

Agenda item: FC 91/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 26th September 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To inform council of a resignation, declare a vacancy and thank Cllr Hopcraft for his service.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council accepts the resignation of Cllr Hopcraft.**
- 2. That council thanks Cllr Hopcraft for his services to the people of Coffee Hall and Woughton.**
- 3. That council declares a vacancy, with the Council Manager sending the relevant paperwork to MKC Elections department, with a relevant date of 27th September 2022.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Due to ill health, Cllr Phillip Hopcraft has submitted his resignation, with immediate effect.

Cllr Hopcraft has represented Coffee Hall for around 6 years and has also been involved with the Coffee Hall Residents Association. The council would like to thank him for his contributions during this time and wish him well with whatever comes next.

As a result of this resignation, there is now a vacancy on Coffee Hall which will be formally declared after this meeting and the relevant paperwork sent through to MKC and displayed within the ward. There is then a period where local electors can, if so wished, call an election. If this doesn't happen, the council *may* choose to co-opt someone onto the council, but could, given the timings, decide to wait until May 2023 when elections are due for all council seats.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

NOTICE OF VACANCY Coffee Hall Sept 2022.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager



WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

TAKE NOTE THAT A VACANCY HAS OCCURRED IN THE OFFICE OF COUNCILLOR FOR THE COFFEE HALL WARD OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF WOUGHTON

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL ELECTIONS (PARISHES & COMMUNITIES) (ENGLAND & WALES) RULES 2006 AN ELECTION WILL BE HELD IF, WITHIN FOURTEEN DAYS OF THE DATE BELOW, NOTICE IN WRITING REQUESTING SUCH AN ELECTION IS GIVEN BY TEN ELECTORS OF THE PARISH TO: -

SHARON BRIDGLALSINGH
RETURNING OFFICER
MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL
CIVIC OFFICES
1, SAXON GATE EAST
MILTON KEYNES
MK9 3EJ

IN THE EVENT OF NO SUCH REQUEST FOR AN ELECTION BEING RECEIVED, THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL FILL THE VACANCY BY CO-OPTION AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE.

ANY QUALIFIED PERSON WISHING TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THIS POSITION SHOULD CONTACT THE CLERK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

DATED THIS 27TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2022.

SIGNED:  _____ (Parish Clerk)

Agenda item: FC 93/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 26th September 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update council on the new Local Government Association Code of Conduct and the 'Civility and Respect' pledge, with a view to embedding both within the work of WCC.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council notes this report and attached Code of Conduct and other papers.
2. That council agrees to adopt this Code of Conduct as the applicable policy for WCC.
3. That council considers the 'Civility and Respect' pledge and, if felt appropriate, agrees to sign the pledge.
4. That council agrees to councillors and officers attending the 'webinars' and training sessions that are linked to this project, using funding within the training budget.
5. That if wanted, that the 'Dignity at Work' policy is discussed at Operations, with a view to having this ratified if felt appropriate.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

All local councils (town, parish and community), as well as principal and district authorities, should have a Code of Conduct. Best practice is that local councils should be linked to the principal authority code, as oversight and management of the code sits with the Monitoring Officer / Standards Committee of the principal authority (in the case of WCC, this is Milton Keynes Council).

Following some recent incidents with councillors, MP's, senior ministers, Prime Ministers and others within the political arena, WCC councillors voted to re-sign and recommit to the previous code of conduct and, with some exceptions, provided a signed document to this effect.

Alongside the new Code of Conduct, there is also a 'Civility and Respect' project that includes resources and a 'pledge' that councils can chose to sign up to. The website for this project states:

*The Civility and Respect Project Working Group set out a **mission statement** summarising the core aims and values for securing permanent change in the sector:*

'Civility and respect should be at the heart of public life and good governance is fundamental to ensuring an effective and well-functioning democracy at all levels.'

The intimidation, abuse, bullying and harassment of councillors, professional officers and staff, in person or online, is totally unacceptable; whether that is by councillors, professional officers, staff or members of the public.

This can prevent councils from functioning effectively, councillors from representing local people, discourage people from getting involved including standing for election, and undermine public confidence and trust in local democracy.

National Association of Local Councils (NALC), county associations of local councils and One Voice Wales (OVW), as the membership organisations representing the first tier of local government in England and Wales, and Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) as the professional body for clerks, are committed to working together to promote civility and respect in public life, good governance, positive debate and supporting the well-being of councillors, professional officers and staff.

To that end the Group will be working to deliver tangible resources, actions and interventions in four main areas: providing councils with the tools to support good governance; lobbying to strengthen the standards regime and encourage more people to get involved; training; and processes to intervene to provide support to struggling councils.'

This project provides a range of training courses for both officers and councillors, has developed a new 'Dignity at Work' policy and is encouraging councils to focus on this area, showing commitment to building respectful workplaces, communities and interactions within the local council sector.

Training (cost of between £15 - £30 per person per session) includes:

Resilience and Emotional Intelligence — What it means in practice for clerks and council officers by Breakthrough Communications

The learning content, live workshop, and toolkits will enable participants to develop a better understanding of where our behaviour comes from, consider what resilience means for us in the context of our different local council roles and will provide an opportunity to explore role-focused scenarios and how we might respond to those different scenarios. We'll consider strategies to manage and deal with different situations effectively, and provide guidelines and suggestions based on worked-through scenarios. We'll also lead the user through a set of exercises, input and self-reflection and a resource pack for building our own resilience and emotional intelligence.

Leadership in Challenging Situations — Dealing with challenging situations and working with others effectively by Breakthrough Communications

The learning content, live workshop, and toolkits will enable participants to deal with a range of role-focused challenging situations as well as explore how we can work with others more effectively. We will consider different leadership styles and approaches in the context of your role, exploring which styles we personally 'default' to and which styles can work effectively for different situations. We will explore scenarios of challenging situations we might face in our role, and discuss how we might deal with these effectively and appropriately. We'll also consider how to build, support and get the most from an effective and motivated team.

Respectful Social Media — How to deal with attacks and negative engagement by Breakthrough Communications

The learning content, live workshop, and toolkits will enable participants to explore different methods and strategies for dealing with negative attacks on social media and ways in which they can keep control of our social media output. We will consider how we come across on social media as councils, as well as individually, what our personal 'digital tone of voice' sounds like, as well as considering our use of language and its role in positive two-way communication and explore the type of content we can post on social media, depending on our role. For councillors, we will provide suggested social media do's and don'ts: how to be effective on social media, whilst bearing in mind issues around the Code of Conduct. For clerks and officers will explore how the council can de-mystify the role of the council and showcase its people in order to help pre-emptively deal with negative engagement and attacks.

Civility and respect — Uncovering the issues for the public sector by Becky Walsh

Condescending comments, demeaning emails, disrupting meetings, reprimanding someone publicly, talking behind someone's back, giving someone the silent treatment, not giving credit where credit is due, rolling eyes, and being yelled at, is a regular occurrence for many councils. In this webinar, we talk about the issues we face in our council roles. We will then talk about the impact this has on the individuals involved and the organisation as a whole. Each of the webinars will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

What makes people become challenging? by Becky Walsh

In this webinar, we dive into human psychology, neuroscience and power dynamics. What triggers people to behave from the worst of themselves? How as leaders can we create environments with fewer trigger situations and more safety? We will discuss real-life situations and how to turn them around when they start to get out of hand. Each of the webinars will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

Personal resilience and self-protection by Becky Walsh

Having a good understanding of yourself means you'll know what to do when someone tries to push your buttons. In this webinar, we discuss emotional resilience and emotional intelligence and how this applies to specific council situations. Each of the webinars will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

Understanding psychopathic and narcissistic behaviour by Becky Walsh

Both psychopathic and narcissistic people generally lack empathy and tend to have unrealistically high opinions of themselves. They often exploit and manipulate others, and can be hard to spot as they can also be superficially charming. They are also attracted to roles of power and are often found in high leadership positions such as company chief executives and in political roles. In this webinar, we learn how to spot them and also how to monitor your own behaviour to lessen their impact on you and your organisation. Each of the webinars will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

Code of Conduct by Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd

This course is aimed at local councils who have either adopted the new Local Government Association (LGA) Code of Conduct for members, as endorsed by NALC and the SLCC or who are considering adopting it. The course is aimed at both

members and officers and will be led by Paul Hoey and Natalie Ainscough of Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd, the national experts who developed the code for the LGA. The course will look at some of the key aspects of the code, the practical implications of working with the code and look at the guidance which sits alongside the code. Attendees will be invited to ask questions about any aspect of the code as the session aims to help people understand how to make the code work most effectively at a local level.

The Pledge:

By signing the Pledge, your council is agreeing that the council will treat councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that it:

- Has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
- Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors
- Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy
- Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise
- Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens
- Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council through for example the Local Council Award Scheme
- Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate

Dignity at Work policy

This is the first major output from the work of the group and is intended to replace any 'Bullying and Harassment' policy, with a view to expanding this to include behaviours that may fall outside this but remain unacceptable.

WCC already has relatively robust policies that cover this area, but this policy does bring a range of issues into one document. It is intended to meet the basic legal standards expected of a local council. It could be seen as focusing too much on 'protected characteristics' within the Equalities Act, rather than seeing these issues as wider, encompassing humans as the diverse and unique collection of individuals, not defined by policy but by their very uniqueness, but does cover the essential elements that are most likely to lead to legal action.

It is also worth noting that this policy is only applicable to officers, as councillors behaviours are managed externally through a system of monitoring officer and standards committees, rather than any internal process.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/guidance-local-government-association-model-councillor-code-conduct> includes background notes

Dignity at Work – the suggested new ‘Dignity at Work’ policy

Bullying and harassment statement poster

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

[Council] believes that civility and respect are important in the working environment, and expect all councillors, officers and the public to be polite and courteous when working for, and with the council.

Purpose

[Council] is committed to creating a working environment where all council employees, councillors, contractors and others who come into contact with us in the course of our work, are treated with dignity, respect and courtesy. We aim to create a workplace where there is zero tolerance for harassment and bullying

[Optional – for Councils who have committed to the pledge] In support of this objective, **[Council]** has signed up to the Civility Pledge, as a commitment to civility and respect in our work, and politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Further information about the Civility and Respect Pledge is available [NALC](#) & [SLCC](#)

We recognise that there is a continuum where unaddressed issues have the potential to escalate and become larger, more complex issues and this policy sets out how concerns will be managed however the emphasis of this policy is on resolution and mediation where appropriate, rather than an adversarial process.

This document:

- explains how we will respond to complaints of bullying or harassment;
- ensures that we respond sensitively and promptly; and,
- supports our employees in ensuring their behaviour does not amount to bullying and/or harassment by giving examples.

Scope

This policy covers bullying and harassment of and by **clerks/chief officers** and all employees engaged to work at **[Council]**. Should agency staff, or contractors have a complaint connected to their engagement with **[Council]** this should be raised to their nominated contact, manager, or the Chair of the Council, in the first instance. Should the complaint be about the chair of the council the complaint should be raised to the **deputy chair / council's personnel / staffing committee**.

Agency staff, or contractors are equally expected to treat council colleagues, and other representatives and stakeholders with dignity and respect, and the council may terminate the contract, without notice, where there are suspicions of harassment or bullying.

Complaints about other employment matters will be managed under the council's grievance policy.

It is noted that the management of a situation may differ depending on who the allegations relate to (e.g. employees, contractor, councillor), however, the council will take appropriate action if any of its employees are bullied or harassed by employees, councillors, members of the public, suppliers or contractors.

The position on bullying and harassment

All staff and council representatives are entitled to dignity, respect and courtesy within the workplace and to not experience any form of discrimination. [Council] will not tolerate bullying or harassment in our workplace or at work-related events outside of the workplace, whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether harm is intended or not. Neither will we tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying. You should also be aware that, if you have bullied or harassed someone (e.g. physical violence, harassment), in some circumstances the treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

We expect all representatives of the council to treat each other with respect and uphold the values of the code of conduct, [civility and respect pledge], equality opportunities policy, and all other policies and procedures set by the Council.

We expect you to demonstrate respect by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other people's feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. See the grievance policy for further details regarding the process. Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Staff and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations. While we will assume that all complaints of bullying and harassment are made in good faith, in the event that allegations are found to be malicious or vexatious the person raising the complaint may be subject to action under the council's disciplinary procedure.

Harassment

- Where a person is subject to uninvited conduct that violates their dignity, in connection with a protected characteristic
- Behaviour that creates a hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment in relation to a protected characteristic

Bullying

- Behaviour that leaves the victim feeling threatened, intimidated, humiliated, vulnerable or otherwise upset. It does not need to be connected to a protected characteristic.

What Type of Treatment amounts to Bullying or Harassment?

'Bullying' or 'harassment' are phrases that apply to treatment from one person (or a group of people) to another that is unwanted and that has the effect of violating that person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that person.

Examples of bullying and harassment include:

- Physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- The offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances e.g. promotion, access to training
- Threats for rejecting sexual advances
- Demeaning comments about a person's appearance
- Verbal abuse or offensive comments, including jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Unwanted nicknames, especially related to a person's age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Lewd or suggestive comments or gestures
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations, work activities or social activities.
- Withholding information a person needs in order to do their job
- Practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or inappropriate birthday rituals
- Physical abuse such as hitting, pushing or jostling
- Rifling through, hiding or damaging personal property

- Display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person
- Isolation or non-cooperation at work
- Subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts, whether directly and / or in front of others
- The use of obscene gestures
- Abusing a position of power

Bullying and harassment can occur through verbal and face to face interactions, but can also take place through sharing inappropriate or offensive content in writing or via email and other electronic communications and social media.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable and behaviour could be harassment when the person had no intention to offend. We all have the right to determine what offends us. Some behaviour will be clear to any reasonable person that it is likely to offend – for example sexual touching. Other examples may be less clear, however, you should be aware that harassment will occur if behaviour continues after the recipient has advised you that the behaviour is unacceptable to them.

Harassment can also occur where the unwanted behaviour relates to a perceived characteristic (such as offensive jokes or comments based on the assumption someone is gay, even if they are not) or due to their association with someone else (such as harassment related to their partner having a disability for example). **See the council's equality and diversity Policy.**

All employees must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity and should feel able to challenge behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

It is important to recognise that bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. Constructive and fair feedback about your behaviour or performance from your manager or colleagues/Councillors is not bullying. It is part of normal employment and management routines, and should not be interpreted as anything different.

Victimisation

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because they have, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e. you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment and the council will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation, which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised you.

Making a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Reporting Concerns

What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a member of the public or supplier (as opposed to a colleague)

If you are being bullied or harassed by someone with whom you come into contact at work, please raise this with your nominated manager in the first instance or, with the clerk/or a councillor. Any such report will be taken seriously, and we will decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a councillor:

If you are being bullied or harassed by a councillor, please raise this with the clerk/chief officer or the chair of the council in the first instance. They will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you. There are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. The Informal Resolution is described below. Formal concerns regarding potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct must be investigated by the Monitoring Officer.

The council will consider reasonable measures to protect your health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties or change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made etc.

What you should do if you witness an incident you believe to harassment or bullying: If you witness such behaviour you should report the incident in confidence to the clerk/chief officer or a councillor. Such reports will be taken seriously and will be treated in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so.

What you should do if you are being bullied or harassed by another member of staff: If you are being bullied or harassed by a colleague or contractor, there are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. These are described below.

Informal resolution

If you are being bullied or harassed, you may be able to resolve the situation yourself by explaining clearly to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to the council's policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the clerk/chief

officer, your nominated manager or a colleague to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

If the above approach does not work or if you do not want to try to resolve the situation in this way, or if you are being bullied by your own nominated manager, you should raise the issue with the chair of the council. (If your concern relates to the chair, you should raise it with the chair of the personnel/staffing committee). The chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss with you the option of trying to resolve the situation informally by telling the alleged perpetrator, without prejudicing the matter, that:

- there has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a member of the council staff
- such behaviour is contrary to our policy
- for employees, the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence

It may be possible for this conversation to take place with the alleged perpetrator without revealing your name, if this is what you want. The person dealing with it will also stress that the conversation is confidential.

In certain circumstances we may be able to involve a neutral third party (a mediator) to facilitate a resolution of the problem. The chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss this with you if it is appropriate.

If your complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator(s) will not usually be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as extremely serious allegation or in cases where a problem has happened before) we may decide to investigate further and take more formal action notwithstanding that you raised the matter informally. We will consult with you before taking this step.

Raising a formal complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about bullying and harassment through the council's grievance procedure. You should raise your complaint to the clerk/chief officer or the chair of the council. A formal complaint may ultimately lead to disciplinary action against the perpetrator(s) where they are employed.

The clerk/chief officer or the chair of the council will appoint someone to investigate your complaint in line with the grievance policy. You will need to co-operate with the investigation and provide the following details (if not already provided):

- The name of the alleged perpetrator(s),
- The nature of the harassment or bullying,

- The dates and times the harassment or bullying occurred,
- The names of any witnesses and
- Any action taken by you to resolve the matter informally.

The alleged perpetrator(s) would normally need to be told your name and the details of your grievance in order for the issue to be investigated properly. However, we will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible. Where you and the alleged perpetrator(s) work in proximity to each other, we will consider whether it is appropriate to make temporary adjustments to working arrangements whilst the matter is being investigated.

Where your complaint relates to potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct, these will need to be investigated by the Monitoring Officer. The council will consider any adjustments to support you in your work and to manage the relationship with the councillor the allegations relate to, while the investigation proceeds.

Investigations will be carried out promptly (without unreasonable delay), sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. When carrying out any investigations, we will ensure that individuals' personal data is handled in accordance with the data protection policy.

The council will consider how to protect your health and wellbeing whilst the investigation is taking place and discuss this with you. Depending on the nature of the allegations, the Investigator may want to meet with you to understand better your complaint (see the grievance policy for further information, and details of your right to be accompanied).

After the investigation, a panel will meet with you to consider the complaint and the findings of the investigation in accordance with the grievance procedure. At the meeting you may be accompanied by a fellow worker or a trade union official.

Following the conclusion of the hearing the panel will write to you to inform you of the decision and to notify you of your right to appeal if you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You should put your appeal in writing explaining the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the decision. Your appeal will be heard under the appeal process that is described in the grievance procedure.

The use of the Disciplinary Procedure

If at any stage from the point at which a complaint is raised, we believe there is a case to answer and a disciplinary offence might have been committed, we will instigate our disciplinary procedure. We will keep you informed of the outcome.

This is a non-contractual policy and procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

GUIDANCE FOR USING THE DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

This is an example of an employment policy designed for a council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.

This guidance is provided to support understanding of the policy, and its application, as well as where local adaptations may be required. The guidance is not part of the policy and should be removed from the policy adopted and shared with council employees.

The Dignity at Work Policy will replace a previous 'Bullying and Harassment' Policy, to create a policy that is focussed on encompassing behaviours beyond simply bullying and harassment, and zero tolerance with the aim of dealing with concerns before they escalate. It is important that any commitment made in the policy is applied in practice.

Wording has been suggested to demonstrate a council's commitment to promoting dignity and respect where they have signed up to the NALC, SLCC and OVW Civility and Respect Pledge. Council's that have not signed up to this are requested to consider making this pledge which is based on basic behaviours and expectations of all council representatives to create workplaces that allow people to maintain their dignity at all times. If your council has not agreed to the pledge this wording should be removed.

The policy is drafted with consideration of employment language and terminology that is reflective of a modern working environment, setting a tone that is engaging, collaborative and inclusive. A council may want to update references where relevant to reflect local terminology and structure, however, should be considerate of equality, diversity and inclusion.

The examples of bullying and harassment are just that – examples. This should not be considered an exhaustive list.

Notes:

Protected Characteristics

A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of any of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination includes treating people differently because of a protected characteristic. Employees can complain of harassment even if the behaviour in

question is not directed at them. This is because the complainant does not actually need to possess the relevant protected characteristic. An employee can complain of unlawful harassment if they are related someone with a protected characteristic, or because a colleague believes they have a protected characteristic.

Examples of harassment related to a protected characteristic could include;

- Making assumptions about someone's ability due to their **age**, or denying development opportunities to someone based on their age. This could also include assumptions about their lifestyle or making inappropriate jokes related to age.
- Making fun or mimicking impairments related to a health condition, or using inappropriate language about disabilities. Constantly selecting social activities that make it impossible for a colleague with a **disability** to participate in.
- Refusing to treat a person as their new gender, or disclosing information about their gender identity could be harassment on the grounds of **gender reassignment**.
- **Pregnancy/Maternity** harassment could include refusing opportunities due to pregnancy or maternity leave, or inappropriate touching and invasion of personal space such as unwanted touching of a pregnant persons stomach.
- Harassment based on **race** could include derogatory nicknames, or stereotyping based on ethnicity. It could include racist comments or jokes, or assumptions about someone's lifestyle based on their ethnicity.
- **Gender** harassment could include not considering people for a job based on gender stereotyping roles, or implementing practices that disadvantage one gender over another. Rude, explicit jokes, even if not directed at an individual, or comments on individuals dress or appearance.
- Regularly arranging team meals over periods of fasting or religious occasions or failing to adjust a dress code to accommodate religious dress could be examples of harassment based on **religion/belief**.
- Excluding same sex partners from social events could be both **sexual orientation** and **marriage/civil partnership** discrimination, as could not offering the same work-related benefits.

A person does not need to be employed or have 2 years qualifying service to make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

- Job applicants who believe they have not been appointed because of a 'protected characteristic' can make a claim.
- New or established employees who are dismissed, or treated unreasonably because of a health condition can make a discrimination claim.
- An employee subjected to harassment can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.
- An employee asked to retire can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal

Legal risks

Successful unfair dismissal claims are limited to a compensation cap, whereas those for unlawful discrimination have no cap.

A positive employment culture, and swift action if conduct falls beneath acceptable standards will help mitigate the risks. An unhealthy culture will make it difficult to defend claims.

The time to defend and the cost of defending tribunal claims can be significant, irrespective of the outcome.

Culture and behaviour

We work in eclectic communities and working environments, and a positive culture within the council enables employees with different backgrounds and beliefs to share ideas and shape how the council achieves its objectives for their community.

It is important to recognise that different individuals may find different behaviours bullying or harassing so while there is not always intent to offend or cause harm, that does not mean that the effect of the behaviour has not caused harm or offence.

It can take people a period of time to decide to raise their concerns, as they worry about consequences (perhaps from peers by complaining about a colleague who is popular, or they fear victimisation from the perpetrator or others). The council should consider whether there are opportunities (such as 121s to offer opportunity to reflect on relationships/morale) to identify issues earlier and address negative behaviours. Individuals can often mention concerns they are experiencing but not want to take it further. The council should remind the complainant that it has a zero tolerance to bullying and harassment and remind them of the policy in place to address concerns. If the allegations mentioned are significant, the council may want to suggest that it will need to investigate further, even if a 'grievance' is not raised, so as to ensure that any concerns and risks are managed, and the council is meeting its responsibilities and duty of care as an employer.

Whilst both staff and councillors jointly determine the working culture, councillors are key in demonstrating what is and isn't acceptable behaviour. This is apparent from how councillors behave with each other in council meetings and also in how standards of behaviour are applied through the use of informal discussion and formal policies.

Scope

All council representatives are expected to uphold the values of the Dignity at Work Policy, however this policy sets out how allegations from employees will be managed. As indicated in the policy, concerns from a contractor, agency worker etc. should be raised to the identified person, and an appropriate approach will be considered based on the situation and relationship of the complainant with the council.

Likewise, concerns raised about the behaviour of a contractor or agency worker would not generally be managed via the full process (such as the disciplinary process) but appropriate action would be considered based on the situation. To treat people (such as contractors, or a casual worker) engaged by the council the same as an employee could blur the status of the employment relationship, so consider seeking professional advice if needed.

Managers

Recognising that councils are of varying sizes, where the term manager/nominated manager is used it is recognised this could be the clerk/chief officer, another employee of the council, or a councillor depending on the situation. It is good practice to have a clearly identified person who is the responsible 'line manager' or equivalent contact for an employee so that there is clarity on how the employee should report concerns to, who they notify if they are sick or to request leave etc. More often for council employees this may be the clerk/chief officer, and for the clerk/chief officer this could be the chair/deputy Chair, or possibly chair of a staffing/personnel committee.

Bullying and harassment & performance management

The policy sets out that bullying and harassment does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. It is not uncommon for an employee, when receiving critical feedback, to claim that this is bullying and/or harassing. It is the role of the nominated manager to provide effective and constructive feedback to encourage performance at the required standard.

Even when the feedback is not positive it should be fair, communicated in a professional and reasonable manner and shared with the objective of aiding understanding and achieving an improvement to overcome the shortfalls. There is no absolute definition of when the feedback may not be appropriate. Often it will be for the person/panel hearing the dignity at work complaint/grievance to determine whether the performance management has upheld the standards expected in terms of respect and civility and any feedback has been shared in a fair and professional way.

Responsibilities

All staff and representatives of the council are responsible for their own behaviour in the workplace and for taking steps to revise unacceptable behaviour and appropriately challenge that of others.

Leaders – councillors, clerks, chief officers, managers - are responsible for ensuring that these standards of treating people with civility, respect and courtesy are upheld, both through their own example, and by communicating and promoting these expectations to all employees. They are also responsible for ensuring that concerns raised are treated seriously and addressed in line with this policy in a timely manner.

During the investigation

Employers have a duty of care to provide a safe place of work. If a complaint is made, discuss how to manage working relationships whilst the allegation is being investigated and until the outcome is disclosed. This is as much for the protection of the alleged perpetrator as for the aggrieved.

Consider whether a neutral person should be offered as a 'listening ear' for both parties in the investigation. This could be a councillor or nominated manager who is not involved in the investigation or allegations and can be a point of check in as raising, or being subject to allegations can be stressful.

Offer other support that may be appropriate to the situation such as signposting to support groups, time off for counselling etc. If you have suspended a staff member, your duty of care continues and it is important to consider their wellbeing and mental health.

Ensure that you communicate regularly with both parties.

The investigation and any subsequent hearing should be completed in accordance with the grievance policy which sets out a process for dealing with concerns. You should ensure that the grievance policy adopted adheres to any local policies and procedures, with consideration of any timescales and escalation routes in your locally adopted policy.

Confidentiality

It may be possible for concerns to be raised with the perpetrator without disclosing the name of the complainant however in a small council it is likely that it will be clear that the accused will know where the accusation has come from. The council representative (clerk/chief officer/councillor) speaking to the alleged perpetrator must be clear that the discussion is confidential and the individual would be at risk of formal disciplinary action if there is any sort of victimisation or retaliation for the individual raising their concern.

During any formal investigation it may be necessary to disclose the nature of the allegations and where they came from to ensure a fair and balanced investigation and process. This should be discussed with the person raising the concerns to understand any issues and how they may be mitigated. In some situations it may be appropriate to provide anonymised witness statements however this would be a last resort, and could compromise the fairness of the process. Where there is a genuine fear of consequences and this may need to be considered, it is recommended that professional advice is sought. For the same reason it can be difficult for a council to consider an anonymous complaint, however if the concerns are significant and compromise the council in their duty of care to employees, then consideration of how the deal with the matter may be required.

Victimisation

All employees have the right to raise genuine concerns without the fear of reprisals. If the aggrieved (or a witness) is treated differently / less favourably because they have raised a complaint, then this is victimisation. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint, cancelling a planned training event, or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload. Victimisation can lead to a claim to an employment tribunal.

False allegations

If an employee makes an allegation that they know to be untrue, or gives evidence that they know to be untrue, the council should consider the matter under the disciplinary procedure. Such an allegation would be potentially gross misconduct.

Complaints against Councillors

Following the Ledbury case, the law is clear that any formal complaint about a councillor regarding a breach of the code of conduct must be referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation (either by the complainant, or the Council with agreement of the complainant). During the investigation, it is critical to ensure that where an employee of the council has made the complaint, that the council agrees reasonable measures with the employee to protect their health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties, change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made etc.

Careful consideration is required where a grievance is raised against the council as a whole due to lack of support related to councillor behaviours. The specific allegations will need to be considered to determine whether the allegations can be addressed by the council, or require exploration of the councillors behaviour in order to respond, in which case the Monitoring Officer may be required to investigate the alleged behaviours of a/any councillors where this may relate to the code of conduct. It is a matter of fact whether the complaint is against the council and can therefore be dealt with by the council's grievance procedure or against a councillor and can only be dealt with by the Monitoring Officer.

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 26th September 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To propose that Council declares a 'Cost of Living' emergency, continues to develop additional support and shares this information with others to ensure all are aware.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council notes this report.**
- 2. That council agrees to support the motion below – the declaration of a 'Cost of Living Emergency'.**
- 3. That council continues to develop further approaches that build upon the existing support with an aim to support residents over the coming months.**
- 4. That information about this support and the declaration is shared via website, social media, press releases, notice boards, The Gazette, etc. with an aim to ensure others also take relevant and necessary steps to help.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Several councils have declared a 'cost of living emergency' in response to the unmanageable pressures on many residents' finances, with more expected over the coming months. Starting with Eastbourne back in May, many of these declarations acknowledge the issue, but also call for action from the government to reduce the impact. Since then, more and more councils, Mendip, Watford, Eastleigh, Somerset, and others, have also stated their concerns about the situation. These councils are not the areas of deprivation you might expect, but the southern coast counties and London suburbs of the affluent. The London Assembly has also discussed the issue, with a view to making a similar declaration.

Poorer households are currently experiencing higher inflation – on average – than better-off households. The Institute for Fiscal Studies estimated – based on the share of budgets spent on different broad product groups – the annual inflation rate for the poorest 10% of households to be 10.9% in April. By contrast, the richest 10% of households had the lowest rate of inflation, at 7.9%. This is because energy costs – the major driver of recent inflation – makes up a greater proportion of household budgets for low-income households.

Even if inflation rates were similar, the impact of inflation on poorer households might be greater anyway. A richer household might be able to absorb higher energy costs, for example by reducing how much it saves, but that option will not be available for many low-income households.

Woughton is one of the parishes that will be most at risk because of this crisis and the lack of action from those in power. We know that levels of poverty are higher within the parish, with almost half of children living in households that are classed this way after housing costs. With higher than average levels of disability, older people, and people in receipt of benefits, Woughton will feel the pinch more quickly and more sharply than many other areas.

Woughton Community Council (WCC) has already taken steps to address some of the issues, providing 50 plus hours of direct advice and wellbeing support each week and linking residents with further support where possible. The community fridges, larders and cafés provide not only food, but social spaces that can provide a warm place to spend time. The youth service offers snacks, safe spaces and support to children and young people. And with plans to expand opening of community venues to provide further 'warm spaces', obtaining hot water bottles and blankets and other approaches as the crisis deepens, WCC will continue to work with community members to see how else they can help.

Part of this initiative is to make clear the councils views by declaring this an emergency. When hundreds or even thousands of households within the parish are in fuel poverty, where residents are having to choose between eating or heating and where ageing housing stock leads to higher bills, due to lack of suitable insulation, the only word to describe this is an emergency.

The proposed full text of the motion is:

This council notes with deep concern that Woughton faces the highest levels of poverty of any parish in the city of Milton Keynes and, as the 'Cost of Living' crisis continues, that residents of Woughton are most at risk. As stated by the Bank of England, 'inflation hits the least well off the hardest'.

Poorer households are currently experiencing higher inflation than better off households. The rising energy costs, with seemingly endless raising of the 'cap' over the past year, impact the poor more than others, with a greater percentage of income spent on energy. Following the most recent announcement, with the 'cap' being set more than 3 times higher than April 2021, it is likely that many, if not most, residents of the parish will find themselves in fuel poverty. And for those in most need, the expected £300 per month average energy costs are greater than the entirety of a universal credit payment (currently £265.31 a month for a single person under 25). And this is compounded by other costs. Inflation is currently 10.8% and expected to increase further, potentially to levels not seen since the three day weeks in the 1970's. With income levels struggling to keep pace. Benefits increased by a paltry 3.1% this year, meaning a real terms cut of over 7%. And wages faced similar cuts, with statista.com showing a 3% wage cut in real terms in the six months to May 2022.

Woughton Community Council is calling for a nationwide emergency to be declared, acknowledging the very real risk this crisis causes. Without a clear plan, financial support and wider help offered, the impact on citizens will be so severe as to lead to hunger, illness and death. This is not inevitable, but without immediate intervention, will become harder and harder to avoid.

Woughton Community Council also calls for support at a local level, from Milton Keynes Council, local businesses, organisations, and residents to ensure that those most in need are helped. This includes additional funding for urgent help, warm spaces, The Food Bank, and other support agencies, as well as a clear message to those with more power that urgent and lasting change is needed. We urge those in power to consider cuts to VAT, increases to income for those most in need and to provide direct funding to local councils, such as WCC, who are best placed to offer support to residents.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Supporting Paper from MKC.

Energy crisis and efficiency funding.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 95/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 26th September 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To publish the Cost of living priorities survey.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Council notes the report.
2. That the Council approves publishing the cost of living survey to residents to assist with drafting the budget for the next financial year (2023/2024) and to assist with reviewing the current budget at mid-year point (September close).
3. That the Council agrees to push engagement of the cost of living survey through access to a QR code for online link and paper copies being readily available at projects such as the community fridge, café and at the Community Council local offices.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Please see link to our cost of living survey, we would like to publish this as soon as possible with a view of getting some feedback from our residents regarding the current economic situation. This will help us when reviewing our mid-year budget in October (after September close) but also to draft a budget that is reflective of the needs of our Parish for 2023/24 which will be commencing from now onwards.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8JWQ6TY>

I have included the paper document which will be used in your packs, alongside an A3 poster which we will hang in noticeboards/community centres and our offices.

As per our priorities survey for the budget consultation, we would like to engage as much as possible through our community projects such as all of the community fridges and cafes taking place around the Parish, alongside our public offices.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Cost of living survey - POSTER.

Cost of living survey - Booklet.

AUTHOR

Samone Winsborough
Operations manager and RFO



Communities and Environment Fund – Application Overview

Name of Applicant	Janette Bobey
Date of application	29/08/22
Name of project	Christmas Theatre Trip – Northampton
Amount Requested	£750

Project Overview (what is the project, how has it been determined that it is needed, what does success look like?)

Applicants comments:

A trip to the Deco Theatre in Northampton, to see a pantomime at Christmas, Snow White & the 7 Dwarfs. An important time Christmas, with many families struggling more this year than ever before, would make their Christmas, we have not done this before, despite being asked previously, this year more than ever it would be welcomed by residents.

We asked last November via meetings, face book, as it had been suggested on numerous occasions previous years, all residents were really keen on a visit to the pantomime, we know neighbouring estates go every year, so wanted to give our residents the opportunity, it's been a bleak couple of years so this year is the year to go, and will be welcomed.

Officers Comments:

How will the project improve the quality of life for local residents? (what change will happen? What happens if we don't fund it? What considerations have been made to sustainability?)

It will give them enjoyment, hope and install family values, it will be a way of families to escape the problems of life for an afternoon, it will educate and provide top quality entertainment, that most residents would not be able to gain themselves without this help.

If the trips doesn't go ahead it will make residents feel they cannot be included in this type of entertainment; it will make parents feel they are unable to give their children a Christmas outing that is normally never forgotten by those who have attended a pantomime, it will cause them to lose hope and make them feel alienated with this type of entertainment.

Officers Comments:

Are the finances reasonable? Has other funding been applied for? Is there a charging policy?

Applicants comments:

The total cost of the trip is £1,582.50. Netherfield Residents Association is putting £382.50 towards the trip. Assuming that the £750 grant request is successful, this will leave £450 £1,582.50 - £382.50 from NRA - £750 grant if successful, leaves £450 divided by 79 (approx. £6 per ticket).

Officers Comments:

WCC have been asked to contribute approximately 50% of the overall cost of the trips, with the RA funding 24% with the remaining 28% coming through ticket sales.

Officer Assessment

Have we received 3 quotes for all items? Yes No X (only 1 quote available)

Have we received all governance documents? Yes X No

Have we got two independent referees details included? Yes X No

Officer Recommendation and overview

The trip provides a good opportunity for families to visit a Christmas pantomime. The trip is something that was requested through consultation with residents, so should prove popular. WCC is part-funding the trip, with the RA and reasonably priced ticket sales providing the remainder.

Which fund would this application come from? Communities and Environment

How much is currently in that fund? £5,121

For completion after scoring

Scorer No	Scorer Name	Total Score	Any other comments
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

7			
8			

Average Score from all scorers:

Applications that score an average of below 15 will not be awarded.

Applications that score between 16 – 24 will be discussed

Applications that score an average of over 25 will be awarded (except in exceptional circumstances)

Outcome from Committee

Awarded in full Awarded in part (amount awarded) Not awarded Deferred

If deferred, please explain what actions are needed:

Date for resubmission (if applicable)

Agenda item: FC 96/22



Office Use Only
Date Application Received
Minute Number

Woughton Community Council

Communities and Environment Fund Application Form

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] our website or on request from our offices.

Name of Organisation The Netherfield residents Association	Date of Application 29th August 2022
Status of Organisation Not for profit community Group/Residents Association	
<input type="checkbox"/> Charity	State Registered Charity Number
<input type="checkbox"/> Company Limited by Guarantee	State Company Number

Contact Information for the Organisation	
Contact Name Ms Janette Bobey <small>(someone who has full knowledge of this application)</small>	Position Secretary/Treasurer
Address	
Email Address	
Face book pg MK Netherfield Residents Association	

In the event that your application is successful please state who the grant cheque should be made payable to / please provide bank account details so a direct payment can be made
Payable to The Netherfield Residents Association

Sort Code

Account Number

Chair **Mr Eamonn Bobey**

Telephone / Email

Treasurer **Ms Janette Bobey**

Telephone / Email

Secretary **Ms Janette Bobey**

Telephone / Email

Please provide details of 2 independent referees (this cannot be anyone related to or living at the same address as the applicant) who has knowledge of the project. This person should be easily contactable and must agree on amounts.

Name

Address

Email Address

Telephone Number

Name

Address

Email Address

Telephone Number

What are the aims and objectives of your organisation? Please provide full details of your organisation, the work you do and the outcomes you aim to achieve

Identity and aims

The NRA obtains grants from MKC Council, Woughton Community Council, other agencies and self-fundraising projects, these grants help towards funding the running of the Assoc, trips, Fun Days and other projects that benefit the community; in return we are expected to work with funders and perform or be involved in consultation projects.

The NRA has members that attend meetings concerning our estate who report back the information, so we are in touch with up to date issues, we are on databases of various groups and agencies that also send out

regular information and consultation surveys. We are committed to creating a community, one that, everyone that resides here can be a part of, we are here to represent the residents, and be their voice; all residents are encouraged to have their say in what's going on, to be heard, and to be involved.

The NRA would like to believe that everyone is getting a good service from MK council, Woughton Community Council, the Police, Education, Health and various other bodies working on Netherfield, but sometimes unfortunately this fails and as a residents association we will support all residents in helping to put things right, we can help with contacts and advice, if any resident is unfortunately faced with Anti-social behaviour problems on the estate we will try and help and to be supportive.

The NRA is involved with activities such as Estate outings, Fun days, Parties, Gardening projects, Coffee mornings etc, we are always looking at new activities and projects for our estate, all these needs is a little planning and fresh ideas.

Agencies make decisions about what is needed on Netherfield, but they don't live here, we do! the residents know what's best and right for our estate, so working with all the agencies that work on Netherfield is crucial, ensuring they get it right, we will continue to work for Decent and safer homes, and a better safer environment for us, our children and future generations to live in.

All residents of Netherfield are welcome to the meetings but must follow the code of conduct, it makes no difference if you are a Council tenant, Homeowner, Housing association tenant or privately renting tenant, you are still a resident of this estate and part of this community, by attending the meetings you find out what is going on where you live, you can also ask questions of what is going on, you may just want to come along to listen or become an involved committee member, the level of involvement is up to you.

We know there are problems on Netherfield and as residents we want the best environment to live in which is why the resident's association was formed when the estate was built, the residents of Netherfield who work voluntary in our organisation regularly attend training courses from various agencies, so we have good up to date knowledge. Without the involvement, support, and attendance of residents the Residents association would not exist, please think about what this could mean for our estate, so please come along and keep the Netherfield residents association going.

Amount Requested: **£ 750**

What do you require the grant for: Please provide details of the project, giving as much information as possible to enable the panel to fully assess the application.

A trip to the Deco Theatre in Northampton, to see a pantomime at Christmas, Snow White & the 7 Dwarfs, of which costs £12.50 per person, a Coach costly £595 to take 79 Residents safely and return. An important time Christmas, with many families struggling more this year than ever before, would make their Christmas, we have not done this before, despite being asked previously, this year more than ever it would be welcomed by residents. Total cost is £1,582.50 - £382.50 from NRA - £750 grant if successful, leaves £450 divided by 79 = £6 per ticket.

How have you identified a need for the project (scoring criteria 1)? What consultation, if any, have you undertaken? How did you do this? What were the responses?

We asked last November via meetings, face book, as it had been suggested on numerous occasions previous years, all residents were really keen on a visit to the pantomime, we know neighbouring estates go every year, so wanted to give our residents the opportunity, it's been a bleak couple of years so this year is the year to go, and will be welcomed.

How will the project improve the quality of life for people who live in, work or visit the Woughton Parish area (scoring criteria 3, 6 and 7)? (Peartree Bridge, Eaglestone, Leadenhall, Coffee Hall, Beanhill, Netherfield, Tinkers Bridge, Redmoor and Bleak Hall). Please provide as much information as possible – how will this project change people's lives? What impact will it have? What do you want the project to achieve? If applicable, how will it impact upon the environment?

It will give them enjoyment, hope and install family values, it will be a way of families to escape the problems of life for an afternoon, it will educate and provide top quality entertainment, that most residents would not be able to gain themselves without this help.

What are the consequences of not undertaking this project? Please provide a full explanation showing how this will impact on the proposed beneficiaries?

It will make residents feel they cannot be included in this type of entertainment; it will make parents feel they are unable to give their Children a Christmas outing that is normally never forgotten by those who have attended a pantomime, it will cause them to lose hope and make them feel alienated with this type of entertainment.

How will you make this project sustainable in the future, to reduce dependency on grant funding (scoring criteria 2)?

This is a one-off project, although it may be possible to do this again if successful, the NRA are also putting money into this project this year

For projects that focus on the environment (scoring criteria 7), please provide details of how the project will make a positive change / impact.

N/A

When will the project / activity start and finish?

Saturday 10th December 2022, 1.30pm leave for 2.30pm show, return for 6pm

Who will benefit from the grant (scoring criteria 3)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adults | <input type="checkbox"/> Older adults (55yrs +) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Young People (12-18yrs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Men | <input type="checkbox"/> Women |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The whole community 79 | <input type="checkbox"/> BAMER communities |

How many beneficiaries of the project/activity reside or work in the Woughton Parish area? **79**

How have you reached this figure? Please explain the process you used
This is the largest Coach available, to get as many residents as possible

Woughton Community Council priority is poverty, with 3 focus strands. Please tick which is appropriate to your project (scoring criteria 6)

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Youth Advice | <input type="checkbox"/> Food | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

How does your project meet the priorities identified above?

Mainly youth will be going, and some elderly, advice is always given on our trips on all issues asked

Project Finances (scoring criteria 5)

Please give a breakdown of the total cost of the project for which you are applying, and how much you are requesting from Woughton Community Council

Item	Cost	Amount requested
Coach 79 seats	£ £595	£ 0
79 entry tickets @£12.50 ea = £987.50	£ £987.50	£ £750
Sweets for Coach	£ 15	£ 0
	£	£

	£	£
	£	£
Total £1,597.50	£	£ £750

Do you expect the activity/project to generate an income? Yes No 

If so, how much? £

How will the income be used?

How will you raise any outstanding balance?
The NRA will donate £382.50, this leave a balance of £450 divide by 79 if successful with our application = £6 per person, any/if unsold seat will be met by the NRA, although this should not happen

Have you made an application to any other funders for this project/activity, or do you intend to? If so, please tell us who they are, how much you have requested and when you expect a response. **No**

Funder	Amount requested	Amount awarded	Response date
	£	£	
	£	£	
	£	£	
	£	£	



Communities and Environment Fund – Application Overview

Name of Applicant	Kirstie Rennie
Date of application	30/08/22
Name of project	Halloween Activities
Amount Requested	£256

<p>Project Overview (what is the project, how has it been determined that it is needed, what does success look like?)</p>
<p>Applicants comments:</p> <p>To hold activities such as pumpkin carving, recipes, costume making and a disco for Halloween for the children on Tinkers Bridge, hoping that this stops them going out on the dark streets and knocking on stranger’s doors. We are hoping this will keep our children safer.</p> <p>The need was established through communicating with residents on Tinkers Bridge especially the children. Discussions through social media and at breakfast club during the summer holidays and our fun day.</p>
<p>Officers Comments:</p>

<p>How will the project improve the quality of life for local residents? (what change will happen? What happens if we don’t fund it? What considerations have been made to sustainability?)</p>
<p>Applicants comments:</p> <p>During the half term break we can do pumpkin carving with the children, assist them in making costumes and decorations to make their Halloween fun. We are also working with Helen Innes from Fareshare and community fridges on pumpkin projects to stop waste and encourage people to fully utilise their pumpkins teaching children recipes to take home. Teaching children to make use of the pumpkins as meals or to feed wildlife instead of it going to landfill. Helping children make costumes with reusable materials that would otherwise go to landfill.</p> <p>If we do not put on activities our children may go looking for things to do and other activities putting them at risk. We really do not want our children knocking on stranger’s doors and being out in the dark where they are easy targets.</p>

Officers Comments:

Are the finances reasonable? Has other funding been applied for? Is there a charging policy?

Applicant's comments:

Costs involved:

Pumpkins and carving kits = £50

Decorations = £50

Food and drink = £50

Sweets and goody bags = £40

Hall hire = £66

We will charge each child 50p to attend. This will give them entry to the disco, a goodie bag of sweets, a hot dog and a drink. This money will go towards future events.

We will look for donations for any outstanding balance.

Officers Comments:

Officer Assessment

Have we received 3 quotes for all items? Yes No Not Applicable

Have we received all governance documents? Yes X No

Have we got two independent referees details included? Yes X No

Officer Recommendation and overview

This event looks relatively cheap to run and should prove to be fun as well as keeping children occupied during the half-term. Learning about waste reduction and cooking are worthwhile too.

Which fund would this application come from? Communities and Environment

How much is currently in that fund? £5,121

For completion after scoring

Scorer No	Scorer Name	Total Score	Any other comments
1			
2			

3			
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8			

Average Score from all scorers:

Applications that score an average of below 15 will not be awarded.

Applications that score between 16 – 24 will be discussed

Applications that score an average of over 25 will be awarded (except in exceptional circumstances)

Outcome from Committee

Awarded in full Awarded in part (amount awarded _____) Not awarded Deferred

If deferred, please explain what actions are needed:

Date for resubmission (if applicable)



Office Use Only
Date Application
Minute Number

Woughton Community Council

Communities and Environment Fund Application Form

Please read the Guidance Notes prior to completing this application form. These are available on our website or on request from our offices.

Name of Organisation Tinkers Bridge Residents Association	Date of Application 30/8/2022
Status of Organisation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Charity	State Registered Charity Number
<input type="checkbox"/> Company Limited by Guarantee	State Company Number

Contact Information for the Organisation		
Contact Name Kirsty Rennie <small>(someone who has full knowledge of this application)</small>	Position	Treasurer
Address		
Email Address		
Website		

In the event that your application is successful please state who the grant cheque should be made payable to / please provide bank account details so a direct payment can be made	
Payable to Tinkers Bridge Residents Association	
Sort Code	
Account Number	

Chair John Orr	Telephone / Email
Treasurer Kirsty Rennie	Telephone / Email
Secretary Deanna Norris	Telephone / Email

Please provide details of 2 **independent** referees (this cannot be anyone related to or living at the same address as the applicant) who has knowledge of the project. This person should be easily contactable and must agree on amounts.

Name **Deanna Norris**

Address

Email Address

Telephone Number

Name **John Orr**

Address

Email Address

Telephone Number

What are the aims and objectives of your organisation? Please provide full details of your organisation, the work you do and the outcomes you aim to achieve

- ***Tinkers Bridge Residents Association is a group of volunteers elected in by the residents to stand for them on the estate.***
- ***As an association our aim is to Improve Tinkers Bridge, including housing, environment, facilities, community spirit, activities and trips, and the way of life and services for all residents.***
- ***Respect and support the residents of the area and to help solve any problems which may affect Tinkers Bridge.***
- ***Represent the interests of residents and put forward the collective viewpoint following active consultation.***
- ***Enhance the quality of life on Tinkers Bridge***
- ***Signpost residents in the right direction for their issues***

Amount Requested: £ 256.00

What do you require the grant for: Please provide details of the project, giving as much information as possible to enable the panel to fully assess the application.

To hold activities such as pumpkin carving, recipes, costume making and a disco for Halloween for the children on Tinkers Bridge, hoping that this stops them going out on the dark streets and knocking on stranger's doors. We are hoping this will keep our children safer

How have you identified a need for the project (scoring criteria 1)? What consultation, if any, have you undertaken? How did you do this? What were the responses?

Communicating with residents on Tinkers Bridge especially the children. Discussions through social media and at Breakfast club during the summer holidays and our funday

How will the project improve the quality of life for people who live in, work or visit the Woughton Parish area (scoring criteria 3, 6 and 7)? (Peartree Bridge, Eaglestone, Leadenhall, Coffee Hall, Beanhill, Netherfield, Tinkers Bridge, Redmoor and Bleak Hall). Please provide as much information as possible – how will this project change people's lives? What impact will it have? What do you want the project to achieve? If applicable, how will it impact upon the environment?

During the half term break we can do pumpkin carving with the children, assist them in making costumes and decorations to make their Halloween fun. We are also working with Helen Innes from fareshare and community fridges on pumpkin projects to stop waste and encourage people to fully utilise their pumpkins teaching children recipes to take home.

What are the consequences of not undertaking this project? Please provide a full explanation showing how this will impact on the proposed beneficiaries?

If we do not put on activities our children may go looking for things to do and other activities putting them at risk. We really do not want our children knocking on stranger's doors and being out in the dark where they are easy targets

How will you make this project sustainable in the future, to reduce dependency on grant funding (scoring criteria 2)?

We will charge each child 50p to attend this will give them entry to the disco, a goodie bag of sweets, a hot dog and a drink. This money will go towards future events

For projects that focus on the environment (scoring criteria 7), please provide details of how the project will make a positive change / impact.

Teaching children to make use of the pumpkins as meals or to feed wildlife instead of it going to landfill. Helping children make costumes with reusable materials that would otherwise go to landfill

When will the project / activity start and finish?

28th 29th 30th 31st October

Who will benefit from the grant (scoring criteria 3)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adults | <input type="checkbox"/> Older adults (55yrs +) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Young People (12-18yrs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Men | <input type="checkbox"/> Women |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The whole community | <input type="checkbox"/> BAMER communities |

How many beneficiaries of the project/activity reside or work in the Woughton Parish area? **All children on Tinkers Bridge will be able to attend and any others in the woughton community area**

How have you reached this figure? Please explain the process you used

We will advertise with posters, Newsletter and social media for all children and families that wish to attend

Woughton Community Council priority is poverty, with 3 focus strands. Please tick which is appropriate to your project (scoring criteria 6)

- Youth Food Advice

How does your project meet the priorities identified above?

We will be working with the families attending, we will teach them to make meals with pumpkin, we will teach them to carve the pumpkins and use them safely as decorations for their events. We will offer prizes for best carved pumpkins so they can take pride in what they are making and displaying.

Project Finances (scoring criteria 5)

Please give a breakdown of the total cost of the project for which you are applying, and how much you are requesting from Woughton Community Council

Item	Cost	Amount requested
Pumpkins & carving kits	£ 50	£ 50
Decorations	£ 50	£ 50
Food & drink	£ 50	£ 50
Sweets & Goody Bags	£ 40	£ 40
Hall Hire	£ 66.00	£ 66.00
	£	£
	£	£
Total	£ 256.00	£ 256.00

Do you expect the activity/project to generate an income? Yes No

If so, how much? £ **Unsure as difficult to gauge attendances**

How will the income be used? **Towards future events**

How will you raise any outstanding balance?

We will look for donations

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Have you made an application to any other funders for this project/activity, or do you intend to? If so, please tell us who they are, how much you have requested and when you expect a response.

Funder	Amount requested	Amount awarded	Response date
	£	£	
	£	£	
	£	£	
	£	£	

How will you know if the project has been successful? If your project is successful, you will be asked to provide an evaluation, so please consider how you will show success – testimonials, feedback forms, statistics (number of people, demographics etc) could all be used to support this.

By the number of people attending

I confirm that the information contained within this form is correct and that I have attached the required documents

Name **Kirsty Rennie**

Position **Treasurer**

Signature **Kirsty Rennie**

Date **30/8/2022**

Please note, you may also be asked to give a short presentation to the Services Committee or at the Chairs Awards on how the grant has benefitted the local community.

By returning this form you will have given permission under the Data Protection Act 2018 to have your details registered on the Woughton Community Council database. Woughton Community Council will only use this information to provide you with details of schemes and events which may be of interest to you. Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive this information

Agenda item: FC 99/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 26th September 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update council on costs, operations and other relevant information relating to No 95 'The Youth Centre' and associated youth provision.

RECOMMENDATION:

That council notes this report.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

No 95 Jonathans is a MKC owned building that is rented to WCC on a peppercorn basis. The lease, with a Commencement Date of 4th July 2017, runs for 10 years and permitted use is:

'Community use primarily for children and young people from the MK6 postcode area with ancillary officer including the right to hire out to parties the Premises or any part of them on a temporary basis for those uses to organisations which demonstrate they are offering a service to the community on a not for profit basis'

The lease is due to expire on 3rd July 2027, meaning that WCC is about halfway through the agreement. The building was originally transferred as a 'youth centre' and, whilst this remains its primary purpose, there have been enquiries from some councillors regarding the use of the building for wider community benefit, especially during times where it is not currently utilised.

No 95 is a house and a half which includes a kitchen / café area, a pool table, a quiet room, a recording studio, performance space, gardens to the front which are used for growing, gardens to the rear used for a variety of activities and an external 'gym' in a summer house type building. No 95 is also used as the 'base' for the youth team – storage and office space are also within the building / grounds. This space is also used for youth team meetings, training, 121's, etc (around 15 hours per week set aside for prep, meetings, etc.).

Sessions that take place within No 95 are detailed on the attached timetable and include open access sessions (the 'Healthy Living' project is the open access seniors club on Coffee Hall), specialist sessions (e.g. SEND group, young parents, intergenerational gardening) and 'partnership' sessions (run in conjunction with external agencies, such as Q Alliance). In total, around 12 hours a week of direct youth provision takes place within No 95.

There are also times during the day when the centre is rented to **external agencies**. This income provides a financial base which covers the costs of running the building,

as well as contributing to the overall budget (see below). These sessions are predominantly one agency working on behalf of a number of different providers – Educreate use the building, providing sessions for Cambien, Oakbank and others. This income is around £9 – 10k per year. Around 14.5 hours per week is used for external rental.

The **budget** for the service for 2022/23 is detailed below. It is worth noting that some of the expenditure is linked to previous years grants funding that was unspent (youth garage and LEAP grant are both covered by external funding, not via the precept). There is also spending that is linked to current year applications – the Summer 2022 HAF grant means that much of the summer spend was ‘cost neutral’ to the council – money came in and was spent.

Youth	Code	Title	Last Year 2021 - 2022				Current Year 2022-2023						
			Receipts		Payments		Receipts			Payments			
			Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Budget	Actual	Forecast	
10	Additional Income	3,000.00	5,375.00		975.00	5,000.00	7,920.00						
71	Vehicles			2,000.00							2,315.00	27.00	
79	Salaries			59,897.32	53,591.80						68,106.00	17,398.80	
85	Running Costs			5,000.00	5,081.34						5,500.00	2,315.90	
86	Services budget			10,000.00	9,067.92		207.50				9,000.00	545.95	
92	SP 22/23 - Youth Council			1,600.00							1,600.00		
101	HAF Funding	8,950.00	15,537.50	8,950.00	5,259.06								2,060.72
120	SP 22/23 - Youth provision ad										1,500.00		
123	EMR - Youth garage						103.00				6,900.00	375.26	
126	LEAP Grant						3,000.00				3,000.00	1,387.29	
128	Summer 2022 HAF					9,438.36	9,438.36				9,438.36	5,310.83	
SUB TOTAL		11,950.00	20,912.50	87,447.32	73,975.12	14,438.36	20,668.86				107,359.36	29,421.75	

The service was underspent by £13,472 in 2021/22 and had income that was £8962.5 higher than budgeted, meaning a £22,434.50 surplus (around 25% of budget). The cost of the Youth Provision during this financial year was £53,062.62*.

Looking at the budget for 2022/2023, the funding via the precept is the top five elements – vehicles, salaries, running costs and services budget. The fifth, Youth Council, is funded via the Service Plan.

This year, the receipts (income) is £6k in surplus with spending mainly within budget – the exception to the is the running costs of No 95, which are slightly high. This is countered by the Services budget which is significantly underspent (in part, due to additional funding be sought from elsewhere) and the vehicles budget, which was set too high and can be reduced. The budgeted cost of the Youth service for this financial year is £92,921. As noted above, likely to be under this at year end and income already exceeding expectations so should be seen as planned, rather than actual.

*This doesn't include everything (e.g. pensions, NI, phones, IT, insurance, etc.) and may not be directly comparable with this year's budget.

The wider youth service encompasses a range of offerings across the parish; youth clubs at Netherfield, Tinkers Bridge and Eaglestone and a variety of other options

(see below). No 95 acts as the 'base of operations' for all this delivery. The specific WCC groups that take place at No 95 are:

- **SEND Youth Club**, a very high ratio, low number project which enables specially trained team members to come alongside young people who cannot manage a general open access group but have the right to attend the 'same' services as every other child on parish. Based on need and ability not age. The session, just 45 minutes long, provides an opportunity to offer these youngsters access to recreation and social interaction that would otherwise be missing. These skills are essential for later life functioning and current life quality. The session is also often utilised to offer respite for the family: parent / carer or sibling / young carer.
- **Healthy Living Project**, is an open access senior youth club: our one stop drop-in session where young people ages 13yrs+ can access a healthy snack, learnt to cook, budget, access the gym, gain independence skills, seek advice and guidance and career support. Named as a project based on feedback from teens that they dislike the title youth club and wouldn't attend but will come to a 'project'. This project is supported by MKC by the offer of a youth support worker each week. They are responsible for gathering intel on training and employment opportunities and helping young people research for themselves. The outcomes/ benefits have been seen to be increased self-awareness, self-esteem & confidence. Risk management and independence skills. Improved access and uptake of pathways in education and develops a greater understanding of 'healthy choices' in terms of relationships, food, their bodies and their futures. The gym, the cooking / food and the non-judgemental nature of the club are big draws and the downside of not delivering is the potential of poorly equipped young adults missing opportunities in education and unhealthy relationships with food (and humans).
- **Young Parents Group** is open to any young parent aged 13-19yrs and up to 25yrs is SEND or identified as 'specifically vulnerable' and in terms of child protection for the infant / children. Working in partnership with MKC Youth Faculty, we offer a session to access support, develop a peer network, upskill, and access training. We offer it as support service with vast amounts of signposting to local partners and professional bodies. Often working in hand with CFP and CSC / ASC to enable young parent to self-manage their own lives and take adequate care of their children. We utilise an advice worker for benefits and housing advice. The session is used to model play, healthy eating, behaviour management and basic parenting skills. We have evidence in many cases of the work we do preventing slides into greater debt, abusive relationships, and homelessness. Most importantly the prevention of children being taken into care, and we are instrumental in many cases of children moving from at risk to Child in Need status. Much of the work that focuses on this group happens outside of the session, throughout the week.

Attendance/ direct interaction.

Project	On Roll	Ave' attendance Pre Covid (if we have it) p/session	Ave' attendance immediately post covid closures 2021	Current Ave' attendance p/session
SEND youth	8	4	3	4
Healthy Living Seniors youth group	14	Previously food project so restricted to 6-8	3	9
Young Parents group	22	18	10	15
Q Alliance	42	12+ 2	3	16 +5
Totals	86	42	19	49

In terms of the other sessions (outside No 95), numbers reflect the above – directly after Covid, numbers were much lower, but are starting to increase and are approaching pre-covid levels. Further

information can be found in the reports submitted at Services & Communities Committee in February (general overview) and May (summer programme).

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager