Woughton Community Council Service Plan 2026/2027

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. This 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.

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Item No	Description	Objective	Details and key issues	Approximate costings	Lead Officer/Member	Committee responsible

Introduction

Many of the elements noted in this plan link to an overarching approach that aims to take a different approach within the council and wider parish. Over the past decade, the approach with the council has been focused on the issue of poverty, with this being the theme of grant policies, service delivery and much of the discussion within meetings, committees and consultations. This was increased with the 'cost of living' crisis, the impact of the pandemic and the ongoing pressures on finances within all levels of government. Whilst poverty remains a significant issue for many within the parish and services and support remains a major part of the council's delivery, it is also felt important that aspiration and encouragement is prioritised. Supporting the view that the parish has much to offer and is not just poverty and disadvantage, is a focus within this plan and the wider council and community.

As a result, the issues of pride in the parish, building skills and resilience, improving public realm and supporting aspirational approaches run through this document. Creating estates that are attractive, well maintained and designed to provide great community facilities supports this approach. The housing improvements taking place on Netherfield, Tinkers Bridge and Beanhill support this too, as does the work that has been done to improve public spaces (refurbishment of the ABC park, the renewal of the Barista Park, public realm improvements across the parish have all happened over the past year). But it isn't just about place, it's about people. Supporting residents to develop new skills, to try new activities, to lead healthier, happier and more active lives. And, most importantly, to expect and aspire to more.

The items noted below cover a wide range of approaches, from one off events to ongoing services. Physical spaces to aspirational thoughts. And all should be considered against a backdrop of

'What is best for the people of the parish?'

And the only way to know this, is to talk to people. To meet people where they are. To ask questions. To consult on decisions. To increase the democratic involvement and encourage new, innovative ways of doing things, even when these may be scary. And these conversations need to take place at all levels – much feedback comes from occasional conversations where a caretaker, a landscaper, a café volunteer or a councillor hears an idea, a viewpoint or a comment that can help shape the parish. We can take these, as well as the views collected through more formal routes, and help work together to build a parish that thrives, that succeeds and that builds upon the strengths of our community.
This plan underpins the work that will happen over the coming year. But we will also continue to deliver the ongoing services and support that made Woughton the 'Council of the Year' – services that focus on the people of the parish.
This is aspirational and a different approach to previously. Some things will work, some may not. But all will help us build understanding, learn from the experience and continue to move forward.

1	Continued refurbishment of Meeting Places	To provide a better-quality experience for renters and users and to try and improve occupancy rates within the centre	Taking a priority approach and working within reasonable budgets, the continued improvements to community centres is a key part of delivering quality spaces to the local population. To this end and following a programme of change over the past few years, work will continue to develop the centres. This may include: new kitchen at TBMP, new windows at No 95, and accessibility issues better managed at No 99.		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.	Further development of this resource, with active engagement of volunteers, development of new services (e.g. repair library) and a publicity push to increase usage. Additional equipment and inclusion of additional items, having a clear pricing structure and clarity around membership levels will also form part of this work.	Within existing budgets	Estates Manager / Environment Team	Services
3	Children and young people on the margins	Consider approaches for young people identified as marginalised or minority groups / those most at risk - Home schooled, young cares, SEND, BME, LGBTQ+, NEET- offering social activities and promoting positive citizenship.	This may include partnership working with external agencies to deliver on parish and developing targeted offers to reach the harder to reach and most at risk. Eg: Early Help Autism pilot programme, Escape the Trap & knife crime initiatives Consideration of options with papers to committees as and when appropriate.		Youth & Community Services Manager	Services

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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. To include a formal agreement with MKCC Street Cleansing team regarding what areas have seen investment and therefore need maintenance	Following the work undertaken over the previous years, focusing on key areas of the parish, bringing underused or unloved areas back into use. This includes: - The spaces at the end of garage blocks on Netherfield, that border the redway through the estate - The 'gap' on Peartree Bridge, building a space that is more usable, more visually appealing, includes benches and offers a community space to share - At least one 'pocket park' area on Beanhill, working with residents to create a new space to enjoy. - The 'pond' area on Eaglestone. Developing a schedule of works to create street art across the parish, in particular the underpasses. Which will see a more consistent feel and look across the whole parish. To include new pieces and the maintenance of those already done.	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 Youth and Community Manager	Services
5	Community Arts	Building a programme and approach, making use of the 'Artist in Residence' and other resources locally.	Create a programme of work, events and activities, utilising the community artist and other local resources to build a wider art focus within the parish, linked to public realm, community activities, schools, older people, etc. with a view to provision of exhibitions, creation of resources, etc.	Within the existing agreement – some small funding for resources may be needed	CDEO / Y+C Manager	Services
6	Communications from WCC	Improvements to the Communications of the council, including a review of the communications policy	Build this into the new Ops Manager role, potentially with some additional resource. Build upon the work that has been undertaken on the Youth and Community pages and developing new approaches across the piece.	Much already done. Embed within workflows	Business Services Manager	Operations
7	Panto, Carols on the Green, Diwali, Colour run, Passover, etc. wider events provision covering diverse population To include exploration of Carnival for 2027	Increase in delivery of a diverse range of events, covering the diversity of the parish. Also responding to requests from members of the public	Task the Community Development officer and wider officer team with liaison with wider community and councillor group to develop and deliver these events, focusing on the diversity elements. Clarification of whether support exists for Carnival in 2027	TBC	CDEO	Services
8	Neighbourhood Plan Review	Updated plan, reflecting current views	With the main body of work completed (the Design Codes and Site Allocation proposal), finalising the plan for submission, alongside the publicity and engagement elements needed, with a view to having the plan	£15,000 budgeted for the coming year (in earmarked reserves)	Council Manager	Planning

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			'made' within the 2026 /7 council year (dependent on MKCC / Oneil Homer / etc)			
9	Environmental, biodiversity and carbon neutrality plan	To have an extended, considered and long term plan for the approaches that WCC will take around the 'green' agenda, including carbon neutrality, biodiversity and other environmental initiatives.	The Green Initiatives Working Group (GIWG) to continue the work in this area, building upon the initial document provided via Operations Committee. To include a wider approach, covering issues broader than the 'biodiversity' focus provided to this point, and linking to service delivery, investment and procurement, policy, practice and any funding / grant applications May link in with external partners (e.g. Donut Economics, Open University) for support and further applications to the Carbon Neutrality Fund and other grant givers for additional infrastructure projects.	TBC	RFO Environment Team Green Working Group	Operations, but links to all.
10	New community space on Peartree Bridge	Investigate the potential and viability of provision of a community building on Peartree Bridge	To include potential use, costs, planning concerns, charitable status, funding bids, etc. with a view to being able to make a considered and evidence based decision on whether another building is needed, wanted, going to be suitable, etc.	Unclear at this point, but officer / councillor time in the first instance	Council Manager / PB councillors	Operations
11	Lease agreements, asset transfers and long term plans	Ensuring that robust, timely and manageable agreements are in place for all buildings / resources	Working with MKCC and others to clarify ownership / management of community buildings and spaces, ensuring suitable investment and management in place and ensuring best value for residents. The initial focus on Eaglestone Activity Centre (currently no formal agreement in place), and the 95 – 99 Jonathans terrace, with a view to asset transfer to ensure long term provision of youth / community initiatives. This will enable investment in solar, sustainable building models, long term investment strategies and income / expenditure balance, whilst ensuring access to suitable spaces and resources across the parish.	Some legal costs may be needed, but limited (usually around £2k per lease, where needed)/ Longer term investment planning to come at a later stage.	Council Manager / Estates Manager	Full Council
12	Local Government Award Scheme	Continue to evidence the benefits of the work undertaken by WCC.	Build upon the initial achievement of Foundation Quality Council, continue to develop, with work towards Silver accreditation (following a change in the scheme) with the associated work needed to evidence the way that council consults with and engages with local residents and the wider community.	£100 submission fee for the silver award	Council Manager	Full Council
13	Healthy lifestyles (to include food initiatives)	Look at activities that support healthier lifestyles and promote happier, healthier communities.	Consider a range of activities, building on some work already undertaken, with my include: - New 'ParkRun' style 5km run. And walking groups - Seated exercise, yoga and Mindfulness - Escape the Trap, DA recovery programmes - Build upon the cycling culture, linking to the Millenium Cycle route	Within existing budgets and donation costs, with additional grant funding where possible.	Youth & Community Services Manager Food Coordinator	Services

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		Broaden the food offer and consider health impacts linking to healthier communities	Within the cafes, youth provision, events and other places where food is offered, look at alternative options (e.g. culturally diverse, vegan / vegetarian, etc.) and the balance of food offered, especially around healthy foodstuffs. To be balanced alongside the use of donations and ensuring that it remains enticing and enjoyable.			
14	Sustainable travel initiatives	Initiatives to encourage more use of bikes and sustainable transport.	Building on the work undertaken over recent years, including the 'Wheelie Big Picnic' becoming part of the annual events calendar and developing opportunities to support skills development, cycling infrastructure and sustainable transport approaches, looking at next steps – membership of the Cycling Citizens MK group, further infrastructure proposals, building a parish that is designed for sustainable travel.	Partnership funding External sponsorship Events budget	Youth & Community Services Manager Council Manager	Services
15	Living Archive and Arts & Heritage Trails	Building on the existing 'Love Exploring' trail, celebrating the arts and heritage of the parish	Following agreement and reinstallation of the Tinkers and Netherfield Art Trail, building upon this to further develop the parish as a destination for external visitors, alongside those who live, work and are educated here. - Continue to refurbish art pieces where possible - Develop new trails	Annual cost - minimal	Council Manger/ Youth and Community Manager	Services
17	Food	Create a local 'street food' festival	Following positive responses to the idea of a food festival on parish, and with a link to the 'pride in place' theme and building aspiration within the locale, delivering a food festival, using local providers (e.g. RA's, faith groups, local producers) and building this into an event that includes a market of Woughton based creatives.	Space, officer time and potentially some funding for rental of some equipment.	Community Development / Youth and Community Manager	Services
18	Minibus provision to support access to WCC activities	To enable those from around the parish have access to 'centralised' activities	Due to concerns about travelling within the parish, consideration of the provision of a minibus within the council, to support access to existing (and future) activities. This may include aspects such as: - Supporting residents of Tinkers Bridge and Peartree Bridge to access youth services. - Supporting access for older people to cafes, social events and similar.	Exploration only at this point	Council Manager	Services
19	Education, training and development	Work experience, training and apprenticeships Personal and professional development pathways	To create a programme of in-house mentorship and placement for local young people and adults. With a view to have apprenticeships within the council, if practicable. To implement, identified opportunities for residents to access sessions / providers which teach new skills that are relatable and useful, either for	Emerging priority – within existing resources Partnership SLAs and external funding	Council Manager / Business Services Manager Youth & Community Services Manager	Services

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			daily living, independence or as routes into professional development. Likely to involve partnership working Eg: digital skills, employability skills, practical skills (cooking, bike maintenance etc).	streams with potential use of Emerging priority budget		
20	New councillor and community leader engagement	Building and delivery of the proposals around community engagement events, listening events, councillor interviews and similar	The outcomes should include a greater understanding of the views of local people, a greater number of residents being involved (formally or informally) with community events and activities, development of training sessions for local people (e.g. first aid, event planning, etc.) and look to the potential for people to stand for election at the May 2027 elections.	Funding in place (around £4k)	Council Manager / All	Operations
21	Repair Cafe	To start a repair café on Eaglestone	Cllr Coughlan proposes a new repair café within the EAC. More to follow.	Unclear	Cllr Coughlan / Environment Officer	Services
22	Sports pitches	Work with local schools to see if access to playing fields for use by organised teams is possible.	Following initial conversations with New Chapter, assessment of viability and suitability of this approach and sustainable delivery.	TBC	Council Manager	Services
23	Parent Support	To consider approaches and options to bring greater support and training opportunities to parents. Enabling them to access resources and support to have greater insight into their children's needs and the skills to manage difficulties as they arise.	Deliver (WCC Officers and through partners) a range of sessions and resources that parents can access, so empowering them to parent and advocate most effectively for their children. Alongside, breaking down the isolation and Eg: Nurture programme with MKCC, SEND resource and parent peer support groups with Early Help Autism, Food/ weight/ toileting with School nurses. Sleep and behaviour management, Who is in Charge, Online safety resources. Ensure Youth directory is maintained and updated	Partnership SLAs and funding streams	Youth & Community Services Manager	Services
24	Diverse Communities	Improving access to services for harder to reach, minority groups of residents. To increase the reach and level of engagement with a broad spectrum of resident ethnicities. Recognising and celebrating the cultural diversity of the parish and create greater cohesion across currently disparate groups	Develop partnerships locally to support Officers' direct engagement and work on our offer and comms to encourage greater involvement of the currently disengaged and unreached. Create multi-cultural opportunities to bring different groups together for some common goals (link to the cultural food initiatives?) Deliver Asylum seekers/ refugee awareness workshops - To break down myths and raise awareness across the piece of the diversity within. See item 7 above	Resources to be confirmed once programme agreed	Council Manager / Youth & Community Services Manager & Community Engagement Officer	Services

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25	Reducing the digital divide		Consider approaches that improve access to internet across the parish, and address confidence and capability with residents. Consider involvement from Good Things Foundation and Community Learning.	Partnerships SLA's and funding streams	Youth and Community Manager	Services
26	Men's Mental Health / engagement	To commit to delivering the Men's mental health breakfast and use this and other opportunities to explore ways to engage male residents in consultation to inform service delivery that is relevant and accessible	Deliver the weekly Men's breakfast and establish signposting and pathways from that engagement Explore additional projects in response to the consultation work to better serve and engage male residents	Emerging Priority- £3K for practitioner External partnership funding for food & resources	Youth & Community Services Manager	Services
27	Youth Council	To have a Youth Council in place and delivering	Having appointed an officer to prepare this work, after a significant period where resources didn't allow sufficient focus, to finalise the creation and delivery of the Youth Council, as previously agreed.	Funding in place	Youth & Community Services Manager	Services

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