

Agenda item: FC 128/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th November 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

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

RECOMMENDATION:

That council notes the report and asks any questions relating to content.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Since the last meeting, the WCC RFO and Ops Manager has been off work and will not return now until the end of maternity leave – estimated to be November 2023. This means that significant additional work is being covered. A significant thank you is due to the Accounts Assistant for stepping up with the finances, L+E Manager for the buildings and maintenance, as well as other officers who are covering bits and bobs.

Meetings and Activities

It has been another busy period, with launches, partnerships, events and meetings all over the place. October saw:

- the launch of the 'MK Communities' app, which aims to bring people in Woughton together to solve small problems (e.g. someone needs a hand with their garden, someone else has an hour to spare – link together, everyone benefits). This is a partnership with the Open University and has the potential to create something really helpful.
- An online meeting to look at the Cycling and Walking Infrastructure proposals – there are two that relate to Woughton (one next to Tinkers Bridge on Groveway and Peartree Lane between CH/ LH, running down to Peartree Bridge through Eaglestone) and feedback has been submitted.
- Interviews for the RFO / Ops position – this was successful insofar as there was an applicant that was suitable. However, given the current fiscal challenges (and at that point, there was a lack of clarity around several issues), no appointment has been made.
- I attended an event at MK Central Library which was around building an archive for the new city. This links to ensuring that the history and heritage of the city is preserved and some of the work being undertaken within the parish around celebrating and recognising the importance of Woughton and its estates. Some useful contacts and refreshing to hear from overseas visitors the value they place on the design and history of our estates.

- I also attended a webinar about how WCC can support employees during the cost of living – again, refreshing to hear that the steps we have taken were the ones suggested
- We welcomed the Young Planners to Chambers where we talked about the Neighbourhood Plan. This was part of a conference which was sponsored by Neil Homer, who supported WCC with their Neighbourhood Plan.
- The additional planning meeting took place to explore the application for Holmfield Close – this was held due to the timing of the application falling between meetings. This was attended by residents of Tinkers Bridge and has had 170 views since – clearly an application that has caused strong feelings. A submission was made objecting to the application.
- I attended the BMKALC Conference, which was focused on climate change and the actions that local councils can take to reduce impact. Some interesting stuff and thanks to the organisers for donating left over buffet for the fridge / café.
- The same day, there was a Health and Wellbeing day at the Hub. Limited reach, but some useful interactions and potential to build upon this for future events.
- This was followed that week with a Halloween Takeover in the café, where a local chef provided pumpkin based foods. Some new people visited and feedback (!) about the food was mostly good, despite some early grumbling. Pumpkin alternatives were available.
- A stakeholder engagement event was held in Chambers to introduce some researchers from a variety of universities who are going to be doing some work on Parish to assess young people's experiences of growing up – this is linked to work in Huddersfield and rural Lincolnshire so comparisons can be made. Interesting start and interesting to see what this research shows.
- A meeting with two representatives from Wolverton Community Energy took place that sits alongside some of the work that is being done around 'decarbonising' the MKCC housing on Netherfield. They have some funding to look at private housing to support similar aims, with a potential focus on Tinkers Bridge. A useful meeting where ideas were exchanged, some mutual contacts shared and the potential for some helpful work to be done. A joined up approach with the MKCC work would be helpful – I will update as and when I hear more.
- I have also met with Kat Newman from the YMCA (see attached paper), MKCC Landscaping held a meeting for devolved parishes (this will become a regular thing) which I also attended and have also met with Paul Harrison to clarify some issues around parking on parish.

There has also been an update to the Sharepoint system, which has caused some difficulties, but these appear to be reducing and resolved. We have some training planned for later this month.

All staff should now have been trained in First Aid, ensuring compliance, alongside most of the checks on our buildings that have been outstanding (asbestos, electrical installations, gas checks, etc). These are really positive steps which I hope will be added to with some additional 'lone worker' protections which will be discussed at Operations.

Budget planning has been a significant part of the last few weeks and this is likely to continue – as stated in the budget paper, a longer term approach is going to be key to managing over what looks like may be a further period of ‘austerity’ (awaiting the news from the new chancellor).

This feels like a challenging time, but as you can see from some of the other papers, some real positives too.

Devolved decisions

Mostly around urgent repairs needed – toilets at No 95 need resealing underneath the floor (leaking quite badly), the two hot water boilers at the Hub have both stopped working, the boiler at NFMP is on the fritz and, as a separate paper details, the cost of fixed electrical installation testing is significant (this should happen every 5 years). Where possible, these costs come to committee / council for agreement, but where urgent, delegated powers allow up to £2k.

Toilets are around £1k – this has been agreed due to urgency and need to prevent further damage.

Boilers are £800ish each, plus fitting.

New boiler at NFMP (if needed – unclear at time of writing) will be £2.5kish (this will need agreement from Chair – I will update at the meeting if necessary).

Food and equipment for Remembrance will be around £500 but fits within the ‘Events’ budget.

All in all, not too much but there is quite a lot that will need to be completed to ensure that we are compliant, remain compliant and meet expectations around standard and quality.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 129/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th November 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To provide an update on the proposed budget and precept setting for 2023/24.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council notes this update.**
- 2. That council considers the impact of this update on overall budget, deficit, and potential impact on precept need.**
- 3. That council continues to consider budget in conjunction with any service planning or additional delivery that may be wanted during the 2023/24 financial year.**
- 4. That council acknowledges the current gaps in knowledge regarding key elements of this budget and revisits once further clarification is gained.**
- 5. That further consideration is made at the December meeting, with a view to having a final decision at the January Full Council meeting, to enable a precept request to be made.**
- 6. That alongside the budget setting for 2023/24, an update is made to the 3 and 5 year budget projections to include any updated information around external funding.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Since the last discussion, some clarifications have been made that may help council in consideration of and decisions relating to the budget for the next financial year (April 2023 – March 2024). Whilst there remain gaps in knowledge (see below), this information helps clarify likely income levels.

