

Wednesday 24th April 2024

To: All members of Woughton Community Council

Cllrs Sue Smith (Chair), Nick Scott (Vice-Chair), Eamonn Bobey, Janette Bobey, Tony Coughlan, Margaret Ferguson, Michael Ferguson, Donna Fuller, Penny Glasgow, Michael Holland, Luke Louis, Charlie Marsh, Ruth McMillan, Deanna Norris, D'Anne Mordecai, April Rennie, Liz Simpkins, Lorna Webb, Alan Williamson

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of Council to be held on **Monday 29th April 2024** commencing at **6:30pm** at the **Woughton Community Council Hub, the Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG**, when the business set out in the following agenda will be transacted.

Members of the public can attend in person, submit questions in advance and or watch live via www.facebook.com/woughtoncc.

Steve McNay
Council Manager

Please ensure that your mobile phone and other electronic equipment is switched to silent or is switched off completely during the meeting.

Microphones are live at all times – if you are not speaking formally within the meeting, please do keep any additional noise to a minimum and be aware that anything said within this meeting will be in the public domain.

The Calendar of Meetings can be accessed at:

<https://www.woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk/council-meeting-calendar/>

AGENDA

FC 54/24 Apologies for Absence:

To receive and record apologies from members.

FC 55/24 Declaration of interests:

Under the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, made under s30 (3) of the Localism Act, members must declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting, and any additional interests not previously declared.

FC 56/24 Minutes of the previous Full Council meeting:

To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on:

- Monday 25th March 2024

(Attached)

FC 57/24 Chair's Announcement(s)

FC 58/24 Questions from the public:

To allow questions and comments from the public (maximum of 10 minutes in total).

FC 59/24 Ward Matters arising:

Information from Members on ward matters for deliberation at future meetings:

FC 60/24 Milton Keynes Council Ward Councillors report:

To give an opportunity to the Woughton & Fishermead Ward Councillors to verbally report to the meeting, on their ward activities and to raise any issues, along with their work on Milton Keynes Council and on its activities.

FC 61/24 2 minute Estate updates from councillors

To give an opportunity to all councillors to provide a brief update on activities and issues from the estates they represent.

FC 62/24 Feedback from meetings with Outside Bodies:

- a) Woughton Welfare Trust - **Cllr Maggie Ferguson**
- b) MKALC - **Cllr Ruth McMillan & Cllr Sue Smith**
- c) Parishes Forum - **Cllr Ruth McMillan & Cllr Sue Smith**

(Verbal reports)

FC 63/24 To note the minutes from the following Committees:

- a) Operations & Resources - Monday 11th March 2024
- b) Services and Communities - Monday 18th March 2024

(Attached)

FC 64/24 Council Manager's report:

(Report by the Council Manager to follow)

FC 65/24 To discuss options for provision of dog waste bags for the parish

To consider whether to continue to provide dog waste bags and, if so, the type of bags that council wish to obtain.

(Paper attached)

FC 66/24 To formally agree the budget for 2024/25, with updated figures and accurate precept levels included.

To provide and agree the finalised budget for the coming year, with updated and agreed figures for confirmed income.

(Paper attached)

FC 67/24 To review the WCC Investment Strategy

To ensure that the strategy meets the needs of the council and is compliant with best practice.

(Policy attached)

FC 68/24 To update the preparations for the Annual Meetings and review relevant documentation for agreement.

Update the council on preparations and review the relevant documentation in advance of the formal ratification at the Annual meeting.

(Paper attached and policies via Sharepoint)

FC 69/24 To review the meeting schedule for the coming year.

Provision of the draft calendar of meetings for the coming council year, to ensure suitability in advance of the annual meeting.

(Draft calendar attached)

FC 70/24 Update on legal advice sought regarding MKCC Service Charges

To update council on advice received following request at previous meeting and any further steps.

(Verbal Update from Council Manager).

FC 71/24 Provision of declaration for councillors regarding allowances

Paper copies of the declaration regarding tax liabilities for allowances, following agreement at previous meeting.

(Paper and declaration attached)

FC 72/24 Information regarding consultation on Accountability within public bodies

Details of the consultation being undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life

(Verbal report and consultation documentation attached).

FC 73/24 Ratification of the Service Plan for 2024/25

Agreement that the Service Plan will form the basis for work over the coming council year.

(Service Plan attached).

FC 73/24

Date of next meeting:

To be agreed at the Annual Meeting on Tuesday 7th May

Full Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 25th March 2024, 6:30pm at the Woughton Community Council Hub, Council Chamber, The Local Centre, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes

Present: Cllrs Sue Smith (Chair), Nick Scott (Vice-Chair), Eamonn Bobey, Janette Bobey, Tony Coughlan, Margaret Ferguson, Michael Ferguson, Penny Glasgow, Michael Holland, Luke Louis, Charlie Marsh, Deanna Norris, D'Anne Mordecai, April Rennie, Liz Simpkins, Lorna Webb, Alan Williamson

Also present:

Steve McNay (Council Manager)

FC 35/24 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies received from:

Donna Fuller (unwell)

Ruth McMillan (unwell – attended online)

RESOLVED – Noted and accepted.

FC 36/24 Declaration of interests:

Declarations of interest were noted for agenda item FC 52/24, where the following councillors stated that they are tenants on MKCC:

Cllrs Eamonn Bobey, Janette Bobey, Maggie Ferguson, Michael Ferguson, Sue Smith, Charlie Marsh, Lorna Webb and Alan Williamson.

NOTED

FC 37/24 Minutes of the previous Full Council meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 26th February 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

RESOLVED

Proposed by Cllr Sue Smith Seconded by Cllr Michael Ferguson.

FC 38/24 Chair's Announcement(s)

- A reminder that scam emails are prevalent and if anyone receives an email supposedly from the Chair asking for Apple Gift Cards or similar, this is a scam. Please ring her if there is any suspicion.
- Four years yesterday since lockdown started.
- Office is closed over the Easter weekend.
- Thanks to the Islamic Centre for the Unity Iftar.
- Easter HAF is open for bookings. The Council Manager apologised for the booking website.

FC 39/24 Questions from the public:

Cllr Alan Williamson requested details of the events taking place at MK Bowl and Stadium MK, with details from the principal authority on how they are planning to manage traffic for the neighbouring estates.

FC 40/24 Ward Matters arising:

Cllr Eamonn Bobey again requested the issue of the paths at the ABC park be addressed, due to the overgrowth meaning that they are becoming impassable, plus the loss of bins. This was noted at the last meeting and no actions have been noted.

Question from Cllr Williamson around the upcoming concerts at Stadium MK and MK Bowl and how parking and access can be managed. The council manager will investigate plans from MKCC and feedback.

RESOLVED - noted

FC 41/24 Milton Keynes Council Ward Councillors report:

Cllr Sue Smith deferred this matter, due to the 'Pre election period of sensitivity' (previously known as purdah).

RESOLVED - noted

FC 42/24 Estate updates from councillors

Beanhill – Easter events planned.

CH – parking remains an issue. Reporting continuing.

ES – lots of fly tipping, but MKCC collecting quickly. Issue with parking on Harlans has been resolved.

LH – concerns about the lack of updating of notice boards. Litter and bins are an ongoing issue. Queries regarding access to gated court and ownership which Council Manager will follow up on. Maps for all areas denoting ownership requested for all areas.

NF – SHDF problems the biggest issue. They are doing a 'Find the Bunny' easter event.

PB – (Cllr McMillan via Zoom) – all the 'Top Hats' are off; scaffolding is done and final works taking place. Easter eggs – names to Cllr Sue Smith.

TB – lots of issues, with a multi-agency approach being taken. Drugs, needles, graffiti, damage, etc.

DVLA are visiting the parish currently and noting untaxed cars.

RESOLVED - noted

FC 43/24 Feedback from meetings with Outside Bodies:

a) Woughton Welfare Trust – meeting took place and proposal for potential for £400 per year to be passed for councillors to access for help with cost of living issues.

b) MKALC – Yellow line consultations are now the responsibility of Parishes, without consultation. Cllr Smith is requesting a meeting with highways around this.

c) Parishes Forum – covered carbon offset, a presentation from Centre for Integrated Living, transport (changes to MK Connect) and MK University College Hospital, where it became apparent that parking may be an issue as further works are undertaken on the hospital site.

RESOLVED - noted

FC 44/24 To note the minutes from the following Committees:

a) Planning, Licencing & Development - Monday 5th February 2024

Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by: Cllr Glasgow

RESOLVED

b) Operations & Resources - Monday 12th February 2024
Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by: Cllr Rennie
RESOLVED

c) Services and Communities - Monday 19th February 2024
Proposed by: Cllr Scott Seconded by: Cllr Michael Ferguson
RESOLVED

FC 45/24 Council Manager's report:
Council Manager spoke to the report.
RESOLVED - Noted

FC 46/24 To consider the process, categories and delivery of the annual Chairs Awards

There was considerable discussion around the awards, with agreement that this will take place, with some useful discourse around the type of awards wanted. Costs were considered, alongside venue, catering, etc. Cllr Smith is investigating the potential for sponsorship of the event to keep costs minimised. New suggestions included recognising the importance of sport and acknowledging the blue light / uniform services.

It was agreed that we would investigate potential venues, such as the Islamic Centre, Falconhurst, Moorland, Grand Union Vineyard – Council Manager will investigate options.

Involving residents in the nomination process was also felt important, but simply to nominate those that deserve recognition. The Council Manager agreed to provide an online nomination form.

It was also suggested that everyone who is nominated gets some form of recognition.

One request was made that nominations avoid council staff (MKCC council) and that individual estates can also nominate estate based residents, with councillors having input into the decision on who is most deserving.

Proposal:

'That the Chairs Awards 2024 take place'

Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by: Cllr Scott
RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote

'That there is an indicative budget allocation of £1000, if no sponsorship is possible, is allocated'

Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by: Cllr Ferguson
RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote

'That the nomination process is two stage, with all able to make nominations, a shortlist for specific awards then decided by the Chair and panel, with the 'Spirit of Woughton' award nominations then open to a public vote, with an estate 'superstar' option running alongside'.

Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by:
RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote

FC 47/24 Consideration of MKCC transferring the lease of No 99 Jonathans to WCC

There was considerable discussion around the pros and cons of this suggestion – that of taking on a lease for the building at No 99 Jonathans by WCC, to run alongside the lease of No 95.

