



# Woughton Community Council Service

## Agenda item: FC 71/19

Each year, Woughton Community Council sets its priorities for the coming year. This year, we have been able to get more public engagement than previously, with some clear themes identified and some very definite issues that the public would like to see us focus on in the coming year.

Item No	Description	Objective	Milestones and Dates	Approximate costings	Lead Officer/Member	Type and Committee responsible
1	Woughton 'On The Road' – provision of a mobile space for the parish	To provide a vehicle (bus / trailer / similar) to enable WCC to provide a visible and useable presence in areas that are not served by a suitable community building, providing services and engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Proposal agreed at Services (December 2018)</li> <li>b) Proposal agreed at Full Council (March 2019)</li> <li>c) Suitable vehicle bought, prepared, altered and branded, ready for use (End April 2019)</li> <li>d) Programme of activity in place, with staffing and outcomes identified (as part of proposal for Dec 18)</li> </ul>	<p>£15,000 – suitable vehicle, with alterations and branding</p> <p>Storage - TBC</p> <p>Staffing – within existing structures</p> <p>Insurance – via fleet / current insurance</p> <p>Repairs and maintenance - TBC</p>	<p>Council Manager</p> <p>Chair of Services</p>	<p>Services</p> <p>Project</p>
2	Community Growing and Gardens – Coffee Hall Allotment Site	To develop the identified allotment site to provide a range of growing options, community groups and parish needs (storage and plant nursery) in a sustainable way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Proposal developed with input from environment and landscape team (Nov 18), with priorities and staged development</li> <li>b) Big Lottery / other funding bid(s) developed and submitted (Jan 19)</li> <li>c) To include storage and potential for moving Landscape depot onto the new site</li> </ul>	<p>Suggested £10,000 budget for initial stages work if appropriate and to include any elements that would require additional funding</p>	<p>Landscape Manager / Environment Officer (North)</p> <p>Chair of Services</p>	<p>Services</p> <p>Project</p>

3	Community Engagement	To undertake quality market research, focusing on provision of representative evaluation across all areas of our parish	<p>d) To include planting, solar, rain collection, etc.. taking sustainable approaches wherever possible</p> <p>e) Work to start once funding in place – aiming for April 2019</p> <p>f) If funding is not forthcoming for full project, re-evaluation and reduced provision.</p>	<p>a) To clarify, through Operations (?) committee, the nature of the research (for 21<sup>st</sup> Jan meeting)</p> <p>b) To undertake a formal process to appoint external company (by Mar 19)</p> <p>c) Undertake agreed engagement (suggested combination of online, telephone, face-to-face and group approaches) over the course of 2019</p> <p>d) Both Youth and Pensioner panels to be included within this programme, alongside focus on BAMER communities</p>	Costs vary widely and will be dependent on the expectations of council. Rates start at £700 per day, £200 for an online survey or upwards of £5k for a full programme	Council Manager / Community Development Officer  Chair of Operations  Operations Project
4	Ascot Railings replacement programme	To prepare, plan and cost a programme of ascot railings or similar, to reduce impact of inappropriate parking, dangerous use of green spaces and damage caused to infrastructure by vehicles driving over grassed spaces	<p>a) Assessment of current railings, noting damage and condition (Apr 19)</p> <p>b) Assessment of other areas currently being damaged by parking / vehicle access, with priority areas noted (May 19)</p> <p>c) Cost evaluation made for each area noted, in line with financial policy (June 19)</p>	£5000 identified as a budget to work within, based upon the outcome of assessment, this may vary but £5000 maximum spend	Landscape Manager / Environment Officers  Chair of Services  Services Project	