The council tax base for 2023/24 has now been decided and sits at £2514.29. This is an increase from last year and reflects the views from MKCC around collection levels, reduction / discount levels, impact of LCTRS and any housing growth. This base level is used to define the level of precept income likely, and, with this increase, precept income would rise next year (an increase of around £25,000).

In addition to this increase, a decision has been made that LCTRS (Local Council Tax Revenue Support) will remain at the same level. This grant is made to try and mitigate against the loss of revenue from households who pay reduced rates, have council tax discounts or other reductions in what would usually be paid. This is good news for the coming year, but will be reduced or removed in future years.

There remain considerable questions around other sources of income, specifically the contractual amount that is paid for the Landscaping service. WCC has been told

that the 'uplift' that applies to the current year (from April 2022) will be agreed and paid in January, backdated to April 2022. There will then also be a request for WCC to extend the current contract for a six (6) month period until September 2023, where the new 5 year (with potential additional 5 years) contract will start. WCC has

also been told that they will received an 'indicative' budget for this new contract prior to the end of 2022, so this *should* be able to be included in any budget planning.

The budget sheet provided for the purposes of this paper includes the two agreed amounts above and an increase in Landscaping budget that reflects the inflation rates in April 2022 – this stood at 9.0% (Consumer Prices Index rate) and 11.1% (Retail Price Index rate) so have increased this years income accordingly, with a further 5% increase from April 2023 IF council continues with the contract. This will then be further clarified once the figures for the new contract are agreed from Sept 2023.

Some changes to spending have also been made (highlighted in red) to reduce expenditure where possible. These include reductions in events spending, gazettes and uniforms, as well as some service budgets. Further savings could be made through reductions in key areas such as Service Plan (currently £20k), emerging priorities (currently £10k) and staffing contingency (currently £25k) – any reductions in these areas would have an impact on service delivery.

As can be seen, with this new information, combined with the unknown amounts being included with some logical assumptions, the budget for 2023/24 remains in deficit by around £35k. To deliver a 'balanced' budget (i.e. no deficit and no surplus), this £35,000 will need to be found, either through savings or through income increases.

Each 1% of precept increase equates to around £6,500 of additional income – a 5% increase would be sufficient to 'break even'. This is half the current inflation level and is less than the increase in the wage bill that was agreed by the Joint National Councils (the 'green book') for the current year. This would not enable any increase to our reserves, cover the deficit expected this year (due to TB roof, IT, wage increases and staffing cover costs) or build any resilience in for the coming years, where income will reduce.

The Council Manager has requested a breakdown of the current parish payments at each housing band but has used previous years figures for the following calculations. Each 1% of precept increase equates to around £1.20 per year / 10 pence per month for local council taxpayers – a 5% increase would mean around 50p a month additional payment for a Band A or B property (the vast majority of properties in the parish), with slightly more for higher bands.

It is important that this increase would only apply to the small part of the council tax bill that relates to the parish costs – the remainder of the bill is MKCC, Thames Valley Police, Bucks Fire and the social care precept element. Any further increases would be in the hands of the other authorities.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

For the year coming, staffing can be maintained at current levels. At the present time, other than the additional capacity offered by the increased role of the Accounts Assistant, no further 'back filling' for the RFO / Ops role has taken place. This helps ensure budgetary balance, but places additional demands on other officers. It is recommended that a decision regarding any cover during the 2023 be made once the further clarifications are made around both the current and coming financial years.

Further changes may be needed over the coming years in terms of roles, with greater flexibility across the workforce and an ability to cover where necessary, when necessary, depending on the needs of the council (i.e. a multi-skilled workforce that can cover across departments). This is already very much evident a lot of the time, with cover offered on an ad hoc basis.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

The budget setting process takes place every year and includes a 3-year projection. It is recommended that this is increased to include a 5 year projection too, especially with the significant changes that are likely over the coming years. These changes include the very likely loss of the LCTRS grant, potentially a new landscape contract, the ongoing impact of the 'cost of living' crisis and inflationary pressures as well as the unknown stuff that comes along regularly. This will be helped by the in depth look at the services that are provided by the council and a clear view on what the priorities are (also considering the feedback from the surveys).

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Budget for FC Nov 2022.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 130/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th November 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update council on Survey Feedback for consideration when doing service and budget planning.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council notes the report and feedback offered.**
- 2. That council considers this feedback when planning focus for both the coming winter and the coming year, both in terms of service provision and budgets.**
- 3. That council considers a return to a more general priorities survey from March 2023, running through until September 2023, to gain a fuller picture of priorities for residents.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The annual 'priorities survey' was, this year, agreed to be focused on the Cost of Living crisis, with questions focused on trying to gain an idea of what residents feel the council should prioritise over the coming winter. Whilst there has been some feedback that sits outside this, the majority has been in response to questions posed specifically around cost of living and as such, using this feedback for more general service and budget planning may be difficult. However, the feedback is excellent in terms of planning for any support over the coming months – this links nicely to another paper about 'winter programme' that is also being discussed within this meeting.