Concerns were noted that this would be another additional cost burden on the council, with Cllrs stating that with WCC *'running a deficit budget'* and with the increase in precept, this cannot be justified – we already have buildings that need additional investment, and this would put further pressure on this money. This was expanded by commenting that WCC was still paying for the 'Hub' offices, via the loan. It was also stated that the cost of the loan is half the cost of the rental previously paid at the Netherfield offices. Cllrs from Netherfield pointed out that there is a need for investment at Netherfield and that this would potentially reduce the chances of this happening.

Other views suggested that with the additional space, the large gardens and the potential that the space brings, that NOT taking this one would mean the potential loss of a long term asset. It was also noted that WCC could offer a range of services from the building, offering more to the community. This was supported by some ideas and existing requests for space from external groups.

A query was raised regarding the recent reductions in staffing and whether there would be sufficient to effectively staff another building. The Council Manager explained that whilst the type of delivery wanted at No 99 would impact on this, that he felt that there was sufficient within the team to manage, with a view to running for the two years of the lease, assessing the value and, if unsuitable, not renewing.

The Council Manager also suggested that there could and should be further discussion around how investment into existing centres should take place, with one proposal that a Public Works Loan Board advance be taken, repayable in a similar way to that of the Hub improvements, to ensure that all the centres are brought up to standard. It was pointed out by a Cllr that in the past, s106 money had been allocated for refurbishment, but WCC failed to spend it, so it was returned, leading to the current situation where it was suggested that NFMP doesn't have sufficient heating, amongst other issues.

The Council Manager stated that council can, at any point, request that investment from existing reserves or budgets can be allocated. Cllr Michael Ferguson requested that this be added to a future agenda – the Council Manager agreed to sit down and prepare any proposal with any councillors who would like to see this.

Proposal:

'That WCC agrees to take on the lease of No 99 Jonathans, to run for two years alongside the lease of No 95 Jonathans and that during that two year period, a long term plan is developed'

Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by: Cllr Scott

**Votes were 7 for, 7 against with 3 abstentions.
RESOLVED with a casting vote by the Chair and passed.**

NB: There was then some discussion around the casting vote, requested by Cllrs E and J Bobey. The Council Manager confirmed that both the Standing Orders and the Arnold Baker on Local Council Administration both stated that a second, or casting vote, is correct. This is defined in the Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12 para 39(2).

FC 48/24 Shared prosperity fund

To consider applications towards certain areas of the above fund, administered by MKCC.

The Council Manager spoke to the paper, explaining that following previous discussions around public realm, there is also now a 'bid' process for specific areas, as detailed in the papers. They also gave some background on some possible proposals that council may wish to consider as guidance for ideas.

The Council Manager also updated on an external organisation that is eager to work with WCC on a proposal to deliver a 'job club' plus approach, with tailored support for individuals within the parish.

Lots of discussion around ideas and what can / can't happen, what fits in with this particular funding stream and what may sit elsewhere.

Due to the short timescales involved and the feeling that the proposals noted in the paper were suitable, the following was suggested:

Proposal:

'That the Council Manager submits suitable bids, based upon the discussions and with the proposals in the paper included, specifically engagement work with residents, cycling infrastructure and enhancements to the Job Club approach.

And that the Council Manager continues to investigate options relating to the Owl and the Pussycat park on Netherfield'

Proposed by: Clls Smith Seconded by: Cllr E Bobey

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

FC49/24 Local Council Award Scheme submission proposal

To propose and ratify a decision to state that all relevant policies are in place and that a submission is made.

The Council Manager explained that there needs to be a formal resolution at council prior to submission that states that all relevant paperwork is in place.

Proposal:

'That council confirms that all relevant documentation for the submission for the Local Council Awards Scheme – Foundation Level, is in place as detailed on the application form and / or by provision by way of submission by the Council Manager to the assessment panel'.

Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by: Cllr Marsh

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote

FC50/24 Application to the Open University 'Challenge Us' scheme

To propose a submission to the Open University for support around creating a local council approach to developing sustainability and ecology approaches.

The Council Manager spoke to the paper and explained that the Green Initiatives Working Group had discussed use of 'Donut Economics' as a measurement tool, and to get this, finding a baseline is important. Huge piece of work which, if the Open University can help with, will make things considerably easier.

Proposal:

'That council agrees to the Council Manager, in liaison with the GIWG, to submit an initial application for the Open University 'Open Societal Challenges Online' competition to support the development of an assessment and planning process to help address environmental issues'.

Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by: Cllr Coughlan

RESOLVED by way of majority vote

FC51/24 Training calendar for 2024/25.

Training calendar update, with the annual calendar to be proposed and agreed. The Council Manager provided the proposed training calendar for the 2024/25 council year, covering a range of sessions that have previously been highlighted by councillors as the most pressing. These are planned for the second Wednesday of the month and will take place in the Chambers.

Some further discussion took place around the specific sessions.

- ***That the council notes the dates below***
- ***That the council manager sends a calendar invite for each of the dates, with the heading of 'training'.***
- ***That councillors confirm their attendance at least a week prior to the date of delivery, to ensure sufficient numbers.***
- ***That if any changes are needed to accommodate external sessions, these will be communicated accordingly.***

RESOLVED - noted

FC52/24 Further information on 20mph zones

To update council on expected response levels to evidence public support for applications to implement 20mph zones within parish estates.

The Council Manager spoke about this issue, sharing the scoring matrix that MKCC transport had given him and explained that community support is important, but sits alongside other issues. He also shared the current levels of response online, which was relatively low.

There was discussion about schools on estates and need to reduce traffic, better signage and the need to look at all aspects of this issue. Speedwatch was also mentioned again.

Cllrs stated that this needs to be pushed with residents to get more signed up, with agreement that councillors would skill share on setting up suitable online presence and resharing the links to the online sign up.

RESOLVED - noted

FC 52/24 Rent, service charges and changes for MKCC tenants and leaseholders

To discuss the rent and service charge implemented by MKCC on tenants and leaseholders, with a view to further action from Woughton Community Council.

Cllr E Bobey spoke on this issue, commenting that this was an issue that had previously been discussed, noting that rent had risen by 7.7% and a service charge had also been added, leading to an additional £500 per year in rent, plus £90 on service charge. It was also suggested that this would bring additional money to the amount of £4 – 5 million in rent (adding to the £60 million each year through rents currently), with a further £1.2 million via the service charge, with this money going to Milton Keynes City Council. Cllr Bobey also suggested that the amount currently spent on the open spaces of HRA land is £100k.

Cllr Bobey stated that he has been contacted by people from across the city about this issue and detailed the ways that people can make their views known on this:

- Lobbying
- Complaints Procedure (needs to happen prior to the below options)
- Tier 1 Tribunal (ruling – enforceable)
- Housing Ombudsmen (recommendation – can be ignored)

Cllr Bobey also spoke about the consultation process and the view that this was flawed – only 400 responses from across the city and lack of clarity, only online options and the need for a code that was sent in advance.

There was also concern noted about the information online, with further lack of clarity, a view that a sheltered housing scheme which isn't related to this consultation, alongside some confusion around figures noted.

Lots of council tenants in Woughton and this impacts on them. Concern about paying twice (or three times) for some of the issues. Also some queries regarding the approach that MKCC have taken in comparison to other LA's – shared ownership and tenants seen as the same, limited use of general funds with all monies coming from the HRA fund.

The Council Manager read the response from MKCC to the concerns expressed prior to the meeting. A query was raised regarding the 'parish costs' and the Council Manager explained that he thinks that this is due to the charges being detailed to parish level – costs associated with Woughton will be met by Woughton residents, but this may need further clarification.

It was suggested that legal advice be taken to see whether this is how MKCC *have* to do it this way, whether they could do things differently and are there are legal reason / challenges that may be valid in terms of challenging this approach.

It was also suggested that Natasha from MKCC be invited to a meeting in future. It was also suggested that a 'step-by-step' guide to making complaints be provided to councillors who can share with residents if wanted.

A review of this issue was also requested for the next meeting.

- ***That the Council Manager obtain legal advice via the free BMKALC service, clarifying with councillors what specifically is being asked.***
- ***That Natasha Hutchin from MKCC be invited to the next meeting of the council to discuss this situation.***

- *That this issue be added to the agenda for the next meeting as an update on any actions or information gained'.*

RESOLVED - noted

FC 53/24

Date of next meeting:

Monday 29th April 2024, 6:30pm, at the Woughton Community Council Hub, The Council Chamber, the Local Centre, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 8.29PM

Chair _____ Date _____

Woughton Community Council

Operations & Resources Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11th March 2024, 6:30pm at the Woughton Community Council Hub, the Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.

Present: Cllrs Sue Smith (Chair), Liz Simpkins (Vice-Chair), Eamonn Bobey, Tony Coughlan, Luke Louis, D'Anne Mordecai, Deanna Norris, April Rennie, Alan Williamson

Also present:

Steve McNay (Council Manager)

Marta Sobis (Responsible Finance Officer)

OC 99/24 Apologies:

Cllr Ruth McMillan (unwell)

Agreed and accepted.

OC 100/24 Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

NOTED

OC 101/24 Chairs Announcements:

The Chair reported that:

- Coffee Hall Meeting Place would close on Thursday 14th March, to reopen after Easter. This is to enable refurbishment of the toilets.
- Solar has been installed at Tinkers Bridge Meeting Place and is performing well.
- Sam Rogers (Food Coordinator) has her last day this week.
- The Council Manager collected a cheque from the Police and Crime Commissioner to cover the costs of installing CCTV at all council buildings.

OC 102/24 Questions from the public (Max. 10 minutes):

No questions received.

OC 103/24 Minutes of the previous meeting:

The minutes of the Operations & Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 12th February 2024 Were **AGREED** as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

RESOLVED

Proposed: Cllr Sue Smith. Seconded: Cllr Tony Coughlan

OC 104/24 To agree the List of Payments, Bank Reconciliations for the month of January / February 2024:

Due to the delays for January's sign offs (due to absence of RFO), all were signed by Cllr Sue Smith and agreed by all.

RESOLVED

OC 105/24 To recommend use of PAYE for councillor allowances.

Following the RFO investigating the situation with allowances, and to follow best practice and guidance from governing bodies, the RFO proposed that councillor allowances should be paid through PAYE, as they are considered to be 'taxable income' in law.

There was significant discussion around the issue, with questions relating to self-employment, impact on benefits, the potential to move people into higher tax brackets, impact on pensions, etc. The RFO explained that the individual circumstances would be managed through the systems and each situation would be different, but that it should be declared whatever the circumstances. By using PAYE, this covers the council and complies with best practice.

Cllr Smith stated that previous attempts to move councillors to PAYE had caused difficulties and so tabled a proposal:

Proposal: 'That Woughton Community Council continues to offer councillors the choice of having allowances paid through PAYE OR that they sign a declaration stating that they are individually responsible for ensuring that the allowance is declared to all relevant authorities'.

**Proposed by: Cllr Sue Smith Seconded by Deanna Norris
RESOLVED by way of majority vote.**

It was noted that this was against the advice of the RFO and Council Manager.

OC 106/24 Training provision update for the new council year.

Following agreement at the previous meeting that the Council Manager would collate training options that are available through external agencies, alongside details of any training that can be provided locally, a paper was provided with details of these sessions. Due to the number of different sessions suggested and the pressures of time, the committee was asked to prioritise which sessions were most important (with some legal duty ones already agreed). As a result, the following sessions were suggested, to take place on Wednesday evenings on a monthly basis:

First Aid (this also should include the community members noted previously)
Communications and Social Media
GDPR and Data Protection
Standards in Public Life
Meetings, motions and debate – how to work within Standing Orders
Safeguarding*
Anti sexual harassment*
PREVENT*

Charing Meetings training was also suggested but can be provided via BMKALC.

There was also agreement that the previously discussed sessions would form part of this programme:

Domestic Abuse (MK Act)

Modern Slavery
Bystander training

The Council Manager will create the programme and send a calendar of training round to all parties.

RESOLVED

OC 107/24 Legal updates for March 2024

The Council Manager provided updates on procurement limits, meeting dates, references, foreign convictions / bankruptcy, funding to schools and the use of Clerks home addresses for correspondence.

RESOLVED - NOTED

OC 108/24 Prevention of Sexual Harassment policy update

The Council Manager spoke about the paper provided, that details new expectations and legislative demands around protecting employees from sexual harassment. There is a process that the council needs to undertake and to meet these standards, the following proposals were made:

Proposal:

- **That the committee tasks officers with the development of a suitable policy and procedure, engaging with the organisation widely (officers and councillors) to help define the policy.**
- **That this should include a shortened version that can be displayed within buildings to ensure all are aware of their duties.**
- **That these are brought to this committee prior to the proposed implementation in October, with an agreement in place by July 2024 (on the understanding that this may change once law is implemented).**

Proposed by: Cllr Sue Smith Seconded by Cllr Liz Simpkins
RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

OC 109/24 Biodiversity Duty update paper

The Council Manager spoke about the papers provided, including the possible template for use around ensuring that WCC, as a local authority, complies with its duties under the 2021 Environment Act. This includes an assurance that WCC is 'considering' what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

To this end, the following was tabled:

Proposal:

- **That the committee tasks the Green Working Group with developing an approach to ensure compliance with the new duty, building on what has happened to this point**
- **That this approach, including details of what / where / when / whom, is presented to this committee for formal ratification.**

Proposed by: Cllr Sue Smith Seconded by Cllr Tony Coughlan
RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

OC 110/24 To discuss possible proposals for applications to the Shared Prosperity Fund for public realm improvements

Following a drive around the parish with MKCC representative who help manage the spending of the Shared Prosperity Fund, a paper was created that identified potential areas for improvements to be made. This paper was intended to promote discussion about priorities.

There was considerable discussion around this proposal, with a number of councillors suggesting that spending money on public realm was inappropriate, as this was a duty of MKCC who they stated had failed to maintain appropriately. It was stated that this money should not be spent on anything that MKCC has responsibility for.

It was suggested that this decision could be discussed at the annual meeting in May, that the money be split across the seven estates and have further travels around the estates to identify areas needing work.

The Council Manager explained that this money comes via central government and that there are specific guidelines for spending – what it can / can't be spent on and criteria that needs to be met.

No decision was made. The Council Manager will undertake further work to identify the process that needs to be followed.

Date of next meeting:

Monday 15th April 2024, 6:30pm at the Woughton Community Council Hub, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 7.30 PM

Chair _____ Date _____



Woughton Community Council

Services & Communities Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18th March 2024 at 6:30pm
Woughton Community Council Hub, Council Chamber,
60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.

Present: Cllrs Nick Scott (Chair), Jeanette Bobey (Vice-Chair), Eamon Bobey, Maggie Ferguson, Penny Glasgow, Charlie Marsh, D'Anne Mordecai, Deanna Norris, April Rennie, Sue Smith, Lorna Webb.

Also present:

Steve McNay (Council Manager)
Sean Perry (Community Services Manager)
Tash Darling (Youth Manager)

SC 88/24 Apologies:

Cllr Ruth McMillan (unwell) – attended online
Cllr Donna Fuller (unwell)
Cllr Liz Simpkins
Cllr Michael Ferguson (work commitment)

RESOLVED - All accepted

SC 89/24 Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest
Noted

SC 90/24 Questions from the public (maximum 10 minutes):

Cllrs Eamonn and Janette Bobey both declared an interest in SC 94/24 and SC 95/24.
Noted

SC 91/24 Chairs announcements:

The councillor training programme starts on 10th April with a Domestic Abuse session provided by MK Act.

SC 92/24 Minutes of previous meetings:

To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19th February 2024.

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Nick Scott

Seconded: Cllr April Rennie

Communities and Environment Fund Application(s)

SC 93/24 1st Langland Scout Group

Sean Perry spoke to the application for £1,500 towards provision of an inclusion fund, providing funding for members of the scout group that may not be able to take part without a level of financial support. This includes items such as uniform, but also other costs, such as Scout camps, membership fees, etc. A uniform costs around £65, with a week long camp costing around £120. There are around 20 beneficiaries coming from Netherfield – mostly on parish.

Cllr Smith expressed concerns about the nature of the fund – this is a ‘just in case’ fund, rather than a specific project, suggesting that there is no formal plan in place. If money was awarded, could there be some reporting and accountability, with feedback to ensure

Cllr E Bobey questioned where the amount had come from for the application – the Council Manager explained that they had spoken to him on the phone and he had suggested that £1500 was a reasonable level of application, given the end of year and the remaining fund. Cllr Bobey also questioned the value of the Scout group, suggesting that they have not delivered on the estate, citing the raised beds outside the meeting place as an example of where they didn’t maintain things that they agreed to and suggesting that they don’t deliver on the estate / for the community and wondered what the focus of the group is and whether they could be asked for details of the plans / activities undertaken.

Steve McNay explained that the policy does state that feedback needs to be provided within an agreed date after the project (42 days) – this works well when it is a specific activity (e.g. A coach trip), but that this is more difficult in a situation like this. However, requesting feedback within a set timescale, with specific reporting requests is possible and asked if the committee would like to see this, with a date from which money should be spent or returned? Alternatively, it could simply be provided on the understanding that they spend it as they see fit.

Cllr Scott asked if we would be able to ask for feedback on what it has been spent on – can a request be made on what activities they undertake on the estate / parish? Many people are unaware that there is a Scout group. It was also explained that there are 20 beneficiaries from parish, the majority from Netherfield. Cllr Scott also requested that someone from the Scouts attend to report back on what the money is spent on and what they are doing.

Cllr Norris suggested that the spending may not be spent within the period, as the nature of the fund is that it will be spent as needed.

Cllr Scott reiterated that the spending should be reported on and spent only on children from within the parish.

Proposal:

‘That the funding of £1500 is awarded to the Scout group, with additional request made for reporting back on the use of the funding and an invitation to attend a meeting to present on what the Scout group do locally’.

Proposed by: Cllr Scott Seconded by: Cllr Norris

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

SC 94/24 Netherfield Residents Association

Sean Perry spoke to the paper detailing an application for £895 towards a trip to Skegness. Cllr Smith stated that as usual, the application from the NRA was excellent, but requested that people who don't usually get onto the trips be prioritised. Cllr J Bobey agreed that people would be allowed to do one trip or the other. Cllr Bobey also stated that people from elsewhere on parish often wish to take part.

Proposal

'That the funding of £895 be awarded to Netherfield Resident Association'

Proposed by: Cllr Scott Seconded by: Cllr Norris

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

SC 95/24 Netherfield Residents Association

There was further discussion about the application for £1250 towards a trip to Weymouth.

Proposal

'That the funding of £1250 be awarded to Netherfield Resident Association'

Proposed by: Cllr Scott Seconded by: Cllr Marsh

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

SC 96/24 Phoenix Arts

Tash Darling (TD) spoke to this application for support for teaching of swing dance for performance at D-Day event at a cost of £460.96, after being asked to by the Chair. TD explained that she was part of the management committee for Phoenix Arts and so had understanding of the application. The application includes both sessions to train members and staff of Phoenix in swing dance AND attendance at the D Day event to support attendees in learning swing dance moves. Despite funding being available through the events budget to support this (as explained by the Council Manager), TD stated that the organisation benefits from having successful grant applications and so the application had been made.

Proposal

'That the funding of £460.96 be awarded to Phoenix Arts'

Proposed by: Cllr Scott Seconded by: Cllr Norris

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

Reports

SC 97/24 To update the committee on grants applied for and received.

Tash Darling (TD) spoke to the paper, explaining the purpose and updating on some successes and some disappointments. This included the award of circa £7,400 towards CCTV in buildings, and the disappointment of not being awarded the £100,000 towards the revamp of the Netherfield Meeting Place and courts.

Cllr Smith stated that she was proud of bringing in so much additional money to the parish.

RESOLVED – noted by the committee.

SC 98/24 To propose updates to the Resident Association (RA) agreement.

