

**Agenda item: FC 191/22**

**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**FULL COUNCIL**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To update the council on activities and delegated decisions made since the previous meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That council notes this report.**

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

This is the last Full Council meeting for this council year, with the Annual Meeting coming up next month.

Since last time, we have continued to work on the new website, to try and ensure all is in place for the new council year. To ensure that we have all that we need, I would ask that all councillors provide a very brief 'pen picture' – a few lines / paragraphs about who you are, what you have done, what you are working on. Something along the lines of:

*'Bob Carolgees has been a councillor since May 2018. He became a councillor because he wanted to help address some of the concerns around the environment, but also because he wants to celebrate the history and heritage of the parish. Bob is currently working with the Finance Committee to increase grants income, as well as supporting the residents association'.*

This can then be added to your councillor picture, attendance record and declaration of interests, in line with the transparency code.

Other things that have happened include some walkabouts around the parish with MKC officers to look at the wheelie bin rollout and challenges that might be faced, to start discussions around how any estate renewal might happen, ensuring that local voices are heard and to look at the Netherfield Trail, a new MKC / Living Archive project that celebrates the estate (we are aiming to continue this so that all parts of the parish have something similar – watch this space). Also met with councillors and MKC officers to consider possible improvements to Beanhill Local Centre – a further draft plan will be offered with consideration of parking proposals and alterations, as well as some visual and spatial improvements proposed.

I attended an online session titled - *Land Availability Assessment Draft Methodology Consultation and Call for Sites - Parish/Town Council Q&A Session*. This looked at how pieces of land may be passed to MKC to be assessed for suitability for housing

or other elements. It had limited use for Woughton, as most land is owned by MKC or Parks Trust and WCC have nothing of note.

I have met with the team exploring the possible 'app' for community support – this aims to enable people to register both a need and an offer and be linked together. An example might be that

someone needs help to manage their garden and someone else has a few spare hours each week – they can be linked together to get stuff done, creating stronger communities. This is a piece of work with the Open University – considerable work still to do, but some nice ideas started.

The Planning Training that was previously postponed took place in Chambers – despite several councillors having booked on, attendance was limited (possibly due to the rescheduling and somewhat messy booking). It was a useful session which can be used to help inform decision making and, with slides and papers available, could be shared with others if wanted.

The changes to IT systems have been more challenging than anticipated, especially with regard to the councillor tablets. Due to them being made by Huawei, android will no longer allow any updates as they allege that the company is being used by the Chinese government. Its all a bit of a mess. We will continue to work with Cloudy IT to find solutions to this – far from ideal and may mean that we need to look at alternative equipment.

More positively from an IT viewpoint is the new Asset Manager app, developed in partnership with Cloudy. This is a nice bit of software that will enable all our assets to be logged, with any warranties, pictures, paperwork, guarantees, etc. all in one place. This will be hugely useful at audit time and should ensure consistent approaches and the ability to delegate to managers.

In terms of Covid, we continue as previously. Nothing has changed specifically since last time, other than further absences / working from home, due to infections and positive tests. With rates fluctuating (at time of writing, a rate of 10 per 1000 in MK) it is unclear as to what may happen. With this in mind, we continue to deliver everything as previously, but retaining a level of sensibility – hand sanitisers, air circulation, etc. but very much closer to 'normality'. It would appear that we are now in a 'living with' situation and as such, have to work to find suitable ways of managing effectively.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None.

**AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager

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**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**FULL COUNCIL**

**Monday 11th April 2022**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To propose some changes to committee structures and consideration of Councillor roles for 2022/2023 Council Year.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That council notes the report.
2. That council considers the issues raised and feeds back any views prior to the Annual Meeting for inclusion in any formal proposal.
3. That the Annual Meeting formally makes decisions on the following:
  - a. That Operations and Resources and Finance committees are combined into one committee that meets monthly, named Operations and Resources (OaR).
  - b. That the monthly format of meetings alters to enable the new OaR committee to meet later in the month, allowing financial reporting to be more effective.
  - c. That the monthly meeting cycle is:
    - i. First Monday = Planning, Licencing and Development
    - ii. Second Monday = Full Council
    - iii. Third Monday = Operations and Resources
    - iv. Third Wednesday = Services and Communities.
4. That there are agreed 'standing items' for committees that are agreed at the first meeting of the new council year. This includes:
  - a. Planning: Neighbourhood Planning, Estate Renewal, Planning Applications, Licensing Applications, any decisions made. Further consideration to be given to the level of involvement in domestic planning applications and relevance to WCC.
  - b. Full Council: Council Managers report, TaF Strategy group feedback, existing fixed items to be reviewed (e.g. feedback from outside bodies)
  - c. Operations and Resources; finance signoffs, VAT returns, budget reviews, policy updates.
  - d. Grant applications, set service update (this could be individual services each month, or a wider 'all services' update each meeting), Service Plan achievement update.
5. That councillors are reminded of the option for them to contribute to agendas, write discussion papers and offer recommendations for agreement within the meetings.
6. That any other ideas or considerations for meeting management form part of the paper provided to the Annual Meeting, to ensure a robust and healthy meeting schedule and provision for 2022/23 Council Year.

## **MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

With the new council year starting in May, it is a relevant time to review the committee structures and processes to ensure that they are working. At the start of the 2020 /21 Council Year, we introduced

the Planning, Licensing and Development Committee and made other changes with Finance moving from a Sub Committee to a standalone and Operations taking on some of the P+R work previously managed in that committee.

On the whole, things appear to have worked okay, but there are some challenges – Finance has been cancelled on several occasions due to ‘lack of business’, where this is often due to ‘lack of business in the first week of the month’, with business then moving to Full Council (as with this meeting). And with both Finance and Operations being two monthly, this can mean the delay in getting stuff sorted is too long. Merging them and meeting monthly may help ensure things are more effective and moving to later in the month means that sign offs will have happened.

Planning has been useful but has felt a little process driven at times – we discuss applications because we can, rather than because we should. The larger developments, such as Cripps Lodge or the Redmoor warehouse are items that need to be discussed, but with the robust planning rules in place at unitary level, the Council Manager is less convinced of the need to discuss all domestic applications.

The need to refocus on a review of the Neighbourhood Plan and consider more regularly the impact of renewal are both elements that could be added as standing items.

More generally, standing agenda items can bring a level of structure that can be helpful. This, alongside the reminder / information that ALL councillors can offer papers for discussion, consider items for the agenda, request the Council Manager to prepare papers (or for the Council Manager to delegate this to other officers!) and generally be involved in the day-to-day delivery of the meetings may help reinvigorate the committees and promote greater involvement from all.

## **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

## **OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Proposed Calendar of Meetings 22-23.

## **AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager

**May-22**

Tues 3rd Annual Meetings  
 Mon 9th Full Council  
 Mon 16th Operations and Resources  
 Weds 18th Services and Communities

**Jun-22**

Mon 6th Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Mon 13th Full Council  
 Mon 20th Operations and Resources  
 Weds 22nd Services and Communities

**Jul-22**

Mon 4th Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Mon 11th Full Council  
 Mon 18th Operations and Resources  
 Weds 20th Services and Communities

**Aug-22**

NOTHING

**Sep-22**

Mon 5th Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Mon 12th Full Council  
 Mon 19th Operations and Resources  
 Weds 21st Services and Communities

**Oct-22**

Mon 3rd Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Mon 10th Full Council  
 Mon 17th Operations and Resources  
 Weds 19th Services and Communities

**Nov-22**

Mon 7th Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Mon 14th Full Council  
 Mon 21st Operations and Resources  
 Weds 23rd Services and Communities

**Dec-22**

Mon 5th Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Mon 12th Full Council  
 Mon 19th Operations and Resources  
 Weds 21st Services and Communities

**Jan-23**

Mon 9th Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Mon 16th Full Council  
 Mon 23rd Operations and Resources  
 Weds 25th Services and Communities