Feedback at date of writing this paper included a total of 126 responses which were fairly representative of the seen estates of the parish. Respondents stated that the estate they lived on was:

▼ Peartree Bridge	13.49%	17
▼ Leadenhall	5.56%	7
▼ Eaglestone	11.11%	14
▼ Coffee Hall	14.29%	18
▼ Beanhill	20.63%	26
▼ Netherfield	28.57%	36
▼ Tinkers Bridge	6.35%	8
▼ Redmoor	0.00%	0
▼ Bleak Hall	0.00%	0
TOTAL		126

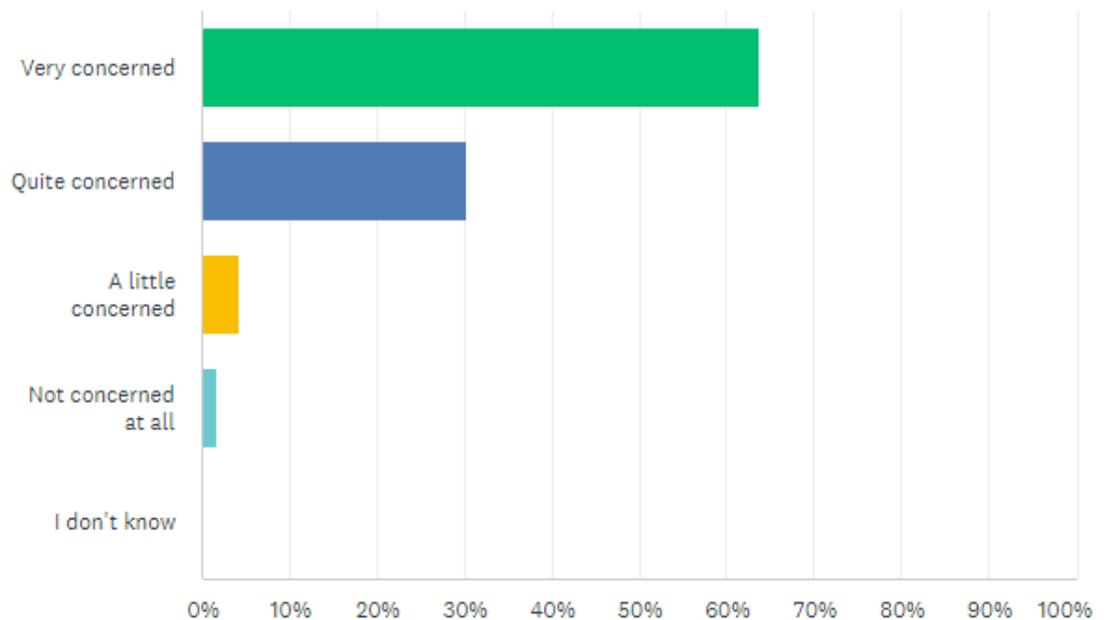
The respondents were split in terms of their employment status too.

▼ Working full-time (inside or outside the home)	22.58%	28
▼ Working part-time	19.35%	24
▼ Unemployed	33.06%	41
▼ Student/in education	1.61%	2
▼ Retired	23.39%	29
TOTAL		124

Almost everyone considered the cost of living situation cause for concern:

How concerned are you about the current cost of living crisis?

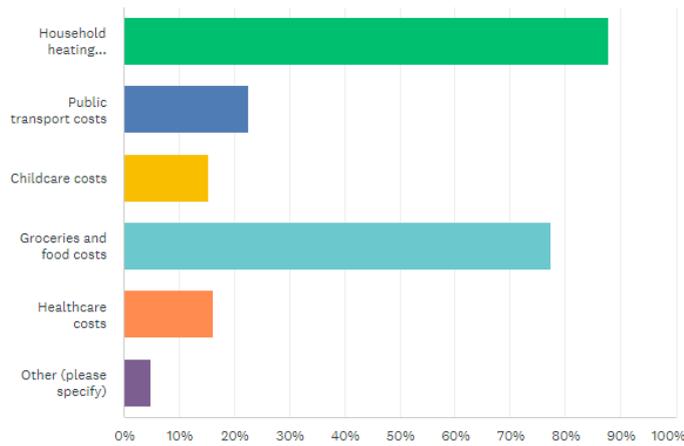
Answered: 116 Skipped: 10



The biggest concerns were unsurprising, with food and utilities the biggest concerns:

Which (if any) rises in the cost of living are causing you the most concern/negative impact? Please tick all that apply

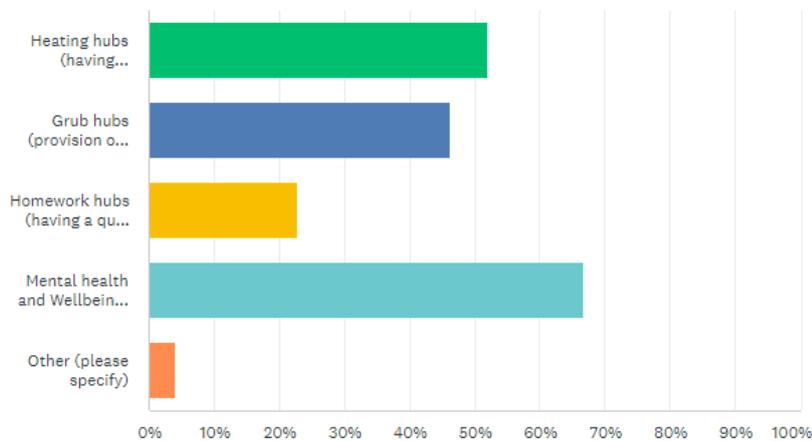
Answered: 124 Skipped: 2



One of the more surprising results was the things that people want to see WCC provide, with mental health and wellbeing support the biggest one, but closely followed by the heating and grub hubs.

Which areas do you feel you will need the most support with over the coming year? (please only select a maximum of 3)

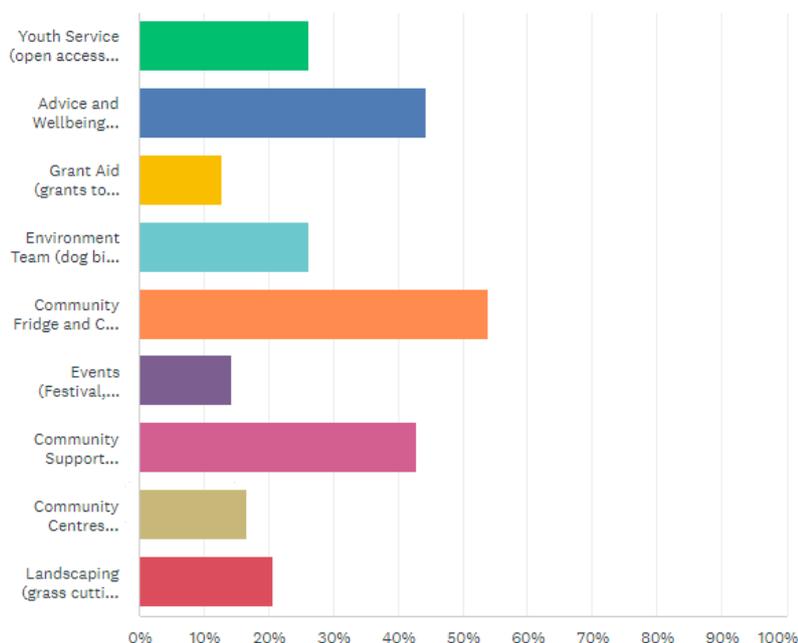
Answered: 123 Skipped: 3



One area that will contribute to the longer-term planning is the question around which services are most important. It is noticeable that this year, with the question specific to the cost of living issue, that the priorities have changed; community food remains top (in part due to the number of responses from people attending those sessions), with advice, community support coming out on top, with youth, environment and landscaping also valued. Grants, events and community centres finished towards the bottom. It should be noted that people could choose up to three on this question.

Please tick the THREE most important services that you feel would be most useful to the wider community based on the cost of living crisis occurring at this time.

Answered: 126 Skipped: 0



Alongside these statistical responses, there were also a number of written comments, varying from very positive to very condemning. There were also comments about what might help that fall way outside the remit of WCC – levels of benefits, council tax funding policies, housing repairs and improvements and fining people for dropping litter are all areas that council may wish to comment on but have no power to change.

Positive comments included many people commending the fridge and café, suggestions that could extend the hours to enable more people to access and the idea that provision of heating and food ‘hubs’ could be hugely beneficial.

Negative comments included a view that all this was pointless, that WCC is a ‘thieving lot’ who steal the food from people’s mouths whilst feathering our nests and topping up our pension pots and a recommendation that we should freeze the parish precept. One comment also suggested that we only focus on youths and ignore pensioners.

This feedback, whilst limited, suggests that ensuring that there is access to mental health support, warm spaces and food for those that need it would be welcomed. In terms of longer term, the services that are provided are seen as valuable in terms of the cost of living stuff, but some were valued more highly than others (grants, community centres and events came lowest but may reflect the impact on cost of living, rather than wider value).

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Given the focus on cost of living with this survey, it is recommended that during 2023, a fuller, more in depth survey is undertaken to try and gather views on long term views for the parish. This could take a similar approach to the current survey, but with a more general tone to questions and a request for contact details for follow up questions for those that are happy to do so. This would and could help focus the work around long term service planning and budgeting.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Cost of Living letter to all Parish & Town Councils.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

November 2022

Dear Clerks and Councillors

Cost of Living – funding for Parishes

As part of the Council's Cost of Living Winter Plan, which was approved by Cabinet on 1 November, £180,000 has been allocated for Parish and Town Councils to help you open 'warm places' and run pop up cafes and other informal social activities where people can meet up, as well as to be warm and enjoy a hot meal. We appreciate that many Parish and Town Councils are already organising support and this funding can be used to extend initiatives so that more people can benefit.

The funding has been allocated on a one-off basis so this will need to be a consideration when putting arrangements in place.

The funding has been allocated based on current deprivation indices and parishes have been grouped (see table over). Group 1 has 10 parishes which have areas within them that are the most deprived according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) sharing £120,000, Group 2 has 10 parishes which have areas in them which are the next most deprived according to the IMD sharing 40,000 and Group 3 has the remaining 28 parishes that may wish to draw from the remaining £15,000. Full details of the allocations are shown overleaf.

If you would like to access the funding, please contact kay.pettit@milton-keynes.gov.uk to confirm as soon as possible. A grant agreement will be drawn up setting out the terms of the funding. We may ask for periodic updates on spend so that we can summarise for the Council how the money has been used. We are also keen to hear about the initiatives you are working on so that we can signpost them through Council communications channels for the benefit of local people.

If you have any queries about the funding, please do feel free to get in touch with Kay Pettit.

Kind regards,

Sarah Gonsalves

Director of Communities and Customer Services

		Allocated funding
<p>Group 1 The 10 parishes which have areas within them that are the most deprived according to the IMD</p> <p>Total Allocation £120,000</p>	<p>Bletchley and Fenny Stratford TC Bradwell PC Campbell Park PC Great Linford PC New Bradwell PC Stantonbury PC Stony Stratford TC West Bletchley Council Wolverton and Greenleys TC Woughton CC</p>	<p>£12,000 each</p>
<p>Group 2 The 10 parishes which have areas in them which are the next most deprived according to the IMD</p> <p>Total Allocation £40,000</p>	<p>Abbey Hill PC Broughton & MK Village PC Central Milton Keynes TC Loughton and Great Holm PC Newport Pagnell TC Shenley Brook End & Tattenhoe PC Shenley Church End TC Simpson & Ashland PC Walton CC Wavendon PC</p>	<p>£4,000 each</p>
<p>Group 3 The remaining 28 parishes</p> <p>Total allocation £15,000</p>	<p>All other parishes</p>	<p>Circa £500 each</p>

Agenda item: FC 31/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th November 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the council on land transfers, planning applications and progress.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council notes the report.**
- 2. That the council manager continues to encourage legal teams, planners, and others to progress these applications.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

There are currently two different issues that are sitting with legal, planning or otherwise:

- The Community Garden. This has been fully transferred and a planning application has been submitted. This is currently in the consultation period, and we hope will be clarified within a month or so. Once agreed, funding bids can be submitted for the next stages.
- The Depot. Papers have been signed, transfer should have happened and planning about to be submitted. In the meantime, preparations are in hand for delivery of necessary buildings / containers / etc.

Both these issues have taken a significantly longer time to progress than anticipated. These delays have primarily been around delays between legal teams (MKCC and WCC's), but have also been, in part, linked to clarifications needed around the purpose and layout of the two sites.

The Council Manager will continue to encourage swifter resolution for these and will continue to work with key officers within both WCC and MKCC to address any barriers.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Further delays are likely to impact on funding bids – we have a significant amount of potential income tied up in applications relating to these two sites and the delays experienced continue to place these at risk.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 32/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th November 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To propose support *in principle* of a development on Leadenhall from MK YMCA, to develop a youth hub and supported housing scheme.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council notes this report and the attached proposal from MK YMCA.
2. That council considers whether this project is one which brings additional benefit to the parish.
3. That council considers whether this project complies with the Neighbourhood Plan.
4. That council considers whether this project is one which can be given *in principle* support, with the understanding that any decision would ultimately be based on a formal planning application.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

There is a piece of land on Leadenhall that has been owned by the MK Community Foundation for many years, as part of their 'land for charitable use' scheme. The Council Manager, alongside some of the WCC Councillors, have been approached by a representative of the YMCA who would like to develop this land. This land is next to MK College / the Leisure Centre.



The proposal is that the land is used to provide supported housing for young (18 – 35 year olds) who have previously lived at the YMCA – move on accommodation. The development will include a ‘youth hub’ – a largish space on the ground floor that would be a space for youth activities and, potentially, community use.

The YMCA have stated that currently, 6% of residents at the YMCA are from the Woughton parish, suggesting that this is a high level. Whilst it is unclear as to whether this is the case (Woughton accounts for around 6% of the population of the city as a whole), there was also assurances that this project was one of several in the pipeline and that this specific building would prioritise Woughton residents.

The proposal doesn’t include any parking which may be a cause for concern, but as with any development of housing within the city, the Parking Standards SPD would be enforced – this would need to be addressed prior to any application.

This project would bring much needed single person housing to the parish, utilising a piece of land that has been unused for many years. Depending on the final proposal, there would also be the potential for a community space to be included.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

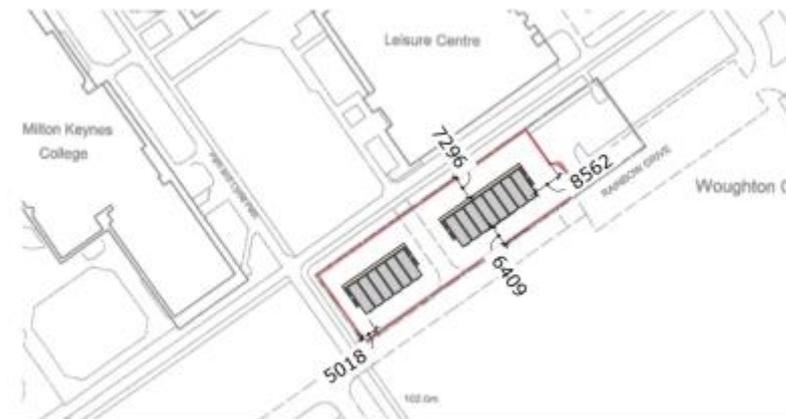
WCC Request for Leadenhall Site Proposal Support in Principle.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

YMCA Milton Keynes: Support in Principle Request for Leadenhall Site

YMCA Milton Keynes would like to request Woughton Community Council's (WCC) support in principle to develop on the Milton Keynes Community Foundation (MKCF) site adjacent to Woughton Leisure Centre in Leadenhall.



About YMCA Milton Keynes

YMCA Milton Keynes opened our doors in 1981 and have supported more than 10,000 people aged 18-35 through emergency accommodation and supported housing. We provide supported housing dedicated to young adults in Milton Keynes. In 2020, we moved into our new state-of-the-art campus. It provides a home for up to 242 young adults across three stages of accommodation. Our social enterprises – such as our café, HomeGround – offer work experience, training and employment opportunities for our residents and a revenue stream for us.

About the Development

YMCA Milton Keynes has an opportunity to bid for just over £1 million from the Youth Investment Fund to build a Youth Centre on Leadenhall. WCC shared that Leadenhall residents feel they have a lack of facilities available on their estate. We would therefore like the development to provide a community asset, available to all, focused on educating young people with the soft skills they need, the 'hidden curriculum', that will enable them to belong, contribute and thrive. We are requesting that WCC works with YMCA Milton Keynes, to bring this project to fruition on the Leadenhall site.

In addition to a Youth Centre, we will also build 22 self-contained flats for young people aged 18-35 moving on from YMCA. This would provide ideal move-on opportunities from our main campus in Central Milton Keynes, prioritised for the 6% of residents who come from this Parish. These would be let at an affordable rate, providing a viable move on option for those ready to leave our main campus. This would also provide a sustainable stream of income for the youth centre, ensuring its sustainability long term.

About the Youth Investment Fund (YIF)

This statutory fund aims to deliver grants for up to 300 facilities that:

- represent positive value for money,
- are environmentally sustainable,

- and enable positive activities for young people aged 11 to 18 (up to 25 for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

The Woughton and Fishermead Ward has been identified as an area eligible for this funding as it is an area of high deprivation. £50m of a £368m pot has already been allocated, meaning it is very fast moving. We have submitted an EOI and had an initial meeting, all of which has been positively received.

About the Project

This project will expand upon our successful Navigator project, based within MK University Hospital, working with young people aged 11-25 at risk of becoming involved in knife crime and violence.

This Centre would enable us to significantly expand youth provision in Milton Keynes by providing a base for targeted youth work, co-designed with young people from the local community including outreach work, tailored activities, volunteering, and social action projects. We would also create opportunities for young people to lead & make decisions via youth participation projects, building their life skills and getting young people 'work ready'.

If successful, the funding awarded from YIF would pay for the ground floor development, used solely for youth work. We will source funding from Homes England to pay for accommodation for the second floor and a second block, which will provide affordable homes for young people.

In keeping with the Woughton Community Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2031, the development will provide a new community facility to serve Leadenhall alongside housing, include an education & leisure facility and will be no more than two stories in height.

Our Request

YMCA Milton Keynes' expertise and experience in both youth work and capital development projects means we are best placed to deliver this project, and to enable us to gain both the funding needed and to secure the land, we'd like to ask WCC to support our planned development in principle.

We will continue to work closely with WCC, and the wider Woughton community, as the development progresses.

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th November 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update Council on 'Winter Programme' funding and propose delivery for December 2022 – March 2023.

RECOMMENDATION:

That council notes this report

- 1. That council considers the priorities for the winter programme**
 - 1. 'Warm Rooms' – where, with what focus, etc?**
 - 2. Food provision – included within above, or in other ways?**
 - 3. Wellbeing support – should we extend this and if so, how?**
 - 4. Homework hubs – build into the above**
- 2. That council considers any specific approaches that they feel may be helpful**
 - a. Specific activities (e.g. film nights, game nights, etc.)**
 - b. Target groups (families, older people, etc.)**
 - c. Other things**
- 3. That council agrees to a plan being in place for 1st December 2023, for delivery until the end of the financial year (31st March 2023), with potential to extend if further funding is agreed. MAIN ISSUES AND**

CONSIDERATIONS:

Winter Programme and Warm Spaces – how Woughton might respond

WCC has access to a variety of spaces, many of which would work very well as the proposed 'warm spaces' that have been discussed at both WCC and MKCC. It is the understanding of the Council Manager that there will be funding allocated from MKCC to 'local' councils to help support the delivery of these projects – decisions around what WCC is able to provide will depend on the length and level of this funding, whilst there is an acceptance that some level of support can and is being provided within existing budgets.

The programme aims to address the 'cost of living' issues – this might include some of the elements that have been previously discussed and considered (e.g. within the survey, which includes warm spaces, 'grub hubs', homework clubs and wellbeing support), but it is understood that there is some flexibility in how this project may be delivered.

What is a 'warm room'

Warm rooms are a relatively new concept that have arisen in response to the 'cost of living crisis', specifically the initial increase in energy costs that threatened to tip hundreds of thousands more people into fuel poverty. There remains a serious concern that for many, despite the increase being reduced due to government

intervention, that the possible doubling of energy costs will, nevertheless, push many into a 'heat or eat' scenario.

Warm rooms are essentially as they sound – spaces that people can come and keep warm. For many, places such as libraries have acted as warm rooms for many years, often providing other essential elements, such as social contacts and access to the internet. The current warm rooms schemes include a variety of options that sit alongside the underpinning warmth; activities, food, social contact and wider advice and support options.

The WCC offer might include a range of options, depending on the wishes of residents.

Current offer

There are already several projects and sessions that take place that contribute to the 'warm room' agenda – community cafes, youth service activities, 'Games Night', other events that are planned – these all offer an opportunity for residents to come to WCC venues with activities and, in most cases food, provided in a safe and warm space.

1. Tuesday – 11 – 2. Community Café at CHMP
2. Wednesday – 10 – 12. Larder / Café at CHMP
3. Wednesday – 3.30 – 6.00. Community Café at EAC*
4. Wednesday – 6 – 8. Games Night at CHMP (every two weeks)
5. Thursday – 11 – 2. Community Café at CHMP

Youth services

6. Monday evenings – Netherfield Youth Clubs
7. Tuesday evenings – Coffee Hall Youth Club
8. Wednesday evenings – Tinkers Bridge Youth Club
9. Thursday evenings – Eaglestone Youth Club

There are other sessions that run for a variety of reasons that can contribute to the overall approach – community cinema nights, Open Mics, various youth sessions – even council meetings offer access to warm spaces. However, a more planned approach, looking at sessions that offer the best value, best access, greatest reach and meet the needs of Woughton residents.

Potential options

As noted above, WCC has 6 spaces that could be used to support the Warm Rooms initiative:

10. Coffee Hall Meeting Place
11. Netherfield Meeting Place
12. Tinkers Bridge Meeting Place
13. Eaglestone Activity Centre
14. No 95 Jonathans
15. Chambers in the Hub

These spaces are all 'rentable spaces' within the overall WCC policy and, within reason, could be 'rented' as part of the project.

One decision that will have to be taken is whether existing bookings should be prioritised over the warm rooms project – for some of our centres, bookings take up space, potentially at the times that they may be most needed (e.g. weekends, evenings).

Despite these restrictions, there is sufficient space for there to be one or more spaces across the parish most evenings and through some of the weekend (depending on bookings).

Added value

Simply opening a building and welcoming people is helpful, but limited and unlikely to result in any added value. Given the nature of WCC, the existing approaches and services and the needs, wishes and views of our residents, we should approach this with a more inclusive and innovative take. This might include replicating some of the previous events and activities, but also new ideas being included. Previous events that could relatively easily be replicated include:

16. Games Night (currently running at Coffee Hall)
17. Film Night (one event held previously – can be done but needs timing, film choice, etc.)
18. Open Mic entertainment (well attended previously and can be quite fun)

Much of the decision will be based on the perceived 'customer base' – if this is aimed at older people, requests for bingo and dancing have been previously submitted. Younger people may prefer a more relaxed and flexible approach – some music or 'ambience', with space to surf the internet. (This may, of course, be the opposite with young people fully embracing the joys of bingo and older people wanting to sit quietly with an online tablet – a flexible approach is essential).

Ideas that have also been considered include:

19. Specific music nights (e.g. jazz, garage, D+B, swing, Motown, etc.) where there is a soundtrack, but people can simply hang out
20. Having the telly on – nothing more, nothing less.
21. Food / snacks / hot drinks / etc – this could be whatever there is, or something more planned (e.g. hot chocolate night, toasties, specific geographic focus, etc.)
22. Book group – just a general approach where a book is chosen and then discussed

Depending on the building, there are also other activities that could happen – some buildings have more than one room (e.g. EAC) so could have a diversity of options and, with the indoor courts, sports is more possible there too. CHMP has the wellbeing room, which would be a quiet space whilst noisier activities could take place in the main hall. TBMP has the potential for outdoor activities, such as a BBQ, with the enclosed courtyard. There are a range of options to consider.

Costs

As with any new initiative, there are costs to consider. Whilst buildings themselves could be considered 'cost neutral' (i.e. we own them, so no rental costs), each session will cost the council additional money in terms of energy usage, wear and tear, etc. When equipment, any refreshments, opening / closing, staffing, etc. are all considered too, the costs can increase rapidly. In the event that funding is being used, a 'full cost recovery' model will be the basis for budgeting, ensuring all relevant expenditure is covered.

Example Costing

To deliver a 3 hour session at Netherfield Meeting Place, weekday evening, with basic food for 30 people, activities (games) and music.

Building rental	4 hours @ £15 per hour (incl set up / clear up)	£60
Staffing costs	2 officers @ £30 per hour for 4 hours	£120
	Volunteers to support – back up may be needed	
Food stuffs	Approx. £2.50 per person @ 30 people	£75
Equipment, etc	Already in place, but contribution expected	£10
TOTAL		£245.00
	Council may also consider an 'overhead' reasonable @ 15%	£36.75
	FULL COST RECOVERY AMOUNT	£301.75

These costs are indicative, rather than fixed and there is the potential for considerable savings, dependent on what is wanted. Using food from the Community Fridge, offering cheaper meal options, using a 'volunteer only' approach (councillors, volunteers and only opening / closing needed from officers, or, in some situations, no officer involvement at all) and removing the rental costs mean that this could be provided at almost zero cost.

Example costing

Building rental	Donated by WCC towards the project	£0
Staffing costs	Volunteers only	£0
	Caretaker cover only	£15
Food stuffs	Use of stuff from the fridge and basic 'top up'	£15
Equipment, etc	Already in place, but contribution expected	£10
TOTAL		£25 / £40

Dependent on the approach wanted, other costs would need to be considered:

23. Film night means licensing, unless very specific films are shown. This cost can be hundreds per viewing
24. Any TV would need to be checked for licensing issues – whilst we do have a TV licence in place, we need to check it covers this type of event. Online streaming services would be an alternative (e.g. Amazon Prime).
25. Equipment, resources, etc for any specific activities – crafts, arts, books, etc
26. Food stuff. Whilst some can come via the fridge and donations, a level of 'top up' is likely to be needed to fully deliver

Costs of existing provision

CH Community Café – Tuesday / Thursday – cost per session

Officer cover – 9.30am – 2.30pm (5 hours @ £15 p/h)	£75.00
Building costs @ 5 hours (charity rate)	£75.00
Volunteer costs (2 volunteers @5 hours = 10hours)	£30.00
Food ‘top up’ costs	£20.00
TOTAL	£200.00

CH Community Café – Wednesday – cost per session

Officer cover – 9.30 – 12.30 (3 hours @ £15 p/h)	£45.00
Building costs @ 3 hours (charity rate)	£45.00
Volunteer costs (1 volunteer @ 3 hours)	£9.00
Food ‘top up’ costs	£20.00
TOTAL	£119.00