The Council Manager spoke to the paper, giving details of the purpose and delay in reviewing the agreement, further updating the committee on the reasons for the suggested changes. These changes are:

- a. That to receive the annual allowance, RA's must be accredited by MKCC using the agreed process, showing that they have suitable systems and controls in place,*
- b. That RA's should have an agreed 'close down' process, that details what will happen to any remaining funds or assets in the event of closure,*
- c. That the number of forums reduces to two (2) per year, reflecting attendance and demand.*
- d. That the reporting line within Appendix A be altered to include reporting to 'other agencies', rather than just to WCC officers or members.*
- e. The inclusion of 'City' where appropriate, reflecting the change of name for the principal authority.*

Cllr Bobey requested that consideration be given to extending the amount of time that RA's are given 'free' by WCC within the community venues, as he stated that once all meetings have taken place, there is insufficient time left to deliver events. He then tabled the following motion:

Proposal:

'That the amount of time given to RA's for meetings and events be increased from 30 – 35 hours per year and remove the 'maximum of 12 times'

Proposed by: Cllr E Bobey Seconded by: Cllr Smith

RESOLVED by way of majority vote.

There was a further motion tabled following this that spoke to the need for the RA's on estates without meeting places to have their allowance extended too, as costs have increased.

Cllr Rennie questioned the amount of free time offered, when considering the time spent by the Tinkers Bridge RA on delivering community food approaches. It was explained that this would sit separately from the regular agreement, in the same way that the Netherfield and Eaglestone food sessions do.

Proposal:

'That the RA agreement be altered to state that estates without a community space have the allowance increased from £200 per year to £300 per year to pay for renting space'

Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by: Cllr Marsh

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

There was further discussion around some of the other elements, specifically around creating a way of lending equipment – the Council manager explained that this would likely be via the Library of Things (see later item). Further discussion also took place around the

changes that have taken place within the RA's since the initial document, with the proposal that the new Coffee Hall and Beanhill Associations be recognised within this policy and the contact list of names be updated, as stated within the updated document.

Proposal:

'That the RA agreement be altered to include the following changes:

- a. That to receive the annual allowance, RA's must be accredited by MKCC using the agreed process, showing that they have suitable systems and controls in place,***
- b. That RA's should have an agreed 'close down' process, that details what will happen to any remaining funds or assets in the event of closure,***
- c. That the number of forums reduces to two (2) per year, reflecting attendance and demand.***
- d. That the reporting line within Appendix A be altered to include reporting to 'other agencies', rather than just to WCC officers or members.***
- e. The inclusion of 'City' where appropriate, reflecting the change of name for the principal authority.***

and that

That the new Coffee Hall Residents Association, the new Beanhill Resident Association and updated contact names be considered as the recognised RA for the estate, updating the list accordingly.

Proposed by: Cllr Scott Seconded by: Cllr Smith

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

SC 99/24 To look at the Food Coordinator role and propose an approach for the future, prior to recruitment.

There was considerable discussion about this issue, following an introduction to the paper from the Council Manager. The purpose of the paper was stated as:

- The committee considers the role that community food plays within the council and wider community, gives a clear view on the wishes for future delivery to enable a new job role to be developed.
- That the job description creation is delegated to officers, to enable advertising the role in a timely manner, with consideration of the discussions that take place and any subsequent clarifications from committee members.
- That the job role goes 'live' for applications by the end of March, with a view to appointing a new co-ordinator as quickly as possible.

The Council Manager posed some questions, asking whether the cafes should be considered cafes or social spaces, should the role encompass a wider range of services (e.g. cafes on NF, ES, support to the food delivery at the church on NF and the TB approaches), how has the change in approach impacted since the start (e.g. waste reduction to food poverty) and where the 'pastoral' elements of the role may sit.

Cllr Smith stated that the social aspects of the cafes are essential, with some attendees only getting social contact through the cafes.

The discussion included a suggestion that there was no need for a coordinator as other areas deliver using volunteers only, that the new post should include a wider, parish wide

approach (as the view from some is that the former coordinator was the 'Coffee Hall' coordinator, rather than covering the whole parish) and that community led approaches were better. It was also suggested that seeing if a bank of volunteers and / or a charity would come in and run the food delivery projects. If the council is trying to save money, is this a role that is needed?

Other Cllrs suggested that a volunteer role was fine IF there are sufficient interest in volunteering, but that it can be difficult to manage if there is insufficient time. The Tinkers Bridge food volunteers explained that they spend upwards of 40 hours each week on the community food projects on that estate (one fridge, one larder, one café – all in one session).

Cllrs spoke about their experiences of volunteers and supporting them, with others suggesting that there is a role, but that this may need revamping. It was also acknowledged that different estates have different challenges and that in some areas, employed officer support may be needed.

There was also discussion about the provision of cafes, with comments made regarding the fact that they only run because they are supported by WCC Officers, with a query as to whether this is an effective use of time.

Cllr Scott suggested that there is a need revamping the role to include a wider remit, but that the role remains important. This was echoed by Cllr Ferguson, who spoke about the challenges at the Netherfield Café.

This was followed by discussions around the changing role. There was insufficient support for continuing the role as it stands, with further proposals suggesting:

- More community based, rather than Coffee Hall only.
- A suggestion that there may be a need for additional hours
- To explore the potential for delivery of services on Peartree Bridge and Leadenhall
- Consider that there are external factors (e.g. availability of food for any additional provision).

Tash Darling spoke about the consideration of the support offered to young people through the coordinator. This has happened with some success stories, and this should be considered in whatever decision is made. Both TB and NF also support young people (Princes Trust, DofE) and spoke about the time that this takes. There was stated support continuing the work with young people.

Cllr Smith asked the Council Manager to define what was needed. The Council Manager explained that around 26 hours would be sufficient to deliver what is happening now, plus taking on the two other cafes and liaison across the parish. However, delivery of a 1 hour session on Peartree Bridge is probably 4 hours work, so a level of flexibility will be needed.

Cllr Smith suggested prioritising the support to volunteers, working towards some of the other aspects over the coming months – 'nobody expects everything sorted by the end of April'.

Proposal:

'That the committee tasks the Council Manager with developing a new job role that takes into account discussions that took place within the committee meeting, which,

when completed will be shared with committee members via email with delegated powers to the Council Manager to then advertise and employ accordingly’.

Proposed by: Cllr Scott Seconded by: Cllr Norris

RESOLVED by was of unanimous vote.

SC 100/24 Update on the Library of Things and confirm an approach to charging.

The Council Manager spoke to the paper provided, which gave background on the Library of Things and progress to this point. With the service ready to launch in the new council year, agreement on a charging policy was requested. They ran through different options that could be in place, with a request that the committee give a steer on what they would like to see.

Several points were raised that were linked to the issue but not directly about charging:

- Clarity needed that loans from the library are for personal use only and cannot be used for business, to make a profit or similar.
- That whilst breakages happen, any damage that is deliberate or negligent should be chargeable, perhaps via use of any deposit.
- That different items may have different values / costs, especially where ‘consumables’ are involved (e.g. strimmer cord).
- Security with any monies must be considered under any risk management scheme – having money paid at the depot is probably unsafe so alternatives are needed (online payments are an option, but this may exclude some, so payments at the office).
- PAT testing is in place and can be done internally.
- Suggestion that donations could be utilised to increase the levels of equipment available, as well as asking companies for sponsorship.

Membership is necessary (for security purposes – knowing who people are, where they live, etc.).

Cllr Smith stated that as a deprived parish, putting a charge in place would prevent some from accessing the scheme – paying £20 in one go, may be too much. The option of having a ‘discretionary’ option, much the same as is offered by the larder, may help address this scheme. An instalment scheme was also suggested – pay smaller amounts until membership is paid and then borrowing can happen. Another option was a refundable fee – paid, and then if no issues for the year, this is refunded (as with the community centres – a refundable deposit that is returned if no problems).

There was further discussion around individual rental costs, with different items likely to cost additional monies. There are consumables (e.g. strim cord, carpet cleaning liquid) with others that are less likely to be damaged / need replacing and therefore less cost involved.

Proposal:

‘That an annual membership fee is charged, with discretionary waiving of this where necessary, and loan pricing for individual items based upon consumables and / or replacement costs’.

Proposed by: Cllr Scott

Seconded by: Cllr Rennie

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

SC101/24 Update on the Youth service provision

Tash Darling (Youth Manager) spoke to the paper, giving a brief overview. She also updated the committee on a delay on the event on Peartree Bridge (due to waterlogged field), with a view to delivering this on 24th July.

RESOLVED – noted.

SC102/24 To inform the committee of the Hedgehog Highways scheme and clarify whether WCC would like to provide ‘gates’.

The committee was provided with a copy of a letter sent regarding the potential to buy ‘hedgehog highways’ gateways for installation on fences, providing a route for hedgehogs to travel for food. It was suggested that these could be sold at cost price, with the money ringfenced to buy further supplies if successful.

Proposal:

‘That WCC agrees to purchase an initial batch of 50 hedgehog highway fence arches at a cost of £150, with a view to selling to residents at cost and continuing this process using the proceeds if successful.’

Proposed by: Cllr Scott Seconded by: Cllr Marsh

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

Date of next meeting:

Monday 22nd April 2024, 6:30pm, at the Woughton Community Council Hub, Council Chamber, The Local Centre, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council – 29th April 2023

Agenda Item FC XX/24

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To clarify expectation of council regarding dog waste bags and to propose ordering for the coming year(s).

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council considers the value of printed dog bags and the pros and cons of various suppliers.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The current supply of dog waste bags is coming to an end. The current supply is being used widely by people across the parish (and beyond?) for a variety of reasons* and the current level of dispensing (around 1000 per week) will exhaust supplies within a month or so. As a result, we have started 'rationing' to 2 packets per visit.

*reports include rubbish bags for the car, used as nappy sacks (as cheaper for residents than the shops), food storage, used for foraging as fit nicely in a pocket but remain strong, etc.

The process of looking at new supplies has taken place, with a variety of options and prices. It should be noted that prices have increased significantly – more than doubled since 2020 with current supplier.

Our current supplier (Supplier 1) can provide more of the same – the cost of 100,000 would be **£3575** (+VAT) with an 8 week delivery time. These are renowned as high quality and have the logo and messages printed on them.

Supplier 2 will provide plastic free, compostable bags. These have a shorter shelf life (9 months) and deteriorate more quickly, have specific storage needs (cool, dry and dark). The cost for 100,000 would be **£3900** (+ VAT) without any personalisation. They do, apparently, have a 10% discount at the moment, which would reduce the cost to **£3510** (+VAT), which is comparable to supplier 1, but without the personalisation and at a lower 'thread count'.

Supplier 3 have 'oxo-degradable' bags, with one colour printing on one side (not as good as Supplier 1, but okay). Price for 100,000 would be **£4895** (+VAT) with a 4 week delivery time.

Supplier 4 will offer degradable dog bags, with generic messaging ('bag it and bin it' etc) with a slightly lesser thickness. The cost of these would be **£1585** (+VAT) for 100,000.

Given these quotes, it is considered that there are two options – Supplier 1 or Supplier 4. There are pros and cons with both options:

Supplier 1 – a known supplier, with bags that are considered good and will have the WCC 'branding' upon them. Bags are pretty solid and biodegradable. They are significantly more expensive and due

to the quality, are used by people for things other than dog waste (see above) meaning that supplies are used more quickly. This may be seen as both a pro and a con.

Supplier 4 – whilst not used previously, they have sent a sample which appears to be perfectly fine as far as dog waste bags go. It is slightly thinner, but sufficiently thick and robust so as to not result in unwanted messes. Given the change, this may mean that the dog bags are used for the intended purpose, reducing demand (as above, this may be seen as a pro or a con or both). As they are generic, rather than being printed, they are available immediately and are less than half the price of the alternative supplier.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The costs vary:

The generic option (supplier 4) is £1585 per 100,000

The printed option (supplier 1) is £3575 per 100,000

This is difference of £1990.

Last year, donations accounted for less than £200 towards the costs of dog waste bags. The last lot of bags (150,000) was obtained towards the end of 2020, so suggests that around 40,000 a year are distributed* – based on the cheapest above, this represents donations to around 30% of the cost (cost around £630 a year).

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Council can choose to stop supplying dog bags. It is unclear as to how much impact this would have across the parish, but there are a relatively low number of people within the parish that avail themselves of the bags (actual numbers are not recorded).

SUGGESTED PROPOSAL:

Council agrees to obtain 100,000 bags from Supplier X and, if necessary, to obtain a smaller amount from a supplier with immediate delivery to bridge the gap at the discretion of the Council Manager, in consultation with the Environment Team.

Or

Council agrees to stop supply of dog waste bags at the end of the current supply.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council – 29th April 2024

Agenda Item FC 66/24

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To provide confirmed budget for 2024/25, with updated income figures and clarified precept income.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council notes the report and agrees to the budget provided.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The budget and precept increase were ratified at the Full Council meeting in January 2024 (FC 13/24). However, as is often the case, there were several unknown amounts included at that time. This included staffing costs (as restructure was being undertaken), landscape contract income and specific precept amount.

These issues have now been clarified and the attached sheet includes those figures.

The main changes are:

- The precept income is slightly higher than anticipated, due to the higher council tax base and the changes that were later ratified at MKCC regarding void levels and second home charges. This means that the precept income is **£813,612** with a Band D charge of £315.02 per year.
- The Landscape contract income has been confirmed at a slightly higher rate than we had expected, with that amount being confirmed at **£187,421**.
- Staffing costs have reduced as a result of the restructure and now include a suggested level of increase due to any pay rises and incremental uplifts.

This document will be placed upon the website as part of the transparency code and compliance with best practice and auditing requirements.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Budget update paper

SUGGESTED PROPOSAL:

1. That Council agrees to the proposed 2024/2025 budget as presented in the spread sheet.
2. That Council agrees to a 15% rise in the precept, a total of £813,612.
3. That Council when preparing future budgets, continue to look for further efficiencies.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

2024/25 Budget - April 2024

	20203/24	2024/25
EXPENDITURE - Democracy and Governance		
Cllr Ward Initiatives Fund	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00
Communities and Environment Fund	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00
Grant Aid - Res Associations	£ 3,500.00	£ 3,500.00
Member Allowances and Expenses	£ 15,000.00	£ 23,879.22
Democracy and Governance Total	£ 34,300.00	£ 43,179.22
EXPENDITURE - Whole organisational services		
Meeting and hospitality costs	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,000.00
Insurance Inc Vans	£ 9,000.00	£ 10,000.00
HQ - Building Costs (regulars)	£ 25,000.00	£ 30,000.00
Vehicles	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
Uniforms	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Branding and engagement	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
CCTV		£ 12,000.00
Whole organisation services total	£ 42,000.00	£ 59,000.00
EXPENDITURE - Organisational Management		
Affiliations	£ 5,250.00	£ 4,000.00
Professional Services	£ 4,000.00	£ 8,500.00
Audit Fees	£ 4,800.00	£ 3,100.00
Capital Loan Repayment	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00
Newsletters, Websites and Communications	£ 5,510.00	£ 3,000.00
Stationary and Amenities and services - HQ	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00
I.T (previously included broadband and Members IT)	£ 25,000.00	£ 30,000.00
Training, Development and Conferences	£ 8,000.00	£ 6,000.00
Organisational Management Total	£ 75,378.00	£ 85,418.00
Organisational Costs Total	£ 151,678.00	£ 187,597.22
Staffing Costs - increments included		
HQ Staffing	£ 204,149.25	£ 214,747.43
Youth Staffing	£ 94,059.81	£ 120,425.10
Community Staffing	£ 145,064.12	£ 122,897.68
Landscape and Environment Staffing	£ 255,375.85	£ 273,779.43
Members Staffing	£ 32,906.38	£ -
Meeting Places Staffing	£ 73,682.03	£ 87,913.05
Increments & payrise (5%)	£ -	£ -
Staffing cover	£ 25,000.00	£ -
Staffing Total	£ 830,237.43	£ 819,762.70
Landscape - Building costs	£ 6,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Landscape - Services Budget	£ 18,000.00	£ 40,000.00
Youth - Building Costs	£ 7,000.00	£ 7,000.00
Youth - Services Budget	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00
Advice - Services Budget	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Environment - Services Budget (inc dog bins)	£ 9,500.00	£ 10,000.00
Flood equipment updates and replacements		£ 1,000.00
Community Food - Services Budget	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Community Development - Services Budget (incl events)	£ 9,000.00	£ 15,000.00
Meeting Places (Costs)	£ 65,000.00	£ 65,000.00
Service Plan Delivery	£ 20,000.00	£ 20,000.00
Emerging priorities	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00
Grants - services payments (BLF)	£ 37,629.51	£ -
Community Centres investment (agreed)	£ 90,000.00	£ -
New Neighbourhood Plan		£ 15,000.00
Transfer to 'property reserve'		£ 25,000.00
Community Centre improvements		£ 50,000.00
Services Delivery Total	£ 282,629.51	£ 270,500.00
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	£ 1,264,544.94	£ 1,277,859.92

Full Council

29th April 2024

Agenda Item FC 66/24 -

To provide an update on the proposed budget and precept setting for 2024/2025:

The meeting discussed at length the proposed budget, precept rise, and the need to look at future budget pressures and efficiencies. This update reflected the actual figures, following a budget setting process with a lack of information present. It also includes the accurate 'carry over' figure for the 2023/24 financial year.

RESOLVED

1. That Council agrees to the proposed 2024/2025 budget as presented in the spread sheet.
2. That Council agrees to a 15% rise in the precept, a total of £813,612.
3. That Council when preparing future budgets, continue to look for further efficiencies.

THE AGREED PRECEPT FOR 2023/24 IS £813,612.00, AN INCREASE OF 15% with a Band D charge of £315.02

This increase reflects the challenging position that the council faces, especially as a local council that provides high levels of services and therefore, significant staffing costs. With the precept increase in 2023/24 being below inflation levels and failing to cover the increases in wage costs, a larger increase was needed to 'catch up' and ensure reserves were maintained to a safe level.

As can be noted, efficiency savings with staff costs have been made, with a reduction made in this area, alongside a realistic but challenging approach for the coming year.

INCOME		
Bank and Investment Interest	£ 3,200.00	£ 6,000.00
MKC LTRS Grant / Deprivation grant	168,592.99	£ 171,199.36
Hire of Meeting Places	£ 65,000.00	£ 60,000.00
Landscape Grant	£173,669.41	£ 187,420.97
Landscape additional		
Precept	£ 688,403.88	£ 813,612.00
Grants income (agreed)	£ 54,009.51	
MKCC Funding - Comm Centres and CIF	£ 52,000.00	
Additional Income Generation	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00
Grant funding (to be confirmed - priority for Comm Centres)		£ 50,000.00
Income Total	£ 1,234,875.79	£ 1,318,232.33
SURPLUS / DEFICIT	-£ 29,669.15	£ 40,372.41
Balance carried over from 2022/23 (NB Includes £100k in long term CCLA)		437,174.27
Proposed surplus / deficit		£ 40,372.41
End of year carry over		£ 477,546.68

Woughton Community Council

Investment Strategy 2024

Introduction

Woughton Community Council acknowledges the importance of prudently investing funds held on behalf of the community. All investments will be made in line with the Council's financial procedures and observations, or advice received from the Council's internal and external auditors, supported as necessary by advice from the Responsible Finance Officer.

The Council will ensure it has adequate though not excessive cash resources, overdraft, or standby facilities to enable it always to have the level of funds available which are necessary for the achievement of its service objectives.

This strategy has been prepared in line with statutory guidance issued in 2018 from Local Government Act 2003 s15(1)(a)

Policy

1. Woughton Community Council's investment priorities are the security of reserves and adequate liquidity of its investments.
2. Woughton Community Council will aim to maximise income from its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.
3. Woughton Community Council will seek to ensure that investment income is consistent year on year.
4. Where external investment managers are used, they will be contractually required to comply with this strategy.
5. In balancing risk against returns, the Council is more concerned to avoid risks than to maximise return(s)
6. Investments will include an evaluation of the ethical value of any funds and, where this is felt to be at odds with the aims of the council, investments will be made elsewhere. Woughton Community Council aims to ensure ethical investments are prioritised wherever possible, whilst accepting reasonable limitations on this. Reasons for removing or not investing in funds may include:
 - a. Involvement in the creation or sales of weaponry
 - b. Involvement in the promotion of gambling
 - c. Involvement in the creation or promotion of pornography
 - d. Concerns around business approaches relating to modern slavery, sustainability and biodiversity, employment practices or similar

7. All investments will be in Sterling (GBP)

Specified Investments

Specified investments are those offering high security and high liquidity, made in Sterling (GBP) and maturation of no more than one year. Such short-term investments made with the UK Government or local authority, or a town or parish council will automatically be Specified Investments.

For prudent management of its treasury balances, maintaining sufficient levels of security and liquidity Woughton Community Council will use;

1. Deposits with banks, building societies, local authorities, or other public authorities.
2. Other recognised funds specifically targeted at the Public Sector.
3. The choice of institution and length of deposit will be at the discretion of the Responsible Finance Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Operations and Resources Committee. Recommendations must be agreed at Full Council by majority vote.

Non-Specified Investments

These investments have greater potential risk such as investments in the money market, stocks, and shares. Woughton Community Council will use the services of an appointed FSA FCA accredited Financial Advisor on the investment of these funds and will undergo a suitability report. The choice of investment company will be reviewed within the first year of every new administration following an election or more frequently if the performance of the investments is not meeting the required objectives.

Long term investments, defined as greater than 36 months will be required to have the appropriate level of security as all other public investment criteria.

The Council will expect the RFO (Responsible Finance Officer) to act as the Investment Manager to invest in a balanced portfolio that will yield a consistent income/growth year on year whilst having regard to the Council's objectives and security of its investments. The RFO will be encouraged to consider social, ethical and /or environmental factors or criteria when selecting retaining or disposing of assets.

Balance of Investments

Due to the size and scope of Woughton Community Council's turnover, the council is not protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FCSC) scheme. This means that ensuring a suitable suite of investments, spreading risk, and monitoring financial markets and news is essential to maximise this security. The Responsible Financial Officer, in conjunction with the Operations and Resources Committee, will oversee this and report where necessary for any urgent action.

End of Year Investment Report

At the end of each financial year the RFO will present the final AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return) report at Full Council which will include all investment activity.

The position of all investments at year end should be reported, and an assessment should take place each new financial year to review what, if any of our reserves should be invested into any of our investment funds.

End of Year Investment Report

This strategy will be reviewed annually by the Operations and Resources Committee. The Committee reserves the right to make variations to the Strategy at any time, subject to approval at Full Council.

Last review date:	April 2024
Next review date:	April 2025
Lead:	Responsible Finance Officer
Overseeing Committee:	Operations and Resources Committee
Approved:	
Review cycle:	Annually

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council – 29th April 2024

Agenda Item FC 68/24

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To update council on Annual Meeting preparations and recommend policies for ratification at that meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council notes the report and proposals for the meetings.
2. That council notes the policy reviews for formal agreement at the Annual Meeting.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

There are two meetings planned for the 7th May – the Annual Parish Meeting (where members of the public are encouraged to attend, ask questions of the council, receive updates on what the council has done, what the plans are, etc.) and the Annual Meeting of the council, where decisions are made with regard to official posts (Chair, Leader, committee membership, etc.) and policies are agreed for the coming year.

Councillors have been encouraged to review the documents noted below and officers have reviewed to ensure that they meet the necessary standards, are correctly branded and laid out and updated where appropriate. The following reviews and updates are recommended:

Code of Conduct

- Added paragraph explaining that the policy is based on the Principal Authorities, in line with legislation.

Comments, Compliments and Complaints

- Changes to committee name and some date changes.

Complaints Form

- No change

Councillor Allowances and Expenses Policy

- Updates figures
- Minor change to the basic allowance explanation, to be the same as the principal authority.
- Updated to include PAYE / self declaration.
- Removal of Ambassador allowance.
- Suggestion (in italics) that consideration be given to whether the broadband allowance remain valid, given the level of allowance and the links to MKCC policy, which states that the allowance is intended to cover these costs.
- Change to the reporting officer, following staffing changes
- Change to dates / reviewing cycle

Financial Regs

- No change offered, as NALC are currently updating the Model Financial Regulations (MFR). These were due to be here for this meeting but have not arrived and there is no clarity from

NALC as to when they may arrive. As a result, it is recommended that we retain the current ones, with changes to be deferred until such time as the National Body can provide the necessary update.

GDPR and Data Policy

- Additional of some grammatical clarification.
- Clarity about the Data Protection Officer being either Clerk or other suitable officer.
- Changes to dates and review cycle.

General Privacy Statement

- Inclusion of explanatory paragraph around transparency and purpose of the statement.
- Changes to dates, updates and review cycle.

Guidelines for Broadcast

- Inclusion of a paragraph around the streaming of meetings and repository of these recordings.
- Changes to dates and review cycle

Information Policy

- Some grammatical changes
- Changes to dates and review cycle

Lead Member Roles

- Removal of Ambassador role
- Changes to dates and review cycle

Scheme of Delegation

- This is an entirely new policy that brings together a range of information from various sources to make clear where the decision making processes can happen within the council. This is a useful 'one stop' place for this information and is usual to have in a council the size of Woughton.

Standing Orders

- As with the Financial Regulations, the Standing Orders are based upon the NALC model document that is likely to be updated in line with the Financial Regulations, as they have some links. Therefore, this document remains very similar, with optional elements highlighted in yellow. These include:
- Clarification on publication of agendas, meeting schedules, papers, etc. in Section 3.
 - o Item h – clarification of how long Council would like allocated to public participation (currently 15 minutes)
 - o Clarification of what is expected when someone wants to speak – is council happy with the 'raised hand' option?
- Information included around the 'streaming' of meetings and access via online option.
- Election of Leader / Ambassador are included as these are not usual roles and therefore not included in the 'model' regulations.
- Inclusion of the General Power of Competence element
- Updated to include 'City' in Milton Keynes City Council.
- Section 15 – Proper Officer and clarity around who acts as 'Proper Officer' in the absence of the Council Manager. Currently the RFO.
- Updated language where possible to make gender neutral.
- Section 18 point c has changed and will be reflected when NALC MFR's are published. However, the updated figures have been included in this document, with the levels moving

from £25,000 to £30,000 (inc. VAT), so arguably no real change, but language has clarified the meaning.

- Changes to dates and review cycle

The following are the Terms of Reference (ToR) for Committees and are therefore the responsibility of said committees AND Full Council. Full Council is encouraged to contribute to these to ensure that they meet the wider needs of the council.

Operations ToR

- Updated membership numbers, to a maximum of 12. This is replicated in other committees, to ensure that these committees remain committees and not additional 'Full Council' meetings.
- Some language changes to clarify expectations of the committee.
- Changes to dates and review cycle

Planning ToR

- Update membership expectations and voting rights, to ensure fairness and transparency.
- Changes to dates and review cycle

Services ToR

- Updated membership and voting numbers, to ensure fairness and transparency. Council may choose to reduce this to one vote per estate for specified items, to have parity with the one councillor estates.
- Grammatical corrections.
- Changes to dates and review cycle

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

All policies within the SharePoint folder, details sent to Councillors in March 2024 and included in the summons for this meeting.

SUGGESTED PROPOSAL:

That council agrees to the policy changes contained within the paper provided to the meeting with a view to formal ratification at the Annual Meeting.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager



Woughton Community Council

Calendar of Meetings 2024/25

May-24

Tues 7th *	Annual Meeting
Mon 13th	Operations and Resources
Tues 14th *	Planning (if necessary)
Mon 20th	Services and Communities
Tues 28th *	Full Council

Dec-24

Mon 2nd	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 9th	Operations and Resources
Mon 16th	Services and Communities
Mon 23rd	Full Council

Jun-24

Mon 3rd	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 10th	Operations and Resources
Mon 17th	Services and Communities
Mon 24th	Full Council

Jan-25

Mon 6th	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 13th	Operations and Resources
Mon 20th	Services and Communities
Mon 27th	Full Council

Jul-24

Mon 1st	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 8th	Operations and Resources
Mon 15th	Services and Communities
Mon 22nd	Full Council

Feb-25

Mon 3rd	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 10th	Operations and Resources
Mon 17th	Services and Communities
Mon 24th	Full Council

Aug-24

NOTHING

Mar-25

Mon 3rd	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 10th	Operations and Resources
Mon 17th	Services and Communities
Mon 24th	Full Council

Sep-24

Mon 2nd	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 9th	Operations and Resources
Mon 16th	Services and Communities
Mon 23rd	Full Council

Apr-25

Mon 7th	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 14th	Operations and Resources
Tues 22nd *	Services and Communities
Mon 28th	Full Council

Oct-24

Mon 7th	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 14th	Operations and Resources
Mon 21st	Services and Communities
Mon 28th	Full Council

May-25

Tus 6th *	Annual Meeting (s)
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Nov-24

Mon 4th	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 11th	Operations and Resources
Mon 18th	Services and Communities
Mon 25th	Full Council

All meetings start at 6.30pm and will last no longer than 2 hours

* denotes a Tuesday meeting, due to Bank / f

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council – 29th April 2024

Agenda Item FC 71/24

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To provide a declaration and relevant paperwork regarding Councillor Allowances.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council notes the report and attached paperwork.
2. That councillors complete the relevant paperwork prior to any allowances being paid.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Following discussion at the Operations Committee (OC 105/24) regarding the payment of tax on allowances, in line with legislation, it was agreed that councillors could choose to either have allowances paid via PAYE (the council payroll system being used for this) OR to sign a declaration to state that they would be responsible for any necessary declaration, tax liabilities or otherwise.

The RFO has produced the attached declaration and has also included a 'New Starter Checklist' for anyone wanting to use PAYE.

Councillors will need to complete and return the declaration in advance of any allowances being paid, to ensure that WCC is compliant.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Cllr Allowance declaration 2024.25
Starter_checklist (1)

SUGGESTED PROPOSAL:

For information only. No proposal needed.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

DECLARATION OF OPTING-IN TO PAYE / SELF ASSESSMENT – COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES AND INCOME TAX 2024/2025

As per HMRC guidance, for tax purposes council members and civic dignitaries are treated in the same way as any other individual who holds an office or is an employee. This means that Councillor Allowances paid to elected members are chargeable to income tax as employment income and normal PAYE arrangements apply to these payments. Following the proposal from Operations and Resources Committee on 11th March 2024 Woughton Community Council will continue to offer councillors the choice of having allowances paid through PAYE or that they sign a declaration stating that they are individually responsible for ensuring that the allowance is declared to all relevant authorities.

For 2024/2025, Woughton Community Council has adopted the recommended allowances set by Milton Keynes Council’s Independent Remuneration Panel:

- Basic Woughton Parish Councillor Allowance at 7.5% of the Basic Milton Keynes Councillor Allowance, at £916 per annum.
- Chair’s Allowance at 15% of the Basic Milton Keynes Councillor Allowance, at £1,832 per annum,

Considering the above, can you please choose one of the following declarations and return it by 17th May 2024:

1. I would like to opt in to have my councillor allowance / chair’s allowance (delete as applicable) paid through PAYE and have enclosed a completed “Starter Checklist”.

Name of elected councillor

Signature Date

OR

2. The gross councillor allowance / chair’s allowance (delete as applicable) I receive for the year 2024/2025 I will declare to HMRC as earned income and I will undertake to pay income tax on the gross councillor allowance / chairman’s allowance (delete as applicable) on a Self Assessment tax return.

Name of elected councillor

Signature Date



Do not send this form to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

Instructions for employer

Use this starter checklist to gather information about your new employee if they do not have a P45. You can also use this form if they have a student loan (whether or not they have a P45). Use the information to help fill in your first Full Payment Submission (FPS) for this employee. If you have already submitted your first FPS, keep using the tax code in that FPS until HMRC sends you a new tax code. If the employee gives you their P45 after the first FPS submission, use the tax code shown in parts 2 and 3 of the P45. You must keep the information recorded on the starter checklist for the current and next 3 tax years. This form is for your use only.

Instructions for employee

Fill in this form if you do not have a P45 (a document you get from your employer when you stop working for them). You should also fill in this form if you have a student loan (whether or not you've a P45). Give the completed form to your employer as soon as possible. They need this information to tell HMRC about you and help them to use the right tax code. Make sure you answer the questions correctly. If you do not, you may pay the wrong amount of tax or student loan deductions.

Employee's personal details

1 Last name

2 First names
Do not enter initials or shortened names for example, Jim for James or Liz for Elizabeth

3 What is your sex?
As shown on your birth certificate or gender recognition certificate
Male Female

4 Date of birth DD MM YYYY

5 Home address

Postcode

Country

6 National Insurance number (if known)

7 Employment start date DD MM YYYY

Continue on the next page

Employee statement

These questions will help you to choose the statement that matches your circumstances. The statement you choose helps your employer to apply the correct tax code.

8 Do you have another job?
 Yes Put an 'X' in the statement C box below
 No Go to question 9

9 Do you receive payments from a State, workplace or private pension?
 Yes Put an 'X' in the statement C box below
 No Go to question 10

10 Since 6 April have you received payments from:
 • another job which has ended
 or any of the following taxable benefits
 • Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
 • Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
 • Incapacity Benefit
 Yes Put an 'X' in the statement B box below
 No Put an 'X' in the statement A box below

For more information about tax codes, go to www.gov.uk/tax-codes

Statement A <input type="checkbox"/>	Statement B <input type="checkbox"/>	Statement C <input type="checkbox"/>
Current personal allowance	Current personal allowance on a Week 1/Month 1 basis	Tax Code BR
<p>Key</p> <p>This is my first job since 6 April and since the 6 April I have not received payments from any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobseeker's Allowance • Employment and Support Allowance • Incapacity Benefit 	<p>Key</p> <p>Since 6 April I have had another job but I do not have a P45. And/or since the 6 April I have received payments from any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobseeker's Allowance • Employment and Support Allowance • Incapacity Benefit 	<p>Key</p> <p>I have another job and/or I am in receipt of a State, workplace or private pension.</p>
<p>Key</p> <p>Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) is an unemployment benefit which can be claimed while looking for work. Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is a benefit which can be claimed if you have a disability or health condition that affects how much you can work. Incapacity Benefit is help if you could not work because of an illness or disability before 31 January 2011. State Pension is a pension paid when you reach State Pension age. Workplace pension is a pension which was arranged by your employer and is being paid to you. Private pension is a pension arranged by you and is being paid to you. Please note that no other Government or HMRC paid benefits need to be considered when completing this form.</p>		

Student loans

11 Do you have a student or postgraduate loan?

Yes Go to question 12

No Go straight to the Declaration

12 Do any of the following statements apply:

- you're still studying on a course that your student loan relates to
- you completed or left your course after the start of the current tax year, which started on 6 April
- you've already repaid your loan in full
- you're paying the Student Loans Company by Direct Debit from your bank to manage your end of loan repayments

Yes Go straight to the Declaration

No Go to question 13

13 To avoid repaying more than you need to, tick the correct student loan or loans that you have - use the guidance on the right to help you.

Please tick all that apply

- Plan 1
- Plan 2
- Plan 4
- Postgraduate loan (England and Wales only)

Employees, for more information about the type of loan you have or to check your balance, go to www.gov.uk/sign-in-to-manage-your-student-loan-balance

Employers, for guidance on student loans and which plan or loan type to use if your employee has selected more than one, go to www.gov.uk/guidance/special-rules-for-student-loans

You have Plan 1 if any of the following apply:

- you lived in Northern Ireland when you started your course
- you lived in England or Wales and started your course before 1 September 2012

You have Plan 2 if:

You lived in England or Wales and started your course on or after 1 September 2012.

You have Plan 4 if:

You lived in Scotland and applied through the Students Award Agency Scotland (SAAS) when you started your course.

You have a postgraduate loan if any of the following apply:

- you lived in England and started your postgraduate master's course on or after 1 August 2016
- you lived in Wales and started your postgraduate master's course on or after 1 August 2017
- you lived in England or Wales and started your postgraduate doctoral course on or after 1 August 2018

Declaration

I confirm that the information I've given on this form is correct.

Full name Use capital letters

Signature

Date DD MM YYYY

Give this form to your employer

Your employer will use the information to make sure you pay the right amount of tax.

Do not send this form to HMRC.

Employer guidance

For information on how to work out your new employee's tax code, go to www.gov.uk/new-employee-tax-code

Use Statement A, B or C that your employee has chosen in the employee statement section and apply the tax code below:

- Statement A - use the current personal allowance
- Statement B - use the current personal allowance on a 'week 1/month 1' basis
- Statement C - use tax code BR

Accountability within public bodies - acting on early warning signs

Open consultation

The [Committee on Standards in Public Life](#) is carrying out a review into accountability in public life. The terms of reference for the review are available on our website.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

In recent years we have seen several examples of major failures within public institutions, where it seems that opportunities were missed to address issues before they escalated. We are asking, when things go wrong in public bodies, why does it take so long for problems to be recognised and the leadership to respond appropriately and, most importantly, what needs to change?

Our review will identify where public bodies should focus their attention to maximise the likelihood of problems being uncovered and addressed before issues escalate and lives are damaged. We have chosen to look especially at accountability within public bodies because we want to help organisations to get better at holding themselves to account for the effective delivery of public services.

As part of this review, the Committee is holding an open consultation. **The consultation will run from 09:00 on Monday 25 March 2024 to 17:00 on Friday 14 June 2024.**

Replies to this consultation should be emailed to public@public-standards.gov.uk Further details on how to respond are set out below.

Consultation questions

The Committee invites responses to the following consultation questions. Submissions need not respond to every question.

1. What are the main reasons why public bodies might fail to act quickly and decisively at the first sign of a problem within the organisation?
2. Can you describe any examples of practical measures used by public bodies to ensure that employees are guided by the Nolan Principles at critical decision points, including but not limited to decision-making models, codes of conduct, guidance and training?

3. Public bodies are required to manage a variety of risks to the successful delivery of public services. What role can data play in understanding these risks?
4. Are you aware of any examples of organisations that have good processes in place for identifying patterns and spotting problems that need addressing?
5. What practices and behaviours can the boards of public bodies adopt to ensure that they have proper oversight of their organisation?
6. How should public sector bodies conduct their annual board effectiveness evaluations? What does best practice look like?
7. Accountability in public life can sometimes be associated with blame. How can public bodies build a culture where people feel safe to speak up about concerns, allowing problems to be addressed early and lessons to be learned?
8. The Nolan Principles of honesty and openness require public bodies to be transparent about how they operate and the decisions they make on behalf of the public. Are you aware of any examples of organisations exhibiting good practice in this area?

How to make a submission

Anyone with an interest may make a submission. The Committee particularly welcomes submissions from public bodies.

Submissions should be emailed to public@public-standards.gov.uk.

Submissions must:

- State clearly who the submission is from, i.e. whether from your or sent on behalf of an organisation.
- Include a brief introduction about you/ your organisation and your reason for submitting evidence.
- Be in word or another editable format. Please do not send uneditable formats like PDF.
- Have numbered paragraphs.
- Comprise a single document. If there are any annexes or appendices, these should be included in the same document.
- Be concise – we recommend no more than 2,000 words in length.
- Contain a contact email address.

The Committee may choose not to accept a submission as evidence, or not to publish a submission even if it is accepted as evidence. This may occur where a submission is very long or contains material which is inappropriate.

Submissions will be published online with any contact information removed.

The Committee will publish anonymised submissions (where the name of the respondent and any references to named individuals are removed) where a respondent makes a reasonable request to do so.

Submissions sent to the Committee after the deadline of 17:00 on 14 June 2024 may not be considered.

If you have any questions, please contact the Committee's Secretariat by email (public@public-standards.gov.uk). If you have any questions you would prefer to discuss by telephone, please include your contact number in the email.

Woughton Community Council Service Plan 2024/2025

The Woughton Community Council Service Plan is the document that details the focus of specific work to be undertaken over the coming 'council year' (May – April). This document lays out the specific items, projects, services and initiatives that the council commits to delivering over the coming year and should work alongside the operational plans, that detail the 'day to day' delivery, such as existing services and ongoing commitments.

As with previous year, this document is separated into colour coded committee responsibilities, showing the officers and members who have overall leadership on delivering this plan. Whilst all are involved, ownership and accountability are detailed as follows:

Items in **ORANGE** are Services and Communities Committee
Items in **BLUE** are Operations and Resources Committee
Items in **GREEN** are Planning, Licencing and Development Committee

There are some items which sit across either a few committees (e.g. where a project impacts both service provision and financial income) or should be a whole council approach. These items have been left blank.

This plan should be considered as a 'living document', updated and altered as the landscape changes, things are completed or where circumstances change. As was seen in 2020, a plan needs to be flexible and respond to both known and emerging priorities. This is reflected in the budget that has been agreed for this year, with budgets allocated towards Service Plan items, whilst also having an amount that is allocated to those issues that emerge over the year. There are times where this flexibility is what makes the local council sector so valuable to its residents – the ability to move quickly.



Woughton Community Council Service Plan 2024/25

Item No	Description	Objective	Details and key issues	Approximate costings	Lead Officer/Member	Committee responsible
1	Refurbishment of Netherfield Meeting Place	To provide a better quality experience for renter and to try and improve occupancy rates within the centre	To include toilets, ceiling, windows (where necessary), replacement radiators and heating improvements, lighting and general tidy up. If possible, also to include the minor changes needed with the kitchen layout to enable fridge freezer and decent cooker.	Toilet improvements = £18k Ceiling replacement (including lighting) = £10K Kitchen works (incl. 'white goods') = £3k Window replacements = £1500 Internal décor, door furniture, etc. = £1k Sockets, electrics, CCTV, etc. = £1k* Radiators = £800 Contingency @10% = £3400 Total around £40k	Estates Manager (works) Council Manager (funding)	Operations Committee
2	Library of Things	To provide access to range of equipment that may be useful for residents at low or no cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery starting at 2 afternoons per week, with a view to building volunteer capacity, • utilising online booking and payment options, • recycle equipment and resources where possible with a view to expanding into a 'Repair Café' and recycling service in the longer term. 	This is already costed at approx. £60 per year for software costs with other costs included within existing resources. There will be other costs associated (e.g. PAT testing) but unclear until we start delivering the service.	Estates Manager / Environment Team	Services
3	No 99 Jonathans	To develop a space that helps provide a 'Health and Wellbeing' space for the parish	<p>Looking at the space (internal and external) and how best this can be used to support the health and wellbeing for people within the parish, provide additional space for either current or future delivery and offer space for councillor surgeries, training sessions and a smaller space to rent / loan to community groups that need space that isn't a community centre size.</p> <p>This initial period is intended to allow time to assess the suitability and viability of the space for WCC, with a view to 'hand back' if this becomes untenable.</p>	Initial costs (compliance, legal, immediate needs, etc.) - £4,000 Annual costs (to be confirmed, but based on No95) - £9,000 per year*	Council Manager	Full Council – delegated to Services (delivery) and Operations (finances)



Item No	Description	Objective	Details and key issues	Approximate costings	Lead Officer/Member	Committee responsible
4	Public Realm improvements	A visible and impactful approach to making changes to the parish, bringing unloved spaces back into use and improving the appearance of the parish.	Identify key spaces on each estate to provide projects for Payback and potential community approaches. This could include play parks (e.g. the mosaics at Two Halls Play area), utility spaces (such as the old 'pocket parks' on Beanhill and other estates), areas subject to ASB (the 'ends' of the garages in Netherfield) or simply focusing on an area for litter picks, painting bollards, cutting back, path edging, etc. This will not only provide a very visible example of works being undertaken, but also provide opportunities to build upon successful 'multi agency' events that have happened previously (e.g. tree planting).	Costs are going to vary, but are likely to be minimal, other than use of tools (already in place) and potentially paint, etc.	Estates Manager / Environment Team	Services
5	Community Food	Bring community food approaches to other parts of the parish and review current delivery	Development of the Community Food provision, to include parish wide approaches, collaborations and potential new mobile services utilising the new van. This follows discussion within the council meetings around the role and the wishes of the council to see extended provision. Whilst costs are already considered (e.g. use of the van, etc.), some aspects of this proposal are linked to food being available (outside the control of WCC) and therefore the ability of the council to expand. Links to a need for a wider discussion around what 'Community Food' means and what level WCC should be delivering these approaches.	Within existing budgets.	Council Manager	Services
6	Communications from WCC	Improvements to the Communications of the council.	Linked to the staffing restructure, was the inclusion of a new role, a Communications Officer. This may be something that can be included within the Administrator role (depending on demand), but the very real need for there to be a concerted effort to have a communications focus is clear. This should include all aspects within the council; The Gazette, online Gazette, e-shots, social media, notice boards, website, etc. as well as looking at a clear visual approach (the Woughton 'look'), press releases, professionalising our publications (e.g. an Annual Report) and generally having a singular focus on this area.	This is costed within the new staffing model, currently at around £15,000 for 15 hours per week (this could be lowered / higher accordingly).	Operations Manager	Operations
7	Woughton is 50	To celebrate and commemorate the anniversary of the estates of the parish and build a 'legacy' of stories and knowledge.	A year of celebration. With the first people moving into the parish in 1974, this year focuses on celebrating the anniversary of the parish proper (excluding Old Woughton, and rightly so!). A series of grant applications has been made, alongside an allocation from the budget already in place. This is to include activities in the run up to a large festival, plus some legacy work in the aftermath.	Total costs will be dependent on any grant success, but between £8 - £20k.	Youth and Community Manager / Community Development	Services
8	Neighbourhood Plan Review	Updated plan, reflecting current views	Updating the Neighbourhood Plan to reflect the changes that have taken place since 2017, when the current plan was made. Work has started on this with consultants, but further work to undertake over the coming year.	£15,000 budgeted for the coming year	Council Manager	Planning



Woughton Community Council Service Plan 2024/25

Item No	Description	Objective	Details and key issues	Approximate costings	Lead Officer/Member	Committee responsible
9	Environmental, biodiversity and carbon neutrality plan	To have a clear, developed and agreed plan covering these aspects for both the council and the wider parish.	The Green Initiatives Working Group (GIWG) to produce the first draft of the new plan, with the 'highlights' of areas which need further investigation, investment or specialism. To link in with an application to the Open University for support and further applications to the Carbon Neutrality Fund for additional infrastructure projects.	Grant application for up to £20k but can be driven by resources available.	Council Manager	Operations, but links to all.
10	Incident Plan	To update the plan to reflect current needs.	To review, building on early work and creating both a robust and inclusive plan and a training programme to run alongside, ensuring the parish is best placed to manage in the event of any significant incident. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provision of community first aid courses for people across the parish, specifically around those that are the 'community leads' for the plan, but to include other community 'leaders' who can make a difference. Training on safe use of equipment Volunteer engagement and involvement 	Monies allocated via budget, including training budget. Likely to be around £2 – 3k	Operations Manager	Operations
11	CCV policy	Improving the safety and security of the parish	Development and implementation of a CCTV policy, to include the installation of the CCTV at all venues (funded via the TVP Funding), provision of the Crimewave cameras and how to accept / decline requests for use of said cameras from partner organisations.	£12k in budgets for CCTV systems, plus around £7.5k for internal systems.	Council Manager / Estates Manager / Operations Manager	Operations (internal) / Services (external)
12	Local Government Award Scheme	Continue to evidence the benefits of the work undertaken by WCC.	Achieve Quality Standard in the Local Government Award Scheme, building upon what is hoped will be a successful submission for Foundation level in May 2024. This will need to include reviews of all relevant documents, plus development of key NEW documents, including an annual report (published), a scheme of delegation, engagement strategies, involvement at annual meetings, etc.	£80 submission fee for Foundation, £100 for Quality, £200 for Gold.	Council Manager	Full Council
13	Refurbishment of Tinkers Bridge Meeting Place		Initial plan including painting, decorating, minor repairs and improvements, plus development of further proposals for larger scale works and utilisation of space and a project plan for the potential redevelopment of the wider site, to include a larger centre and additional property.	Around £3- 4k for the initial work.	Estates Manager / Member for Tinker Bridge	Services
14	Woughton on 2 Wheels	Cycling initiative to encourage more use of bikes and sustainable transport.	Getting Woughton on 2 wheels. A wide range of activities that work together towards Woughton becoming more connected, resourced and set up to enable all to use cycling for transport. Could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and youth projects for cycle proficiency, bike maintenance, also available through MKCC for families Signposting / support accessing ride to work schemes etc 	Expectation that most would come through grant applications, support from the principal authority, partnerships with	Youth and Community Manager	Services



Woughton Community Council Service Plan 2024/25

Item No	Description	Objective	Details and key issues	Approximate costings	Lead Officer/Member	Committee responsible
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help access to bikes to support entry into employment where transport an issue • Work with MKCC to get our redways better signposted • Work with Cycle saviours to get repairs and old bikes up to safety rideability • Potential for training and small enterprise related to bike repairs long term • Secure cycle stores on parish so people can cycle to work / school / doctors etc and store bikes 	relevant agencies and organisations.		
15	Living Archive and Arts & Heritage Trails	Building on the existing 'Love Exploring' trail, celebrating the arts and heritage of the parish	<p>After initial work leading to the Tinkers and Netherfield Trail, celebrating the 'street art' and other community installations, the 50th Anniversary year is a really good time to launch this for the whole parish and build further options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at our existing art and repair as necessary. • Get some new art onto the parish. • Document what we have, what's happened here, who has lived here and still does and what they have to say. • Develop the trails properly. • Work on the podcasting idea previously discussed. 	Funded via grants, but a small budget of around £2k to be allocated.	Youth and Community Manager	Services
16	Play Parks	To review all parks within the parish, identify urgent works and develop a collaborative approach with other stakeholders to improve them.	<p>Refreshing play parks and looking at settings that are suitable for both younger children (e.g. under fives) and those with disabilities. There was some suggestion that there was funding for this from MKCC, but this was not forthcoming. As a result of this, plus lots of discussion around this from councillors and resident, agreement that a focus will be placed upon this area over the coming year, with a development plan created as a first step.</p>	No specific funds attached.	Environment Team / Youth and Community Manager	Services / Planning
17	Food	Investigate the potential for a 'street food' festival within the parish.	<p>Building upon a vibrant scene within the wider city (Eat Street, Food Truck Friday, etc.), consideration of whether a similar approach could take place within Woughton. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying suitable venues (space, parking, toilets, power, etc.) - Consideration of costs to attendees - Focus on local residents or appealing to a wider city approach - Any 'add ons' (e.g. music, kids activities, etc.) 	No funds allocated at this point – investigation only	Community Development / Youth and Community Manager	Services
18	Skills sharing	To encourage community members to share knowledge and skills	To investigate the potential for regular 'skill share' sessions within the parish, encouraging local people to support sharing their skills and knowledge with others. To include councillors, officers and others/	Unknown – probably just buildings and a £1k allocation	TBC	Services



Woughton Community Council Service Plan 2024/25

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