



Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 13 March 2024 at 19:30

Present: Councillor Legg (Mayor)

Councillors M Bradburn, Andrew, Andrews, Ahmad, Bailey, Bell, K Bradburn, R Bradburn, Brown, Cannon, A Carr, J Carr, Clarke, Crooks, Darlington, Exon, Geary, Hall, Hearnshaw, D Hopkins, V Hopkins, Hume, Hussain, Imran, Kendrick, M Khan, Lancaster, Long, Mahendran, Marland, McLean, McQuillan, Middleton, Muzammil, Nayee, Nolan, Oguntola, Oyakhire, Petchey, Priestley, Smith, Taylor, Townsend, Trendall, Verma and Wardle and 12 members of the public

Apologies Councillors Adewale, De Villiers, Ferrans, Fuller, N Khan, McPake, Rolfe, Whitworth and Wilson-Marklew

Aldermen Bartlett, Alderman Beeley, Alderman Bristow, Alderman Connor, Alderman Coventry, Alderman Geary, Alderman Henderson, Alderwomen Henderson, Alderwomen Irons, Alderman Lewis, Alderwomen Lloyd, Alderman McCall, Alderman McKenzie, Alderman Miles, Alderwoman Saunders and Alderman Tallack

CL105 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That with the correction to minute CL102 (Council Budget 2024/25 and MTFP 2024/25 to 2027/28) amending the wording 'The Mayor briefly adjourned the meeting between 8.10 pm and 8.25 pm' to add the following words: 'because of a power outage affecting Civic Offices and the wider area.

Upon the meeting reconvening, the Mayor proposed (with the consent of the Leaders of Political Groups), and with the agreement of the meeting, that in the exceptional and unprecedented circumstances of a power outage (and limited prospect of power returning), time limited emergency lighting, and the legal requirement to agree a budget within a timeframe, and secure timely printing of Council Tax notices, that the Council depart from its usual practice of debate, and that accordingly amendments be moved, seconded and voted upon without further discussion. Additionally, that the substantive motion which had already been moved and seconded also be voted upon without discussion', that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 February 2024 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

CL106 Disclosures of Interest

For transparency, Councillor Hussain advised that with regard to Item 6(c), Motion 3 – Taxi Drivers and White Ribbon Ambassadors, he did not believe that he had a Non-Registerable Interest but that he would leave the Chamber while the matter was discussed and decided.

CL107 Announcements

The Mayor made announcements in respect of: the Loughton and Shenley by-election; the Civic Reception and Mayor's Awards; the MK Festival of Running; the pre-election period, election materials for the elections on the 2 May, Ramadan; the recent death of Sir Peter Gregson and the retirement of Councillors McPake, Taylor and De Villiers.

CL108 Petitions

The Council received a petition from Councillor J Carr on behalf of local residents requesting the Council do all it can to ensure that the No 1 and 2 bus services were not withdrawn from use.

Councillor Marland advised that he would pass the petition information to officers and noted that the administration was seeking to do all it can do to support local bus services. It was further noted that all communities in Milton Keynes deserved a strong local public transport service and the Council would do all it can do to influence the provider to continue the bus service and would respond to the petition accordingly.

The Council received a petition from Councillor Verma on behalf of local residents requesting the Council implement a 20 mph zone for Hengistbury Lane, Tattenhoe.

Councillor Marland advised that the request had been added to the list for officers to undertake a technical assessment.

ACTIONS:

1. Councillor Marland agreed to pass the petition information on to officers for them to investigate future and undertook to do all that the Council could do to influence the provider of the No 1 and 2 bus service before any decisions were made about its future.
2. Councillor Marland agreed to ask officers to undertake a technical assessment of Hengistbury Lane, Tattenhoe, that had been requested for a reduction in speed to a 20 miles per hour zone.

CL109 Questions from Members of the Public

Questions were received from four members of the public.

Paul Bartlett submitted a question but as he was not able to attend the meeting the Mayor requested that he was sent a written response.

Paul Ridley asked Councillor Darlington, could she confirm that the Council would be supporting World Autism Acceptance Week & World Autism Day on the 2 April?

Councillor Darlington indicated that during that week there would be a large programme of activities including posts and information to schools, the Easter SEND half term sessions would be marking the week, the Council would share the 5K walk information in the SEND newsletter. The Council would also light up the building blue on the 2 April and promote autism awareness through social media posts.

Don Hoyle asked Councillor Marland, could he assure residents that the Council will press Anglian Water, as a matter of some urgency, to increase water storage and thus supply all the water we want, rather than ration it through the use of smart meters?

Councillor Marland indicated that water companies in England, including Anglian Water, must prepare and maintain a water resources management plan which looked at making best use of resources through demand management and supply side options. Water companies had a duty to ensure that water usage was reduced. However, the Council was not aware of any of the practices in terms of smart meters that Mr Hoyle had suggested but the company was indeed installing smart meters as they helped to identify water efficiencies and leakages.

As a supplementary question, Don Hoyle asked Councillor Marland, would all candidates publish prominently in their election literature what efforts they had made or intended to be made to encourage Anglian Water to install reservoirs for the area or that you accept water rationing.

Councillor Marland indicated that on behalf of the Labour Group that they would not be including that request in their manifesto and it was considered that Anglian Water had bigger issues to deal with, such as flushing waste into our rivers.

Christine Griffiths asked Councillor Mahendran, had the Council made residents aware of Project Skyway and had risk assessments been put in place for this project?

Councillor Mahendran indicated that Project Skyway was a private consortium which the Council was not part of and therefore the Council would not necessarily publish any information about it. Councillor Mahendran indicated that they would ask officers to seek further information including any detail of future test plans and if they would impact on the Milton Keynes City area and if this was the case the Council would inform residents. The project was funded by the UK government and risk assessments would have been part of the application process. The project would need approval from the Civil Aviation Authority to fly any drones and require permission from the Council to operate from or overfly any Council owned land.

As a supplementary question, Christine Griffiths asked Councillor Mahendran, did she know whether the project would include any communication towers being placed in residential areas.

Councillor Mahendran indicated that she did not have any information on that matter but that she would ask officers if there was any further detail on this.

ACTIONS:

1. The Mayor asked Councillor Marland to send a written response to the question from Mr Bartlett.
2. Councillor Mahendran undertook to ask officers to investigate if there was any more information related to the potential location of towers within Milton Keynes as part of Project Skyway and would provide a written response on this to the member of the public.

CL110 Business Remaining from Last Meeting

None.

CL111 Reports from Cabinet and Committees

CL112 JNCE - 23 February 2024 - Annual Pay Policy

Councillor Townsend moved the following recommendation which was seconded by Councillor J Carr:

“That the Council agree the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.”

The recommendation was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

That the Council agree the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.

CL113 Councillors' Questions

Questions were received from Councillors: Bailey; D Hopkins; Lancaster, Bell; Nayee; Verma; R Bradburn; Oyakhire; Muzammil and D Hopkins.

Question from Councillor Bailey to Councillor Mahendran (Cabinet member for Climate, Sustainability and Innovation)

Councillor Bailey asked Councillor Mahendran, the Conservative Group recently asked Council to hire a consultant to look at air quality near construction sites. Rather than spend £100,000 on an external consultant, does the Cabinet member have an update on this issue?

Councillor Mahendran indicated that air quality was really important and the Council had secured £50,000 to install small state of the art sensors around the city to monitor air quality and would seek to install some of these sensors in construction areas. The aim was to make the data available in real time so that the Council and residents could monitor their air quality.

Question from Councillor D Hopkins to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor D Hopkins asked Councillor Marland, would he be ensuring that provision for an HGV Lorry Park and associated facilities would form part of the new Plan MK 2050 and, that overnight parking and daytime holding and associated facilities would

be insisted upon being included in the development briefs for new logistic employment sites wherever they are located across Milton Keynes?

Councillor Marland indicated that this issue would be looked at during the process for the development of the New City Plan.

Question from Councillor Lancaster to Councillor Verma (Chair of Corporate Oversight and Scrutiny Management Committee)

Councillor Lancaster asked Councillor Verma, with regard to a Conservative campaign leaflet distributed in the Tattenhoe Ward, was the photo used for the community litter pick at least four years old and what would he say to a resident if they were scrutinising data that was four years old?

Councillor Verma indicated that he undertook very regular litter picks in the ward and the picture used was immaterial.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Lancaster asked Councillor Verma, for transparency, when was the last litter pick that he was involved in?

Councillor Verma indicated that as the question was nothing to do with his role as the Chair of Corporate Oversight and Scrutiny Committee he would not be answering it.

Question from Councillor Bell to Councillor J Carr (Cabinet member for Tackling Social Inequalities)

Councillor Bell asked Councillor J Carr, could she provide an update on the recent British Youth Council 'Make Your Mark' ballot?

Councillor J Carr indicated that 10,000 young people recently cast their vote which was three times higher than the previous ballot in 2022. This turnout reflected the work of Democratic Services and the Youth Council to improve democratic engagement of young people.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Bell asked Councillor J Carr, could she remind Councillors how they could engage with the Youth Council and hear more about their work?

Councillor J Carr indicated that Councillors could follow the Youth Council on their social media, their meeting agendas and minutes were published on Modern.Gov and any member of the Council was welcome to join the Youth Council on the 1st Saturday of the month when they held their civic meeting. More information was available from the Democratic Services team.

Question from Councillor Nayee to Councillor Mahendran (Cabinet member for Climate, Sustainability and Innovation)

Councillor Nayee asked Councillor Mahendran, could the Cabinet member tell us what the Council was doing to support local tech start ups and help them to level up?

Councillor Mahendran announced that the first five winners of the MK Tech Fund had recently been awarded. This fund allowed local Milton Keynes based tech start ups to

bid for funding to help them grow. The Council was committed to supporting small businesses, particularly in tech and innovation as part of our 'Smart City' ambitions.

Question from Councillor Verma to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Verma asked Councillor Marland, residents remained very concerned about the proposed Shenley Park development, could the Leader of the Council assure us that the Council would ensure that residents were kept informed and would have adequate time to make any comments and that the Council would consider all the comments and concerns raised by residents before any decisions were made?

Councillor Marland indicated that this should be a question directed to the Chair of the Planning Committee as it was a process questions. If an application was made it would be determined openly and transparently by the Planning Committee.

Question from Councillor R Bradburn to Councillor D Hopkins (Leader of the Conservative Group)

Councillor R Bradburn asked Councillor D Hopkins, in view of the recent social media posts of a local councillor and parliamentary candidate with the former Vice-Chair of the Conservative Party, Lee Anderson, would the local Conservative Group be maintaining their invitation for him to visit Milton Keynes City?

Councillor D Hopkins indicated that the question should be addressed to the Conservative Federation.

As a supplementary question, Councillor R Bradburn asked Councillor D Hopkins, as you represent the Conservative party on this Council who else should I direct this question to?

Councillor D Hopkins referred Councillor R Bradburn to his previous answer.

Question from Councillor Oyakhire to Councillor K Bradburn (Chair of the Public Realm and Environment Scrutiny Committee)

Councillor Oyakhire asked Councillor K Bradburn, at a recent Public Realm and Environment Scrutiny Committee flood and water management in Milton Keynes was discussed. As we are all aware flooding can cause disruption for local residents and as this is such an important issue for the local area could the Chair assure the Council that the committee would continue to make this a top priority to scrutinise?

Councillor K Bradburn agreed that flooding was a very important issue and one the Council took very seriously. If she remained as Chair she would ensure that flooding remained a top priority and that the committee followed up on all the recommendations that had been made.

Question from Councillor Muzammil to Councillor Nolan (Cabinet member for Children and Families)

Councillor Muzammil asked Councillor Nolan, parents who use the Little Owls Children's Centre in Oxley park had heard it was due for closure, could the Cabinet member reassure local residents that the centre was not closing down?

Councillor Nolan indicated that in Milton Keynes the Council was particularly keen to make sure that our children's centres remained relevant for every part of the city and that we had a comprehensive family centre offer for our children and young people.

Question from Councillor D Hopkins to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor D Hopkins asked Councillor Marland, the Danesborough Fort located on the Greensand Ridge was a scheduled monument, there were reports that the fort was under attack from mountain bike riders, quad riders and others and needed investment in its protection. What could you suggest the Council might do to help preserve this important local landmark?

Councillor Marland announced that as part of their manifesto the Labour Group intended to set up a safety task force that would look at tackling antisocial behaviour. He indicated that he would also bring this matter to the attention of officers to ensure the Council was looking at public safety and maintenance of the scheduled ancient monument and that he would ask the Cabinet member for Culture to write to Historic England and ask what plans they had to maintain and protect the site.

As a supplementary question, Councillor D Hopkins asked Councillor Marland, as there were multiple parties involved with this site including the Bedford Estates, the Greensand Trust and the Council, would the Leader of the Council agree to meet with him to discuss the issue further?

Councillor Marland indicated that he was happy to meet with Councillor D Hopkins to discuss the matter further.

ACTIONS:

1. Councillor Marland undertook that the issue of HGV parking, rest and welfare facilities would be considered as part of the process of developing the New City Plan.
2. Councillor Marland undertook to request the Cabinet member for Culture to write to Historic England for information regarding their plans for the maintenance and protection of the Danesborough Fort and agreed to meet with Councillor Hopkins to discuss the issue further.

CL114 Notices of Motions:

CL115 Motion 1 - Extension of the Franchise

Councillor Nayee moved and Councillor R Bradburn seconded the following motion:

"1. That this Council notes that:

- a) The Elections Act is a major piece of national legislation with local implications for the residents of this local authority, including the use of mandatory photographic voter ID at the polling station, changes to overseas voting and voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens.

- b) According to the 2021 census, one in six usual residents of England and Wales were born outside the UK. They live, work, study, make use of public services, and call the UK their home. Many foreign-born residents of this local authority from EU and Commonwealth countries can vote in our local elections. However, over 1 million residents across England and Northern Ireland do not have a right to vote.
- c) Scotland and Wales implemented residence-based voting rights where all residents with lawful immigration status have the right to vote in local and devolved national elections.
- d) Over 50% of people agree that every resident, no matter where they are from, should have the right to vote at least in local elections.

2. That this Council welcomes:

- a) That all our residents, no matter their nationality, call this local authority their home and bring significant value to our area.
- b) That the voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens with pre-settled and settled status who entered the UK before 2021 will be maintained through the Elections Act.
- c) That 11 local authorities across England have passed motions asking for the right to vote to be extended to all residents in local elections.

3. That this Council expresses concern that:

- a) EU citizens who enter the UK from the 1st of January 2021 and are not covered by bilateral voting rights treaties (currently only active with Denmark, Poland, Luxembourg, Portugal, and Spain) will lose voting and candidacy rights in local elections when the Elections Act is fully implemented. This will create an unequal situation where some EU citizens will have the right to vote where others will not.
- b) The complexity in voting eligibility will cause confusion and will reduce voter turnout in local elections amongst migrant voters, a group already under-registered compared to British voters.
- c) A burden will be placed on Local Authorities managing the removal of a significant number of EU citizens from the electoral register. This may result in some being wrongfully removed from the electoral register.

4. That this Council commits to:

- a) Write to the Minister of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the relevant shadow frontbenchers requesting that the franchise for local elections be extended to all qualifying foreign nationals in England and Northern Ireland in line with eligibility criteria in Scotland and Wales. This would ensure a UK-wide and fair approach to

voting rights so that all our residents, who are also our council tax payers, are enfranchised.

- b) Delivering a training to councillors and relevant officers on the changes brought by the Elections Act so that residents can be accurately informed about their current voting rights.
- c) Work collaboratively with voluntary sector organisations in our local authority to reach residents about current voter eligibility rules and how to vote.
- d) Ensure council officers in Democratic Services have a strategy in place to ensure that the implementation of the Elections Act, including the removal of some EU citizens from the register, does not wrongfully remove eligible voters from the register.
- e) Continue promoting voter registration and photo ID requirements to residents at citizenship ceremonies, events, and other communication channels.”

The Council also heard from Councillor D Hopkins on this matter.

The Motion was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

1. That this Council notes that:
 - a) The Elections Act is a major piece of national legislation with local implications for the residents of this local authority, including the use of mandatory photographic voter ID at the polling station, changes to overseas voting and voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens.
 - b) According to the 2021 census, one in six usual residents of England and Wales were born outside the UK. They live, work, study, make use of public services, and call the UK their home. Many foreign-born residents of this local authority from EU and Commonwealth countries can vote in our local elections. However, over 1 million residents across England and Northern Ireland do not have a right to vote.
 - c) Scotland and Wales implemented residence-based voting rights where all residents with lawful immigration status have the right to vote in local and devolved national elections.
 - d) Over 50% of people agree that every resident, no matter where they are from, should have the right to vote at least in local elections.
2. That this Council welcomes:
 - a) That all our residents, no matter their nationality, call this local authority their home and bring significant value to our area.

- b) That the voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens with pre-settled and settled status who entered the UK before 2021 will be maintained through the Elections Act.
- c) That 11 local authorities across England have passed motions asking for the right to vote to be extended to all residents in local elections.

3. That this Council expresses concern that:

- a) EU citizens who enter the UK from the 1st of January 2021 and are not covered by bilateral voting rights treaties (currently only active with Denmark, Poland, Luxembourg, Portugal, and Spain) will lose voting and candidacy rights in local elections when the Elections Act is fully implemented. This will create an unequal situation where some EU citizens will have the right to vote where others will not.
- b) The complexity in voting eligibility will cause confusion and will reduce voter turnout in local elections amongst migrant voters, a group already under-registered compared to British voters.
- c) A burden will be placed on Local Authorities managing the removal of a significant number of EU citizens from the electoral register. This may result in some being wrongfully removed from the electoral register.

4. That this Council commits to:

- a) Write to the Minister of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the relevant shadow frontbenchers requesting that the franchise for local elections be extended to all qualifying foreign nationals in England and Northern Ireland in line with eligibility criteria in Scotland and Wales. This would ensure a UK-wide and fair approach to voting rights so that all our residents, who are also our council tax payers, are enfranchised.
- b) Delivering a training to councillors and relevant officers on the changes brought by the Elections Act so that residents can be accurately informed about their current voting rights.
- c) Work collaboratively with voluntary sector organisations in our local authority to reach residents about current voter eligibility rules and how to vote.
- d) Ensure council officers in Democratic Services have a strategy in place to ensure that the implementation of the Elections Act, including the removal of some EU citizens from the register, does not wrongfully remove eligible voters from the register.
- e) Continue promoting voter registration and photo ID requirements to residents at citizenship ceremonies, events, and other communication channels.

CL116 Motion 2 - Play Area Improvements Across Milton Keynes

Councillor Trendall moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Oguntola:

- “1. That this Council notes that:
 - a) there are over 400 play areas in Milton Keynes, which are an important factor in maintaining and improving the physical and mental health of our children;
 - b) the more often and the longer these areas are used, the better the outcomes for our families; and
 - c) the user-friendliness of these areas plays a large part in how often, and for how long these play areas are used.
2. That this Council believes that:
 - a) the better these areas are for the users, including importantly the parents and carers of our children, the more they will be used; and
 - b) improving these areas is therefore a factor in improving the welfare of our children.
3. That this Council resolves to ask Cabinet to consider:
 - a) ensuring that every new play area will be equipped with at least one bench seat so that parents/carers have somewhere to sit whilst children play, thus increasing dwell time;
 - b) ensuring that every new play area will be equipped with a waste bin;
 - c) retrofitting those play areas without a bench seat or bin through a five-year rolling upgrade to be complete by May 2029;
 - d) making bench seats with backs that are installed available for the fitting of memorial plaques;
 - e) encouraging companies to sponsor benches and bins to defray the cost to council taxpayers; and
 - f) writing to parish and town councils to and encourage them to place dog waste bins within 20m of each play area, as when there is a parent/carer and child there is often the family pet dog with them.”

The Council heard from Councillors Lancaster and Muzammil on the matter.

The Motion was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

1. That this Council notes that:

- a) there are over 400 play areas in Milton Keynes, which are an important factor in maintaining and improving the physical and mental health of our children;
 - b) the more often and the longer these areas are used, the better the outcomes for our families; and
 - c) the user-friendliness of these areas plays a large part in how often, and for how long these play areas are used.
2. That this Council believes that:
- a) the better these areas are for the users, including importantly the parents and carers of our children, the more they will be used; and
 - b) improving these areas is therefore a factor in improving the welfare of our children.
3. That this Council resolves to ask Cabinet to consider:
- a) ensuring that every new play area will be equipped with at least one bench seat so that parents/carers have somewhere to sit whilst children play, thus increasing dwell time;
 - b) ensuring that every new play area will be equipped with a waste bin;
 - c) retrofitting those play areas without a bench seat or bin through a five-year rolling upgrade to be complete by May 2029;
 - d) making bench seats with backs that are installed available for the fitting of memorial plaques;
 - e) encouraging companies to sponsor benches and bins to defray the cost to council taxpayers; and
 - f) writing to parish and town councils to and encourage them to place dog waste bins within 20m of each play area, as when there is a parent/carer and child there is often the family pet dog with them.

CL117 Motion 3 - Taxi Drivers and White Ribbon Ambassadors

Councillor Hussain left the Chamber while the motion was discussed and decided.

Councillor A Carr moved the following Motion which was seconded by Councillor Bell:

“1. This Council notes that:

- a) Milton Keynes City Council became a White Ribbon Council in November 2022. This status shows our commitment to the White Ribbon campaign to protect and support women and girls from abusive and violent behaviour by men and boys. In gaining this accreditation we, the Council, sought to spread the support to all departments and sections of our Council and beyond, into our community.

- b) Milton Keynes City Council currently licenses approximately 1,500 drivers to provide Private Hire and Hackney Carriage services. Once a license is acquired, a driver may operate anywhere in England, provided they are licensed with an operator in a corresponding local authority area.
- c) A large proportion of drivers operating within the city boundaries are licensed by other Councils, as a result Milton Keynes City Council operates a more proactive stance regarding compliance and safety auditing, which is funded by higher licence fees.
- d) At present all MKCC drivers are fit and proper persons, (meeting the required local standards as set out within our policy), and undertake safeguarding training to ensure they have a better understanding of the abuse suffered by children and vulnerable adults prior to obtaining their licence. Whilst remaining within the statutory licensing procedures, at present this training does not address the issues raised by White Ribbon.
- e) MKCC receives a high proportion of complaints from women in regard to inappropriate behaviour or language by taxi drivers towards female passengers.
- f) That other councils such as Newcastle are already promoting White Ribbon to taxi operators, door security, bar staff and other licenced facilities.

2. This Council resolves to:

- a) ensure that all new applicants and license holders understand that verbal, physical and emotional abuse is not tolerated;
- b) encourage all those experiencing abuse to report this to the Council;
- c) ask officers to make appropriate arrangements (in consultation with relevant Portfolio holder and Regulatory committee chair) to revise the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy to include education about domestic abuse into existing mandatory safeguarding and equality training for drivers, completion of which is recorded.
- d) invite all those Private Hire and Hackney Carriage drivers licenced by Milton Keynes City Council to become White Ribbon ambassadors and display the White Ribbon;
- e) encourage Operators to promote White Ribbon with their drivers, regardless of the origin of their licence; and
- f) ask the Portfolio holder and Regulatory Committee Chair to write to TFL and local authorities whose vehicles operate in Milton Keynes, to ask that they consider taking a similar approach."

The Council heard from Councillors Andrew, Darlington, D Hopkins, McLean and Priestley on the matter.

The Motion was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

1. This Council notes that:
 - a) Milton Keynes City Council became a White Ribbon Council in November 2022. This status shows our commitment to the White Ribbon campaign to protect and support women and girls from abusive and violent behaviour by men and boys. In gaining this accreditation we, the Council, sought to spread the support to all departments and sections of our Council and beyond, into our community.
 - b) Milton Keynes City Council currently licenses approximately 1,500 drivers to provide Private Hire and Hackney Carriage services. Once a license is acquired, a driver may operate anywhere in England, provided they are licensed with an operator in a corresponding local authority area.
 - c) A large proportion of drivers operating within the city boundaries are licensed by other Councils, as a result Milton Keynes City Council operates a more proactive stance regarding compliance and safety auditing, which is funded by higher licence fees.
 - d) At present all MKCC drivers are fit and proper persons, (meeting the required local standards as set out within our policy), and undertake safeguarding training to ensure they have a better understanding of the abuse suffered by children and vulnerable adults prior to obtaining their licence. Whilst remaining within the statutory licensing procedures, at present this training does not address the issues raised by White Ribbon.
 - e) MKCC receives a high proportion of complaints from women in regard to inappropriate behaviour or language by taxi drivers towards female passengers.
 - f) That other councils such as Newcastle are already promoting White Ribbon to taxi operators, door security, bar staff and other licenced facilities.
2. This Council resolves to:
 - a) ensure that all new applicants and license holders understand that verbal, physical and emotional abuse is not tolerated;
 - b) encourage all those experiencing abuse to report this to the Council;
 - c) ask officers to make appropriate arrangements (in consultation with relevant Portfolio holder and Regulatory committee chair) to revise the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy to include education about domestic abuse into existing mandatory safeguarding and equality training for drivers, completion of which is recorded.
 - d) invite all those Private Hire and Hackney Carriage drivers licenced by Milton Keynes City Council to become White Ribbon ambassadors and display the White Ribbon;

- e) encourage Operators to promote White Ribbon with their drivers, regardless of the origin of their licence; and
- f) ask the Portfolio holder and Regulatory Committee Chair to write to TFL and local authorities whose vehicles operate in Milton Keynes, to ask that they consider taking a similar approach.

CL118 Motion 4 - The Growth of Milton Keynes

Councillor Geary moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Wardle:

- “1. That this Council acknowledges that:
 - a) due to the ambitious nature of the New City Plan a significant proportion of the growth in the upcoming city plan is likely to have to be delivered in the rural areas of MK;
 - b) rural areas are one of the city’s greatest assets;
 - c) rural areas are the green lung of the city storing carbon, producing food and providing places of enjoyment for people as well as being a place of beauty and industry; and
 - d) the rural area is made up of many individual and unique communities.
2. That this Council welcomes our local Conservative MP’s commitment to ask government to review MK Councils plans, to mitigate against reckless over development.
3. That this Council agrees that:
 - a) growth into the rural areas should be minimised;
 - b) particular attention should be paid in any future plan to protect the unique identity of individual communities when growth happens;
 - c) the hard fought for planning powers that this council has should not be surrendered to any development corporation and this Council does not support a development corporation in any part of Milton Keynes in the future;
 - d) infrastructure before expansion is vital for any growth of the city so existing and future residents are not disadvantaged by poor infrastructure that is either late or not delivered at all; and
 - e) it should not support a new town within the borough of Milton Keynes and will use all available resources to oppose any such proposals if they come forward.”

The Council heard from Parish Councillor Pryor and Councillors R Bradburn, Marland and Trendall on the matter.

On being put to the vote the Motion was lost.

RESOLVED:

On being put to the vote the Motion was lost.

CL119 Returning Officer's Fees and Disbursements

The Mayor moved and the Deputy Mayor seconded the following recommendation:

“That the schedule of fees and disbursements for Principal Area and Parish elections, as set out in the annex to the report, be adopted for 2024/25.”

The recommendation was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

That the schedule of fees and disbursements for Principal Area and Parish elections, as set out in the annex to the report, be adopted for 2024/25.

CL120 Review of the Council's Constitution

The Mayor moved the following recommendations which were seconded by the Deputy Mayor:

- “1.1 That the revised Councillors’ Planning Code of Good Practice be adopted.
- 1.2 That the Procedure for Public Participation at Planning Committee Meetings, be amended as set out in the annex to the report
- 1.3 That the Joint Negotiating Committee (Employers’ Side) Terms of Reference be amended as set out in the annex to the report
- 1.4 That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance to:
 - a) in consultation with the chair and vice chairs of the Planning Committee, make minor typographical or consequential amendments to the Councillors’ Planning Code of Good Practice; and
 - b) agree arrangements for hearings of a Grievance Sub-committee, or Grievance Appeal Sub-committee, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Joint Negotiating Committee (Employers’ Side).”

The Council heard from Councillor Geary on this matter.

The recommendations were agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That the revised Councillors’ Planning Code of Good Practice be adopted.
- 1.2 That the Procedure for Public Participation at Planning Committee Meetings, be amended as set out in the annex to the report
- 1.3 That the Joint Negotiating Committee (Employers’ Side) Terms of Reference be amended as set out in the annex to the report

- 1.4 That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance to:
- a) in consultation with the chair and vice chairs of the Planning Committee, make minor typographical or consequential amendments to the Councillors' Planning Code of Good Practice; and
 - b) agree arrangements for hearings of a Grievance Sub-committee, or Grievance Appeal Sub-committee, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Joint Negotiating Committee (Employers' Side).

CL121 Quarterly Report on Special Urgency Decisions

The Mayor moved and the Deputy Mayor seconded the following recommendation:

“That the report be noted”.

The recommendation was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

CL122 Ward Based Budgets 2023/24

The Mayor noted that £55,700 was distributed in Ward Based Budgets this year.

The Mayor moved and the Deputy Mayor seconded the following recommendation:

“That the report be noted”.

The recommendation was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 9.16 pm.