**Feb-23**

Mon 6th Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Mon 13th Full Council  
 Mon 20th Operations and Resources  
 Weds 22nd Services and Communities

**Mar-23**

Mon 6th Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Mon 13th Full Council  
 Mon 20th Operations and Resources  
 Weds 22nd Services and Communities

**Apr-23**

Mon 3rd Planning, Licensing and Development  
 Tues 11th Full Council  
 Mon 17th Operations and Resources  
 Weds 19th Services and Communities

**May-23**

Tues 2nd Annual Meeting

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**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**FULL COUNCIL**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To propose the creation of a 'Long Term Strategy' task and finish (TaF) group to prepare a 10-year strategic plan for WCC.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. That Council notes this report and associated papers.**
- 2. That Council agrees to the creation of a Task and Finish (TaF) group to develop a long-term strategic plan for WCC.**
- 3. That this group should report to Full Council, given the importance of this document and the implications of ratification over the coming decade.**
- 4. That this TaF should consist of no more than ten (10) councillors, with involvement from officers and external parties as and when needed.**
- 5. That membership should consist of people who are able and willing to commit to this process, meeting regularly and offering a high level, strategic overview.**
- 6. That the TaF should develop Terms of Reference at its first meeting, to be formally agreed at the meeting of Full Council in the new council year (May 2022).**
- 7. That the TaF should aim to produce a 'first draft' of the strategy by Oct 2022, with a final version to be agreed and ratified in early 2023.**
- 8. That this strategy should be the basis of the councils approach over the coming decade, focusing on long term plans and sitting alongside the 'Service Plan' which addresses immediate needs.**
- 9. That updates should be offered to Full Council on a monthly basis as a standing item over the coming year.**

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

Woughton Community Council has previously had long term plans, the most recent of which appears to have been created in 2015, to run until 2025 (it is unclear as to whether this was ever formalised or ratified). Prior to this, the 2009 plan set some ambitious aims, prior to the separation of the parish.

There was considerable work undertaken prior to the pandemic around a suitable vision, mission, set of values and ethos for the council – this included workshops, feedback sessions, awayday discussions and similar. However, with the impact of other demands, this work was not completed and hasn't been formalised or ratified.

To enable a longer-term approach, to provide a framework for the council to work within and to ensure all partners, stakeholders and residents know the direction and

approach that WCC is suggesting, a formal and detailed plan is needed. This should include the elements above (vision, mission, values and ethos) but also some long-term aspirations and objectives – we set an annual service plan that details our short term approach, but nothing that enables a long term view for larger, more complex or challenging aspects to be planned or developed.

To enable this to happen and to ensure that this strategy reflects the diverse opinions of the council, it's officers and its residents, it is suggested that a group is created with this specific remit: to develop a long term, high level, strategic plan for the coming decade.

This will be a challenging piece of work over a number of months. Whilst early work has taken place previously and can be utilised to start discussions, a commitment to looking at the parish as a whole, the council as a corporate body and thinking creatively and strategically will be important.

### **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

The group will be supported by officers for admin and technical support, alongside any other information, advice, ideas or commentary the TaF may wish to use. In addition, external expertise can be called upon, be that facilitation, training, specialist advice, design or otherwise.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

The lack of a strategy is one barrier to overcome to enable quality council accreditation to be awarded. This piece of work will support this application, as well as the other benefits noted.

This work can also help councillors and officers develop new skills, work collaboratively and develop a strategy that can make a real difference to the parish at a time where change is inevitable and challenges continue to arise.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Previous strategy documents are available and notes from previous discussions will all be provided via an online link or can be printed upon request.

### **AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager



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**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**FULL COUNCIL**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

After attending flood training with Flood Innovation Centre (FIC), I thought it prudent to do a paper as its fast approaching the time of year that we have historically experienced some of our worst floods.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- 1. Agree in principle, to have an incident reporting system.**
- 2. Take advantage of free training for incidents volunteers by FIC.**
- 3. Improve incident kits for councillors.**
- 4. Add RA's wardens to the WhatsApp.**

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

Experts are predicting 59% more rain by 2050, so localised flooding will increase. 7.4 degrees hotter in the summer and 4.4 degrees hotter in the winter.

It seems to me that we in Woughton are ahead of the game, as we have already got:

- a WhatsApp flood group
- we have a Woughton Community Council page where we can put updates on to keep residents up to date.

I know that we are looking at improving our emergency kits for Councillors, and some extra flood equipment coming from MKC, for which we have received £3000.

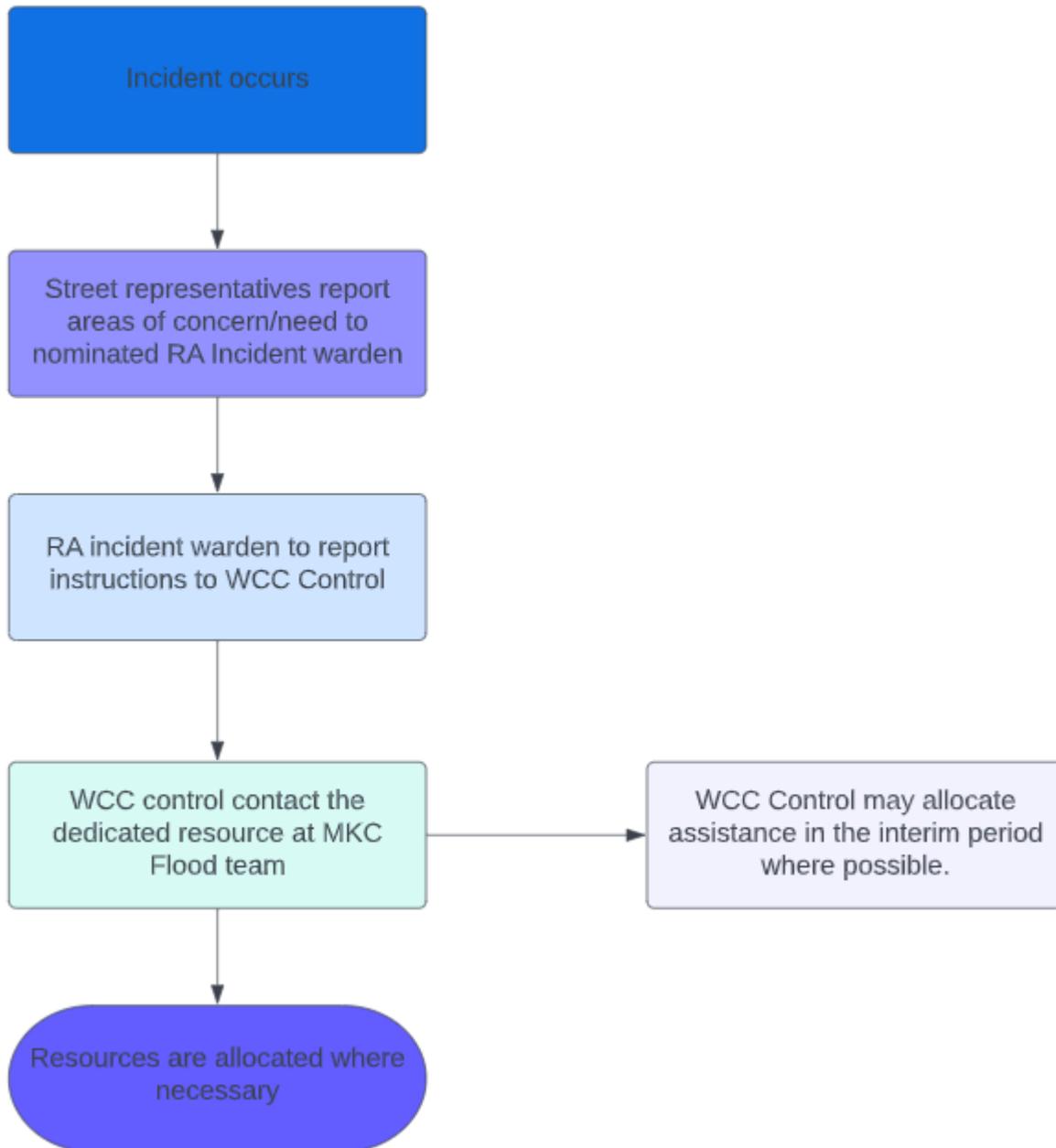
There are some improvements we can do; make flood wardens / incident wardens so that we can deal with other things (like the car incident on Beanhill, that was dealt with by volunteers and councillors exceedingly well, alongside fire rescue, police, and ambulance assistance).

If Resident Associations have 1 warden that reports to Incident Centre (IC) for WCC (at present is me) and then IC can then liaise with MKC, pump out councillors and observation vehicle (mobile councillors out looking who needs assistance).

Resident associations can have as many wardens as they need (i.e., if they have long roads may need more than 1 per street) that report to their incident warden. MK will then liaise with Police, Fire, and anyone else that is needed (sandbags etc).

Street wardens – RA's warden – WCC IC – MKC – fire etc  
Mobile Councillors -WCC IC – MKC -fire

Incident management process  
flow Woughton Parish area



MKC have been busy keeping the street gullies unblocked, which has been an improvement recently, when we have had some downpours.

FIC have lots of free training which we can take advantage of for our volunteers and Ash, Naomi, and the rest of the team at MKC are eager to assist in any way they can.

We can also encourage residents to make the own household flood plan.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None.

**AUTHOR**

Cllr Sue Smith  
Chair of Council

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**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**FULL COUNCIL**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To propose the installation of a knife amnesty bin at the Coffee Hall Hub reception, in partnership with Thames Valley Police.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. That council notes this report.**
- 2. That council agrees to the installation of a Knife Amnesty Bin at the Coffee Hall offices.**
- 3. That this is reviewed on an annual basis, in conjunction with TVP and 'renewed' each year.**

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

There has been lots of discussion over recent months about knife crime and the suggestion that knife amnesty bins would potentially be a positive step towards offering a safe solution to the disposal of bladed weapons.

Following discussions with TVP, Sgt Tom Neilson contacted the Council Manager with a proposal, based upon intelligence and statistics, that Coffee Hall would be the best place to position this. The request was that it was indoors and as accessible as possible. Given this, the suggestion is that Reception is probably the best option.

The bin dimensions are  
Height 303mm  
Width 413mm  
Depth 262mm

It looks like this\*



(\*PC Burton not included).

The knife bin would be paid for and installed by TVP and emptied as and when necessary, by TVP – the responsibility from WCC would simply be to ‘host’ the bin.

There are significant positives to this approach; a clear message that WCC is concerned about knife crime and is eager to see creative approaches to address some of these concerns, that we are eager to offer space to support TVP in providing these bins and that this is one step towards making a safer parish. There are also some potential negatives; we will, even if for the right reasons, be encouraging people to bring bladed weapons to the offices. We will potentially be highlighting the bin as an option for people to target (theft, etc.) but it is important that this has NEVER happened within the TVP area with existing bins to this point.

The current proposal is that there are two bins on offer, one in Coffee Hall and one in West Bletchley. This is due to these being ‘hotspots’ for warrants relating to associated issues – a targeted approach which, we hope, will reduce over time as these issues are addressed and managed.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

There is no direct impact on staff, other than a potential concerns about hosting the bin. Nobody has expressed any concerns.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

**AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager

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**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**FULL COUNCIL**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To update the council on the current banking facilities, and to discuss closing the Barclay's business account.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- 1. That the Committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the Committee agrees to move all of our existing direct debits over to our Metro bank account, and to close Barclay's business.**

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

We had made the decision some years ago now, to open a Metro bank business account for our banking needs. We have simultaneously kept Barclay's over which holds small amounts of money, which is transferred over throughout the year.

We currently have six (6) direct debits which are live on our Barclay's account,

- Mirus (Printer)
- Barton Petroleum (Red diesel)
- Total Energies (utilities for No 95 only)
- Southern electric (utilities for Hub only)
- Milton Keynes Council (business rates for No 95 only)
- AMS Tracking (vehicle trackers)

As we have now finally got our Finance assistant fully set up on the Metrobank account, where we now have active debit cards and our finance assistant has her own access to the online banking with Metrobank, Barclays tends to be a redundant account where we have a few direct debits sat. We would like to finalise moving these final six (6) direct debits across to Metrobank and conducting all of our future business banking through Metro.

We have four (4) accounts linked to our Metro bank business account and therefore can split money between these if necessary. Still having Barclays live, solely for the use of the direct debits means it is an additional cashbook we need to audit and reconcile without any real need for it.

I suggest that we move all of our funds over to Metro and use this as our sole business banking facility, closing Barclays for good.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None.

**AUTHOR**

Samone Winsborough  
Responsible Financial Officer

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## WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### Full Council

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee on year-end forecast for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, and to agree the January & February 2022, Bank Reconciliations, list of payments and receipts.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Committee notes the report.
2. That the Committee formally note that the precept figure for 2022-23 is £631,140.74, this is equivalent to £260.75 per Band D property.
3. That the Committee note that total CASH balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 are £272,259.32 (exclusive of funds in CCLA investment funds).
4. That the Committee note, while this is rough estimation there is a projected surplus for FY 2021/22 AGAR (exact figures to be provided after our internal audit on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022).
5. That the Committee note that while our actual reserves/BBF will be formally noted on the AGAR as c. £100,000 less than projected due to £100,000 which was moved across to the CCLA LAPF – which no longer sits as cash balance and is noted as a long-term asset instead.
6. To agree the January & February 2022, Bank Reconciliations, list of payments and receipts.

#### MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Our BBF (Balances brought forward) for 20/21 were £418,457 our BCF (Balances carried forward) for 21/22 are £444,649 (balance brought forward to FY 2022/23.)

It should be noted at the time of writing this report, March has NOT been closed on our accounting system yet and therefore this report is being produced on a **projection after review of our accounts as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.**

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

We started the last financial year (April 2021) with balance of £444,649.

Current projections show as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (*although it should be noted that March has not yet been closed on scribe and therefore these figures could potentially change.*)

- Our Vat for Q.4 is projected to be c. £5,800.
- Our cash balances are £272,259.32 (see breakdown below)
  - Barclays 1 - £13,047.67

- Barclays 2 - £22,687.37
  - Metro savings (1) - £0
  - Metro savings (2) - £632.27
  - Metro (1) - £193, 529.40
  - Metro (2) - £42,362.61
- Our funds held in CCLA Deposit fund £100,000 and LAPF £100,000 (total £200,000)

In terms of balances available at the time of writing this report, our BCF for 2021/22 is projected to be around c. £478,059.32, this will be surplus of c. £33,410.32.

We are unsure on the status of potential debtors at year end or for pre-payments and accruals which will affect the above noted figures, and therefore there will be further review due to show truly reflective outturns.

However, looking at the basic balances at my disposal at the time of writing this report I am projecting a surplus from last financial year (potentially between £20-£30,000) the exact figure will be reported alongside my AGAR after our internal audit due to be conducted on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022.

However it should be formally noted again that as £100,000 of our reserves was moved from the CCLA deposit to the LAPF this figure will *remain* at £100,000 on the AGAR until we agree for the money to be paid out – no interest is noted on the AGAR year on year, and this will affect how our reserves are accounted. LAPF £100,000 balance will move to box 9 (Fixed assets) instead of box 8 (short-term cash and investments) and therefore although we are forecast a surplus, we will look to be around the c. £378,059 mark for BCF to this year (2022/23.) rather than £478,059 (which would be the accurate figure) this is solely down to how different investments are accounted for and should be taken into account once the AGAR is received.

For auditing purposes, it should be minuted that our 3% precept increase commences from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 at the figure payable from MKC is £631,140.74.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

None Perceived.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None perceived.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

January & February 2022, Bank Reconciliations, list of payments and receipts.

**AUTHOR**

Samone Winsborough  
RFO