EAC Community Café – Wednesday – cost per session

Building costs – @ 4 hours (charity rate)	£60.00
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TBMP Community Café – Saturday – cost per session

Building costs - @ 5 hours (charity rate)	£75.00
Games Night	
Building costs – @ 3 hours (charity rate)	£45.00
Volunteer costs (2 volunteers @ 3 hours = 6 hours)	£18.00
Equipment costs (cost / 26 weeks)	£4.00
Food / refreshments	£20.00
TOTAL	£87.00

Proposals

Part of the consideration regarding any additional provision is that of sufficient staffing cover. Whilst use of volunteers can increase reach, ensuring that there is suitable support and cover at each session is likely to be key. We have the potential with additional funding to look at how best to manage this: employing an additional coordinator, increasing hours for existing officers, employing volunteers who are felt capable are all options. This would need to fit in with any funding offered, but early indications suggest that this funding may be sufficient to cover considerable staffing costs.

Additionally, provision of sessions in spaces across the parish is key – at Coffee Hall, there is considerable delivery already, due to the spaces that are available. Tinkers Bridge and Eaglestone both have a lower level of provision, but regular weekly sessions at the Community Cafes. Netherfield has some excellent stuff provided at the Grand Union Church, but very little within the WCC run meeting place. Given this, it is recommended that any programme covers as wide an area as possible (NB This could include use of non-WCC spaces, such as Moorlands, AgeUK, MK College if felt appropriate).

Based on costs noted above, costs are around £300 for a fully costed, 3-hour session.

UPDATE – 07.11.22

After most of this paper was written, a message was received from MKCC clarifying the level of funding that will be allocated. For Woughton, this amount is £12,000. Based on the ‘full urcurrent financial year (i.e. spent by the end of March 2023), this is four months delivery at 10 sessions per month.

Considerations for Council

27. What are the priorities for council in terms of any additional provision?
 - ‘Warm rooms’
 - ‘Food Hubs’
 - Wellbeing support (NB this was the highest priority for survey respondents)
 - Other stuff
28. Where is the priority for council – which estate(s) should any provision be based on, or should these be spread equally across the parish?
29. Should provision be focused on the opening of spaces, with other activities provided alongside this?
30. Where does this delivery sit within the current model – within the community team, with the possibility of offering additional hours to officers and / or offering paid work for existing volunteers?

Conclusion

WCC has an opportunity to extend and expand the support that is offered over the coming winter months, with financial support provided via MKCC. How this support is offered is dependent on the views of council, with guidance from the Community Team, community food, Community Centre officers and others. There is no doubt that significant additional delivery is possible – it is recommended that there is a programme in place for Dec 1st, for delivery for the following four months.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Cost of Living letter to parishes.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 134/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th November 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To recommend signing up to the 'White Ribbon' campaign.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council notes this report and the associated links.**
- 2. That council agrees to sign the White Ribbon Promise.**
- 3. That council considers whether full accreditation is something to work towards.**
- 4. That council considers whether a declaration covering wider issues of violence (e.g. same sex, etc.) should also be made.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The council was contacted by MKCC:

Please see below from our Community Safety Officer

Good morning,

I just wanted to contact you all about White Ribbon Day on Friday 25 November and the following 16 days of action 26th November – 10th December.

The 16 days of action are an important opportunity to raise awareness of male violence against women & girls at local and national level through events and communications.

A cross-party motion, introduced by Cllr Emily Darlington, was passed at a meeting of the Council on 24th November 2021. It was agreed that Milton Keynes City Council would seek to be a "White Ribbon city" Milton Keynes City Council is seeking White Ribbon Accreditation. It is an objective of the Council Plan 2022.

We would therefore like all parts of the city to be involved in the White Ribbon Campaign and encourage you to take part in your own events to create awareness of Domestic Abuse and the White Ribbon campaign.

This year's White Ribbon theme is centred around football due to the men's FIFA World Cup, so why not encourage grassroot football clubs in your area to be involved in the campaign. You can arrange a stall at your local Community Larder, and we can help you arrange this. Why not become a White Ribbon Ambassador or Champion in your Parish/Town Council? There are so many opportunities to do

something during the 16 days of action. Sharing social media posts and letting us know what your plans are this year would be great.

Let's make Milton Keynes a "White Ribbon City" and together we will!

If you would like some support or guidance on this or would like to apply for your own White Ribbon Accreditation, then please feel free to contact Anne-Marie Smith, Domestic Abuse Coordinator, here at MKCC. Anne-Marie is leading on this year's campaign. Bletchley Town Council are already White Ribbon Accredited and are working with us on this year's campaign.

For further information, please go to the White Ribbon website:

<https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/what-we-do>

In response to this, the Council Manager visited the link to see what the campaign was about, what it entailed and what messages any agreement or involvement might send.

The over arching aim of the campaign is:

White Ribbon is the UK's leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls

Our mission is to prevent violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes. Our aim is to change long established, and harmful, attitudes, systems and behaviours around masculinity that perpetuate gender inequality and men's violence against women. White Ribbon UK's work is preventative, we want to end violence before it starts.

The promise is:

I promise to never use, excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women.

By signing the promise, WCC would be saying that they support these aims and acknowledge the issues around violence towards women and girls.

There are further opportunities to become and accredited organisation, undertake training and awareness work, etc. More details at the site.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

By signing and / or becoming an accredited organisation, we would further build upon the Mindful Employer approach to making sure that our officers are safe, supported and able to know that their employer is engaged with building a better society.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

<https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/>

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager