councillor A Geary how could citizens of Milton Keynes be supported by the Conservative Group in opposition.

Councillor A Geary indicated that while the Police and Crime Commission's precept was not set by the Council it was increasing. Also there was now an additional eleven police officers in Milton Keynes since 2010.

Councillor A Geary also referred to a number of initiatives being undertaken by the Conservative Ward Councillor for Tattenhoe Ward, which included a Community Crime Forum, regular liaison with the Police, regular briefings with the local MPs and an antisocial behaviour initiative in Westcroft.

Councillor Geary recognised the importance of community action and a willingness to be involved as having a significant impact on reducing crime.

(d) Questions from Mr Surinder Jassal, Mr Venu Bharadwaj, Mr Naveen H Krishnamurthy, Mr Anil Kumar Kondebettu and Mr Jagam Gudupati to Councillor O'Neil (Deputy Leader of the Council and Chair of SaferMK)

The questions to Councillor O'Neil were as follows:

Mr Surinder Jassal referring to the increase in daylight burglaries across Milton Keynes, particularly affecting the Indian Community, asked what the Police were doing to address the problem.

Mr Venu Bharadwaj asked for statistics giving the total number of burglaries in Milton Keynes, broken down by neighbourhood and the ethnicity of the victim, and Police response times.

Mr Naveen H Krishnamurthy asked what measures the Council and Police were considering to address the increasing number of burglaries across Milton Keynes and keep residents safe.

Mr Anil Kumar Kondebettu asked what measures the Police were considering to improve their response to burglaries.

Mr Jagam Gudupati asked what measure the Police could be expected to take after a burglary had been reported.

Councillor O'Neill indicated that as the Chair of the SaferMK Community Safety Partnership, which included the Police, she was aware of the growing problem of burglaries and that it appeared that the burglaries were particularly aimed at the Asian community and the theft of gold. Councillor O'Neill recognised that this was an important issue for the Partnership which was being taken very seriously.

Councillor O'Neill offered to meet with concerned residents to discuss the issue and hoped to be able to include the Council's Head of Community Safety and if possible a representative from the Police.

Messrs Bharadwaj and Krishnamurthy asked Councillor O'Neil the following supplementary questions:

Mr Venu Bharadwaj asked when would the statistics requested be available and how soon could Councillor O'Neill hold a meeting.

Councillor O'Neill indicated that the statistics would have to come from the Police, but she would aim to hold the meeting as soon as possible.

Mr Naveen H Krishnamurthy asked if the Chair of Scrutiny would consider the concerns expressed at the Committee's next meeting.

Councillor O'Neill undertook to try and get it on the agenda for the next meeting.

- (e) Question from Mr Kevin Vickers to Councillor Long (Cabinet member for Adult Care and Housing)

Mr Vickers asked Councillor Long why the Council had failed to implement additional measures to provide additional emergency accommodation and outreach support for homeless people.

Councillor Long indicated that the Council was now providing a significant amount of temporary accommodation, currently accommodating 743 persons and by so doing the Council had reduced the use of bed and breakfast accommodation by 95%. With regard to the provision of emergency accommodation for Rough Sleepers, the Council supported the Winter Night Shelter which had doubled the number of

emergency beds available this winter. In addition the Council had eighteen hostel beds, had secured funding for 23 beds to be provided by the YMCA and was supporting outreach work for Rough Sleepers, particularly those with mental health problems. The Council had also identified funding for the One-Stop-Shop which would be opening shortly.

However, Councillor Long emphasised that until it was possible to increase the availability of affordable housing there was little prospect of permanent accommodation for those currently in temporary accommodation or those rough sleeping.

Mr Vickers, as a supplementary question, asked Councillor Long to commit to having a hostel providing additional emergency accommodation up and running before the cold weather set in.

Councillor Long indicated that he could not give that assurance. However, the Council was trying to help Rough Sleepers, who the Council did not have a statutory responsibility for, by offering outreach support to help the range of problems suffered by many Rough Sleepers.

(f) Question from Mr Mike Galloway to Councillor Gifford (Cabinet member for Place)

Mr Galloway referring to the Council's new Multi-Modal Model being used to develop Plan:MK; the apparent reluctance to make information provided by the Model publicly available; the accuracy of the Model; and delays to issue the Highways Design Guide, asked Councillor Gifford why the publication of the Highways Design Guide had not happened yet and what arrangements, if any, had been made for member scrutiny of the Multi-Modal Model.

Councillor Gifford indicated that the new Multi-Modal Model was being used to establish that the transport interventions to support the supplementary housing that had to be provided through Plan:MK, in addition with existing planning permissions, would be possible, so ensuring Plan:MK was sound. The Councillor Working Group on Plan:MK would review the proposed transport interventions before the final submission version of the Plan after the second consultation which was still to come.

Councillor Gifford also indicated that the new Multi-Modal Model will be used for development of the Mobility Strategy which was part of the 2050 ambition.

With regard to the Highways Design Guide, Councillor Gowans was currently unaware of the position, but if the Design Guide was used for planning applications it would fall within the Customer Service Portfolio held by Councillor Legg. Accordingly a written response would be provided.

Mr Galloway, referring to the 2009 Modal Model, suggested that the new Modal Model should be used to inform current planning applications as well as Plan:MK and as such should be made more publically available and open to public scrutiny.

Councillor Gifford indicated that she would check with transport colleague and provide a reply.

CL41

REPORT FROM THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Councillor Brackenbury (Chair of the Standards Committee) moved that the report in relation to a breach of the Councillors Code of Conduct by Councillor C Williams be noted. The recommendation was seconded by Councillor Miles.

The Council noted that the Standards Sub-Committee found that Councillor C Williams had breached Paragraphs 2 and 6 of the Code of Conduct, namely that Milton Keynes Councillors should:

- “(2) Respect others and not bully any person
- (6) Not conduct themselves in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing their office or the Authority into disrepute.”

The Council also noted that the Sub-Committee had decided that the following sanctions should be applied to Councillor C Williams in respect of the breach:

- Councillor C Williams be censured;
- The Sub-Committee’s findings in respect of his conduct be published;
- The findings be reported to Council for information; and
- The Monitoring Officer be instructed to arrange tailored training in respect of the Code of Conduct for Councillor C Williams.

The Council heard from one member of the public.

RESOLVED –

That the report from the Standards Committee be noted.

CL42

COUNCILLORS’ QUESTIONS

- (a) Question from Councillor Bald to Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation)

Councillor Bald, stating that regular budget monitoring was key to sound financial management, asked Councillor Middleton why he had agreed that the Cabinet should receive quarterly rather than monthly reports.

Councillor Middleton indicated that as the Council’s back office functions, such as finance, continued to contract it was necessary to update governance and reporting practices. He

believed the new arrangements which would see the budget monitoring report presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis were adequate and in line with the practice in most other large unitary authorities and many private sector companies.

Councillor Middleton undertook to meet with Councillor Bald to review the budget position in between formal monitoring reports if she wished.

Councillor Middleton suggested that Councillor Bald was failing to acknowledge that the austerity measures were having an impact on back office services and the need for the Council to review and update how it did things.

Councillor Bald, as a supplementary question asked Councillor Middleton if he agreed that openness, transparency and regular reporting were key to good financial management and that by making the change to reporting cycles he was running from the truth.

Councillor Bald also indicated that she would accept the offer of monthly briefings and take the opportunity to report to the Council if she believed the quarterly reporting was not working.

Councillor Middleton indicated that the Leader and Cabinet members would continue to be briefed regularly by the Corporate Leadership Team and by officer colleagues in the individual services.

Councillor Middleton reiterated that he believed that Councillor Bald was failing to recognise the full extent of the challenges facing the Council and the difficult decisions being taken to reduce back office services by a further 25%, which included the Finance Team.

Councillor Middleton suggested that perhaps Councillor Bald should, instead of keep raising the frequency of financial monitoring at Cabinet meetings, focus on the bigger challenges facing the Council such as the continued under funding by Government in many key areas, such as housing.

(b) Question from Councillor McPake to Councillor Gowans (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor McPake referred to a number of instances where it appeared that Highways and Transport colleagues were failing to liaise, specifically with regard to Manor Road in Bletchley, which had been closed and opened on a number of times recently, and the Highways Department had not told colleagues in Transport in sufficient time to reroute buses and give public notice. Also, during one closure of Manor Road, Highways intended to also close the diversion route. Councillor McPake accordingly asked Councillor Gowans if he could intervene and improve the situation.

Councillor Gowans indicated that he was aware of the specific problem and had raised it with officer colleagues, but would raise it again and ask them to work harder to improve their communication.

- (c) Question from Councillor Wales to Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation)

Councillor Wales asked Councillor Middleton if he could update the Council on recent developments with the Revenues and Benefits Service.

Councillor Middleton informed the Council that the Council's Revenue and Benefits Team was finalist in the IRRV Team of the Year awards. He considered this a considerable achievement as the service had faced a significant loss of funding and had managed to maintain the service to such a standard that it had been shortlisted for the award.

The Council joined Councillor Middleton in congratulating the Team on its achievement.

- (d) Question from Councillor P Geary to Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation)

Councillor P Geary asked Councillor Middleton if the refurbishments at the Civic Offices were being carried out with full agreement and compliance with Building Control requirements.

Councillor Middleton indicated that as far as he was aware this was the case, but he would confirm with officer colleagues and provide a written answer.

- (e) Question from Councillor D McCall to Councillor Gowans (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor D McCall, referring to the current peak time closure of H3 Monks Way, the road works with temporary traffic lights in Tickford Street, Newport Pagnell, and the chaos which had resulted with traffic this evening backed up on all surrounding roads, including back beyond M1 Junction 14, asked Councillor Gowans if Highways officer colleagues should have listened to advice from local Ward councillors that having road works on two roads which were alternative routes for each other should be avoided.

Councillor Gowans agreed with Councillor McCall that it was important for officer colleagues to listen to the advice of local Ward councillors in such circumstances and to aid awareness of Ward councillors of up and coming road schemes a list setting out the annual programme of highway works had been circulated all councillors.

Councillor D McCall welcomed the advance notice and the positive response from Councillor Gowans. Councillor McCall reiterated the importance of officers having heed of local advice.

Councillor Gowans noted Councillor McCall's comments.

- (f) Question from Councillor C Wilson to Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation)

Councillor C Wilson asked Councillor Middleton to outline Milton Keynes Development Partnerships stance in respect of providing affordable housing.

Councillor Middleton indicated that following the recent review of the Development Partnership, the Partnership was now required to deliver 36% affordable housing on all sites sold for housing development, which would provide a significant increase in the availability of affordable housing.

Councillor Middleton stressed the importance of the Council being seen to do all that it could to address the shortage of affordable housing.

- (g) Question from Councillor Geaney to Councillor O'Neill (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Councillor Geaney asked Councillor O'Neill if she thought it was right that a Committee having invited a person to attend its meeting, officer colleagues could then subsequently decide that the person should not attend without reference to the Chair or the Committee.

Councillor Geaney, as a supplementary question asked Councillor O'Neill for an assurance that in future a similar situation did not occur, so that committee meetings were run by councillors and not officers.

Councillor O'Neill indicated that she would ask the Leader of the Council to look into the specifics of the situation and respond in writing.

- (h) Question from Councillor Eastman to Councillor Gowans (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor Eastman, referring to four roads in Newport Pagnell which had been resurfaced only a matter of a few months ago and had been resurfaced again last weekend asked Councillor Gowans why.

Councillor Gowans indicated that he would investigate and respond in writing.

Councillor Eastman as a supplementary question asked Councillor Gowans if the costs of the works could be included in his reply.

Councillor Gowans indicated that that he would include details of the costs of the works.

- (i) Question from Councillor McLean to Councillor Gowans
(Cabinet member for Public Realm)

Councillor McLean, referring to a question he asked at the July meeting of the Council about making representations to Central Bedfordshire Council requesting that the weight restriction on the road between Fen Street and Salford be removed so that lorries might be able to take a shorter route avoiding the villages, asked Councillor Gowans when he would be able to give a definitive response.

Councillor Gowans apologised for the delay in replying and indicated that he would provide a written response as soon as possible.

Councillor McLean as a supplementary question asked Councillor Gowans how long was as soon as possible.

Councillor Gowans noted the question.

- (j) Question from Councillor Bald to Councillor Middleton
(Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation)

Councillor Bald, noting that vulnerable people were having to wait for up to 60 days for a new Housing Benefit claim to be processed, putting them at risk of being made homeless, asked Councillor Middleton why he had allowed a £330,000 budget surplus in the Revenue and Benefits Service last year.

Councillor Middleton stressed that nobody had been made homeless as a result of the increased waiting times to process new Housing Benefit applications. The Council provided a number of safety net funds and there would always be a pot of hardship money available to help those experiencing difficulties.

Councillor Middleton recognised that waiting times had been longer than expected for new Housing Benefit applications to be processed and this had been as a result of the increasing demand for help from the Council from vulnerable people and those on the poverty line.

Councillor Middleton indicated that extra money had been provided for the service to engage temporary resources and it was planned to clear the backlog by October.

Councillor Middleton reported that the Revenues and Benefits service had faced a £1m cut in its funding from Government, so it was inevitable that there were fewer people on the front line and the service was facing some difficulty. The service would continue to face cuts of 31% in Government funding by 2020, unless the Government relented and agreed to provide the resources the Council needed for the service.

Councillor Bald, referring to the £330,000 budget surplus in 2016/17, as a supplementary question asked Councillor Middleton if he was happy that by not using the surplus to help fund the Revenues and Benefits Service he had put unnecessary pressure on officer colleagues working in the service.

Councillor Middleton indicated that money was not being held back from the Revenues and Benefits Service and funds had been provided in order to address the current unprecedented demand. And would continue to be provided as long as the need was there.

CL43

LOCAL AUTHORITY FUNDING

Councillor Middleton moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor C Wilson:

- “1. That this Council notes that:
 - (a) local government has faced the most severe austerity spending cuts from Central Government imposed on any sector;
 - (b) the Revenue Support Grant received by Milton Keynes Council has been cut by £74m since 2010, and by 2020 Milton Keynes Council will receive no revenue funding from Central Government;
 - (c) in the same period since 2010 demand for services in Milton Keynes has risen by at least £89m;
 - (d) the total level of cuts after revenue received from extra Council Tax, income and Business Rates has been over £130m; and
 - (e) the longer austerity continues the harder it is to maintain services to a level the public and this Council would like, and that the impact on services has been real and consequential.
2. That this Council further notes that:
 - (a) Central Government had promised by 2020 Local Government would be able to retain 100% of the Business Rates it raises in their local areas;
 - (b) the Local Government Association was working with the Department of Local Government to implement such a scheme and pilots had been established;
 - (c) the Local Government Finance White Paper was withdrawn without consultation from the Queen’s Speech, which covers two legislative years, and replaced with a vague proposal to consult on future finance;

- (d) the Conservative Chair of the Local Government Association, Lord Porter, has stated publicly that abandoning the Local Government Finance White Paper without an alternative in place before the end of Revenue Support Grant in 2020 places Local Government “on a financial cliff edge;”
 - (e) the promise in the Conservative Manifesto to implement a “Dementia Tax,” was a misguided attempt to address the growing underfunding of adult social care, and disappeared without a trace, like much of the Conservative Manifesto;
 - (f) New Home Bonus, which replaced Growth Area Funding, has been substantially reduced; and
 - (g) the £1.5billion found to fund the Conservative Government’s deal with the Democratic Unionist Party would be enough to fund Milton Keynes Council Public Realm services for 40 years, and shows that the Government imposition for austerity for 7 years and into the future is a political choice.
3. That the Council therefore calls on:
- (a) the Government to abandon austerity and properly fund public services;
 - (b) Milton Keynes’ two MPs to call for more funding for Milton Keynes Council and to call on the Prime Minister to reinstate the Local Government Finance Bill;
 - (c) on Cabinet to highlight the impact of cuts on services in Milton Keynes; and
 - (d) on Cabinet to ensure that the cuts and savings required to ensure a balanced budget are brought forward openly at the earliest opportunity for Budget Scrutiny Committee to analyse and comment on.”

Councillor R Bradburn moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor McPake and accepted by the mover of the motion:

- “1. That a new paragraph (h) be added to clause 2 of the motion as follows:
- ‘(h) despite a growing acceptance and belief by a majority of the public that they are willing to pay more through taxation to protect all front line services and particularly look after the most vulnerable in society this Conservative Government has ignored such a growing view.’

2. That a new paragraph (c) be added to clause 3 of the motion as follows, with the original paragraphs (c) and (d) becoming paragraphs (d) and (e):
 - ‘(c) the Government, as a matter of urgency, review all rates of Income Tax and Corporation Tax so that all revenue possibilities are examined with the aim to provide the very funding that Local Government is being starved of in the attempt to provide and protect vital front line services;’
3. That a new paragraph (f) be added to clause 3 of the motion as follows;
 - ‘(f) on Cabinet actively to promote further discussions with parishes with a view to assisting these statutory bodies to complement MKC services where doing so would add value to their residents' well-being, particularly the vulnerable and least well off.’”

The Council heard from one member of the public.

On being put to the vote the motion, as amended was declared carried with 32 councillors voting in favour, 17 councillors voting against and 0 councillors abstaining from voting.

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes that:
 - (a) local government has faced the most severe austerity spending cuts from Central Government imposed on any sector;
 - (b) the Revenue Support Grant received by Milton Keynes Council has been cut by £74m since 2010, and by 2020 Milton Keynes Council will receive no revenue funding from Central Government;
 - (c) in the same period since 2010 demand for services in Milton Keynes has risen by at least £89m;
 - (d) the total level of cuts after revenue received from extra Council Tax, income and Business Rates has been over £130m; and
 - (e) the longer austerity continues the harder it is to maintain services to a level the public and this Council would like, and that the impact on services has been real and consequential.

2. That this Council further notes that:
 - (a) Central Government had promised by 2020 Local Government would be able to retain 100% of the Business Rates it raises in their local areas;
 - (b) the Local Government Association was working with the Department of Local Government to implement such a scheme and pilots had been established;
 - (c) the Local Government Finance White Paper was withdrawn without consultation from the Queen's Speech, which covers two legislative years, and replaced with a vague proposal to consult on future finance;
 - (d) the Conservative Chair of the Local Government Association, Lord Porter, has stated publicly that abandoning the Local Government Finance White Paper without an alternative in place before the end of Revenue Support Grant in 2020 places Local Government 'on a financial cliff edge';
 - (e) the promise in the Conservative Manifesto to implement a "Dementia Tax," was a misguided attempt to address the growing underfunding of adult social care, and disappeared without a trace, like much of the Conservative Manifesto;
 - (f) New Home Bonus, which replaced Growth Area Funding, has been substantially reduced;
 - (g) the £1.5 billion found to fund the Conservative Government's deal with the Democratic Unionist Party would be enough to fund Milton Keynes Council Public Realm services for 40 years, and shows that the Government imposition for austerity for 7 years and into the future is a political choice and
 - (h) despite a growing acceptance and belief by a majority of the public that they are willing to pay more through taxation to protect all front line services and particularly look after the most vulnerable in society this Conservative Government has ignored such a growing view.
3. That the Council therefore calls on:
 - (a) the Government to abandon austerity and properly fund public services;
 - (b) Milton Keynes' two MPs to call for more funding for Milton Keynes Council and to call on the Prime Minister to reinstate the Local Government Finance Bill;

- (c) the Government, as a matter of urgency, review all rates of Income Tax and Corporation Tax so that all revenue possibilities are examined with the aim to provide the very funding that Local Government is being starved of in the attempt to provide and protect vital front line services;
- (d) on Cabinet to highlight the impact of cuts on services in Milton Keynes;
- (e) on Cabinet to ensure that the cuts and savings required to ensure a balanced budget are brought forward openly at the earliest opportunity for Budget Scrutiny Committee to analyse and comment on; and
- (f) on Cabinet actively to promote further discussions with parishes with a view to assisting these statutory bodies to complement the Council's services where doing so would add value to their residents' well-being, particularly the vulnerable and least well off.

CL44

PUBLIC SECTOR PAY

Councillor O'Neill moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Gowans:

"1. That this Council notes that:

- (a) pay squeezes in the public sector have now been in force for almost a decade, with the real-terms impact on workers running into thousands of pounds of cuts;
- (b) there is no democratic mandate for this scale of cuts: the policy has gone further than any proposals at the 2010 general election, and it was not presented as part of the Conservative 2015 manifesto;
- (c) the squeeze on pay has had a disproportionate impact on women, with women making up two thirds of the public sector workforce;
- (d) increasing evidence shows support for end to the pay squeeze and independent polling carried out by Survation has found that 75% of all voters support above-inflation increases in public sector pay, including 69% of Conservative voters;
- (e) the pay squeeze has put pressure on staff recruitment and retention, particularly in areas in competition for staff with the private sector, leading to increased levels of payment for agency staff; and
- (f) by reversing its cuts to Corporation Tax rates, the Government could meet the £8.5 billion needed in this Parliament to end the pay squeeze across the whole public sector.

2. That this Council believes that:
 - (a) public services and the people who deliver them are important;
 - (b) pay for public sector workers should not be set by arbitrary Government caps, but by working with Pay Review Bodies, Trade Unions, employers and employees, who can better address the complexity of pay decisions across the sector and services; and
 - (c) increases in public sector pay should be met by Central Government funding as the public sector, including local authorities, has faced huge budget cuts, and pay increases should not mean additional budget pressures on frontline services.
3. That this Council supports requests by the general public and trade unions, including the GMB and UNISON, to end the public sector pay pinch and calls on Government to:
 - (a) end public sector pay cuts;
 - (b) properly fund all public services;
 - (c) restore the independence for the Pay Review Bodies; and
 - (d) implement a REAL living wage for public sector workers.”

Councillor R Bradburn moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Crooks and accepted by the mover of the motion:

- “1. That clause 2(b) of the motion be amended by the addition of the word ‘initially’ before the word ‘working’ and the addition of the words ‘until a better system is in place that will have public confidence’ after the word ‘Bodies’;
2. That a new paragraph (d) be added to clause 2 of the motion as follows:

‘the Government stating they intend increases in the pay of some Public Sector workers such as the Police and Prison Officers while leaving other vital Public Sector workers such as Carers and Nurses within the pay cap is divisive and not equitable and further that funding for such an increase is not "new money" but will cause other cuts elsewhere in public services.’
3. That paragraphs (a) to (d) of clause 3 be deleted and replaced with:
 - ‘(a) end the current public sector pay cap altogether and up rate wages in line with inflation;

- (b) meet these increased costs from new money rather than by cuts from elsewhere within existing departmental and other organisational budgets;
- (c) implement a REAL living wage both within the public and private sector;
- (d) end the abuses associated with zero hours contracts; and
- (e) create a formal right to request a fixed contract.”

Councillor Walker moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Ganatra:

“1. That the following new clause 3 be added and the existing clause 3 renumbered as 4:

‘3. That Council welcomes:

- (a) recent confirmation by the Government that, on the recommendation of the Public Sector Pay review bodies, ministers will have the flexibility to increase public sector pay by more than 1%;
- (b) the announcement of awards for police and prison officers for 2017/18 and looks forward to seeing the detail of 2018/19 pay remits for other specific Pay Review Bodies at the autumn Budget; and
- (c) fully accepts that the Government must take a balanced approach to public spending, dealing with our debts to keep our economy strong, while also making sure we invest in our public services.’

2. That in new clause 4 the word ‘supports’ be replaced by the words ‘takes seriously’, the words ‘carefully consider’ be added after the word ‘to’, the word ‘end’ be amended to ‘ending’ in paragraph (a), the word ‘fund’ be amended to ‘funding’ in paragraph (b), the word ‘restore’ be amended to ‘restoring’ in paragraph (c) and the word ‘implement’ be amended to ‘implementing’ in paragraph (d).”

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared lost with 16 councillors voting for, 28 councillors voting against and 0 councillors abstaining from voting.

The Council heard from one member of the public.

On being put to the vote the motion as amended was declared carried with 28 councillors voting in favour, 16 councillors voting against and 0 councillors abstaining from voting.

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes that:
 - (a) pay squeezes in the public sector have now been in force for almost a decade, with the real-terms impact on workers running into thousands of pounds of cuts;
 - (b) there is no democratic mandate for this scale of cuts: the policy has gone further than any proposals at the 2010 general election, and it was not presented as part of the Conservative 2015 manifesto;
 - (c) the squeeze on pay has had a disproportionate impact on women, with women making up two thirds of the public sector workforce;
 - (d) increasing evidence shows support for end to the pay squeeze and independent polling carried out by Survation has found that 75% of all voters support above-inflation increases in public sector pay, including 69% of Conservative voters;
 - (e) the pay squeeze has put pressure on staff recruitment and retention, particularly in areas in competition for staff with the private sector, leading to increased levels of payment for agency staff; and
 - (f) by reversing its cuts to Corporation Tax rates, the Government could meet the £8.5 billion needed in this Parliament to end the pay squeeze across the whole public sector.
2. That this Council believes that:
 - (a) public services and the people who deliver them are important;
 - (b) pay for public sector workers should not be set by arbitrary Government caps, but by initially working with Pay Review Bodies until a better system is in place that will have public confidence, Trade Unions, employers and employees, who can better address the complexity of pay decisions across the sector and services;
 - (c) increases in public sector pay should be met by Central Government funding as the public sector, including local authorities, has faced huge budget cuts, and pay increases should not mean additional budget pressures on frontline services; and
 - (d) the Government stating they intend increases in the pay of some Public Sector workers such as the Police and Prison Officers while leaving other vital Public Sector workers such as Carers and Nurses within the

pay cap is divisive and not equitable and further that funding for such an increase is not 'new money' but will cause other cuts elsewhere in public services.

3. That this Council supports requests by the general public and trade unions, including the GMB and UNISON, to end the public sector pay pinch and calls on Government to:
 - (a) end the current public sector pay cap altogether and up rate wages in line with inflation;
 - (b) meet these increased costs from new money rather than by cuts from elsewhere within existing departmental and other organisational budgets;
 - (c) implement a REAL living wage both within the public and private sector;
 - (d) end the abuses associated with zero hours contracts; and
 - (e) create a formal right to request a fixed contract.

CL43 URBAN CAPACITY STUDY

With the consent of the Council, Councillor Walker withdrew his motion in respect of the Urban Capacity Study.

CL46 APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY OFFICER - OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

The Mayor moved and the Deputy Mayor seconded:

- “1. That the designation of Don McLure as the Council’s officer responsible for the administration of financial affairs (Section 151 Officer) be confirmed.
2. That, with sadness, the ill health of Nicole Jones be noted and the Council’s good wishes be sent to her.”

The Council noted that Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 required every local authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.

The Council also noted that Nicole Jones had been appointed as the statutory Council’s Chief Finance Officer by the Council at a meeting on 28 November 2016, when the Council had also authorised the Chief Executive to nominate an appropriate officer to act as the statutory Chief Finance Officer until the point at which a meeting of the Council could take place to formally consider an appointment, if the existing Chief Finance Officer was unable to fulfil the role for any reason.

It was reported that, unfortunately, Ms Jones has been diagnosed with a serious illness and was unable to fulfil all the significant duties associated with the role. Therefore, it has been necessary to secure the services of an interim Chief Finance Officer and reallocate most of the post's responsibilities to that person and to other colleagues. Don McLure had been appointed by the Chief Executive on an interim basis pending a permanent appointment.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

1. That the designation of Don McLure as the Council's officer responsible for the administration of financial affairs (Section 151 Officer) be confirmed.
2. That the designation of Don McLure as the Council's officer responsible for the administration of financial affairs (Section 151 Officer) be confirmed.

CL47

QUARTERLY REPORT ON SPECIAL URGENCY DECISIONS

In accordance with Access to Information Procedure Rule 17.4, the Council noted that the Provisions for Special Urgency, as set out in Access to Information Procedure Rule 16, and Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16(j) were not used during the period 1 June 2017 to 31 August 2017.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10:45 PM