

**Agenda item: FC 102/23**

**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Full Council**

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To update council on activities and delegated decisions made since the last meeting of the Full Council.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That council notes this report and the delegated decisions made.**

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

Another month has passed and another month of bits and bobs...

I have attended a number of training sessions, covering a variety of issues which have enabled me to achieve sufficient 'Continuous Personal Development' (CPD) points to meet the criteria for additional benefits for the council. This include Scribefest, a session on budget forecasting with Marta, and an hour focusing on wellbeing, working from home and commuting.

I also attended the SLCC Clerks Forum for B+MK and the Community Action MK AGM.

I have also had meetings with Charlotte from the Woughton Welfare Trust, Active Luton (social prescribing across the city) and the visit from the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities. This was a full day visit that was arranged to showcase to the department the work that parished can do – the range of support and activity that Woughton offers was seen as a massive bonus and the benefits brought to the community considerable. With four members of the department in attendance, all with slightly different focuses (community agriculture, engagement, social action, partnerships, etc.), a packed programme was provided and thanks should be offered to all the officers, councillors and community members that were involved in the day.

Apple Day also took place, with another Apple Day (Parks Trust on 21<sup>st</sup> October) also supported by WCC, through provision of the bits of equipment that are enjoyed (apple scrapper, apple juicer, etc.).

MK Can were successful in breaking the world record for the most cans in a line. Unfortunately, WCC were unable to be part of this, as a lack of volunteers meant that we could not provide sufficient cover. The tins that we collected were donated to another parish to contribute towards their contribution, so WCC still played a part!

I also attended the BMKALC Conference, where, alongside Sean and Tash, Woughton provided the keynote speech. This focused on the work that WCC does to support the community and encouragement to other councils to consider whether this is something that they would like to start with. Lots of liaison and networking and positive feedback.

Lots of things happening, lots of work ongoing, busy busy time.

No delegated decisions of note this month.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None.

**AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager

**Agenda item: FC 106/23**

## **WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

### **Full Council**

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To provide version 1 of the proposed budget for 2024 / 2025, based upon current understanding and for inclusion in any consultation.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. That the council notes the report and attached budget proposal.**
- 2. That the council begins the consideration process around the coming year, priorities for the council and impact on budgets.**
- 3. That council continues to work with the budget, adjusting as and when further information is available or choices are made, with a view to clarifying the final budget by January 2024.**

#### **MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) has now completed the half year 'sign off', having submitted all income and expenditure that was received prior to 30<sup>th</sup> September. This has enabled discussions and an evidence based from which to reforecast the current year and begin to plan for the coming year.

The attached sheet includes both the reforecast for the current year and three possible options for the coming year (2024/25), based upon precept levels.

*It should be noted that there remain a number of unknown elements – we don't have details of council tax base, the likely uplift in landscape grant, confirmation in writing of the LCTRS grant, potential wage increases and so on. Given this the following assumptions have been made:*

- *Council Tax base remains static*
- *Landscape grant increases by 5%*
- *LCTRS remains at current level*
- *Wages increase by a similar level to the past two years - £1 per hour increase across the board (NB This equates to 725 hours per week or 37700 hours per year) plus any increments due.*

The Council Manager (CM) and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) have reviewed all spending this year, anything that is contracted for the coming year, changes that have been agreed by council / committees and have included these within the budget planning process. This includes items such as CCTV provision (three year agreement), HR support (three year agreement), investment in / replacement of equipment (laptops, dog bins, landscape equipment, etc) and actual spends on utilities and similar (significant increases, but work being done to reduce).

The three proposals have varying levels of surplus or deficit, with the worst case being a deficit of £28,160 and the best being a surplus of £40,679. However, it should be noted that, as with the current year, there is no 'service plan' costed and no emerging priorities funding in place. There is also nothing additional regarding other large costs that have been previously discussed – community centre improvements (some of which are essential), review and preparation of a new Neighbourhood Plan (likely to be £30k plus), provision of a bus service to serve supermarkets (early discussions and no real idea of costs) and similar. If any / all of these elements are to be included in the budget, this will need to be considered as part of any planning process. For example, were the money to be allocated for the Neighbourhood Plan at around £30,000 and a service plan of £15,000 this would lead to a deficit of between £75,000 and £5,000.

Equally, a regular contribution to reserves should be considered, especially following the past two years where below inflation level increases have led to a reduction in the level of reserves held. Whilst they are currently just within acceptable levels (at 4 months delivery costs), any further deficits would place the council in a position of extreme risk. Any deficit budget at this point would be against the advice of both the RFO and CM.

The recommendation of the CM and RFO is that a surplus budget MUST be delivered in 2024/25 and that, if council is unwilling to consider any significant service reductions, this needs to be delivered through precept or additional, unrestricted funding. 15% increase allows delivery at current levels, with limited scope for anything additional / any crises. Anything below this would mean a likely deficit budget.

It should be noted that were the increase to be higher than 15%, additional capacity would be possible – every 1% equates to around £6,900.

#### **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

The work around how council chooses to replace the previous Operations Manager role and review any other staffing implications as a result of this work will continue, but any decisions may not have been clarified prior to the budget setting deadline of January Full Council (29<sup>th</sup> January 2024). These decisions will have an impact on budgets and, with staffing costs being the largest element of council expenditure (over 70% of turnover is staffing), these deliberations will be key.

#### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

V1 Planning Budget Sept 2023

#### **AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Marta Sobis – Responsible Finance Officer

2023 / 24 budget mid year plus 2024/25 v1

	2023/24	Reforecast Sept 23	2024/25 V1 (5%)	2024/25 V1 (10%)	2024/25 V1 (15%)
<b>EXPENDITURE - Democracy and Governance</b>					
Clr Ward Initiatives Fund	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00
Communities and Environment Fund	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00
Grant Aid - Res Associations	£ 3,500.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,100.00	£ 3,200.00	£ 3,300.00
Member Allowances and Expenses	£ 15,000.00	£ 15,000.00	£ 19,109.70	£ 19,109.70	£ 19,109.70
<b>Democracy and Governance Total</b>	<b>£ 34,300.00</b>	<b>£ 33,800.00</b>	<b>£ 38,409.70</b>	<b>£ 38,409.70</b>	<b>£ 38,409.70</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE - Whole organisational services</b>					
Meeting and hospitality costs	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00
Insurance Inc Vans	£ 9,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00
HQ - Building Costs (regular)	£ 25,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00
Vehicles	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
Uniforms	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Branding and engagement	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
CCTV		£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00
<b>Whole organisation services total</b>	<b>£ 42,000.00</b>	<b>£ 59,000.00</b>	<b>£ 59,000.00</b>	<b>£ 59,000.00</b>	<b>£ 59,000.00</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE - Organisational Management</b>					
Affiliations	£ 5,250.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00
Professional Services	£ 4,000.00	£ 8,500.00	£ 8,500.00	£ 8,500.00	£ 8,500.00
Audit Fees	£ 4,800.00	£ 3,100.00	£ 3,100.00	£ 3,100.00	£ 3,100.00
Capital Loan Repayment	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00
Newletters, Websites and Communications	£ 5,510.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Stationary and Amenities and services - HQ	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00
IT (previously included broadband and Members IT)	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00
Training, Development and Conferences	£ 8,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,000.00
<b>Organisational Management Total</b>	<b>£ 75,378.00</b>	<b>£ 78,418.00</b>	<b>£ 79,418.00</b>	<b>£ 79,418.00</b>	<b>£ 79,418.00</b>
<b>Organisational Costs Total</b>	<b>£ 151,678.00</b>	<b>£ 171,218.00</b>	<b>£ 176,827.70</b>	<b>£ 176,827.70</b>	<b>£ 176,827.70</b>
<b>Staffing Costs - increments included</b>					
HQ Staffing	£ 204,149.25	£ 204,149.25	£ 204,149.25	£ 204,149.25	£ 204,149.25
Youth Staffing	£ 96,686.18	£ 96,686.18	£ 96,686.18	£ 96,686.18	£ 96,686.18
Community Staffing	£ 145,064.12	£ 145,064.12	£ 145,064.12	£ 145,064.12	£ 145,064.12
Landscape and Environment Staffing	£ 255,375.85	£ 255,375.85	£ 255,375.85	£ 255,375.85	£ 255,375.85
Members Staffing	£ 32,906.38	£ 32,906.38	£ 32,906.38	£ 32,906.38	£ 32,906.38
Meeting Places Staffing	£ 73,682.03	£ 73,682.03	£ 73,682.03	£ 73,682.03	£ 73,682.03
Increments & payrise (5%)	£ -	£ -	£ 40,393.19	£ 40,393.19	£ 40,393.19
Staffing cover	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00
<b>Staffing Total</b>	<b>£ 832,863.81</b>	<b>£ 832,863.81</b>	<b>£ 873,257.00</b>	<b>£ 873,257.00</b>	<b>£ 873,257.00</b>
Landscape - Building costs	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Landscape - Services Budget	£ 18,000.00	£ 60,000.00	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00
Youth - Building Costs	£ 7,000.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 7,000.00
Youth - Services Budget	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00
Advice - Services Budget	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Environment - Services Budget (inc dog bins)	£ 9,500.00	£ 9,500.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00
Community Food - Services Budget	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Community Development - Services Budget (incl events)	£ 9,000.00	£ 9,000.00	£ 9,000.00	£ 9,000.00	£ 9,000.00
Meeting Places (Costs)	£ 65,000.00	£ 62,000.00	£ 65,000.00	£ 65,000.00	£ 65,000.00
Service Plan Delivery	£ 20,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -
Emerging priorities	£ 10,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Grants - services payments (BLF)	£ 37,629.51	£ 30,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -
Community Centres Investment (agreed)	£ 90,000.00	£ 45,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -
<b>Services Delivery Total</b>	<b>£ 282,629.51</b>	<b>£ 251,000.00</b>	<b>£ 143,500.00</b>	<b>£ 143,500.00</b>	<b>£ 143,500.00</b>
<b>Depot / Landscape Investment</b>					
<b>EXPENDITURE TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 1,267,171.32</b>	<b>£ 1,255,081.81</b>	<b>£ 1,193,584.70</b>	<b>£ 1,193,584.70</b>	<b>£ 1,193,584.70</b>
<b>INCOME</b>					
Bank and Investment Interest	£ 3,200.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00
MKC LTRS Grant / Deprivation grant	£ 168,592.99	£ 168,592.99	£ 168,000.00	£ 168,000.00	£ 168,000.00
Hire of Meeting Places	£ 60,000.00	£ 50,000.00	£ 60,000.00	£ 60,000.00	£ 60,000.00
Landscape Grant	£ 189,182.87	£ 172,000.00	£ 180,600.00	£ 180,600.00	£ 180,600.00
Landscape additional		£ 25,000.00			
Precept	£ 688,403.88	£ 688,403.88	£ 722,824.07	£ 757,244.26	£ 791,664.46
Grants income (agreed)	£ 54,009.51	£ 54,009.51			
MKC Funding - Comm Centres and CIP	£ 52,000.00	£ 11,714.00			
Additional Income Generation	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00
<b>Income Total</b>	<b>£ 1,250,389.25</b>	<b>£ 1,203,720.38</b>	<b>£ 1,165,424.07</b>	<b>£ 1,199,844.26</b>	<b>£ 1,234,264.46</b>
<b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT</b>	<b>£ 16,782.06</b>	<b>£ 51,361.43</b>	<b>£ 28,160.63</b>	<b>£ 6,259.51</b>	<b>£ 40,279.26</b>
Balance carried over from 2022/23 (NB Includes £200k in long term CCLA)	£ 468,738.10	£ 468,738.10	£ 417,376.67	£ 417,376.67	£ 417,376.67
Proposed surplus / deficit	£ 16,782.06	£ 51,361.43	£ 28,160.63	£ 6,259.51	£ 40,279.26
End of year carry over	£ 451,956.04	£ 417,376.67	£ 389,216.05	£ 423,636.24	£ 458,056.44

Held at current levels  
Held at current levels  
Held at current levels  
Increased due to potential election

Reduced  
Based on quotes received  
Based on current year  
Held at current levels  
Held at current levels  
Held at current levels  
3 year contract term

Reduced to reflect reality  
Increased as HR inclusion  
Reduced to actual current year  
Fixed  
2 Gasettes per year only  
Held at current levels  
Held at current levels - replacements likely  
Reasonable

Based on current  
Based on current  
Based on current  
Based on current  
Based on current  
Based on current  
Likely costs but unknown (usually some increments plus £1 per hour worked).  
Contingency

Reduced with new depot  
Reflects replacement needed  
Held at current levels  
Held at current levels  
Held at current levels  
Small increase re: bins  
Held at current levels  
Held at current levels  
Reflects actual costs of 2023/24

Based on actual  
Assuming no major loss  
Based on small increase  
Assumes 5% increase

Various options

	1%	2%	5%	20%
£ 6,884.04	£ 13,768.08	£ 34,420.19	£ 137,680.78	

Realistic

Red = deficit / green = surplus

Carry over figure (includes CCLA)

We've got insurance on twice... £9k saved!

**Agenda item: FC 107/23**

**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Full Council**

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To update council on proposals for engagement re: Annual Survey.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. That council notes the report and the attached 'pull out'.**
- 2. That councillors agree to support an event on each estate, to promote completion.**
- 3. That the 'pull out' is the centrepiece of the Gazette, being the middle four pages that can be removed and returned.**

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

Following agreement at the Operations Committee regarding the first draft of the budget, the Council Manager has prepared the annual consultation using Survey Monkey, and this has been embedded on the website, with social media posts also having been placed on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

In addition, there is a four page 'leaflet' that can be provided in cafes, events, activities, etc.

(There will be copies available at the meeting).

It was proposed at a previous meeting that 'engagement events' take place on each estate. To support this, it is suggested that councillors on each estate suggest a suitable time for this to take place and, if necessary, for the Council Manager to provide suitable resources to support this (e.g. trailer, gazebo, tables, chairs, etc.).

Refreshments were also suggested as an option. This would work well within the cafes – the council manager would welcome suggestions / agreement on what this might look like for estates such as Leadenhall or Peartree Bridge, where suitable engagement has proved difficult previously.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

There will be additional staffing demands depending on the wishes of council with regard to any additional engagement events that may include staff. It is suggested that these may, for example, include some existing events (cafes / fridges / larders / etc.) which would probably be covered by councillors and existing committed staff. However, anything additional would be an additional staffing demand, especially if trailers, etc are needed.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Pullout survey option.

**AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager

## Agenda item: FC 108/23



Dear Town or Parish Clerk,

### **TOWN, PARISH & COMMUNITY COUNCILS - D-DAY 80 - 6TH JUNE 2024**

As you are aware, we are organising D-Day 80 - 6th June 2024, throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories in commemoration/celebration of the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings, in Normandy, France, on 6th June 1944. This will enable our Town, Parish and Community Councils to use their involvement as their 'tribute' to those many, many thousands that gave so much on the Beaches in Normandy, to help ensure our freedom we share today, especially as many members of your community will have had relatives that were either involved in the D-Day landings and/or WWII as a whole.

We feel sure you will agree with us when we say that individuals and communities of all sizes were deeply affected in many and various ways during WWII. With this in mind, we would like to encourage your Town, Parish or Community Council to take part in D-Day 80 on 6th June next year by lighting a Beacon. We are aiming to achieve the lighting of at least **14 Beacons** per County, within England and Wales, as part of this 80th Anniversary event. We would be extremely grateful if you would be kind enough to discuss your possible involvement with your Council members at your earliest convenience please, with the view to ensuring we achieve the lighting of this number of Beacons in your County at 9.15pm on 6th June 2024.

Those taking part will receive a Certificate of Grateful Recognition, enabling them to frame and display it as a lasting reminder of this moment in history commemorated/celebrated.

The Guide To Taking Part, message from the Prime Minister and other aspects of the event, including the Lamp Light of Peace are available to download from the D-Day 80 website - [www.d-day80beacons.co.uk](http://www.d-day80beacons.co.uk)

From inside the Guide, you will see there are various types of Beacons that can be used on 6th June, which could be lit on town and village greens, local farms and country estates, or other locations of your choice that night. **(However, those that have existing Beacons, (including the gas fuelled ones used last year), are being encouraged to re-light these to save on funding).**

Those taking part are being asked to provide the following:

**Name of Country**, Name of County, Name of Town or Parish Council, Name of Contact, Email, Beacon Location, **Public or Private Beacon**.

**Please forward this information to [brunopeek@mac.com](mailto:brunopeek@mac.com) as soon as possible.**

We do hope that your Town, Parish or Community Council will take part, and look forward to hearing from you in due course.

My warmest regards to you all,

*Bruno Peek*

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