

Minutes of the MEETING of MILTON KEYNES CITY COUNCIL held on WEDNESDAY
23 NOVEMBER 2022 at 7.30 pm

Present: Councillor Marlow (Mayor)

Councillors Andrews, Bowyer, M Bradburn, R Bradburn, Cannon, A Carr, J Carr, Clarke, Crooks, Cryer-Whitehead, Darlington, De Villiers, Exon, Ferrans, Fuller, Geary, Hall, Hearnshaw, D Hopkins, Hosking, Hume, Imran, M Khan, N Khan, Lancaster, Legg, Long, Mahendran, Marland, McLean, Middleton, Montague, Nazir, B Nolan, Z Nolan, Priestley, Raja, Rolfe, Smith, Taylor, Trendall, Verma, Walker and Wardle.

Alderman McKenzie and Alderwoman Saunders.

Apologies: Councillors Balazs, K Bradburn, V Hopkins, Hussain, Jenkins, McPake, McQuillan, Muzammil, Oguntola, Townsend, Wallis and Wilson-Marklew.

Aldermen Bartlett, Beeley, Bristow, Connor, Coventry, Geary, Henderson, Howell, Lewis, McCall, Miles and Tallack and Alderwomen Henderson, Irons and Lloyd.

CL75 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Council held on 19 October 2022 and the meeting of Council held on 19 October 2022 be approved and signed by the Mayor as correct records.

CL76 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor McLean declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 5(b)(iii) 'Income tax on the Earnings of the Retired' and did not take part in the debate on that motion.

CL77 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made announcements in respect of: Remembrance Day commemorations; Christmas lights switch on; Red Bull Racing Home Run event and the safe arrival of Councillor K Bradburn's baby.

CL78

PETITIONS

Councillor D Hopkins presented a petition on behalf of residents who were requesting a regular, scheduled, timetabled public bus service connecting Woburn Sands with Central Milton Keynes.

The Leader of the Council, responding on behalf of Councillor Wilson-Marklew who was not present, indicated that public transport was an issue close to all, particularly those who take climate change seriously and it was a matter of further debate in the chamber later. However, scheduled timetabled services that were currently not economically viable were extremely expensive to run and if commissioned by the council generally did not provide value for money. Often the usership did not match with those who said they would use it. The Public Transport team work with operators to find viable economic routes to run through the private sector but it was not likely that the Council could fund additional bus routes. The team were working to ensure that there was a mix of demand responsive transport and scheduled bus services across Milton Keynes.

In response, Councillor D Hopkins, asked if Councillor Marland would meet with himself, the Mayor of Woburn Sands and officers to discuss ways to find a solution before the final budget setting process was completed.

Councillor Marland undertook to ask the Cabinet member for Climate & Sustainability if she would meet with Councillor D Hopkins and the Mayor of Woburn Sands to discuss the issue further. However, Councillor Marland noted that other authorities also had the ability to precept their residents if they wished to subsidise a service and that funds did not always have to come from Milton Keynes Council.

CL79

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The member of the public was unable to attend the meeting and their question and the response is attached as an Annex to the minutes.

CL80

BUSINESS REMAINING FROM THE LAST MEETING

None

CL81 REPORTS FROM CABINET & COMMITTEES – CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL – 13 OCTOBER 20022 – FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Councillor M Bradburn (Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 13 October 2022, which was seconded by Councillor Mahendran:

“That the Council receive the Fostering Service Annual Report 2021/22.”

The recommendation was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

That the Fostering Service Annual Report be received.

CL82 REPORTS FROM CABINET & COMMITTEES – CABINET – 1 NOVEMBER 2022 – WHITE RIBBON ACCREDITATION UPDATE

Councillor Darlington Cabinet Member (Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of Cabinet held on 1 November 2022, which was seconded by Councillor J Carr:

“That the Council receive a full update in respect of the actions requested in its earlier motion, including details of planned activities associated with the White Ribbon Day”.

The Council heard from three members of the Youth Cabinet.

The recommendation was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

That the update in respect of the actions requested in its earlier motion, including details of planned activities associated with the White Ribbon Day be received.

COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

- (a) Question from Councillor Taylor to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities.)

Councillor Taylor, referring to a recent news article that stated that a resident had tried to contact the Council 152 times after receiving a Section 21 notice to vacate, asked Councillor Darlington, whether she thought it was right for a vulnerable family to have to make that number of calls to get the support they required and would she ensure the proper attention is given to the family in their time of need.

Councillor Darlington indicated that it was not appropriate for her to talk in public about the details of a particular case but explained the process of what the Council does when someone is issued with a Section 21 Notice and the responsibilities of the tenant.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Taylor asked Councillor Darlington, was it acceptable for someone to make 152 calls with little response and whether anything similar had happened to anyone else?

Councillor Darlington indicated that the Council on average has 31 families a week to place in temporary accommodation and this was due to Government mismanagement of the economy and their refusal to get rid of Section 21 Notices and to give renters rights.

- (b) Question from Councillor B Nolan to Councillor Trendall (Cabinet member for Customer Services)

Councillor B Nolan, referring to late night noise from businesses at the Hub, asked Councillor Trendall, could he provide an update as to how the Council was tackling anti-social noise at the Hub.

Councillor Trendall indicated that the Council enforcement teams were working with businesses at the Hub to ensure that they had minimal impact on the residents. Teams had been visiting premises and a joint action group had been established to tackle issues.

As a supplementary question, Councillor B Nolan asked Councillor Trendall, would he agree that businesses in the Hub should respond sympathetically to residents' concerns rather than waiting for the Council to take enforcement action.

Councillor Trendall indicated that businesses should be good neighbours particularly when they are newcomers to an area and the Council would work with all parties to try to negotiate amicable solutions.

- (c) Question from Councillor Rolfe to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities)

Councillor Rolfe, referring to criticism of the Government by the Cabinet member that the Council had to apply for funding every year to tackle homelessness, noted that according to the Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing the Council did not apply for funding from the rough sleepers programme for 2021-24, asked Councillor Darlington, could she clarify why she was criticising that the Council had to apply for funding but did not actually take up the opportunity to apply for any?

Councillor Darlington indicated that she was fairly certain the Council had applied for and received funding from the rough sleeping and homelessness programme.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Rolfe noted that at the last full Council meeting the Cabinet member had stated that the Government had refused to impart funding to the Council but that records showed that since 2017 the Government had provided the Council with £22.1m to tackle homelessness, and therefore asked Councillor Darlington, could she confirm that the money received since 2017 was an example of the Government refusing to impart funding.

Councillor Darlington indicated that the Council was not just given funds by the Government they had to put in an application each year for funding for homelessness projects and that the Councillor was obviously misinformed on the information and that he was more than welcome to talk to her or the relevant officers to understand what was going on in the city.

- (d) Question from Councillor Mahendran to Councillor J Carr (Cabinet member for Tackling Social Inequalities)

Councillor Mahendran, referring to the difficult last few years that children had experienced, asked Councillor J Carr, if she could inform Councillors about how they might encourage organisations in their ward to apply to run homework clubs.

Councillor J Carr indicated that there was now a homework club in most areas of the city however there were still gaps in provision. It was noted that there was a £1,000 start up grant available for organisations that could provide children with a meal, socialisation and homework support.

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

Councillor D Hopkins, referring to the shortfall in the provision of recreation and sportsgrounds in SLA areas, asked Councillor Marland, if he would provide an undertaking to reinstate that lost provision into the South East Milton Keynes development area, in addition to what had already been identified for that area.

Councillor Marland indicated that the Council had fought hard so that in the South East Milton Keynes SPD the provision of playing fields was separate to other green areas such as the green buffer. It was noted that there were two sites allocated for playing fields and Councillor Marland undertook to speak to developers to ensure the maximum area of provision was provided within the planning application.

As a supplementary question, Councillor D Hopkins asked Councillor Marland, if would agree to meet with himself and the Chairman of Woburn and Wavendon Lions to find out more details about the shortfall in playing field provision.

Councillor Marland indicated that he would take advice from officers as to whether it was appropriate to meet with external parties given that there may soon be a live planning application and reiterated that he would do all he could to encourage the right amount of playing fields to be provided in any planning application.

- (f) Question from Councillor A Carr to Councillor R Bradburn (Cabinet member for Economy and Culture)

Councillor A Carr, referring to the fact that the next Small Business Saturday was on the 3 December, asked Councillor R Bradburn, if he would provide an update as to what the Council was doing to support the event and generate awareness?

Councillor R Bradburn indicated that the economic team were supporting this as it was an opportunity to promote local businesses and encourage local residents to shop locally. The team would use marketing and social media to highlight businesses across the city.

- (g) Question from Councillor Lancaster to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Lancaster, referring to the fact that the Tattenhoe community does not have a single scheduled bus service that comes through the area, asked Councillor Marland, what the Council would do to help those residents who depend on these traditional bus services and would the Cabinet member commit to restoring a scheduled bus service into Tattenhoe as soon as possible.

Councillor Marland indicated that there was a debate scheduled later as to what the Council could do to improve vital public transport services however, as noted previously the Council is under extreme financial pressure and so was unable to commit that the Council could fund bus services in every part of the city. Councillor Marland noted that the local parish council was able to propose an amendment to their budget to fund private scheduled bus services.

- (h) Question from Councillor D Hopkins to Councillor Trendall (Cabinet member for Customer Services)

Councillor D Hopkins, referring to the number of roads that were wholly or part closed in or adjacent to the Danesborough Ward, asked Councillor Trendall, was it not possible to coordinate more effectively amongst our own departments and Highways England so that an area wide impact analysis was undertaken before agreeing to these mass highways works.

Councillor Trendall indicated that if the Councillor would send the list of road closures to him he would undertake to provide an update after he had met with officers.

CL84

COMMUNITY, TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILLORS

Councillor Hall moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Raja:

- “1. That this Council:
 - a) notes the good work undertaken by Community, Town and Parish councillors in communities across Milton Keynes;
 - b) acknowledges that this work is predominantly on a voluntary basis and can often go unrecognised;
 - c) understands the valuable role played by Community, Town and Parish Councils across Milton Keynes and formally places on record its appreciation; and
 - d) asks the Chief Executive to write to our County and City Parish Associations (BMKALC and MKALC) to formally pass on the recognition and thanks of Milton Keynes City Council, alongside the details of this motion.
2. That this Council:
 - a) notes that around half of its Parishes have elections in May 2023¹, and that at the last ordinary elections of these Parishes in May 2019, only 9 of 61 areas were contested, although 208 of 221 vacancies were filled;
 - b) understands the difficulty in attracting residents to stand for election to Community, Town and Parish Councils, but expresses concern about the potential number of uncontested parish elections in 2023; and
 - c) asks the Returning Officer and local parish associations to consider what practical and reasonable steps could be taken to encourage and support more Milton Keynes residents to stand for election for their local Community, Town and Parish Councils.”

¹ Abbey Hill, Astwood & Hardmead, Bow Brickhill, Broughton & Milton Keynes, Castlethorpe, Emberton, Fairfields, Great Linford, Hanslope, Haversham cum Little Linford, Kent Hill, Monkston & Brinklow, Loughton & Great Holm, Moulsoe, North Crawley, Shenley Brook End & Tattenhoe, Shenley Church End, Sherington, Stantonbury, Stoke Goldington, Walton, Wavendon, Whitehouse, Woburn Sands, and Woughton.

Councillor Hume moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Smith:

The motion, if amended would read:

- “1. That this Council:
 - a) notes the good work undertaken by Community, Town and Parish councillors in communities across Milton Keynes;
 - b) acknowledges that this work is predominantly on a voluntary basis and can often go unrecognised;
 - c) understands the valuable role played by Community, Town and Parish Councils across Milton Keynes and formally places on record its appreciation; and
 - d) asks the Chief Executive to write to our County and City Parish Associations (BMKALC and MKALC) **and to our parish and town clerks** to formally pass on the recognition and thanks of Milton Keynes City Council, alongside the details of this motion.
2. That this Council:
 - d) notes that around half of its Parishes have elections in May 2023², and that at the last ordinary elections of these Parishes in May 2019, only 9 of 61 areas were contested, although 208 of 221 vacancies were filled;
 - e) understands the difficulty in attracting residents to stand for election to Community, Town and Parish Councils, but expresses concern about the potential number of uncontested parish elections in 2023; and
 - f) asks the Returning Officer and local parish associations to consider what practical and reasonable steps could be taken to encourage and support more Milton Keynes residents to stand for election for their local Community, Town and Parish Councils.”

² Abbey Hill, Astwood & Hardmead, Bow Brickhill, Broughton & Milton Keynes, Castlethorpe, Emberton, Fairfields, Great Linford, Hanslope, Haversham cum Little Linford, Kent Hill, Monkston & Brinklow, Loughton & Great Holm, Moulsoe, North Crawley, Shenley Brook End & Tattenhoe, Shenley Church End, Sherington, Stantonbury, Stoke Goldington, Walton, Wavendon, Whitehouse, Woburn Sands, and Woughton.

The amendment was accepted.

The motion was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council:

- a) notes the good work undertaken by Community, Town and Parish councillors in communities across Milton Keynes;
- b) acknowledges that this work is predominantly on a voluntary basis and can often go unrecognised;
- c) understands the valuable role played by Community, Town and Parish Councils across Milton Keynes and formally places on record its appreciation; and
- d) asks the Chief Executive to write to our County and City Parish Associations (BMKALC and MKALC) and to our parish and town clerks to formally pass on the recognition and thanks of Milton Keynes City Council, alongside the details of this motion.

2. That this Council:

- a) notes that around half of its Parishes have elections in May 2023³, and that at the last ordinary elections of these Parishes in May 2019, only 9 of 61 areas were contested, although 208 of 221 vacancies were filled;
- b) understands the difficulty in attracting residents to stand for election to Community, Town and Parish Councils, but expresses concern about the potential number of uncontested parish elections in 2023; and
- c) asks the Returning Officer and local parish associations to consider what practical and reasonable steps could be taken to encourage and support more Milton Keynes residents to stand for election for their local Community, Town and Parish Councils.

³ Abbey Hill, Astwood & Hardmead, Bow Brickhill, Broughton & Milton Keynes, Castlethorpe, Emberton, Fairfields, Great Linford, Hanslope, Haversham cum Little Linford, Kent Hill, Monkston & Brinklow, Loughton & Great Holm, Moulsoe, North Crawley, Shenley Brook End & Tattenhoe, Shenley Church End, Sherington, Stantonbury, Stoke Goldington, Walton, Wavendon, Whitehouse, Woburn Sands, and Woughton.

CONTROL OUR BUSES

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

- “1. That this Council notes that:
 - a) the withdrawal of bus services in Milton Keynes by the private and commercial operators have negatively impacted many citizens who rely on the service to attend work, school, and vital medical appointments, for many buses are crucial as the ongoing cost-of-living crisis continues to worsen;
 - b) bus services play a crucial role in reducing our carbon emissions, pollution, and congestion across the city;
 - c) the prohibition placed on us by the Government prevents Milton Keynes City Council from effectively managing our own bus services; and
 - d) the privatisation of public transport is a failed experiment based upon Conservative ideology rather than social need, which places profit before people.
2. That this Council resolves to request the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to write to Secretary of State for Transport and request the repeal of, or amendment to, the Transport Act 1985 to allow Milton Keynes to:
 - a) operate its own buses either as a city-wide service, or concurrent with other bus operators; and
 - b) to do so without any preconditions, including but not limited to, having an elected Mayor.”

Councillor Taylor moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Nazir.

The motion, if amended would read:

- “1. That this Council notes that:
 - a) the withdrawal of bus services in Milton Keynes by the private and commercial operators have negatively impacted many citizens who rely on the service to attend work, school, and vital medical appointments, for many buses are crucial as the ongoing cost-of-living crisis continues to worsen;

- b) bus services play a crucial role in reducing our carbon emissions, pollution, and congestion across the city;
 - c) the prohibition placed on us by the Government prevents Milton Keynes City Council from effectively managing our own bus services; and
 - d) the privatisation of public transport is a failed experiment based upon Conservative ideology rather than social need, which places profit before people;
 - e) bus services, whether they are privately or publicly run, cost money to operate;
 - f) unless the fares received cover the cost of running the service money would have to be found from the public purse;
 - g) the cost of fuel, the price of vehicles, maintenance and the wage paid to drivers of public transport have all increased significantly over the last few years;
 - h) since the COVID lockdowns, people have found different ways of working and living that have reduced demand for bus services meaning routes that were viable are now running at a loss and are in need of financial support no matter who the operator is or they will cease; and
 - i) this council is proposing a deficit budget for the second year running using reserves to fund day to day expenditure and has no spare cash apparently to setup and run a loss making bus service, even if they had the powers to do so.
2. That this Council resolves to request the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to write to Secretary of State for Transport and request the repeal of, or amendment to, the Transport Act 1985 to allow Milton Keynes to:
- a) operate its own buses either as a city-wide service, or concurrent with other bus operators; and
 - b) to do so without any preconditions, including but not limited to, having an elected Mayor.

The Taylor Amendment was not accepted.

Councillor Geary moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Hosking.

The motion, if amended would read:

- “1. That this Council notes that:
 - a) the withdrawal of bus services in Milton Keynes by the private and commercial operators have negatively impacted many citizens who rely on the service to attend work, school, and vital medical appointments, for many buses are crucial as the ongoing cost-of-living crisis continues to worsen;
 - b) bus services play a crucial role in reducing our carbon emissions, pollution, and congestion across the city;
 - c) the prohibition placed on us by the Government prevents Milton Keynes City Council from effectively managing our own bus services; and
 - d) the privatisation of public transport is a failed experiment based upon Conservative ideology rather than social need, which places profit before people.
2. That this council agrees that the apparent utopia that if only things were publicly operated everything would be amazing, is just a figleaf to cover the embarrassment that the Labour Lib Dem administration has done a poor job of managing public transport and are now receiving political ‘heat’ for this and this, is the real driver of this motion.
3. That this Council resolves to request the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to write to Secretary of State for Transport and request the repeal of, or amendment to, the Transport Act 1985 to allow Milton Keynes to:
 - a) operate its own buses either as a city-wide service, or concurrent with other bus operators; and
 - b) to do so without any preconditions, including but not limited to, having an elected Mayor.

The Geary amendment was not accepted.

With the consent of the meeting the council waived Council Procedure Rule 13.6 and agreed to allow Councillor Taylor to remove clause 1(i) from his amendment.

On being put to the vote the Taylor amendment (minus clause 1(i)) was won.

On being put to the vote the Geary amendment was lost.

On being put to the vote the substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes that:
 - a) the withdrawal of bus services in Milton Keynes by the private and commercial operators have negatively impacted many citizens who rely on the service to attend work, school, and vital medical appointments, for many buses are crucial as the ongoing cost-of-living crisis continues to worsen;
 - b) bus services play a crucial role in reducing our carbon emissions, pollution, and congestion across the city;
 - c) the prohibition placed on us by the Government prevents Milton Keynes City Council from effectively managing our own bus services; and
 - d) the privatisation of public transport is a failed experiment based upon Conservative ideology rather than social need, which places profit before people;
 - e) bus services, whether they are privately or publicly run, cost money to operate;
 - f) unless the fares received cover the cost of running the service money would have to be found from the public purse;
 - g) the cost of fuel, the price of vehicles, maintenance and the wage paid to drivers of public transport have all increased significantly over the last few years;

- h) since the COVID lockdowns, people have found different ways of working and living that have reduced demand for bus services meaning routes that were viable are now running at a loss and are in need of financial support no matter who the operator is or they will cease; and
2. That this Council resolves to request the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to write to Secretary of State for Transport and request the repeal of, or amendment to, the Transport Act 1985 to allow Milton Keynes to:
- a) operate its own buses either as a city-wide service, or concurrent with other bus operators; and
 - b) to do so without any preconditions, including but not limited to, having an elected Mayor.

CL86

INCOME TAX ON THE EARNINGS OF THE RETIRED

Councillor R Bradburn moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Trendall:

- “1. That this Council notes the effect of the cost-of-living crisis, which disproportionately impacts the retired, many of whom live on fixed incomes e.g., pensions and that:
- a) this forces many retirees to return to work, or continue working, after they should have retired;
 - b) those who do work, despite a lifetime of work and contributing to the state, find themselves having to pay income tax on their earnings; and
 - c) the government, whilst helping business, ignores this growing section of our community which we will all be part of one day.
2. That this Council resolves to request the Leader and Chief Executive of the council to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to call for a change to the PAYE system so that:
- a) the Personal Allowance for those aged 66 years old or over, be increased to £21,000 per annum; and
 - b) thereafter, this allowance will be varied in line with any budget changes to other personal allowances.”

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

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes the effect of the cost-of-living crisis, which disproportionately impacts the retired, many of whom live on fixed incomes e.g., pensions and that:
 - a) this forces many retirees to return to work, or continue working, after they should have retired;
 - b) those who do work, despite a lifetime of work and contributing to the state, find themselves having to pay income tax on their earnings; and
 - c) the government, whilst helping business, ignores this growing section of our community which we will all be part of one day.
2. That this Council resolves to request the Leader and Chief Executive of the council to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to call for a change to the PAYE system so that:
 - a) the Personal Allowance for those aged 66 years old or over, be increased to £21,000 per annum; and
 - b) thereafter, this allowance will be varied in line with any budget changes to other personal allowances.”

CL87

URGENT MOTION – CONSTITUENCY NAMES

Councillor Bowyer moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Marland:

- “1. That this Council notes:
- a) the third and final consultation phase of the 2023 review of parliamentary constituencies in England, which closes on 5 December 2023;
 - b) revised proposals include name changes of proposed constituencies from Newport Pagnell to Milton Keynes North, and Milton Keynes to Milton Keynes South; and
 - c) the proposed constituency for Buckingham and Bletchley, which includes Milton Keynes City Council Wards of Bletchley East, Bletchley West, Bletchley Park, and Tattenhoe, and which make up 55.6% of electorate, based on the electoral registers used for the review.

2. That this Council believes that reflecting the name of Milton Keynes in all three constituencies would be administratively logical and easier for residents to understand.
3. That this Council resolves to make representations to the Boundary Commission for England, via the Returning Officer that:
 - a) the proposed constituency name for Milton Keynes North is appropriate;
 - b) the proposed constituency name for Milton Keynes South, should be revised to Milton Keynes Central; and
 - c) the proposed constituency name for Buckingham and Bletchley, should be revised to Milton Keynes South and Buckingham.“

The motion was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes:
 - a) the third and final consultation phase of the 2023 review of parliamentary constituencies in England, which closes on 5 December 2023;
 - b) revised proposals include name changes of proposed constituencies from Newport Pagnell to Milton Keynes North, and Milton Keynes to Milton Keynes South; and
 - c) the proposed constituency for Buckingham and Bletchley, which includes Milton Keynes City Council Wards of Bletchley East, Bletchley West, Bletchley Park, and Tattenhoe, and which make up 55.6% of electorate, based on the electoral registers used for the review.
4. That this Council believes that reflecting the name of Milton Keynes in all three constituencies would be administratively logical and easier for residents to understand.
5. That this Council resolves to make representations to the Boundary Commission for England, via the Returning Officer that:
 - a) the proposed constituency name for Milton Keynes North is appropriate;

- b) the proposed constituency name for Milton Keynes South, should be revised to Milton Keynes Central; and
- c) the proposed constituency name for Buckingham and Bletchley, should be revised to Milton Keynes South and Buckingham.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9:52 PM

[The recording of this meeting is available to view on the Council's YouTube Channel at: https://www.youtube.com/user/MiltonKeynesCouncil](https://www.youtube.com/user/MiltonKeynesCouncil)

DRAFT

WRITTEN RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTION

James Darling to Councillor Trendall

"The residents of Newport Pagnell are currently enduring abnormal levels of traffic, during both the AM and PM 'rush hours', due to the closure of the Tickford Bridge.

The A509 toward junction 14 only recently reopened, and yet we received news last month that Willen Road roundabout will soon be subject to four way traffic lights, and further road closures. This is all before the thousands of homes to be built on MK East bring even more traffic.

Residents are left asking themselves when this misery will end, so my question is; are residents of Newport Pagnell just unlucky when it comes to traffic disruption, or could more be done by the Council to avoid this ongoing suffering for residents."

Thank you for your question.

There are three distinct threads to your question; Tickford Bridge, the A509 and the Willen Road Roundabout. I'll deal with each of these in turn, and for the record, the councillor to whom you refer has not contacted me about any of these issues.

I am pleased to say that the Works on Tickford bridge to renovate and improve the structure, ensuring its ongoing longevity and safety, are drawing to a close and due to finish Friday, with a few footway works then being undertaken after the road has reopened. The exact timing of those works was determined by Heritage England as it their monument and took slightly longer than planned due to environmental issues. Once reopened the traffic pressures on Newport Pagnell will be eased and normal flows resumed.

Similarly the duration of temporary closure on the A509 that took place back in August was unavoidable, and was a result of Anglian water works taking significantly longer than originally estimated by their engineers. Originally a short permission was given for the works to undertake a new connection in preparation for the MKE development, however once commenced it was discovered that significant damage had occurred to the mains supply which could potentially worsen and affect the water supply to Newport Pagnell itself, so the decision was taken to repair the pipe while all the equipment was in place, which I'm sure you would agree, that whilst a significant inconvenience at the time, was far more suitable than potentially risking water supplies or having to reclose the road at a later date.

Finally, on your point regarding the potential temporary signalised control around the Willen Road Roundabout, these controls have not yet been agreed and alternative solutions are being considered, however if they do go ahead, they will form part of the wider traffic control measures that will be introduced in early 2023 to facilitate the roads infrastructure improvement program associated with the MKE expansion development.

Whilst the works will unfortunately cause disruption on the network , not only for Newport Pagnell residents, but for all users, it is part of the wider program to upgrade and improve the Milton Keynes road network making it resilient and suitable for the expected future traffic conditions for many years to come.

DRAFT