

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday 6 June 2023 at 18:30

Present: Councillor Marland (Chair)

Councillors R Bradburn, Middleton, Nolan, Townsend, Trendall and Wilson-Marklew

Apologies: Councillors J Carr and Darlington

Also Present: Councillor Ferrans

Officers: T Aldworth (Deputy Chief Executive), M Bracey (Chief Executive), S Bridglalsingh (Director of Law and Governance), M Green (Property Director - MKDP), E Scott (Company Secretary - MKDP) and R Tidman (Committee Services Manager).

C1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Darlington and Councillor J Carr.

C2 Cabinet Announcements

None received.

C3 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 7 February 2023 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

C4 Disclosures of Interest

Councillor R Bradburn declared an 'Other Registerable Interest' in Item 11, as his wife was the current Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CAG).

C5 Questions from Members of the Public

The following question was received from Paul Williams:

"A number of Local Authorities (such as Hackney) have introduced a 'Companion Pass' scheme, to combat the theft of blue badges. Is this something Milton Keynes Council have explored, or might consider exploring in the future?"

Mr Williams was unable to attend the meeting and he was provided with the following written response from the Cabinet member for Public Realm:

“The Council does not currently offer a Companion Pass as part of its Blue Badge scheme. A number of Councils have introduced this type of scheme to try and broaden the support for disabled users and also reduce the level of potential abuse of the system. There would be a cost to administering this type of scheme which would need to be investigated should the Council wish to consider this further.

The total Blue Badges issued in 22-23 was 4,665 @ £10.00 each. Stolen (and misplaced) cards have to be reported to MKCC so we can re-issue and there have been no reports of theft in 2022-23, which indicates this problem may predominantly be in London Boroughs.”

C6 Councillors' Items

None received.

C7 Councillors' Questions

None received.

C8 Community & Housing Scrutiny Committee - 1 March 2023

Councillor Ferrans introduced the referral, noting that the Committee had considered the issue of homelessness at their March meeting and had heard evidence from the Homelessness Partnership. They had explained that financial and non-financial support from the Council was critical to its success. The Committee therefore wanted to highlight this issue to ensure in particular the ongoing financial support by the Council despite the challenging financial times.

Councillor Marland noted the written response from Councillor Darlington to the referral.

RESOLVED:

That the referral and the written response provided be noted.

C9 Council Plan Delivery Plan 2023/24

Councillor Marland introduced the item noting that this was the annual refresh of the Council Plan Delivery Plan. Councillor Marland noted the efforts of officers to deliver the ambitions of the previous plan. Cabinet Members highlighted the following actions within the Delivery Plan:

- (a) New waste contract which will lead to cleaner streets and higher quality recycling; additional funding for pothole, highway defects, redway and pavement repairs; urban tree planting scheme; and a programme of improvement for local play areas;
- (b) Continues ambition of helping residents of Milton Keynes to deal with the cost of living crisis including the energy advice line, mortgage interest relief fund; funding to parish council's to provide local support initiatives and continuing support for MK Food Bank, expanding the number of food larders and funding for school holiday lunch vouchers;
- (c) The provision of excellent services for our young people including: improvements to the foster service and increasing the number of foster carers; new special educational needs provision and investing in high quality SEN support; and

- (d) Commitment to the decarbonisation fund, support for public transport; creating a city centre tech campus; support for white ribbon and dementia friendly city status.

RESOLVED:

That the Council be recommended to approve the new Council Plan Delivery Plan for 2023/24

C10 Governance changes to Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP)

Councillor Marland introduced the item noting that the changes proposed to the current structure of Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) meant that it would move away from having councillors and the Chief Executive as board members to creating an oversight panel which would be a cabinet advisory group.

The Monitoring Officer advised that the words 'maintaining political membership on a proportionate basis' should be omitted from recommendation 1.1 as this was already dealt with in the Terms of Reference.

Councillor Middleton thanked officers who had been leading on this matter. He noted that this change in governance would allow councillors to provide an appropriate level of scrutiny and challenge to MKDP and he was satisfied that these new arrangements were fit for purpose.

RESOLVED:

1. That a new body called the Owners Advisory Group (OAG) with the Terms of Reference in Annex A be constituted to advise the Cabinet on MKDP matters.
2. That the Members Agreement be amended to:
 - a) recognise the OAG;
 - b) remove the Commissioning Statement and the Reserved Matters listed in this report; and
 - c) reflect the role of Develop MK's as a consultee in the approval of the Business plan.
3. That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance to amend the Members Agreement in accordance with this decision and make any other non-material drafting amendments deemed necessary.
4. That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Leader and the members of the OAG to amend the Terms of Reference.
5. That the Leader's intention that decisions in relation to MKDP be reserved to Cabinet be noted.
6. That these changes take effect on the 1 September 2023.

C11 Annual Appointment of Advisory Groups and Outside Organisations

Councillor Marland introduced the item regarding appointments to Outside Bodies. He noted that Councillor Townsend was to be appointed to the PATROL Joint Committee and that the reference to Councillor Nazir on the Schools Advisory Committee on Religious Education should actually refer to Councillor Imran.

RESOLVED:

1. That appointments to the various outside organisations, advisory groups and strategic partnerships for 2023/24, as set out in Annex A, be agreed.
2. That the following amendments to the appointments be made:
 - (a) Councillor Townsend be nominated to the PATROL Joint Committee; and
 - (b) The reference to Councillor Nazir on the Schools Advisory Committee on Religious Education should refer to Councillor Imran.
3. That authority be delegated to the Director Law and Governance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree appointments to any vacancies that remain, or arise during the 2023/24 council year.