

## Full Council

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 6:30pm at the Woughton Community Council Hub, Council Chamber, The Local Centre, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes**

**Present: Cllrs Sue Smith (Chair), Nick Scott (Vice-Chair),** Jeanette Bobey, Michael Ferguson, Penny Glasgow, Luke Louis, Ruth McMillan, D'Anne Mordechi, April Rennie, Liz Simpkins, Alan Williamson.

**Also present:**

Steve McNay (Council Manager)

Brian Barton (Committee & Member Services Officer)

**In attendance:**

One (1) member of the public.

**Also in attendance:**

Cllr Donna Fuller (via zoom video call)

**FC 28/23 Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr Maggie Ferguson (personal)

Cllr Donna Fuller (personal)

**AGREED**

**FC 29/23 Declaration of interests:**

There were no declarations of interest.

**NOTED**

**FC 30/23 Minutes of the previous Full Council meetings:**

The minutes of the meetings held on:

- Parish Meeting - Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023.
- Annual Meeting of Council - Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

Were **AGREED** and signed by the Chair as a true and correct record.

**FC 31/23 Chair's Announcement(s):**

The Chair informed the meeting that the Disco Bingo will be held at the Tinkers Bridge Meeting Place on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023, please book in advance if attending.

The deadline for notifying attendance at the Chairs Awards is Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

Members were asked to please send Councillor biographies to the Council Manager.  
**NOTED**

**FC 32/23 Questions from the public:**

There were no questions from the members of the public.

**NOTED**

**FC 33/23 Ward Matters arising:**

- Cllr Alan Williamson – concerned about the amount of empty bungalows on Beanhill.
- Cllr Jeanette Bobey – expressed concerns from residents about the decarbonisation programme on Netherfield, regarding engagement a lack of clarity of meeting venues between Hedgerows Childrens Centre and the Netherfield Meeting Place, a lack of advertising of these meetings.
- Cllr Nick Scott – Vans parked on footpaths mostly works vehicles such as an Amazon van on Daniels Welch, Coffee Hall.
- Cllr Liz Simpkins – Garage owners on Eaglestone are being obstructed by other residents cars and blocking access.

Cllr Donna Fuller asked Cllr Alan Williamson to provide addresses of the empty bungalows and a rough time that they became empty.

Cllr Donna Fuller will arrange a meeting with Mears, and Cllr Jeanette Bobey will ensure that all residents issues will be brought up with the contractors.

Cllr Donna Fuller also said that a review is taking place on how to increase the amount of engagement with Mears and residents via the community café, the service is not withdrawing.

Cllr Sue Smith said that residents will be given at least four (4) weeks notice before any work is taking place on their property, Mears are undertaking a pilot of different types of property, to ensure lessons can be learnt before rolling out to all of Netherfield, this will happen street by street.

Cllr Sue Smith said that she will take up the matters raised by Cllr Nick Scott and Cllr Liz Simpkins.

**RESOLVED**

1. **Cllr Alan Williamson to provide Cllr Donna Fuller with addresses of the empty bungalows and a rough time that they became empty.**
2. **That Cllr Donna Fuller will arrange a meeting with Mears, and Cllr Jeanette Bobey to ensure that all residents issues will be brought up with the contractors.**
3. **Cllr Sue Smith to look into what can be done about Vans parked on footpaths mostly works vehicles such as an Amazon van on Daniels Welch, Coffee Hall.**
4. **Cllr Sue Smith to look into what can be done about the obstruction of the garages on Eaglestone, due to bad parking.**

**FC 34/23 Milton Keynes Council Ward Councillors report:**

Cllr Sue Smith – requested locations of any roads that had potholes, to also let Cllr Donna Fuller know, either by using what three words, or a house number and street name.

Both ward councillors had mainly been involved with casework.

**NOTED**

**FC 35/23 Feedback from meetings with Outside Bodies:**

- a) Woughton Welfare Trust - **Cllr Maggie Ferguson** – No report.
- b) MKALC – **Cllr Ruth McMillan, Cllr Liz Simpkins Cllr Sue Smith** – Proposing to hold a meeting in July 2023.
- c) Parishes Forum - **Cllr Liz Simpkins, Cllr Sue Smith** – The next meeting will be held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

**NOTED**

**FC 36/23 To note the minutes from the following Committees:**

There were no committee minutes for consideration at this meeting.

**NOTED**

**FC 37/23 Council Manager's report:**

A vacancy has arisen for a new landscaping operative, an advert has been placed on the website, members were asked to pass this information on in their respective wards.

Any requests by members to officers should include their line managers for oversight and sign off.

Please inform the Council Manager to confirm attendance at the chairs awards.

Rota to be put in place for officers and members attending various events such as the coffee mornings at Moorlands on Beanhill, Tinkers Bridge Meeting Place on Thursdays, the Eaglestone Activity Centre on Wednesdays, and Christ the Vine Church, Coffee Hall each Friday, ideas for inclusion of other events to take place are welcome.

There will be weekly reports from managers on the pros and cons of each of their service deliveries, and will be circulated to members by email.

A washer/dryer for the Hub would be beneficial.

There are environmental health issues with bin storage as children are opening bait boxes outside the Eaglestone Activity Centre.

There will be a temporary closure of the Community Centre and Community Cafe on Coffee Hall in the last week of June 2023 for the installation of a new fire alarm system.

The international Festival will be held soon and it was felt would be a good way to improve partnership engagement.

The Food Bank is attempting a new record for the amount of tin cans laid out in July 2023 and members were requested to indicate whether Woughton Community Council should be involved.

**NOTED**

**FC 38/23 To consider obtaining an official framed portrait of his Majesty King Charles III to be hung in the Council Chamber:**

A suggestion was made that Woughton Community Council may wish to have a picture of the sitting monarch in the Chamber.

It is believed that there will be the opportunity to apply for a portrait, but this scheme has yet to be launched.

The meeting felt that it would be nice to have a picture of the King and of the late Queen in the Council Chamber.

The meeting also said that the photographs of the Woughton Community Council Ambassadors should be updated.

The Council Manager will liaise with the appropriate authorities to obtain the portraits of the King and late Queen.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. That council would like to have a picture of the King and the late Queen on the wall in the Chambers.**
- 2. That the Council Manager to liaise with the powers that be to obtain suitable pictures.**
- 3. That the Council Manager to ensure that the photographs of the Woughton Community Council Ambassadors are updated.**

**FC 39/23 To inform council of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and agree submission to the external auditors:**

Council has seen the internal audit within this meeting.

Following agreement of this, the next stage of compliance is to submit the relevant paperwork to the external auditors, in this case, that is PKF Littlejohn who have been appointed by the relevant umbrella organisation (Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments, SAAA).

This is the AGAR form, in the usual style that details income / expenditure, assures that suitable safeguards and systems are in place and compliance with the necessary rules and regulations. This is prepared and needs to be agreed and signed by Chair of Council and Clerk to Council (the Council Manager).

Once signed, Woughton Community Council also needs to ensure that the public can inspect and ask questions about the accounts, this is set in statute (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015). The period of the exercise of public rights must include the first ten (10) working days of July. PKF Littlejohn have suggested the dates Monday 5th June 2023 to Friday 14th July 2023. However, the latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Monday 3rd July 2023 to Friday 11th August 2023.

## **RESOLVED**

**That Council notes the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) form and agrees to the signing of and submission to the external auditors by the Chair of Council and Clerk to Council (Council Manager).**

## **FC 40/23 To update council on the outcome of the internal audit and next steps for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).**

Year end has now been completed and the end of year reports submitted and audited by Auditing Solutions. The report gives the council a full clean bill of health, with all necessary steps in place to ensure compliance with legislation and best practice. This reflects the hard work that the Finance Officer has undertaken over the past few months in the absence of the Responsible Financial Officer, this is very much appreciated.

The Council Manager will write to the Auditor with an official message of thanks, confirming the agenda item number of this agreement.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That council notes this report.**
- 2. That council notes the internal audit, agrees the content and provides confirmation to the Auditor that this has been seen and agreed.**

## **FC 41/23 To update council on the 2023/2024 budget:**

The budget sheet as presented to the meeting of Council is colour coded for each budget heading, budget headings have been revised.

Savings have been made on the vehicle leasing due to the timing of the end of the lease on the old vehicle, and councillor allowances due to their being vacancies, other areas of the budget have been identified where savings can be made.

An additional budget heading for grants has been added to show when payments have been made.

The budget should break even with savings being identified.

There will be more clarity on department spending due to the new budget headings.

## **NOTED**

## **FC 42/23 To consider options around filling vacant council seats, following the May election:**

The meeting considered options around filling vacant council seats, following the May election.

There are currently six (6) vacancies that can either be filled by election or co-option.

A final decision on the format for candidate selection such as providing a written statement followed by questions, identifying any particular skill set, can be agreed at the Full Council meeting to be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

The Chair moved that there is an open meeting for potential candidates on each of the estates that have a vacancy, this will be arranged in conjunction with each of the present ward councillors on each estate.

A further suggestion was made that these meetings could be held in conjunction with the resident association meetings.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. That council notes the report.**
- 2. That council agrees to publicise the vacancies, inviting expressions of interest from residents or other qualifying applicants.**
- 3. That council agrees to a 'cut off' for applications of Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023, for consideration at Full Council on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023.**
- 4. That applicants are invited to submit a short, written submission, covering the reasons that they would be of benefit to the council to enable effective decision making if there needs to be a competitive selection process.**
- 5. That council agrees to consider any specific skills that would benefit the council so that potential applicants can consider those issues.**

#### **FC 43/23 To propose that former councillors are awarded honours and added to the relevant 'shield':**

The meeting agreed to present the "Honorary Citizen of Woughton" certificates to John Orr and Jordan Coventry who recently stepped down as Councillors at the election held in May this year.

There is currently no formal agreement in place regarding the awarding of the Freedom of the Parish. Given this, the following criteria was agreed:

#### **Awarding of the Freedom of Woughton Parish**

##### **Criteria**

- That the Council agrees to recognise the role of former members by awarding 'Freedom of the Parish' to all former members of the Council who have served as members of the Council for twenty (20) years or more.
- That each award be formally agreed at a full meeting of the Council.
- That the award to be made at the Annual Meeting of Council or other suitable meeting of the council.
- That those receiving the Freedom of the Parish be invited to the Annual Meeting of the Council, the Chairs Awards and other appropriate events.
- That a list of all who have the Freedom of the Parish be recorded in the Annual Report of the Council and be displayed in the Offices of the Council.

The meeting felt that it would be more appropriate to award a special recognition award to Pam Wilson who also recently stood down from office after 25 years.

It was further agreed to present the honours at the Chairs awards.

**RESOLVED**

1. That council agrees to the following honours being awarded:
  - a. Honorary Citizen awarded to:
    - i. John Orr
    - ii. Jordan Coventry
  - b. A special recognition award for long service to:
    - i. Pam Wilson
2. That councillors to consider formal criteria for Freedom of the Parish for future agreement

**FC 44/23 To propose the new council training programme, following the recent elections:**

A new training programme for Councillors was proposed by the Council Manager, following agreement at a previous meeting of the Operations & Resources Committee meeting.

These training sessions will either take place in house or bought in by an outside provider.

The meeting felt that the first Wednesday of the month would be the most appropriate time to hold the training sessions.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the training programme previously agreed now commences.
2. That council agrees to hold the training sessions on the first Wednesday of the month.
3. That the Committee and Members Services Officer (CMSO) and / or Council Manager sends round a monthly training update, covering both internal and external options.
4. That if new sessions are arranged that are time sensitive, that these are sent immediately.
5. That identifying training needs becomes part of any Councillor 'appraisal' system.

**FC 45/23 Committee appointments:**

A vote took place to agree to appoint the following Councillors to the Operations & Resources Committee:

- a) Cllr D'Anne Mordechai
- b) Cllr Penny Glasgow

**AGREED**

**Date of next meeting:**

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 6:30pm, at the Woughton Community Council Hub, The Council Chamber, the Local Centre, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.

**THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 7:31PM**

Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

DRAFT