5	<p>Play Park programme and Open Space assessment</p>	<p>Following considerable feedback from residents, a planned and focused approach to open space and play park provision across the parish.</p>	<p>d) Utilisation of the Unpaid Work Team to install where appropriate, reducing costs (once work starts)  e) Fully costed proposal to be taken to relevant committee for agreement (June 19) with work commencing over summer 2019, if agreed.  a) Full evaluation and report into current Open Space and play park provision across the parish (April 19)  b) Liaison with MKC with regard to their proposals for play parks over coming years, to get clarity about any investment / management from MKC side (as soon as possible)  c) Costed proposals for provision of a range of play areas (small, medium, large), based on agreed equipment and installation  d) Costed plan for maintenance of any open space that may be devolved (May 19)  e) Discussions with MKC Planning with regard to potential space for park on Leadenhall (early 2019)  f) Creation of 5 year plan for development of open spaces and play parks parish wide, with investment, funding bids, MKC contribution (!) and resident association buy in.</p>	<p>No immediate cost, but likely to lead to significant investment in the longer term</p>	<p>Council Manager  Chair of Policy and Resources</p>	<p>Policy and Resources  Report and proposal</p>
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6	<p>Community Led Housing Plan</p> <p>To explore potential for developing and delivering some community led housing initiatives within the parish, providing alternative housing options for local people.</p>	<p>a) Assess spaces on non-regeneration areas for potential sites that could be utilised, including continued liaison with MK College about possible space upon their relocation.</p> <p>b) Work with local residents to assess whether there is a local drive for this type of housing option and, if so, to create a steering group to take plans forward.</p> <p>c) Desktop research into similar schemes that could inform any work undertaken.</p> <p>d) Dependent on outcome of above, consideration of appointment of specialist consultant to explore and research more fully, creating a detailed plan for action(s).</p> <p>e) Build in to any proposal a range of supportive measures for local people, including training and apprenticeships, ongoing management, re-investment of rental / sales income for further schemes, local focus on provision (Woughton residents priority)</p>	<p>Officer time and then additional resource if and when a consultant is appointed. £5,000 is a ballpark figure, but there may be some funding available from external sources</p>	<p>Council Manager</p> <p>Chair of Policy and Resources</p>	<p>Policy and Resource</p> <p>Proposal and Report</p>
7	<p>Increase of tool library</p> <p>To increase and improve the range of options offered through the tool library, including better publicity, wider range of borrowing</p>	<p>a) Investigate and consider the type of provision that would benefit local people (e.g. cake tins, party equipment, BBQ, furniture, power washer, etc.) – consider an article in</p>	<p>Set aside £2,000 maximum</p>	<p>Environment Officers</p>	<p>Project Services</p>



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		<p>options and potential for income generation</p>	<p>the Gazette plus online options for feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Following feedback, cost up buying additional equipment that can be utilised within the 'library'</li> <li>c) Develop new publicity so that local people are aware of the range of equipment on offer</li> <li>d) Improve booking regime, to include online booking options and, if appropriate, online payments</li> <li>e) Provide annual plan for replacements, renewals and repairs to maintain all equipment.</li> </ul>	<p>Chair of Services</p>	
<p>8</p> <p>Woughton Business Forum</p>	<p>To develop a forum for local businesses to promote Woughton as a place to work, bring collaborative approaches and build stronger relationships between companies and the council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Make contact with local businesses, including delivery of The Gazette to business premises, to begin relationship building</li> <li>b) Explore the appetite for a local business forum, through surveys, discussions and focus groups</li> <li>c) If demand is there, develop a programme of events over the year, to include focus on feedback from participants</li> <li>d) Review regularly, ensure participant feedback and respond accordingly.</li> </ul>	<p>Officer time / venue hire only in the first instance.</p> <p>Potential for additional monies needs for hospitality and events in the future</p>	<p>Council Manager / Community Development Officer</p> <p>Chair of Operations</p> <p>Project Operations</p>	

9	Resident Skills Development	To provide a range of opportunities for residents and local groups to develop new skills	<p>a) Develop a list of possible options for skills development, to include ideas already proposed for groups (e.g. committee skills, presentation skills, communication and engagement, first aid, food hygiene)</p> <p>b) Develop a list of possible options for individuals, to include ideas already proposed for individuals (e.g. cooking, budgeting, DIY skills)</p> <p>c) Work with Resident Associations and other local groups to identify priorities, liaise with MKC around what they may provide and create an annual calendar of events</p> <p>d) Provide online booking, alongside other methods, with clarity around any costs, failure to attend, etc. to maximise attendance and reduce wasted spaces</p>	Approximately £300 per session (trainer, venue, refreshments, certification). Assume £2000 for annual delivery.	Community Services Manager  Chair of Services	Project delivery  Services
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10	Long term planning	To develop a range of policy documents and an overarching agreement looking to the future of Woughton and long term aspirations.	<p>a) Consider the specific issues that need significant and longer term work (e.g. traffic and parking / transport generally, refresh of the Neighbourhood Plan, Regen)</p> <p>b) Consider the issues that we may want included within any long term strategy (e.g. council development, income, environment, housing)</p> <p>c) Delegate specific areas to specific councillors / officers to compile evidence, views and plans</p> <p>d) Create the 'Woughton 2030' plan, detailing the direction of travel for the council, setting priorities and aspirations for the coming decade.</p>	Officer and member time	<p>Council Manager</p> <p>Senior Leadership Team</p>	<p>Policy and Report</p> <p>Policy and Resources</p>
11	Waste, recycling and the environment	To engage local communities, develop a robust plan and action regular and consistent approaches to maintaining and improving the parish	<p>a) Assessment of current provision, future expectations of MKC delivery and 'hotspots' for regular involvement</p> <p>b) Look at issues that fall outside current remit (e.g. painting of railings and bollards, weeding of pathways, leaf litter disposal) and consider taking on additional</p> <p>c) Engage and create estate based working groups, including</p>	Officer time.	<p>Community Services Manager</p> <p>Chair of Services</p>	<p>Assessment, report, project delivery</p> <p>Services</p>

			<p>businesses, local people, officers, councillors and others to provide regular and ongoing activity across the parish (including industrial estates)</p> <p>d) Focus on sustainable and independent groups, with support where necessary, reducing financial and officer demand</p>		
12	<p>Training and development</p>	<p>To ensure that officers and members are provided with regular, suitable opportunities for development, in line with organisational needs and identified areas of development, to build capacity and quality.</p>	<p>a) Assess current needs, based upon appraisals and 1:1 sessions</p> <p>b) Look at the future needs of WCC and prioritise areas for development</p> <p>c) Identify suitable providers to offer sessions and opportunities</p> <p>d) Build expectation into JD's, to promote access and involvement</p> <p>e) Develop annual programme of training and development opportunities</p> <p>f) Include 'soft' outcomes, alongside accredited and qualification based options.</p> <p>g) Include annual 'awaydays' for councillors, for officers and for the whole team.</p>	<p>£15,000 budget</p>	<p>Operations Manager</p> <p>Delivery</p> <p>Chair of Operations</p> <p>Operations</p>



13	Hub Improvements	<p>Improve the provision at The Hub offices, to offer suitable space, storage, equipment and environment for delivery of services, democracy and council functions</p>	<p>a) Consider investment in making the Council Chamber fit for purpose, reflecting the importance of this space (i.e. flooring, tables / chairs, integrated sound and vision, storage).</p> <p>b) Additional storage, including cycle storage, to promote healthier travel and provide additional space for storage of various equipment.</p> <p>c) Labelling of storage areas to provide oversight and overview of equipment storage</p> <p>d) Full equipment audit, including IT, with replacement programme and capitalisation agreement for future budget planning (e.g. IT equipment costed over 3/4/5 years, etc.)</p>	<p>Costs of provision of new furniture, sound and vision at around £3000. If replacing the flooring too, an additional £1000 ish.</p> <p>Other elements are cost neutral or minimal costs.</p>	<p>Operations Manager</p> <p>Chair of Policy and Resources</p>	<p>Project Delivery</p> <p>Policy and Resources</p>
14	Community Development Focus	<p>To implement a programme of Community Development, incorporating a range of approaches and activities to promote increased community ownership and involvement</p>	<p>a) Working with new Community Development and Events officer to develop a programme of events focusing on community involvement and engagement (by Mar 19)</p> <p>b) To include elements discussed within Service Planning process, such as: Community Street parties, Woughton In Bloom, Good</p>	<p>No additional costs, other than those associated with regular events.</p>	<p>Community Development Officer / Community Services Manager</p>	<p>Project development and delivery</p> <p>Services</p>



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			<p>Neighbour Project.</p> <p>c) Work with other service leads to develop approaches that include community involvement in existing services (e.g. environment champions on each estate, landscape volunteers to support planting, mentors for mental health provision, etc.)</p> <p>d) To support development of RA's, new organisations and provide ongoing support to those already delivering</p> <p>e) Specific focus needed with regard to developing better links with schools, local companies, faith groups, etc. in line with other elements of this service plan.</p> <p>f) To include an annual training and development programme covering a range of suitable elements (e.g. committee skills, event planning, understanding finance, etc)</p>		Chair of Services	
15	Events	To build upon the successful events that have been held and develop additional elements and opportunities to	a) Festival – develop robust planning processes and deliver in line with agreement and partnership with CPPC	To be confirmed and agreed within existing and planned budgets	Community Development and Events Officer /	Project delivery, events delivery, procedure and policy

16	Landscaping development	To build upon the very successful landscape provision, ensuring long term viability and sustainability with additional benefits to local people, other parishes and the city as a whole.	<p>increase engagement and meet local need</p> <p>b) Apple day – to include additional elements (e.g. conker competition) and create more options for involvement</p> <p>c) Additional event consideration, such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fireworks (cost upwards of £3000 for display, plus licences, H+S considerations, etc..)</li> <li>- Street Parties / Estate celebrations (costs can be as much or as little as there is available – from a couple of hundred per estate upwards)</li> </ul> <p>d) Better linkage with other community groups to provide a more comprehensive calendar of events, reducing duplication and offering more through collaboration.</p>		Community Services Manager	development
			<p>a) Work with parishes to develop robust plans for post devolution, identifying potential for additional work where possible</p> <p>b) Develop investment plan for equipment, based upon realistic life spans and consideration of new equipment that would increase efficiency (e.g. tractor based tools)</p>	Within existing budgets, but with an investment plan for future years	Landscape Manager Chair of Services	Project Development and Policy Proposal Chair of Services

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17	Estate 'Caretakers'	To provide one day per week on each estate of dedicated 'caretaking' staff, addressing litter picking and general tidying of estates	<p>c) Consider income generation options, such as bagging and selling of mulch, logs and similar</p> <p>d) Work with teams on item " above, to develop options for new 'depot' at Coffee Hall, reducing the costs to the service</p> <p>Having costed this, probably prohibitive – for one day per estate plus half a day per industrial estate (e.g. 8 days delivery per week), costs are around £60k per year. However, potential for work to be undertaken to use fewer financial resources and build upon existing provision to improve overall outcomes.</p>	To be confirmed once project parameters clarified.	Council Manager  Chair of Services	Project proposal and delivery  Services
18	Communications Officer	To provide a single resource for communications across the council, to include web, Gazette, press releases, branding, marketing and similar.	Potential for this to be a shared post with Campbell Park Parish Council in the longer term. Will not meet the deadline for inclusion in their budget planning for 2019/20. Given this, need to consider whether to include in the coming year.	Salary of around £25k (FTE) plus pension and on costs (so £35k FTE).  Assuming half time post, salary costs of around £17k, plus additional costs for IT, etc. of £1000 per annum, plus	Operations Manager  Chair of Operations	Post proposal and delivery  Operations

				management, etc..		
19	Communications	To improve our communications with residents and other local stakeholders, promoting our work and building better engagement.	To build upon the positive work already undertaken to increase and improve visibility of the council. Specific focus on building links with schools, faith groups, businesses, etc. in conjunction with other aspects of this service plan.	Within existing budgets	Operations Manager  Chair of Operations	Delivery  Operations
20	Policy and procedure	Building upon the work undertaken during the previous year, a review and rationalisation of all policy and procedure with access provided to all officers and members utilising the new IT system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To audit all policy and procedure in existence across the organisation</li> <li>b) To review what is needed, what is no longer applicable and what needs updating / creating</li> <li>c) To build a 'policy on policies' document that details all policies, their review cycle, lead officer and calendars ratification at committee / full council</li> <li>d) To build in accessibility to all relevant policies within the</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets	Operations Manager  Chair of Operations	Policy development  Operations

			development of the new Sharepoint IT system		
21	IT capacity and system development	To work with IT suppliers and support agencies to develop the new IT approach, including all aspects of internal systems, security and usability.	<p>a) To work with officers and members to develop our IT offer, ensuring all have access to relevant files, papers, policies and similar.</p> <p>b) To ensure compatibility across the IT system, with modern and high quality operating systems, software and security.</p> <p>c) To effectively manage any IT supplier to ensure responsive and robust responses to queries, issues and needs, as they are identified.</p> <p>d) To incorporate suitable record management system into IT offer</p>	Within agreed budget	<p>Operations Manager</p> <p>Project Delivery</p> <p>Chair of Operations</p> <p>Operations</p>
22	Community Gym	To utilise agreed grant funding for the provision of a new building and community gym to the rear of No 95.	Following the confirmation of a grant from Mick George, a plan has been created for delivery of a concrete base and 'garden room' type building, to provide a gym. This gym will be utilised by youth groups, but will also be opened to the local community at low cost. Plan includes working with local	Contribution of under £2k from WCC, to access £15k of funding in total.	<p>Youth Manager / Community Services Manager</p> <p>Project Delivery</p> <p>Chair of Services</p> <p>Services</p>



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23	Parking and Transport	To develop a comprehensive plan covering parking and transport for the parish, identifying and addressing the priority issues, focusing on safety and resident satisfaction.	Gyms to provide volunteer trainers, providing 'open' sessions (at a cost, but very low cost) and enable additional space within No95 to extend the studio, providing further potential for income generation.				
24	Community / Estate Champions	To work with local residents to provide ongoing support and training to enable them to support other residents.	a)				



# Woughton Community Council Service

25	Waste Management Strategy	To develop a comprehensive waste management strategy for the parish, focusing on reduction in fly-tipping, environmental improvements and more pleasant estates for all		
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This is Version 3 of the Service Plan.

Committees, members and officers are encouraged to contribute towards the plan, building on the priority feedback from residents and views on what the council should be doing over the coming year(s). Following this, additional items can be added, existing items can be removed / edited and then a second version will be presented to committees (Services, Policy and Resource and Operations) for further comment, prior to the final version being presented to Full Council on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019. It is anticipated that the Service Plan will, at this point, be agreed in principle, alongside the budget for the coming financial year.

Following this meeting, any final aspects will be worked on to ensure that ALL committees, officers and members have had sufficient time to input into the plan and any further work will be undertaken and then final draft presented to council on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019.



**Agenda Item: FC 72/19**

**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Full Council**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

Regeneration strategy/policy.

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

Following significant changes in Milton Keynes Councils Regeneration Policies and Structures it is considered appropriate that Woughton Community Council also revise its existing strategy on this matter which is almost two years old.

Recently Milton Keynes Council have announced that they wish to commence a big conversation with local residents in the identified regeneration area which includes four (4) of the estates in the Woughton Community Council area. In addition, RORE (Residents of Regeneration areas), who represent three (3) of the four (4) resident associations in the Woughton Community Council area are seeking empowerment for local communities in the regeneration process.

Attached is a suggested strategy/policy Woughton Community Council may wish to adopt. It is not meant to be detailed or prescriptive. That will be for local residents, but it would enable us to support and promote the interests of local residents.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

None perceived.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

The draft regeneration strategy/policy.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**That the attached draft regeneration strategy/policy be adopted.**

**AUTHOR**

Cllr Kevin Wilson - Leader of the Council

## **Woughton Community Council**

**January 2019**

### **Proposed Revised Regeneration Policy**

Estate improvement is vital to the Woughton area. Phased improvement is preferred to regeneration which can conjure up negative images and is often seen as being forced on unwilling communities.

Estate improvement must be led by and championed by local communities both at an estate level and often at a much more local level (e.g. street level), of course professional support and advocacy can greatly assist in this approach.

This approach does not mean that everyone's individual wishes can be catered for. There will be occasions when majority views will hold sway. Whenever there is a difference of opinion, where a majority view needs to be obtained this will be via a referendum, with every elector or those who would be eligible if the voting age were 16 shall be entitled to a single vote.

Woughton Community Council will support resident associations and local communities throughout the process. Woughton Community Council demands a strong say in discussions with them both.

Woughton Community Council will be active in ensuring that any improvement plans adhere to the policies in the approved Neighbourhood Plan adopted by Woughton Community Council residents. Amongst other matters this restricts building heights to three (3) storeys (and generally two (2) storeys), except in the close vicinity of local centres where four (4) storeys can be considered. It also acknowledged that there is open space that may be suitable for development but equally protects the most valuable open spaces on each estate.

As a general rule Woughton Community Council does not believe that demolition and rebuilding of existing properties is necessary or desirable and does not appear to be supported locally either. There may be the odd exception which is acceptable if this is the tested wish of local residents living in the affected street(s).

However improvements to existing social and council housing is vital. Many of the properties in the Woughton Community Council area are approaching 50 years old and often showing signs of age, and require modernisation, improvements in energy efficiency and similar. The same is true of many privately owned properties especially those now being privately let.

The resources for improvements to Council houses should come from the Councils Housing Revenue Account and other sources such as those arising from new developments. Those in private housing cannot access resources from the Housing Revenue Account.

Woughton Community Council would expect any new housing to adhere to the former Parker-Morris spatial standards.

There is a strong need locally for affordable rental housing. Council owned properties offer the best opportunity for this and Woughton Community Council would thus seek to ensure that at least 50% of all new houses be Council rented properties.

Woughton Community Council would expect to see a significant enhancement in the quality of public open space.

Woughton Community Council would expect to see significant investment in training, skills and educational opportunities as well as a real attempt to tackle issues such as mental health, disability and social isolation.

Whilst four (4) of the estates have been identified as priority regeneration estates Woughton Community Council also believes that appropriate opportunities should be taken to improve the other three (3) residential estates in the Woughton Community Council area as well.

**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To propose a new expenses and allowances policy.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the council notes the report.
2. That the council agrees to the policy, with implementation from the start of the new council year (May 2019).
3. That the council agrees that the Councillor Allowance and Expenses budget remains as agreed, but is monitored for impact of new policy for future years.

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

To address some of the concerns that have been expressed with regard to enabling the council to support all in our community who may wish to stand for election, consideration was given to updating our expenses policy to reflect the impact of public service on some.

These issues included clarity around what can and cannot be considered an 'expense', being clear about which activities should be considered part of the councillor role (and therefore attract expenses) and to build in some additional capacity around supporting those with caring responsibilities (both for children and others).

To develop this policy and with consideration of a recent recommendation that local councils consider principle authorities policies around Code of Conduct and similar, the Milton Keynes Council policy was used to inform the proposed policy for Woughton Community Council. Whilst not exact (the level of allowance is considerably lower with WCC), the principles are similar; that a councillor should not be disadvantaged financially through their role as a councillor.

The policy include provision for childcare and care for adults with specific needs, taking into consideration recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel and working within the legislative framework (Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.)

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There is a budget in place for Councillor Allowances and Expenses, which covers the costs of all allowances and the remainder is used mainly for support with broadband provision (not claimed by all). The total budget for 19/20 is £15,500.

Based upon current allowances (17 basic, plus Leaders, plus Chairs, plus Ambassadors), the cost annually is £13,200. If all councillors claim the broadband allowance, this totals £2280 – a total of £15,480. As some councillors don't claim all the allowance, there is some additional money for travel and other expenses incurred.

The new policy provides potential for childcare and dependent costs, to a maximum of £10 per hour and no more than 5 hours per day. Assuming a councillor attends full council and one committee each time (with each meeting being 3 hours, including travel time), this is a total of 12 meetings / 36 hours per year (at a cost of up to £360). In addition, councillor roadshows, training events, etc. are likely to add additional time demands (estimated at a further 14hours per year, meaning a total of £500 per year). Dependent on the number of councillors claiming this amount, this could have an impact on budgets overall, but it is likely that the total of any additional expenses will be a few thousand pounds each year.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

This does not impact upon staff, but does help us ensure that we are meeting obligations under equalities legislation for councillors.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Without consideration of these changes, there is the potential for some councillors, current and future, to be unable to fully embrace the role. To enable those with disabilities, those with caring responsibilities and children (often, but not exclusively women) to be involved means ensuring that they are able to do so. This policy aims to address some of the issues related to this.

The remains an issue with regard to compliance with regulations regarding allowances for any member other than the Chair. This issue should be considered separately.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Councillor Allowances and Expenses Policy.

**AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager

# Woughton Community Council – Councillors Allowances and Expenses Policy

## General

- This policy is made under the terms of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
- This policy takes into consideration the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel appointed by the Principle Authority (Milton Keynes Council) and further recommendations following consultation during 2018.
- Woughton Community Council currently has 19 councillors, who serve a four year term of office and, as long as they have been elected, are entitled to these allowances. Expenses are payable to ALL councillors, including those that have been co-opted.

## Basic Allowances

- All elected councillors receive a basic allowance of £624.50 per annum (as of April 2018). This is paid in two instalments and is subject to both tax and National Insurance contributions where applicable.
- If a councillor ceases to be a councillor before the end of their term of office, payment of the allowance ceases and a pro rata calculation is made to ensure the councillor receives the right amount of allowance. If necessary, an adjustment for under or overpayment may have to be made and the council reserve the right to recover any overpayment of Basic Allowance.
- A Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment of all councillors, including such inevitable parts of their time as meetings with officers and parishioners. It is also intended to cover incidental costs, such as use of their homes for council business, telephone rental and call costs.

## Special Allowances

- The council pays a specific allowance to the Chair of the Council, to reflect the additional demands and responsibilities that this office confers. This amount is double that of a councillor's basic allowance - £1249 per annum (as of April 2018).
- The council also pays an additional specific allowance to the Leader of the Council, reflecting again the additional demands and responsibilities. This is paid at the same rate as the Chair of the Council. This reflects the special nature of this council, in having a Leader (un-prescribed in legislation).
- These allowances are paid in two instalments and are subject to tax and National Insurance contributions where applicable.
- The Ambassador is allocated £50 annually towards specific expenses related to the role.
- In the event that a councillor who is receiving a specific allowance is unable to carry out the duties associated with the role for a period of three months or more, the council will consider the circumstances with the option of ceasing the specific allowance and making a retrospective payment to a deputising councillor who is stepping onto the position, continuing this payment until the original councillor is able to resume the role.

## Co-opted members of the council

- Under legislation, any member who has been co-opted onto the council is unable to be paid any allowances. They are, however, able to claim expenses, as detailed below.

## Expenses

Woughton Community Council is committed to ensuring that ALL members of our community who are eligible to stand as councillors are able to do so. If elected or co-opted onto the council, the council is also committed to support access and attendance for all. The expenses policy noted below reflects this commitment.

### Child Care and Dependents Allowance

All councillors (both elected and co-opted) can claim, on production of appropriate receipts, the Child Care and Dependent Carers Allowance at the following rates:

Child Care:

The Living Wage of £7.83 (as of April 2018) applies for all.

Other Dependents:

£10 per hour or the applicable rate for the hourly cost of Milton Keynes Council Home Help carer, whichever is the least.

This is paid for up to a maximum of 5 hours in any 24hour period and covers care provided for the members dependants whilst the councillor is carrying out and 'Approved Duties' specified in Appendix 1. This includes travel time associated with these duties.

### Travel and Subsistence

Where possible, travel and subsistence should be planned in advance and paid for via the Responsible Finance Officer. Where this isn't possible (e.g. where a private vehicle is used or a meal is bought whilst away from the offices), the following policy applies.

Councillors will be reimbursed for travel at the current rates agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for reimbursement of council officers.

Councillors will be reimbursed the full costs of travel *using the most appropriate means* at standard class, whilst carrying out approved duties. A valid receipt **MUST** be provided.

Councillors who are undertaking Approved Duties may claim for reasonable costs for meals. These are currently set at:

- Breakfast – up to £5.00 (if working away between 6am - 9am)
- Lunch – up to £8.00 (if working away between 12 noon – 2pm)
- Evening meal – up to £12 (if working away between 6pm – 10pm)

Please note that these allowance are only payable if working away throughout the duration of these hours and only if no food is provided (e.g. if on a training course that includes lunch, no additional allowance is payable).

### Information Technology and Communications

Councillors will be provided with suitable information technology equipment (e.g. laptop, tablet or similar), which will remain the property of the council and will be subject to the same restrictions as the basic allowance (i.e. is only provided whilst undertaking the role, to be returned if a suspension takes place and at the end of a councillors tenure).



Councillors are able to claim for a contribution towards the costs of broadband provision at their homes. This is intended to enable them to undertake their councillor role whilst at home and is limited to a maximum of £10 per month.

If a councillor ceases to be a councillor before the end of their term of office, payment of the broadband allowance ceases and a pro rata calculation is made to ensure the councillor receives the right amount of allowance. If necessary, an adjustment for under or overpayment may have to be made and the council reserve the right to recover any overpayment of the broadband allowance.

#### **Time scales for claiming**

All claims for any expenses and allowances must be made within three months. Any claim falling outside this timescale can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Chair of Council, Chair of Policy and Resources Committee and Responsible Finance Officer.

#### **Dual Authority Roles**

Councillors cannot receive an allowance from more than one authority (e.g. MKC) for the same duties. In the event that a parish councillor who is also a Ward Councillor is undertaking duties on behalf of both authorities, the claim should be made to Milton Keynes Council.

#### **Forgoing Allowances**

A councillor may forgo all or part of any allowance which they are entitled to, provided they have given written notice to the Committee and Member Support Officer.

#### **Suspension and Withholding Allowances**

In the event of a councillor being suspended from duty following an investigation by the Monitoring Officer, allowance will not be paid to the councillor concerned during the period of suspension. If necessary, a pro-rata payment will be made and any under or overpayment adjusted accordingly. The council reserves the right to reclaim any overpaid allowances.

**This policy will be reviewed annually and will be linked to recommendation from the Independent Review Panel and Milton Keynes Council policies.**

**Policy Approved:**

**Policy Review date:**

**Written by: Steve McNay (Council Manager), based on MKC policy.**

## Appendix 1 – Approved duties

Approved duties, for which Travel and Subsistence Allowances, Childcare and Carers Allowances are payable include:

- Full Council meetings
- Committee Meetings (where the councillor is a member of that committee)
- A meeting of an 'outside body' where the councillor has been nominated to be the councils representatives
- A meeting which has been authorised by either the Full Council or a Committee of the council and agreed within the written minutes
- Attendance at training, conferences, seminars and other councillor development activities, as agreed with Operations Committee or Full Council
- Council 'Awaydays'
- Provision of councillor surgeries, roadshows, casework or similar
- Attendance at external meetings pertinent to the councillor's role, after agreement from Council Manager, Committee and Member Support Officer, Chair of Council or Chair of Committee.
- Other duties, as agreed with the Council Manager, Committee and Member Support Officer, Chair of Council or Chair of Committee.

**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Full Council**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To inform the Committee regarding the proposed Saturday morning opening of the community space at the Coffee Hall Hub.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the Committee notes the report.
2. That Council discuss if Councillors wish to support the opening hours on a rota basis.

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

Currently the Woughton Community Council Hub is open Monday to Friday, with the Community Fridge going from strength to strength and has currently under gone a review around the opening times, and it is currently only accessible to people who work on Monday evening.

Woughton Community Council are also a click and collect outlet for clear sacks, however this service has limited accessibility should you work.

The proposal is that the Community space at the rear of the Hub opens from 10:00am-11:00am on a Saturday morning, where Residents can access the Community Fridge, collect their Clear Sacks, and giving them an opportunity to engage with an Officer and/or Councillor should they wish to. This would make Woughton Community Council more accessible to a larger number of people.

Initially this will be a trial with a review after 3 months, and the suggested start date of Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2019

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

None perceived

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

Officer time

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None perceived

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None

**AUTHOR**

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