



# WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The Council Hub, Local Centre, Garraways, Coffee Hall, MK6 5EG  
www.woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk 01908 359681

## FULL COUNCIL

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2026

To: All members of **Woughton Community Council**

**Cllrs Sue Smith (Chair), Deanna Norris (Vice-Chair)**, Eamonn Bobey, Tony Coughlan, Margaret Ferguson, Michael Ferguson, Donna Fuller, Penny Glasgow, Michael Holland, Luke Louis, Charlie Marsh, Ruth McMillan, Stacey Munkley, D'Anne Mordecai, April Rennie, Nick Scott, Liz Simpkins, Lorna Webb, Alan Williamson

## NOTICE OF MEETING

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of Council to be held on **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026** commencing at **6:00pm** at the **Woughton Community Council Hub, the Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG**, when the business set out in the following agenda will be transacted.

Please note that due to the cancellation of the Services and Communities Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026, there are some items that have been moved to this meeting, due to time pressures. These are limited and are denoted with an asterisk\*

**Please also note that there will be a minute's silence in memory of former Councillor Janette Bobey prior to the official business.**

Steve McNay  
Council Manager

**Please ensure that your mobile phone and other electronic equipment is switched to silent or is switched off completely during the meeting.**

Members of the public can attend in person, submit questions in advance and or watch live via [www.facebook.com/woughtoncc](http://www.facebook.com/woughtoncc).

Please be aware that this meeting is being recorded and broadcast live. Microphones are live at all times – if you are not speaking formally within the meeting, please do keep any additional noise to a minimum and be aware that anything said within this meeting will be in the public domain.

The full Calendar of Meetings can be accessed from the following link on the website:

<https://www.woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk/calendars/>



## Woughton Community Council – Full Council

### AGENDA

#### **FC 25/26 Apologies for Absence:**

To receive and record apologies from members.

#### **FC 26/26 Declaration of interests:**

Under the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, made under s30 (3) of the Localism Act, members must declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting, and any additional interests not previously declared.

#### **FC 27/26 Minutes of the previous Full Council meeting:**

To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on:

- Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026 (Annual Meeting)

**(Attached)**

#### **FC 28/26 Chair’s Announcement(s)**

#### **FC 29/26 Questions from the public:**

To allow questions and comments from the public (maximum of 15 minutes in total).

#### **FC 30/26 2-minute Estate updates from councillors**

To give an opportunity to all councillors to provide a brief update on activities and issues from the estates they represent.

**(Verbal reports – information only)**

#### **FC 31/26 Feedback from meetings with Outside Bodies:**

- a) Woughton Welfare Trust - **Cllr Maggie Ferguson**
- b) MKALC - **Cllrs McMillan, Rennie & Smith**
- c) Parishes Forum - **Cllrs McMillan & Smith**
- d) Sustainable MK - **Cllrs Ferguson and Rennie**

**(Verbal reports – information only)**

#### **FC 32/26 To note the minutes from the following Committees:**

- a) Planning, Licensing and Development 7<sup>th</sup> April 2026
- b) Operations and Resources 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026

**(Attached – information only)**

#### **FC 33/26 To confirm appointments to the committees**

Due to absences at the Annual Meeting, to ensure that all councillors have been nominated and assigned to the correct committees

**(Verbal nominations and voting)**

#### **FC 34/26 To agree and ratify the updates to the Safeguarding Policy**

Following some changes to legislation, and in line with the annual review of the policy, to review and agree to the proposals

**(Paper and updated policy attached)**



**FC 35/26 To review the Service Plan and agreed to a final version to be presented at the June Full Council meeting**

Following ongoing discussions, to review the current Service Plan proposal, offer any amendments and agree to ratify at the June meeting.

**(Updated Service Plan to be presented at the meeting)**

**FC 36/26 To present the internal auditors report**

Following the completion of the internal audit, to present the findings to Full Council

**(Internal Audit report attached)**

**FC 37/26 To agree the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), along with the Exercise of Public Rights paperwork**

With the year end now complete and the relevant internal audits undertaken, Council to consider the attached paperwork for the formal submission of the AGAR and publication of the Exercise of Public Rights notices,

**(Paper and notice attached)**

**FC 38/26 To review Councillor Allowances, following the publication of the MKCC Independent Remuneration Panel report**

To agree level of councillor allowances, following the updated information from MKCC, including an increase in basic levels and changes to the 'Quality Council' regime

**(Paper, policies and updates attached)**

**FC 39/26 To agree reporting and work plans for the coming year**

As the new council year has started, discussion and clarification on the focus, including that from the Service Plan, plus any specific work programmes, for the 2026/27 year, to include:

- Training
- Working Groups
- Policy development
- Anything else

**(Verbal updates, discussion and agreed next steps)**

**FC 40/26 Events update**

Following the paper that went to Services Committee, an updated version for ALL councillors to be aware of and consider involvement in.

**(Paper attached)**

**Date of next meeting:**

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, to commence at 6.00pm. Held at Council Chambers, The Local Centre, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG

Please note that the Annual Meeting of the Parish will take place on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May, from 6pm at Netherfield Meeting Place.



# Woughton Community Council

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

5<sup>TH</sup> May 2026

### MINUTES

**Present:** Cllrs Sue Smith (Chair), Nick Scott (Vice-Chair), Tony Coughlan, Michael Holland, Luke Louis, Charlie Marsh, Deanna Norris, Ruth McMillan, D'Anne Mordecai, Stacey Munkley, April Rennie, Liz Simpkins, and Alan Williamson.

**Also present:**

Steve McNay (Council Manager)

Marta Sobis (Responsible Finance Officer)

Tash Darling (Youth and Community Manager)

Mable Kong-Rawlinson (Business Services Manager / Deputy Clerk)

**FC 01/26 Election of Chair for the Council year 2025/2026.**

Sue Smith was nominated as Chair and was the only nomination.

Nominated by: Cllr Marsh. Seconded by: Cllr Scott

**RESOLVED** by way of unanimous vote.

**FC 02/26 To receive the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**

**FC 03/26 Election of Vice Chair for the Council year 2025/2026.**

Cllr Deanna Norris was nominated and was the only nomination.

Nominated by: Cllr Rennie. Seconded by: Cllr Mordecai

**RESOLVED** by way of unanimous vote.

**FC 04/26 To receive the Vice-Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**

The Proper Officer witnessed the signing of the declaration of office form.

**RESOLVED**

**FC 05/26 Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Eamonn Bobey, Margaret Ferguson, Michael Ferguson, Donna Fuller (attended online until 6.15pm), Penny Glasgow and Lorna Webb.

**FC 06/26 Declaration of interests:**

Under the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, made under s30 (3) of the Localism Act, members must declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting, and any additional interests not previously declared.

No declarations were made.

**FC 07/26 Minutes of previous meeting:**

To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on

- Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

**It was proposed that the minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting.**



Proposed by: Cllr Smith. Seconded by: Cllr Norris

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**FC 08/26 Questions from the public:**

To allow questions and comments from the public (maximum of 15 minutes in total).

There were no questions from the public.

**FC 09/26 To agree the roles for the following posts:**

- a) Leader / Deputy of the Council
- b) Chairs / Vice Chairs
- c) Lead Members

The Council Manager shared the paper that detailed the roles noted above (these were also shared in advance of the meeting).

**Proposal:**

That this paper reflects an accurate and agreed description of the roles and responsibilities of the lead members

**Proposed by: Cllr Smith. Seconded by: Cllr Rennie**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**FC 10/26 Election of Leader for the Council year 2025/2026.**

Cllr Fuller was nominated in her absence and was the only nomination.

Nominated by: Cllr Rennie. Seconded by: Cllr Norris

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

Cllr Fuller spoke via link to state that she believed that professional development should be prioritised this year, so that future leaders and other elected roles can be supported to develop.

**FC 11/26 Election of Deputy Leader for the Council year 2025/2026.**

Cllr Rennie was nominated and there were no further nominations.

**Proposed by: Cllr Mordecai. Seconded by: Cllr Norris**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**FC 12/26 To approve the following committee structure:**

- a) Operations & Resources Committee
- b) Planning, Licencing & Development Committee
- c) Services & Communities Committee

The current committee structure was presented and there were no suggestions for any changes to the current structure.

**Proposal:**

That the committee structure in place, as presented to the meeting in the papers pack, is agreed for the coming council year.

**Proposed by: Cllr Smith. Seconded by: Cllr Scott**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**FC 13/26 To approve Terms of Reference for the following Committees:**

- a) Operations & Resources Committee
- b) Planning, Licencing & Development Committee
- c) Services & Communities Committee



The Terms of Reference were shared, following inclusion within the papers pack previously shared with council. Following significant changes last year, there were no further changes proposed.

**Proposal:**

That the terms of reference for the committees be agreed for the council year 2025/26

- Planning – Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Rennie
- Operations - Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Rennie
- Services - Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Simpkins

**ALL RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**FC 14/26 To approve the 2025/2026 Calendar of Meetings:**

The calendar of meetings retains the current process of fixed weeks for each meeting and was agreed as suitable, with a request from some members for a printed copy, which was provided.

**Proposal:**

That the calendar of meetings presented is agreed for the council year 2025/26

**Proposed by: Cllr Smith. Seconded by: Cllr MARsh**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**FC 15/26 Election of Members to the Committees:**

- a) Election of members to the Operations & Resources Committee

The following members were elected to the Operations and Planning Committee:

- Tony Coughlan
- Penny Glasgow
- Charlie Marsh
- Ruth McMillan
- D'Anne Mordecai
- Deanna Norris
- April Rennie
- Alan Williamson
- Donna Fuller
- Sue Smith
- Liz Simpkins

- b) Election of up to nine (9) members to the Planning, Licencing & Development Committee (one (1) representative per estate).

The following members were elected to the Planning, Licensing and Development Committee as full members (estate represented in brackets):

- TBC (NF)
- Penny Glasgow (LH)
- Michael Holland (ES)
- Ruth McMillan (PB)
- Deanna Norris (CH)
- April Rennie (TB)
- Alan Williamson (BH)

Cllrs Sue Smith and Donna Fuller are also 'de facto' members, as Chair and Leader respectively. Cllr Fuller is a non-voting member.



- c) Election of one (1) deputy with full voting and speaking rights covering each of the following Wards: Coffee Hall, Eaglestone, Netherfield, Beanhill and Peartree Bridge, to attend in the absence of a Planning, Licencing & Development Committee Member (up to five (5) Ward Members in total).

The following members were elected as 'deputy' members of the Planning, Licensing and Development Committee (estate represented in brackets)

- Charlie Marsh (BH Dep)
- TBC (NF Dep)
- D'Anne Mordecai (CH Dep)
- Liz Simpkins (ES Dep)

It should be noted that as the second Peartree Bridge councillor is a 'de facto' member of the committee, only four (4) deputies have been elected.

- d) Election of members to the Services & Communities Committee.

The following members were elected to the Services and Communities Committee:

- Penny Glasgow
- Luke Louis
- Charlie Marsh
- Ruth McMillan
- D'Anne Mordecai
- Deanna Norris
- April Rennie
- Nick Scott
- Lorna Webb
- Alan Williamson
- Sue Smith
- Donna Fuller

Appointment of the Chairs / Vice Chairs of the committees takes place at the first meeting of the committee after the annual meeting.

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

#### **FC 16/26 To consider any additional outside bodies that may require formal representation**

No additional groups were agreed for inclusion, but it was requested that the Council manager check options for any over-arching groups that cover transport, Parks Trust and TVP.

#### **FC 17/26 To appoint members to the following outside bodies and organisations:**

Members are reminded that, should they be appointed to serve as a representative on these bodies they will be expected to report to Council, either verbally or in writing, following their attendance at meetings.

- a) Woughton Welfare Trust (1 Member)

The following member was proposed (by Sue Smith), seconded (Michael Ferguson) and appointed by majority decision – **Cllr Maggie Ferguson**

- b) Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (3 Members)

The following members were proposed (by Sue Smith), seconded (Michael Ferguson) and appointed by unanimous decision – **Cllrs Sue Smith, Charlie Marsh and Deanna Norris.**



- c) Milton Keynes Parish Forum (2 Members)  
The following members were proposed (by April Rennie), seconded (Maggie Ferguson) and appointed by unanimous decision – **Cllrs Sue Smith and Ruth McMillan**
- d) Sustainable MK (as agreed in FC 16/25)  
The following members were proposed (by Sue Smith), seconded (Michael Ferguson) and appointed by unanimous decision – **Cllrs April Rennie and Maggie Ferguson**. Consideration to be given regarding the Coffee Hall fridge.

#### **FC 18/26 Member Allowances:**

It is recommended that allowances are provided in line with the recommendations from the Full Council, in line with Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). Whilst there has been no formal notification from the IRP regarding any inflationary increase, it was agreed that the allowances would be changed to reflect the obtaining of the Quality Council accreditation.

#### **Proposal:**

*That the council will pay allowances in accordance with the Independent Remuneration Committee recommendations, namely 10% of the MKCC allowance rate, reflecting the awarding of the Quality Council accreditation.*

**Proposed by: Cllr Smith. Seconded by: Cllr Williamson**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

#### **FC 19/26 To approve the following constitutional documents and policies for 2025/26:**

- a) *Standing Orders*
- b) *Scheme of Delegation*
- c) *Financial Regulations*
- d) *Risk Register and Contingency Planning*
- e) *Councillor Allowances and Expenses*
- f) *Comments, Compliments & Complaints*
- g) *Councillor and Officer Protocol*
- h) *Information*
- i) *Data and GDPR*
- j) *General Privacy Statement*
- k) *Freedom of Information Publication Scheme*
- l) *Code of Conduct*
- m) *Guidelines for Broadcast*

The policies noted above were all shared with Councillors in advance of this meeting and were discussed as to whether any changes were necessary. They were agreed as presented.

#### **Proposal**

That the policies are agreed and ratified for the council year 2025/26

**Proposed by: Cllr Smith. Seconded by: Cllr Marsh**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**FC 20/26 To refer the following policies to the appropriate committee and to agree that the committees have delegated powers to review, amend and approve such policies:**

#### **Operations & Resources Committee**



1. Social Media
2. Health & Safety
3. Lone Working
4. Driving at Work
5. Capability and Sickness Management
6. Incident Plan
7. 1to1 Supervision and Support
8. Employment
9. Maternity, Paternity, Parental and adoption
10. Redundancy
11. Training and Development
12. Absence and leave.
13. Equal Opportunities and diversity
14. Officers Allowances and Expenses
15. Security IT
16. Volunteer Policy and Process
17. Appraisal and Review
18. Recruitment and Retention
19. Sickness
20. Disciplinary Procedures & Background
21. Banking Procedures
22. Procurement
23. Investment strategy
24. Write off and Disposal.
25. Retention and Disposal
26. Safeguarding
27. Whistleblowing
28. Grievance
29. Officer Code of Conduct
30. Dignity at Work Policy
31. Employee Handbook
32. Asset Register
33. Internal Audit Terms of Reference
34. Business Continuity Policy
35. Menopause
36. Neonatal Care Leave

### **Proposal**

That the policies listed above are delegated to the Operations and Resources committee for review, agreement and ratification

**Proposed by: Cllr Smith. Seconded by: Cllr Norris.**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

### **FC 21/26 To consider affiliation or membership of any outside bodies not noted in FC 22/25 below.**

It was suggested that affiliation to Sustainable MK, in line with the previous agreements made at council regarding the fees payable, could be helpful.

### **Proposal:**

*That WCC agrees affiliation to Sustainable MK at £10,000 per year, covering any and all fees due for the provision of food via Food Connect to the three (3) community fridges within the parish*



**Proposed by: Cllr Rennie. Seconded by: Cllr Coughlan**  
**RESOLVED by way of majority vote (8 in favour, 4 abstentions).**

**FC 22/26 To approve continuing affiliation to the following bodies:**

The Council Manager spoke of the value or otherwise of the affiliations noted above, with some concerns noted that NALC continued to be an organisation that further consideration of value should be explored. However, it was suggested that at this point, affiliation should continue.

- a) National Association of Local Councils and the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (BMKALC)  
Proposed by Cllr Smith. Seconded by Cllr Marsh  
**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**
- b) Milton Keynes Association of Local Council's (MKALC)  
Proposed by Cllr Smith. Seconded by Cllr Norris  
**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**
- c) Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)  
Proposed by Cllr Smith. Seconded by Cllr Marsh  
**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**
- d) The Cooperative Councils Innovation Network (CCiN)  
Proposed by Cllr Smith. Seconded by Cllr Simpkins  
**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**
- e) Any further bodies identified via FC 21/25 above  
Sustainable MK – as above.

**FC 23/26 To agree to the appointment of Auditing Solutions as the internal auditor for the 2026/27 council year**

This issue had previously been discussed within Full Council and the RFO spoke to the paper, explaining that the two tenants of appointment, namely independence and competence, were more than met by Auditing Solutions and recommending that the council appoints said company for the coming year.

**Proposal**

That Woughton Community Council appoints Auditing Solutions to provide internal auditing for the council year 2026 – 2027.

**Proposed by: Cllr Smith. Seconded by: Cllr Marsh**  
**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**FC 24/26 To review insurance cover and ensure that this is suitable for the councils services and operations**

The Council Manager shared the insurance paperwork, explaining the variety and level of cover that is provided through the current policy. This includes the basic employers and public liability, but also more specialist elements, such as business interruption and fidelity insurances.

**Proposal**

That council agrees that the current insurance cover is suitable for the council, its delivery and services and meets the needs of the organisation.

**Proposed by: Cllr Smith. Seconded by: Cllr Mordecai**  
**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**Date of next meeting:**



Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 6:00pm, at the Woughton Community Council Hub, The Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.

**THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 6.44PM**

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



## PLANNING, LICENSING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2026, 6:00pm at the Woughton Community Council Hub, the Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.**

**Present: Cllrs Cllr Sue Smith (Chair), Deanna Norris (Vice Chair), Alan Williamson and Charlie Marsh (BH Dep).**

**Also present:**

Steve McNay (Council Manager)

**LD 98/25 Apologies:**

Apologies were received from:

- Cllrs Penny Glasgow, Michael Holland, April Rennie and Ruth McMillan

**RESOLVED - noted**

**LD 99/25 Declarations of Interest:**

*Under the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, made under s30 (3) of the Localism Act, members must declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting, and any additional interests not previously declared.*

No declarations were made.

**RESOLVED – noted**

**LD 100/25 Questions from the public (maximum 10 minutes):**

No questions submitted.

**RESOLVED - noted**

**LD 101/25 Chairs announcements:**

The Chair thanked MEARS for the donation of Easter Eggs, Three Ts café on Thursday (11- 1.30) and Quiz Night on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

**RESOLVED – noted.**

**LD 102/25 Minutes of previous meeting(s):**

To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on:

- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025.

**Cllr Smith proposed that the minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Williamson.**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**LD 103/25 To consider responses made to the following planning applications that fell outside the meeting schedule:**

- a) PLN/2026/0455 Proposed erection of two dwellings at 4 Holmfield Close, Tinkers Bridge, Milton Keynes, MK6 3AB

**(Papers attached – to note)**

- b) PLN/2026/0521 Certificate of lawfulness for the proposed loft conversion with rear dormer and a single storey rear extension at 17 BUCKBY, TINKERS BRIDGE, MILTON KEYNES, MK6 3DP



The committee was provided with details of the two applications above, with details of Full Council considering the Tinkers Bridge application (FC 181/25) and the submission agreed at that meeting was provided. This has been 'called in' and will be heard at the next MKCC committee meeting. No feedback was received regarding the second application, but queries were addressed within the meeting around HMO potential.

**RESOLVED – noted.**

**LD 104/25 To consider any planning applications that have arrived between the publishing of this agenda and the meeting.**

To try and avoid applications being unconsidered, a standing item to cover any late arrival papers.

**LD 105/25 To consider licensing application made**

- a) Street Trading Consent Boroughwide Renewal - Mister Softee, Reg JJ92 NNV, Ref 147614
- b) Street Trading Consent Boroughwide Renewal - Soft99Whip, S99 WHP, Ref 143311
- c) Street Trading Consent Boroughwide Renewal - Pecorella Whip - FJ72 WHP - 143302
- d) Street Trading Consent Boroughwide Renewal - Mr Guci Ices Ltd, R481 0SH, Ref169557
- e) Street Trading Consent Boroughwide Renewal - Mr Softee - T402 POA - 147552

No concerns were noted regarding any of the above and no comments were made.

**RESOLVED – noted.**

**LD 106/25 To note other planning related issues**

The committee received information relating to various issues that fall within the remit of this committee.

**RESOLVED – noted.**

**LD 107/25 To note decisions issued by MKCC Planning Authority**

The committee received updates on planning decisions issued by MKCC regarding previous considerations by this committee.

**RESOLVED – noted.**

**Date of next meeting:**

**To be confirmed at the Annual Meeting – likely to be Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May**

**Woughton Community Council Hub, The Local Centre, Council Chambers, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.**

**THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 6:23 PM**

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



## OPERATIONS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026, 6:00pm at the Woughton Community Council Hub, the Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.**

**Present: Cllrs Deanna Norris (Chair), Sue Smith (Vice Chair), Tony Coughlan, Penny Glasgow, Charlie Marsh, April Rennie, Alan Williamson.**

**Also present:**

Steve McNay (Council Manager)

Marta Sobis (Responsible Finance Officer – RFO)

Mable Kong-Rawlinson (Business Services Manager / Deputy Clerk)

**OC 81/25 Apologies:**

There were apologies received from Cllrs Bobey and McMillan.

**RESOLVED - noted**

**OC 82/25 Declarations of Interest:**

Under the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, made under s30 (3) of the Localism Act, members must declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting, and any additional interests not previously declared.

There were no declarations received.

**RESOLVED - noted**

**OC 83/25 Questions from the public (maximum 10 minutes):**

There were no questions received.

**RESOLVED - noted**

**OC 84/25 Chairs announcements:**

There were no announcements made

**RESOLVED - noted**

**OC 85/25 Minutes of previous meeting(s):**

To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on:

- Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

It was proposed that the minutes were a true and accurate record.

**Proposed by: Cllr Norris. Seconded by: Cllr Rennie.**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote**

**OC 86/25 To review and approve the bank reconciliation and payments made during the month of March 2026**

To ensure suitable committee oversight of payments made and to ensure bank reconciliations are correct, in line with relevant financial process and procedures, papers were presented and checked by the Chair and Vice Chair.

**Proposal:**



*That the financial documents provided, bank reconciliation and payments made, were correct and in line with agreed policy and procedure.*

**Proposed by: Cllr Norris. Seconded by: Cllr Rennie  
RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**OC 87/25 To review and approve the following policies:**

- a) Risk Register and Contingency Planning
- b) Councillor Allowances and Expenses
- c) Comments, Compliments & Complaints
- d) Councillor and Officer Protocol
- e) Information
- f) Data and GDPR
- g) General Privacy Statement
- h) Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
- i) Code of Conduct
- j) Guidelines for Broadcast

It was noted that the General Privacy Statement was not available via the link provided, so this policy was provided and spoken to by the Council Manager.

It was noted that the Risk Register document states that this will work alongside the Contingency Planning document. This in actuality sits within the Business Continuity Plan, which includes contingency planning, so updated wording will be included to make this clear.

Interest was also expressed in the other documents and included discussion around whether the council may choose to implement the allowances policy that covers Quality Council status.

There was also discussion around the patchy nature of the policies and the need to have a 'suite' – the Business Support Manager (BSM) spoke to the suite that the HR provider offers and that this is for discussion later in the meeting.

**RESOLVED**

**It was agreed that the policies noted were suitable for formal ratification at the Annual meeting.**

**OC 88/25 To agree to a proposal regarding internal audit, in preparation for the Annual Meeting**

The RFO spoke to the paper that aimed to clarify that council has met the necessary standards around internal audit, with a view to formally appointing at the Annual Meeting. The Council Manager also spoke to the new 'Assertion 10' covering data management and related.

**Proposal**

*That the committee initially agrees to appoint Auditing Solutions as our internal audit provider, with a view to formally appoint during Annual Meeting*

**Proposed by: Cllr Norris. Seconded by: Cllr Rennie.**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote**

**OC 89/25 To propose implementation of the annual pay increase, in line with Green Book conditions.**

As has happened previously, the employers have made their 'full and final' offer for the pay scales for the coming year and, to help avoid negative impacts on officers, it was suggested that this be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> April, with a view to addressing any variances if and when they occur.

**Proposal:**



*That WCC implements a 3.3% pay increase to all scale points, backdated to April 1st 2026, from the April pay date. That in the event that there is any further increase later in the year, that this will be included once formally agreed.*

**Proposed by: Cllr Norris. Seconded by: Cllr Rennie.**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**OC 90/25 To receive an update on the end of year figures**

The committee reviewed the draft final figures from the end of the 2025/26 financial year, which showed a surplus of around £105,000. This is due to underspends in key areas (mainly staffing) and income at a higher level than anticipated. There will be some adjustments over the coming weeks and final figures will be provided at a later meeting. Councillors expressed reassurance given impending loss of LCTRS and praised the financial planning of the RFO.

**RESOLVED - noted**

**OC 91/25 To begin considerations of implementing HR policy suite provided by the HR consultants, to replace those currently in place (with a view to formal agreement in the new council year).**

The committee started considerations around the replacement of the various policies that council has ratified, with policies provided by CHRGS, the HR consultants, with a view to them updating as and when needed (e.g. with legislative updates). This linked to discussions earlier in the meeting and was supplemented by the BSM discussing some of the changes to employment legislation that will impact on the council.

**Proposal:**

*That the committee will look at the implementation of the CHRGS policies in the new council year*

**Proposed by: Cllr Norris. Seconded by: Cllr Smith**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote**

**Date of next meeting:**

**TBC at the Annual Meeting**

**Woughton Community Council Hub, The Local Centre, Council Chambers, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.**

**THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 6.42PM**

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



**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
Full Council.  
Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To bring the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy to council for review and adoption. As the scheduled annual policy review, seeking agreement following updates made due to changes in the Safeguarding team personnel and legislative changes.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the committee notes the report, agrees to adopt the updated policy and instructs the Business Services Manager to update the records and website accordingly.

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

All changes to the policy have been highlighted yellow with corrections scored out and new text inserted for council's reflection and agreement, prior to the publication of the final amended document being ratified. Comment boxes contain the reasoning or details of the proposed changes.

- Following recent DSL annual training and review of safeguarding policy guidance, some of the language has been amended and sections of information, now viewed as superfluous, have been removed.
- One of our named DDSLs has left the organisation since the last policy review. Therefore their details have been removed accordingly. Best practice is to have a minimum of two deputies. This is not possible at this time but Council are asked to note that when proposed recruitment into the Youth & Community directory allows, a second deputy will be appointed and the policy updated as it is a legal requirement to have our team named accurately on the policy.
- The change in terminology has been noted when referring to Safeguarding Practice Reviews (SPR) as these were previously known as serious case review panels.
- All relevant legislation has been reviewed by the DSL and updated accordingly.
- All personnel details, contact information, referral pathway links and reference documents have been reviewed, amended and updated. (note: not all links will work for all, some are referral pathway specific and will only work for those Safeguarding officers with appropriate accounts).
- The Care Act 2014 has been added alongside a sentence to reflect Council's commitment and recognition of our responsibility to safeguard adults.
- There has been a point added pertaining to the responsibility of WCC as a venue provider and host, to document within the policy and action in practice that organisations hiring our venues will be required to confirm that they have their own safeguarding policy, named lead and processes in place to safeguard their service users, whilst running from our venues.
- There has been a point added to document Council's ongoing commitment to the safe storage, retention and disposal of data. And, refer to the Data Controller records in place.
- It was decided to bring this report and amended policy to Full Council rather than wait until June Operations Committee to avoid further delays, in order to provide an opportunity to make a greatest number of members aware of the additions. And, ensure the least time to elapse without a ratified current policy.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

- The DSL has completed the review in order to make amendments to bring to council. No further work need be undertaken.
- The Operations Manager will disseminate changes to policy throughout our records, online files and website.
- The DSL will appropriately induct, train and enable a newly named deputy to join the Safeguarding team, when possible to retain our usual robust safeguarding team levels.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Reviewed and amended Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

**AUTHOR** Tash Darling

Youth & Community Services Manager.

Designated Safeguarding Lead & Designated CP Lead Officer



## Woughton Community Council

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Previously Policy known as: Young Persons Protection Policy. 2014. N Fulton  
Reviewed: March 2015. C Hutley  
Recreated as WCC Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy: 2016 T. Darling  
Renewed: September 2018. T Darling  
Reviewed: November 2020. T Darling. Personnel contact details updated September 21. T Darling.  
Reviewed: February 2023. T Darling. LADO details updated November 23. T Darling  
Reviewed: October 2024/ January 2025. T Darling. Out of Hours number and Named DDSLs Updated.  
T Darling.

**Commented [TD1]:** Removed review history- now unnecessary

## Introduction / Overarching aims

Woughton Community Council fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 11 of *The Children's Act 2004* (Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Various other statutory duties apply to other specific organisations working with children and families) to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and, in doing so, have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This includes arrangements to take all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised and take appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child. Alan Wood reviewed the role and function of LSCBs and found widely agreed needs for change to current local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Wood review (published May 2016) informed the *Children and Social Work Act 2017*. Significant changes to multi-agency arrangements have been established through this Act, creating new duties for police, health and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, as detailed in the *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (published March 2015. Updated 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025). The council commits to best practice standards and as such works to KCSIE 2025 and KCSIOOS 2023 guidance, despite not being a statutory body of education.

**Commented [TD2]:** Removed as no longer necessary in this detail

This council equally recognises the responsibility it has to safeguard adults under the *Adults at Risk, Care Act 2014*. Both this policy and practice have been informed by the most recent legislation:

**Commented [TD3]:** Updated legislation reference to KCSIE 2025 and added KCSIOOS 2023 (out of school settings)

**Commented [TD4]:** Included the legislation underpinning adult safeguarding- Care Act 2014

**Commented [TD5]:** Entered relevant legislation

Through their day-to-day contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults and direct work with families, staff officers have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to Children's Social Care via the Milton Keynes Council Referral Hub (ideally designated officers to refer). Furthermore, have a duty to promote welfare. This policy sets out how the council discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults accessing our services.

**Commented [TD6]:** Change Staff to Officers (more professional) and Resident to Individual to reflect that our services users may not always be residents

Our policy applies to all officers, councillors, administration, and support staff, paid and unpaid as all can be the first point of disclosure for an resident individual. Concerned parents/carers may also contact the council, which will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It is consistent with the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership (MKSP) framework.

In addition, Council recognises their responsibility to safeguard attendees of their buildings when hired to a third party. As venue owner, recognising our duty of care to ensure our premises are safe, but in the context of venue hire, agree the immediate responsibility for safeguarding attendees lies with the hirer. As the venue owner we take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the premises and confirm the hirer's safeguarding measures, especially when children, young people or vulnerable adults are involved. This takes the form of a signed declaration by the hirer acknowledging their responsibility.

**Commented [TD7]:** New section to detail acknowledgement of WCC responsibility as a venue owner to safeguard the attendees to hired groups. Specifics added into Procedures section of this policy.

## Policy

### There are four main elements to our policy:

1. **PREVENTION** through the provision of direct services and support offered to **resident** children, young people & vulnerable adult **service users** and the creation and maintenance of a whole organisation protective ethos.
2. **PROCEDURES** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are attached (see Appendix A)
3. **SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN, (YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS)** who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others.
4. **PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN (Young People & Vulnerable Adults)**

### 1. PREVENTION

We recognise that healthy self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect individuals.

The council will therefore:

- 1.1. Establish and maintain an environment where children, young people and vulnerable adults feel safe in both the real and the virtual world and are encouraged to talk and are listened to actively.
- 1.2. Ensure children/ young people know that there are adults in the council, specifically the youth service, whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.
- 1.3. Strive to include activities and opportunities which equip children, young & vulnerable adults with the skills they need to stay safer from abuse both in the real and the virtual world and information about who to turn to for help.
- 1.4 As appropriate to each setting, offer access to sexual health information, signposting, and access to contraception. Always ensuring understanding of individual's rights, choices and consent are central to decision making. Always reinforcing essential skills for each child, young person or vulnerable adult to develop in confidence, think independently and assess their own risks, based on their own judgements.

### 2. PROCEDURES

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership Competency Framework. A copy of these procedures can be found on the MK Safeguarding Partnership website <https://www.mktogether.co.uk/> Latest version September 2024. And found here: <https://miltonkeynesscp.trixonline.co.uk/>

2.2 The (DSL/DCPO) Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Child Protection Officer is the named **Safeguarding Lead Officer**.

2.3 The nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead & Child Protection Officer (DSL & DCPO) is **Tash Darling**.

2.4 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) officers are **Gemma Simmons & Lauren Steel**.

The council will:

- 2.4.1 Ensure there is a designated senior person who has lead responsibility for Safeguarding & Child protection in the council who has undertaken the necessary training deemed competent by the MKSP
- 2.4.2 Ensure that one full day training is undertaken initially and a refresher (usually 3.5hrs) is carried out in accordance with government guidance.
- 2.4.3 Recognise the importance of the role of the designated person/s and ensure they have the time, training and support necessary to undertake their duties which include, providing advice and support to staff, taking part in inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of children in need.
- 2.4.4 Ensure every member of staff, paid and unpaid, the committees and councillors know who the officers are and the procedures for passing on concerns from the point of induction. Each knowing:
  - The name of the designated person/s and their role
  - How to identify the signs of abuse and neglect
  - How to pass on and record concerns about an individual/s
  - That they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring child protection and safeguarding concerns to the designated Person/s

**Commented [TD8]:** Updated DDSL information in line with government & best practice guidelines

- That they have a responsibility to provide an environment in which children, young & vulnerable people are safe.
- That they can find the Core Inter–Agency Procedures on the MKSP and MKCC websites.

2.4.5 Have at least one nominated deputy for Safeguarding who has taken the appropriate training. Ensuring that every member of staff, paid and unpaid, and the committees and councillors know what the contingency arrangements are for when the designated members of staff are not available.

2.4.6 Ensure that the designated members of staff take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases. The Designated Persons have access to both the MKSP and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) is also available (see Appendix B)

2.4.7 Provide Safeguarding/ Child Protection training for all staff from the point of their induction which is updated regularly, every three years at a minimum, so that they are confident about:

- The council’s legislative responsibility
- Their personal responsibility
- The council’s policies and procedures
- The need to be alert to the signs and indicators of possible abuse, including possible **child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation**
- The need to record concerns
- How to support and respond to a child, young or vulnerable person who tells of abuse

2.4.8 Ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, within WCC or in other organisations in regard to children, young & vulnerable people and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies and appropriate involvement of the LADO.

2.4.9 Ensure that parents have access to information which details the responsibility placed on the council and staff in relation to child protection by setting out these duties on the website through public documents.

2.4.10 Ensure that appropriate steps have been taken to ensure organisations hiring our venues have confirmed they have a Safeguarding policy, named person and processes in place to safeguard attendees whilst utilising our venues.

**Commented [TD9]:** Guidance is we don’t need to add specifics anymore. As the trending themes of risk change. Better to encompass all

**Commented [TD10]:** Have added this into the policy specifically in line with government guidelines and will ensure the bookings system checklists this has been confirmed by the hirer.

## 2.5 LIASON WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The council will:

2.5.1 Work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all children, young and vulnerable people throughout the parish.

2.5.2 co-operate as required, in line with ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children (February 2024 June 2025)’, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding Safeguarding/ Child protection matters and providing written reports at child protection conferences, core groups and **Safeguarding Practice Reviews (SPR) previously known as serious case review** panels.

2.5.3 Notify the MASH and / or relevant Children’s Social Care Unit immediately, when it is known to WCC officers through partnership working if:

- It should have to exclude a child/ young person from a service who is subject to a Child Protection Plan (whether fixed term or permanently);
- There is an unexplained absence of a child/ young person who is a known subject to a Child Protection Plan
- There is any change in circumstances to a child/ young person who is a known subject to a Child Protection Plan.

**Commented [TD11]:** Updated legislation

**Commented [TD12]:** Updated policy to represent change from Serious Case Reviews to Safeguarding Practice Reviews as now correctly termed

## 2.6 RECORD KEEPING

The council will:

2.6.1 Keep clear, detailed, accurate records of concerns about children, young and vulnerable people (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children’s Social Care immediately.

2.6.2 Make every reasonable effort to ensure all records are kept securely and in a locked location or password protected in accordance with GDPR. (GDPR & Data Protection Policy April 2024 and General Privacy Statement 2020/ reviewed May 24) Updated May 2026

2.6.3 Ensure all relevant and appropriate to share safeguarding/ child protection records are shared with service providers/ partners as appropriate and agreed by Children's Social Care Child Protection Record Keeping Guidance. (GDPR. See WCC Privacy Policy)

2.6.4. Ensure documents are stored, retained and disposed of in accordance with government guidelines and WCC's GDPR documentation, with oversight of the Data Controller.

**Commented [TD13]:** Updated the reference to the policy we now have ratified

**Commented [TD14]:** Added this year. Inclusion of reference to our document & process that shows commitment to how we store, retain and dispose of data

## 2.7 CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

2.7.1 Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 (chapter 12) principles. In summary, they must be stored securely (password-protected/locked) and retained until a child turns 25, or up to 75 years for serious abuse cases. Records regarding staff allegations are kept until retirement age or 10 years post-allegation. The Data Protection Act does not prevent council staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

2.7.2 Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children/ young people and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child/ young person or parents to see data stored, they will refer the request to the Designated Person and ~~or senior management,~~ the Council Manager (who manages all information requests). The council will:

2.7.3 Ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the Designated Officer, Children's or Adult Social Care as required. As a general rule of if a child/ young person is deemed at risk (level 4) no data will be shown to unauthorised bodies or individuals.

**Commented [TD15]:** Updated to specific officer responsible for all information request

### \*Information sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers

(Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers March 2015. Update 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024) is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

**Commented [TD16]:** All links checked

2.7.4 Ensure that the Council Management or Designated Person will only disclose any information about a child/ young person to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis, including Domestic Abuse notifications.

2.7.5 Make all staff personnel aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children / young & vulnerable people. The designated person must always be informed and details of what is shared and the date recorded.

2.7.6 Ensure staff are clear with all concerned that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

**Commented [TD17]:** Changed to personnel to incorporate officers volunteers and councillors

**Commented [TD18]:** Look to implement a data store and system for this

## 2.8 COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/ CARERS

The council will:

2.8.1 Ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the council and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties in this policy, Data and Privacy Policies as public documents.

2.8.2 Undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agencies unless the circumstances preclude this action. If the council believes that notifying parents / family member or carer could increase the risk to the child, young or vulnerable person or exacerbate the situation, advice will be sought from the MASH / Children's Social Care. (Further guidance on this can be found in the MK Together Interagency Policy and Procedures – 01/01/2023 2025).

**Commented [TD19]:** checked

**Commented [TD20]:** Added carer to ensure clear any person who may increase risk if informed

**Commented [TD21]:** Updated in line with MKCC policy

## 3. SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN/ YOUNG PEOPLE

3.1 We recognise that abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on those vulnerable children/ young people which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support.

3.2 This council's staff may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children/ young people at risk. Nevertheless, when at youth clubs/ provisions their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may become withdrawn. Staff will be trained to be sensitive and respond accordingly

3.3 We recognise that some vulnerable children/ young people may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

3.4 The Council will support the child/ young person through:

3.4.1 Youth provision opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation

3.4.2 An ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community.

3.4.3 The youth department's behaviour/ conduct will support vulnerable children/ young people. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child/ young person but does not damage the child/ young person's sense of self-worth. Staff will ensure that the child/ young person knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but she/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred

3.4.4 Liaison with other agencies which support the child/ young person such as Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), ARC or Children and Family Practices

3.4.5 A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers

3.4.6 Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse or mental health issues are vulnerable and in need of support and protection; they may also be young carers

3.4.7 Monitoring and supporting child/ young person's welfare, keeping records and notifying Children's Social Care in accordance with the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership / MK Together Interagency Partnership.

3.4.8 When a child/ young person who is subject to a child protection plan leaves permanently, information will only be transferred to the new service providers on request and if deemed necessary to protect the child/ young person. The lead Social Worker from Children's Social Care will also be informed

### **3.5 SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND CHILD PROTECTION**

3.5.1 The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reported evidence of their substance misuse is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings, but the DSL/ SCPO will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- To believe the child/ young person's substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse
- To believe the child/ young person's substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or because of pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults
- To where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse.

### **3.6 CHILDREN OF SUBSTANCE MISUSING PARENTS/ CARERS**

3.6.1 Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with Significant Harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence.

3.6.2 When staff receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedures.

3.6.3 This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

- Use of the family resources to finance the parent's dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children
- Children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors, e.g. customers or dealers
- The effects of alcohol leading to an inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour
- Chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance
- Disturbed moods as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency
- Unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment
- Drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child

### **3.7 DOMESTIC ABUSE**

3.7.1 Where there is Domestic Abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships.

3.7.2 Social services, Head teachers and some other professionals may be notified of Domestic Abuse incidents where the police have been called and that involve children and young people under their duty of care and will take appropriate action to ensure children and young people are kept safe.

### **3.8 FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)**

3.8.1 Female genital mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is a surprisingly common form of abuse in the UK.

3.8.2 FGM is carried out on children between the ages of 0–15, depending on the community in which they live. It is extremely harmful and has short and long-term effects on physical and psychological health.

3.8.3 FGM is internationally recognized as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries, including the UK.

3.8.4 The council takes these concerns seriously and staff will be made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of FGM. Any indication that FGM is a risk, is imminent, or has already taken place will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy.

3.8.5 The Designated Person will make appropriate and timely referrals to Children's Social Care if FGM is suspected. In these cases, parents will not be informed before seeking advice. The case will still be referred to Children's Social Care even if it is against the child/ young person's wishes. It is now possible to restrict the removal of a dependant from the UK if FGM is suspected to be planned.

Note: Policy Amendment December 2023. [https://www.mktogether.co.uk/sites/default/files/2024-01/FGM\\_Policy\\_MKTSP%20Dec%202023.pdf](https://www.mktogether.co.uk/sites/default/files/2024-01/FGM_Policy_MKTSP%20Dec%202023.pdf)

### **3.9 FORCED MARRIAGE**

3.9.1 Forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used.

3.9.2 In cases of forced marriage discussion with the family or any involvement of the family or local community members will often place the child or young person at greater risk of harm. Families should not be approached if forced marriage is suspected.

3.9.3 Children and young people facing forced marriage often come from very loving families where the parental capacity to provide safety, emotional warmth and stability is excellent. The children are often high achievers at school, their health is good, they are well integrated into the local community and have good relations with the wider family.

3.9.4 It is important professionals are sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles and to child-rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. At the same time, they must be clear that child abuse cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons, therefore forced marriage must be responded to as a protection and safeguarding issue.

3.9.5 There is no specific offence of 'forcing someone to marry', criminal offences may nevertheless be committed. Perpetrators, usually parents or family members, could be prosecuted for offences including threatening behaviour, assault, kidnap, abduction, threats to kill, imprisonment and murder. Sexual intercourse without consent is rape, regardless of whether this occurs within a marriage or not.

3.9.6 Forced marriage is automatically handled as a child protection issue and staff should share Information quickly when a child is at risk.

### **3.10 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)**

3.10.1 Child Sexual Exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, drugs, alcohol, gifts or in some cases simply attention/ affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

3.10.2 Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship to serious organized crime involving gangs and groups.

3.10.3 Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyber bullying and grooming.

3.10.4 It is important to recognize that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of this abuse and may not recognise it as abuse.

3.10.5 Young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation and so procedures are in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.

3.10.6 Staff should notify the Designated Lead and should complete the MKSP Child Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Tool and refer to the Multi-Agency Referral Unit if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk.

## **4. PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

4.1 The council will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to the government guidance '2010 to 2015 government policy: helping employers make safer recruiting decisions' See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-helping-employers-make-safer-recruiting-decisions>

4.2 The following members of staff have undertaken Safer Recruitment training; Designated Safeguarding Lead: Tash Darling. It is recommended that this should be refreshed and certificated every 3 years and that the Council Manager and the Operations Manager should also complete Safer Recruitment training, so that at least two trained officers can complete every recruitment process for every role that entails working with vulnerable people.

4.3 Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff will be reported straight away to the Designated Lead and Council Manager. In cases where the Designated Lead Officer is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the Council Manager. If both The DSL & Council Manager are implicated, it will be reported to the Chair of Council (See Allegations flow chart Appendix C.) The council will follow the procedures set out in Part four of Keeping Children Safe.

4.4 The council will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or councillor and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe.

4.5 All allegations are reported to the LADO within one working day. Following consultation with the LADO, he will advise on all further action to be taken. Please note that the Designated Lead officer, Council Manager or Chair of Council should **not** seek to interview the child/ren, young people, vulnerable adult or members of staff involved until advice has been sought. Doing so may compromise any police interviews that may be necessary.

4.6 The council will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the council and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

4.7 Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children/ young people are protected.

4.8 Consideration must be given to the needs of the child/ young person and recognition that a child/ young person may make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

4.9 The council will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with children/ young people, young vulnerable adults and parents/carers. As part of the Induction process, all staff will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all children, especially those with a disability or who are vulnerable.

4.10 Although we are not a school setting, all staff can access *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings* ( KCSIE expectations around low level reporting. **Sept 24 Updated 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 and KCSIOSS 2023**) as a good guide to best practice.

4.11 The council will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with young people aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the *Sexual Offences Act 2003 Section 16 (Abuse of Trust)* .

4.12 The council will ensure that communication between children/ young people and adults, by whatever method, are transparent and take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and are open to scrutiny.

Commented [TD22]: Updated legislation and KCSIOOS included

## 5. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

There will undoubtedly be children/ young people who have Statements of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plans. For a number there will be multi-agency planning and involvement to support integrated care.

We recognise that, statistically, children with emotional, social, behavioural and mental health difficulties and challenges, characteristic of a significant percentage of the parish's population, are

particularly vulnerable to abuse. Council staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to indicators of abuse.

The Designated Lead Officer and signposted agencies will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self-esteem as part of an overall behaviour support.

The designated Lead Officer/ Youth Staff will endeavour to include informal PSHE informal education, as appropriate for each setting. And staff will as (continuous) good practice, teach children & young people, personal safety skills commensurate with their ability and needs. Children/ young people will be taught personal safety skills such as telling and who to tell, good and bad touches and good and bad secrets. The content of lessons can be shared with parents/carers so that these skills can be supported at home.

We promote high standards of practice, including ensuring that children/ young people know how to raise concerns, and have access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.

## **Appendix A**

### **Four categories of abuse**

#### **Physical Abuse**

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

#### **Neglect**

This is a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

It may involve the neglect of or lack of responsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

It also includes parents or carers failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

#### **Emotional Abuse**

This is the persistent emotional maltreatment so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are:

- Worthless
- Unloved
- Inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet another person's needs

It may include:

- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views
- Deliberately silencing them
- 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children including:

- Interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- Preventing participation in normal social interaction

It may involve:

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- The exploitation or corruption of children
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment although it may occur alone.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This may involve:

- Physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex)
- non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities involving:  
children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images,  
children in watching sexual activities
- Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## Appendix B Useful Contacts

### Designated Safeguarding Lead & Child Protection Officer:

Tash Darling. Youth & Community Services Manager & Safeguarding Lead Officer  
[tash.darling@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk](mailto:tash.darling@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk)  
01908 395681 / 07983 590546

### Deputy Safeguarding lead:

Gemma Simmons. Senior Youth Officer  
[gemma.simmons@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.simmons@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk)  
01908 395681 / 07983 599279

### Council Manager

Steve McNay  
[Steve.mcnay@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.mcnay@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk)  
01908 395681

### Chair of Council

Sue Smith  
[sue.smith@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk](mailto:sue.smith@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk)

### Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership

Telephone: 01908 254373  
<https://www.mktogether.co.uk/>  
Email [mktogether@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:mktogether@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

### Milton Keynes Council Multi Agency Referral Hub

Worried about a child, Telephone: 01908 253169/ 253170  
Worried about a vulnerable adult, Telephone: 01908 253772  
MKC main switchboard: 01908 691691

### Multi-agency referral forms (MARF)

[children@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:children@milton-keynes.gov.uk)  
referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by completing the [Multi-Agency Referral Form \(MARF\)](#).

### Adult-Safeguarding Alert (online referral form)

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/adult-social-care/safeguarding-adults-and-children/worried-about-adult> (lead page)  
<https://adultsportal.milton-keynes.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/safeguardingreferral#h1> (Referral Form)

### Emergency Duty Social Work Team

(Out of hours) Telephone: 01908 265545

### Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Commented [TD23]: Added to policy as the contact for information requests as per WCC policy

Commented [TD24]: checked

~~Debbie Young and Kay Newman~~, Denise Goodson and Mel Perkins the LADO team at MKCC. Any one of the team are representatives of the LADO and can be reported to. Email [lado@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:lado@milton-keynes.gov.uk) Telephone: 01908 254307

NB. If you wish to discuss any concerns and are unsure if the criteria has been met please complete and return a [LADO Notification form \(DOC, 116KB\)](#) to [lado@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:lado@milton-keynes.gov.uk) prior to contacting the service on 01908 254307.

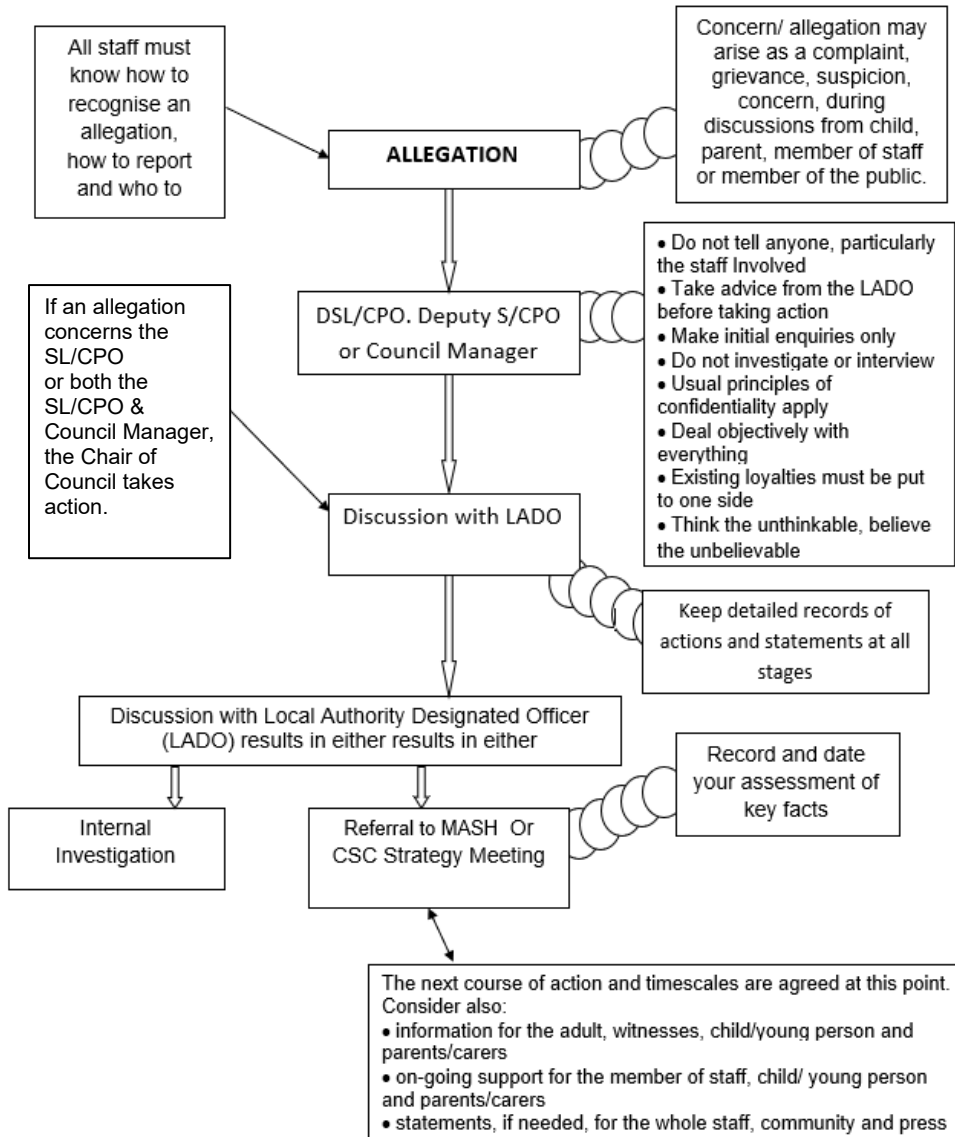
**Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAUI)**

Telephone: 101 or 01908 276140

## Appendix C

### Managing an Allegation against a Member of Staff in your setting

Commented [TD25]: LADO details updated



**Linked policies (i.e. to be read in conjunction with).**

- **GDPR & Data Protection Policy**
- **General Privacy Statement**
- **Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy**
- **Anti-bullying & Harassment Policy**
- **Health and Safety**

- Whistleblowing
- Complaints procedure

Commented [TD26]: Checked and updated

<b>Last review date:</b>	November 2025
<b>This review date:</b>	May 2026
<b>Next review date:</b>	May 2027
<b>Lead:</b>	Tash Darling
<b>Overseeing Committee:</b>	Operations & Resources Committee
<b>Approved:</b>	FC
<b>Review cycle:</b>	Annually

# WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

*Full Council – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026*

*Agenda Item FC 36/26*

**PURPOSE OF REPORT: To inform council of the Internal Audit report**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That council notes the Internal Auditors Report
2. That council agrees to the submission of the relevant parts within the AGAR submission

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

The internal auditor, Auditing Solutions, undertook our end of year audit in May, submitting both the report (attached) and the signed 'Internal Audit' bit of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

The internal audit looks at both financial systems and compliance with other aspects of local government – info on the website, minutes and agendas, policy and process, etc.

The specific areas covered are:

- Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations
- Review of Corporate Governance
- Review of Expenditure
- Assessment and Management of Risk
- Precept Determination and Budgetary Control
- Review of Income
- Petty Cash
- Review of Staff Salaries
- Fixed Asset Registers
- Investments and Loans
- Annual Governance and Accountability Return

All aspects of the audit were positive, with nothing noted for concern.

**SUGGESTED PROPOSAL:**

*'That council confirms that it has received the presented Internal Audit report'.*

**AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager  
Marta Sobis - RFO

---

# **Woughton Community Council**

*Internal Audit Report 2025-26: Final*

---

*Adrian Shepherd-Roberts*

*For and on behalf of  
Auditing Solutions Ltd*

## **Background**

All town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Governance and accountability Return (AGAR).

This report sets out the work undertaken in relation to the 2025-26 financial year which was completed by 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and 29<sup>th</sup> April 2026. We wish to thank the Responsible Finance Officer in assisting the process, providing all necessary documentation to facilitate completion of our review for the year to date. We have ensured that governance and financial controls remain effective.

## **Internal Audit Approach**

In undertaking our reviews for the year, we have had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts/AGAR. We have employed a combination of selective sampling techniques (where appropriate) and 100% detailed checks in a number of key areas in order to gain sufficient assurance that the Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and fit for the purposes intended.

Our programme of cover has been designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems are robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the Council's AGAR, which requires independent assurance over a number of internal control objectives.

## **Overall Conclusion**

We have concluded that, on the basis of the programme of work we have undertaken to date the Council has maintained adequate and effective internal control arrangements.

We ask that members consider the content of this report and acknowledge that the report has been reviewed by Council.

We have completed and signed the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the year's Annual Governance and Accountability Return, having concluded that, in all significant respects, the control objectives set out in that report were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council

# Detailed Report

## Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

The Council uses Scribe accounting software to maintain its accounting records currently covering the Metro Bank and Barclays Bank accounts.

Our objective in this area is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. We have:

- Checked that there is a full and effective cost centre and nominal account code structure;
- Checked detail of transactions recorded on the combined cashbook for two bank accounts and the savings account to supporting bank statements to March 2026;
- Checked and agreed detail on the bank reconciliations on the combined cashbook as at to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 noting that Councillors have been receiving and signing copies of reconciliations.

### *Conclusions*

*We are pleased to report that no significant issues have been identified in this area.*

## Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has a robust regulatory framework in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and that, as far as we are able to ascertain, no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been taken nor are such being considering currently.

We note that both Standing Orders (SOs) and Financial Regulations (FRs) were reviewed in May 2025 by the Council.

We have commenced our review of the minutes of the Full Council and its Standing Committees meetings for the year to date in order to ensure that no issues affecting the Council's financial stability either in the short, medium or long term exist: no such matters were identified.

We also note that the Council have reviewed their Code of Conduct and resolved to approve the General Powers of Competence.

We are satisfied that The Council have met the requirements for Assertion 10 for this financial year.

### *Conclusions*

*We are pleased to report that no significant issues have been identified in this area.*

## Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and approved budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;
- Official orders are raised wherever deemed appropriate;
- All potential prompt payment discounts have been identified and taken;
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery and that the annual submission has been returned in a timely manner.

We have completed our testing in this area, examining a sample of payments processed in the year to date of the non-pay related spending. Our sample has again been determined to ensure compliance with the above criteria.

We have also examined the periodically prepared VAT returns which have been or are in the process of being submitted to HMRC for the financial year to March 2026.

### *Conclusions*

***We are pleased to report that no significant issues have been identified in this area. We will undertake further work at our final review.***

## Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition. We have: -

- Noted that the Council's Operational Risk assessments and Financial Risk Register was reviewed for the 2025-26 financial year; at the Annual Meeting in May 2025; - and
- Obtained and examined the Council's current year insurance policy with Hiscox to ensure that appropriate cover is in place to include Employers and Public Liability at £10m,

### *Conclusions*

***We are pleased to report that no issues warranting recommendation have been identified in this area.***

## **Precept Determination and Budgetary Control**

We aim in this area of our work to ensure that the Council has appropriate procedures in place to determine its future financial requirements leading to the adoption of an approved budget and formal determination of the amount of the precept placed on the Unitary Authority, that effective arrangements are in place to monitor budgetary performance throughout the financial year and that the Council has identified and retains appropriate reserve funds to meet future spending plans. We are pleased to note that members continue to receive regular budget monitoring reports with over/under-spends and the level of earmarked reserves the subject of regular review.

We note that Full Council approved, at its 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025 meeting, a precept level of £977,318 for 2026-27.

We are pleased to note that members continue to receive regular budget monitoring reports with over/under-spends and the level of earmarked reserves the subject of regular review.

### ***Conclusions***

***There are no matters requiring formal comment or recommendation in this area of our review process.***

## **Review of Income**

The Council receives income from a relatively limited number of sources including meeting room and hall hire fees, interest, grants, donations and recoverable VAT.

Our objective is to ensure that robust procedures are in place to ensure that all income due to the Council is identified and invoiced (where applicable) appropriately with recovery effected within a reasonable time span. Consequently:

- We note that hall hire fees were reviewed in September 2023 and have not been increased subsequently.
- We have examined the Sales Ledger transaction report for the current year's income in respect of the hall hires for the Coffee Hall, Tinkers Bridge, Eaglestone and Netherfield;
- We have reviewed a sample of the hall bookings and the controls and processes for the registration and subsequent collection of fees.
- On the Scribe accounts there are currently 2 outstanding and 30 overdue, of which 6 are overdue by more than 6 months, the majority are short dated and do not raise any areas for concern.

### ***Conclusions***

***We are satisfied that there are no significant issues to report..***

## **Petty Cash**

We are required, as part of the annual Internal Audit Reporting process on the AGAR, to indicate the soundness of controls in this area of the Council's financial activities and note that the Petty cash is now being operated at both the Council office and the Youth Centre.

The Petty Cash is no longer operative and the Council have moved to using Pleo cards.

### ***Conclusions***

*No issues have been identified in this area warranting formal comment or recommendation.*

## **Review of Staff Salaries**

In examining the Council's payroll function, we aim to confirm that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the Employee Rights Act 1998 and the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) legislation as regards the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, together with meeting the requirements of the local government pension scheme, as further revised from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 in relation to employee percentage bandings.

We have reviewed the procedures in place for the assessment and calculation of salaries which are completed in house. Consequently, we have:

- Checked and agreed the gross payments for each of the Council's employees for October 2025 against the Council Manager's establishment record;
- Checked the computations for net pay, tax, NI contributions and superannuation deductions for the same sample month by reference to the relevant HMRC and Pension Fund contribution tables; and
- Verified the physical net payments to staff, together with payments to HMRC and the Pension Fund Administrators.

### ***Conclusions***

*There are no matters requiring formal comment or recommendation in this area of our review process.*

## **Fixed Asset Registers**

The Governance and Accountability Manual requires all councils to maintain a record of all assets owned. We have checked and agreed the principles used in the detail, as recorded in the Council's Asset Register, noting that it has been prepared using purchase cost values or where that value is unknown at the previous year's Return level or uplifted or decreased to reflect the acquisition or disposal of assets.

### ***Conclusion***

*No issues require formal comment or recommendation.*

## **Investments and Loans**

The Council has specific funds in investments, the “surplus” funds available being held in a Barclays Premium interest-bearing bank account in a CCLA deposit account and Property Fund. Council should note that the Property Fund should be accounted for in the Fixed Assets for accounting purposes.

The Council have two PWLB loans We have as part of our above expenditure review checked the current cash book entries for the PWLB statement and ensured that the capital and interest payments have been correctly reported in the accounts.

We also note that The Council have approved an Investment Strategy in May 2025.

### ***Conclusions***

*There are no matters requiring formal comment or recommendation in this area of our review process.*

## **Annual Governance and Accountability Return**

The Accounts and Audit Regulations required that all Councils prepare a detailed Statement of Accounts, together with supporting statements identifying other aspects of the Council’s financial affairs.

We have examined the Council’s procedures in relation to the preparation of the year-end detailed Annual Governance and Accountability Return data, also reviewing the arrangements for the identification of year-end debtors and creditors with no issues arising.

### ***Conclusions***

*No issues have arisen in this review area and, on the basis of work undertaken during the year, we have duly signed off the Internal Audit Report of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, assigning positive assurances in all but one of the relevant areas.*

# WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Agenda Item FC 37/26

**PURPOSE OF REPORT: To propose the signing and submission of the Annual Governance and Accountability Review (AGAR) and associated documents.**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That council notes the report.
2. That council agrees to the submission of the AGAR and relevant additional papers
3. That council agrees to the notice of public rights and publication of unaudited annual governance & accountability return being placed on the website / notice boards between 3 June and 14 July 2026

## **MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

The Annual Governance and Accountability Review (AGAR) is the yearly submission to the external auditors, showing whether the council has been compliant with rules, regulations and financial accounting. This process includes submitting the attached form (the AGAR), as well as internal audit reports, breakdown of finances, bank statements, evidence of General Power of Competence (GPOC), explanations of any variances, etc. It is a significant piece of work that shows the quality (or otherwise) of all local councils.

As with previous years, our external auditors are PKF Littlejohn who have provided significant levels of information for us to use to help ensure we are audit ready.

In addition to submitting the relevant paperwork, the council must also make arrangements for anyone who wishes to inspect the relevant paperwork (unaudited accounts, AGAR, etc.), to be able to do so. This must be compliant with legislation, with a form completed and published, etc..

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

AGAR submission to be approved

Confirmation-of-the-dates-of-the-period-for-the-exercise-of-public-rights-2025-26

## **SUGGESTED PROPOSAL:**

*'That council agrees to the signing and submission of the AGAR, with any associated papers or supporting documents and that the necessary actions are taken to ensure publication of the relevant notices to ensure public rights to inspect are in line with legislative requirements'.*

## **AUTHOR**

Marta Sobis – Responsible Finance Officer

# CONFIRMATION OF THE DATES OF THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

**This form is only for use by smaller authorities subject to a review and should not be published on your website**

Please submit this form to PKF Littlejohn LLP with the AGAR Form 3 and other requested documentation

Name of smaller authority: **Woughton Community Council**

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): **Buckinghamshire**

**On behalf of the smaller authority, I confirm that the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights are as follows:**

Commencing on 3 June 2026

and ending on 14 July 2026

(Please enter the dates set by the smaller authority as appropriate which must be 30 working days (i.e. Monday – Friday only and not Bank Holidays) inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July 2026 (i.e. Wednesday 1 July – Tuesday 14 July). The period should not commence before the approval of the AGAR.)

We have suggested the following dates: Wednesday 3 June – Tuesday 14 July 2026. The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Wednesday 1 July – Tuesday 11 August 2026.)

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Role:** RFO

# WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Agenda Item FC 38/26

**PURPOSE OF REPORT: To review councillor allowances and expenses for the 2026/2027 council year.**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That council notes the report
2. That council confirms that they would like to continue with special payments to Chair and Leader
3. That council agrees to the £1,085 (7.5% of £14,473 of Basic MKCC Allowance) as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel.
4. That Council confirms whether it wishes to apply the “Quality Council” premium to the allowance for 2026/27, following the decision made at the Annual Meeting. It should be noted that the Independent Remuneration Panel only recommends the “Quality Council” premium for Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS) Silver or Gold Award parish councils, which WCC does not currently hold.

## **MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

The payment of allowances to councillors is set in legislation, namely the *Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003*.

Woughton Community Council has paid an allowance for many years. This has included special allowances for the Chair, the Leader and the Ambassador (when one was appointed), alongside the basic allowance that is paid to all elected members.

As stated in the policy:

*“The Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment of all councillors, including such inevitable calls on their time as meetings with officers and constituents and attendance at meetings. It is also intended to cover incidental costs, such as the use of their homes for council business, telephone rental and broadband charges.”*

As stated in ‘Arnold Baker on Local Government Administration’:

*In calculating the amount suitable for a parish basic allowance (which must be the same for all save the chairman (sic) a local council should have regard not only to the principal council’s recommendation and practices but also to the costs of genuinely probably expenses. The total will mostly be small.*

*The discretionary feature of these allowances is important. A council is not obliged to pay them and therefore may pay less than the amount incurred.*

Woughton Community Council has paid allowance based upon the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), reporting via Milton Keynes City Council with

recommendations for parishes within the city. These recommendations have been that parish allowances should be paid at:

- 7.5% of the MKCC basic allowance for parish councils OR
- 10% of the MKCC basic allowance for quality parish councils.

It should be noted that the latest IRP report specifies that “Quality Council” status should only be applied to Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS) Silver or Gold Award parish councils, and not those holding only the Foundation Award.

For 2025/26, this was set at 7.5% for WCC, meaning a basic allowance of £942.00.

## **2026/2027**

There are several issues that council needs to consider when agreeing any allowance level for the coming council year:

- During the Annual Meeting the following was resolved:

*“That the council will pay allowances in accordance with the Independent Remuneration Committee recommendations, namely 10% of the MKCC allowance rate, reflecting the awarding of the Quality Council accreditation”*

However, having obtained a copy of the IRP report, Council may wish to review that decision. The recommendation is explicit: *“The Panel therefore recommends that those parishes who feel that a basic allowance would be appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 10% of the Basic Allowance for Milton Keynes Council for Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS) Silver or Gold Award Parish Councils. For those Councils that are not LCAS Silver or Gold Award accredited they should be able to pay an amount up to 7.5% of the Basic Allowance for Milton Keynes Council.”*

Since the overarching principle behind the decision made at the Annual Meeting was to follow the recommendations of the IRP, the RFO suggests that Council follows the advice of the Panel and approves 7.5% of the Basic Allowance. Compared to last year, this represents an increase of 15.2%, which should cover the inflationary increase in the costs of carrying out councillor duties.

- The payment of allowances to those other than the basic allowance – the Chair is permitted a ‘special allowance’ in legislation, but any other additional payment is not allowed in law. Whilst WCC has not been challenged about this previously, the Council Manager has been questioned about the additional payments and the power used to enable them. The special allowances are currently a double basic payment to both the Chair and Leader of the council.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The implication of the decisions noted above are:

- Awarding of the 15.2% on current levels = £1,085, an increase of £143 per councillor per year - currently 12 elected councillors, plus double allowances for two members, equals 14 x £143 = £2,002 in total
- Awarding of the increase linked to 'Quality Council' (including the 15.2% above) = £1,447 and increase of £505 per councillor per year. Currently 12 elected councillors, plus double allowance for two members equals 14 x £505 = £7,070 per year.

## **OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

As noted above, legislation does not make allowances a duty, but a power. Councils can choose to pay or choose not to. Additionally, councillors can, individually, choose to claim or not claim their allowances (although a choice to not claim must be made in writing, if a basic allowance scheme is in place). Co-opted councillors are not entitled to an allowance, despite having the same duties and responsibilities as an elected member.

The issue of additional payments is one that has been discussed previously but, for the first time, WCC has been questioned on the powers available to make these additional payments. Whilst there are good and valid reasons for the payments (i.e. that due to the complexity and size of WCC, the need to split the responsibilities of the senior role into that of Chair and Leader), the situation remains that there are no legal grounds for this arrangement. As such, Council needs to be clear about whether this is a policy that it remains comfortable with and if so, ratifies this policy with the knowledge that this *may* be challenged.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Annex B - Scheme of Councillors Allowances 2026-27

Annex C - Milton Keynes Council Parish and Town Council Report of IRP November 2025

## **AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager  
Marta Sobis - RFO

## **Milton Keynes City Council**

### **Scheme of Councilors' Allowances 2026/27 (Effective 11 May 2026)**

**SCHEME OF COUNCILLORS'  
ALLOWANCES  
2026-2027**

**1. General**

- 1.1 This Scheme is made under the terms of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 1.2 At the meeting of the Council on 21 January 2026 it was agreed that the Council would adopt this Scheme after taking into account the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel in November 2025.
- 1.3 Milton Keynes City Council size is 60 councillors, who serve a 4 year term of office and all of whom are entitled to receive the allowances under this scheme.
- 1.4 Allowances or expenses attributable to Political Groups, apply where a Political Group is constituted in accordance with section 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

**2. Basic Allowance**

- 2.1 All councillors to receive a Basic Allowance of £14, 473 per annum. This is paid in 12 equal, monthly instalments.
- 2.2 If a councillor ceases to be a councillor before the end of his or her term of office, payment of the allowance ceases and a pro rata calculation is made to ensure that the councillor receives the right amount of allowance. If necessary, an adjustment for under or overpayment may have to be made to ensure that the correct final payment is made, and the Council reserves the right to recover any overpayments of Basic Allowance.
- 2.3 The Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment of all councillors, including such inevitable calls on their time as meetings with officers and constituents and attendance at political group meetings. It is also intended to cover incidental costs, such as the use of their homes for council business, telephone rental and broadband charges.

### 3. Special Responsibility Allowance

3.1 The Council also pays Special Responsibility Allowances to those councillors it considers to have significant, additional responsibilities over and above the generally accepted duties of a councillor. These special responsibilities are related to the discharge of the Council's functions.

3.2 Milton Keynes City Council currently pays Special Responsibility Allowances for the following roles at the rates stated:

Leader of the Council	£43,419
Deputy Leader of the Council	£21,710
Main Opposition Group Leader	£19,539
Cabinet Member* <sup>1</sup>	£17,368
Smaller Opposition Group Leader(s)* <sup>2</sup>	£10,855
Chair of Scrutiny Committee* <sup>3</sup>	£8,684
Chairs of Task and Finish Groups* <sup>4</sup>	£6,513
Chair of Planning Committee	£13,026
Chair of Licensing & Regulatory Committees (1 person)	£10,855
Chair of Audit Committee	£6,513
Chair of Corporate Parenting Panel	£6,513
Chair of Standards Committee	£4,342

#### Notes:

\*<sup>1</sup> A maximum of 8 Cabinet members may be appointed in addition to the Leader and Deputy Leader.

\*<sup>2</sup> Subject to a minimum Political Group Size of 15% of the Council size.

\*<sup>3</sup> - Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee  
- Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee  
- Community and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee  
- Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee  
- Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee

\*<sup>4</sup> Payable pro rata depending on the length of time the Group is in place.

3.3 Special Responsibility Allowances are paid in 12 equal, monthly instalments.

3.4 In the event of a councillor ceasing to hold an office which entitled him or her to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance before the term of office is completed, payment of the Allowance ceases, and a calculation based on the number of days in the Council year concerned will be made to determine the entitlement. If necessary, an adjustment for under or overpayment may have to be made to ensure that the correct final payment is made, and the Council reserves the right to recover any overpayments of Special Responsibility Allowance.

- 3.5 Notwithstanding, any agreed Parental Leave Policy for Councillors, in the case of a councillor who is in receipt of a Special Responsibility Allowance being unable to carry out the duty for which the Allowance is payable for a period of three months or more, requiring the duty to be carried out by a specific councillor as deputy, the Council will consider the circumstances, with the option of ceasing the Special Responsibility Allowance payment to the councillor concerned, and making a retrospective payment to the deputising councillor for the whole of the three month period, and continuing until the original councillor is able to resume the duty concerned.
- 3.7 Under the terms of Milton Keynes City Council's Scheme of Allowances no councillor is allowed to receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance, even if they fulfil more than one role.
- 3.8 In the event of a councillor already in receipt of a Special Responsibility Allowance being appointed to an office with a different level of Special Responsibility Allowance, a calculation based on the number of days in the Council year concerned will be made to determine the entitlement. If necessary, an adjustment for under or overpayment may have to be made to ensure that the correct final payment is made, and the Council reserves the right to recover any overpayments of the Special Responsibility Allowance.

#### **4. Co-opted Members of Committees**

- 4.1 Persons co-opted to serve on Committees, Sub-Committees or Panels, and who have voting rights, shall receive an allowance of £720 calculated pro-rata to the term of co-option. This is to be paid in 12 equal, monthly instalments and will be liable for tax and National Insurance.
- 4.2 All co-optees are eligible for travel and subsistence allowances at the Councillors' rate when carrying out the duties for which they are co-opted.
- 4.3 If the co-opted person ceases to serve as a co-opted member before the end of his or her term of co-option, payment of the Allowance ceases, and a calculation based on the number of days in the Council year concerned will be made to determine the entitlement. If necessary, an adjustment for under or overpayment may have to be made to ensure that the correct final payment is made, and the Council reserves the right to recover any overpayments of this allowance.

#### **5. Civic Allowances**

- 5.1 The Mayor of Milton Keynes receives a civic allowance of £15,197 per annum, paid in 12 equal, monthly instalments.
- 5.2 The Deputy Mayor of Milton Keynes receives a civic allowance of 50% of the Mayor's allowance, i.e. £7,599 per annum, paid in 12 equal, monthly instalments.
- 5.3 Civic Allowances are liable for tax and National Insurance.

5.4 In the event of a Mayor or Deputy Mayor ceasing to hold office before the term of office is completed, payment of the Allowance ceases, and a calculation based on the number of days in the Council year concerned will be made to determine the entitlement. If necessary, an adjustment for under or overpayment may have to be made to ensure that the correct final payment is made, and the Council reserves the right to recover any overpayments of the Civic Allowance.

## **6. Child Care and Dependent Carers' Allowance**

6.1 All councillors and co-opted members of Council committees can claim, on production of appropriate receipts, the Child Care and Dependent Carers' Allowance.

6.2 Child Care:

The current Real Living Wage (as set by the Living Wage Foundation) of £13.45 per hour applies and will be up rated each November in line with the Living Wage Foundation's annual review.

6.3 Specialist Care:

Specialist care is reimbursed based on the actual costs incurred, subject to the production of receipts and medical evidence that this type of care is required. The allowance has no daily or monthly maximum claim when undertaking Approved Councillor Duties.

6.4 Claims for Child Care and Dependent Carers Allowance are inclusive of travel time associated with the Approved Duties.

6.5 Full details of the Dependent Carers' Allowance Scheme are listed in the Appendix of this Scheme.

## **7. Travel and Subsistence**

7.1 Re-imbusement to councillors for travel and subsistence will be paid at the current rates agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for the re-imbusement of Council officers, which are as HMRC (per mile) rates:

- Cars and vans                      45p
- Motorcycles                        24p
- Bicycles                             20p
- Electric vehicles                 45p

7.2 From 1 April, 2016 mileage claims are no longer liable for tax and National Insurance contributions.

7.3 Councillors will be reimbursed the full cost of travelling by the most appropriate means of transport at standard class rates whilst carrying out Approved Duties, provided a valid receipt (bus ticket etc), is produced to substantiate the claim.

7.4 All reasonable claims for subsistence expenses whilst carrying out Approved Duties will be paid provided they are supported by valid receipts. As there is no profit element in the payment of subsistence claims, this allowance is not subject to tax or National Insurance contributions.

## **8. Claimable Allowances**

8.1 There is a 3 month time limit for submitting claims for the claimable allowances above i.e. Child Care and Dependent Carers' Allowance and Travel and Subsistence Allowances. Any claims made outside of this time limit will only be paid in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Director Law and Governance and the Chief Internal Auditor.

## **9. Advance payment of expenses**

9.1 Where a Councillor would be financially disadvantaged and / or unable to undertake approved duties because of the initial cost outlay and associated delay in receipt of expense payments, consideration may be given to travel and subsistence expenses being borne directly by the Council as opposed to the Councillor bearing the expense and then submitting a claim for reimbursement.

9.2 The Director of Law and Governance will be required to authorise any advance payment of expenses.

9.3 Where the cost of travel and subsistence expenses is borne directly by the Council in the above circumstances these will be reconciled to a Councillor's expense account and published each year in accordance with legislative requirements.

## **10. Pensions**

10.1 Councillors are no longer eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## **11. Dual Authority Roles**

11.1 Councillors cannot receive an allowance from more than one authority (e.g. Fire Authority) for the same duties.

## **12. Forgoing Allowances**

12.1 A councillor may forgo all or part of any allowances to which he or she is entitled, provided he or she has given notice in writing to the Director Law and Governance.

## **13. Approved Duties**

13.1 The list of "Approved Duties" under the regulations for which the Travel and Subsistence Allowance is payable is as follows:

- a) a meeting of the Council;
- b) a meeting of the Cabinet;
- c) a meeting of a committee of the Cabinet;

- d) a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a committee of the Council where that councillor is a member of that committee, is substituting for a member of that committee or otherwise receives a specific invitation from the chair of that committee;
- e) a meeting of Cabinet members with the Corporate Leadership Team;
- f) a meeting with officer colleagues in relation to portfolio / corporate issues (to include Group Leaders, Cabinet members, Chairs, Vice-Chairs and opposition spokespersons) and Ward issues;
- g) a meeting of some other body to which the Council makes appointments or nominations (i.e. Outside Bodies);
- h) a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the Council makes appointments or nominations;
- i) a meeting of a local authority association of which the Council is a member (e.g. Local Government Association);
- j) a meeting in the Councillor's Ward called by a Council Officer or Parish Council;
- k) duties undertaken on behalf of the Council in connection with the discharge of any function of the Council conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises;
- l) duties undertaken on behalf of the Council in pursuance of any Procedure Rule requiring a councillor or councillors to be present while tender documents are opened;
- m) duties undertaken on behalf of the Council in connection with arrangements made by the Council for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of Section 342 of the Education Act 1996;
- n) a meeting which has been:
  - i) both authorised by the Council, a committee, or a sub-committee of the Council and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee, and
  - ii) to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited or to which two or more Councillors have been invited;
- o) a meeting of the Cabinet, committee of the Cabinet, committee of the Council, or sub-committee, at which a councillor, who is not appointed to that body:
  - i) attends to present an item which he/she has requested be included on the Agenda in his/her name;
  - ii) is required to attend to answer questions/give evidence; or
  - iii) attends to present a report on behalf of another body of the Council;
- p) a formal meeting of a Councillor's Political Group;

- q) attendance at conferences, seminars and other Councillor Development and training events as approved by the Council or the Service Director (Legal and Democratic Services);
- r) attendance at casework surgeries organised at advertised times and venues within the Councillor's own ward; and
- s) any other duty approved by the Council in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

#### **14. Indexing**

14.1 The Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, Civic Allowances and Co-Optees Allowances are subject to indexation commensurate with the percentage increase in staff salaries from the previous financial year, from April 2027 for a period of up to four years.

#### **15. Duration**

15.1 The above Scheme of Allowances is operative from 11 May 2026 until 31 March 2027 or such other time as agreed by the Council.

## Dependant Carer Allowance Scheme

1. The Scheme is open to all elected councillors of Milton Keynes City Council and co-opted members of Council committees.
2. The Scheme covers the care of dependants whether children, elderly people or people with disabilities for whom those listed in 1 above have responsibility.
3. The rate payable is as follows with no maximum time cap:
  - a) Childcare – Real Living Wage of £13.45 per hour
  - b) Specialist Care – actual costs subject to medical evidence supporting the requirement for specialist care
4. The Scheme covers care provided for a councillor's/co-opted member's dependant(s) whilst they are carrying out any 'approved duties', including travel time, as set out in Section 12 of the Scheme of Councillors' Allowances.
5. Carers must be over the age of 16 and not be a member of the claimant's own household.
6. Where the provision is for childcare, it is recommended that a registered child-minder / nursery or an approved child carer is used. However, it is ultimately the parents' responsibility to make adequate provision for their childcare needs.
7. Claims should be made on the Councillor's Business Expense claim forms, supported by valid receipts. Co-opted members of committees should submit their receipts with a covering letter to the Head of Democratic Services, Milton Keynes City Council, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes, MK9 3EJ.
8. Receipts should contain the date the care was provided, length of time the care was provided, the 'approved duty' covered, the cost per hour and should be countersigned by both the carer and claimant. Claimants may wish to use the attached sample receipt as a standard format.
9. In accordance with paragraph 9 of the Council's Scheme of Councillors' Allowances claims for Dependent Carer Allowance payments should be submitted within 3 months of the event.

## Dependant Carers' Allowance

Date care provided	
Duty covered	
Time from	
Time to	
Total hours	
Cost per hour (£)	
Total (£)	
Name of Carer	
Signature of Carer	
Name of Claimant	
Signature of Claimant	



# REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

FOR

MILTON KEYNES PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

---

NOVEMBER 2025

Index



---

Introduction	Page 1
Terms of Reference	Page 2
Approach	Page 2
Arriving at the Recommendations	Page 2
Recommendations	Page 3



## Report from the Parish and Town Councils Independent Remuneration Panel

November 2025

### 1. Introduction

---

The Parish Remuneration Panel was convened by Milton Keynes Council as the 'Responsible Authority' so required by the 2003 Regulations:

The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003  
Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1021 and the amendment – Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1692

The Guidance issued on these regulations for Parish Allowances/ or Members of Parish Council is:

*"91. Parish councils may choose to pay their members an allowance, known as 'parish basic allowance', to recognise the time and effort they put into their parish duties. There is no obligation on parish councils to pay such allowances. Each parish council may make an allowance available to its chair only, or to each of its members. Where all members receive an allowance, the amount payable to the chair may be different to that paid to other members, but otherwise the amount paid to each member must be the same. Parish basic allowance is a discretionary allowance. It may be paid in a lump sum, or at intervals throughout the year.*

*92. If a parish council wishes to pay a basic allowance, it should have regard to a recommendation from its parish remuneration panel. This is a panel set up to make recommendations to parishes in its area. The membership of a parish remuneration panel will be the same as the independent remuneration panel of the district or county council within whose area the parish is situated. The panel will make a recommendation as to whom basic allowance should be paid, and the level of the allowance."*

*(New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances, DCLG, 2003)*



## 2. Terms of Reference

---

The Panel was asked to consider and make recommendations to Parish Councils regarding:

- Basic Allowance
- Chair's Allowance
- Travel and Subsistence Allowance
- Indexation

### The Parish Independent Remuneration Panel

The Parish Independent Remuneration Panel comprised of the same membership as the Independent Remuneration Panel which met on 29 and 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025 to review the allowances for Milton Keynes Council and the members of the panel are set out below:

The Panel comprised the following members:

- Stewart Bailey, Local Resident and Managing Director, Virtual Viewing.
- Melanie Beck, Local Resident and Community Champion.
- Mark Palmer, Director: Development and Governance, South East Employers, Chair

The Panel met virtually via MS Teams. The Panel meeting was held in private session.

## 3. Approach

---

All Parish and Town Councils were invited to provide views through a questionnaire and the opportunity to speak to the Panel in respect of the Parish Basic Allowance, the Chair's Allowance, Travel and Subsistence and Indexation. Twenty-two Parish and Town Councils responded to the questionnaire, attached as Appendix 1.

The Panel thanks the twenty-two Councils who responded to the questionnaire.

The Panel paid close attention to the Government Guidance when making its recommendations.

## 4. 4. Arriving at the Recommendations

---

The Panel was of the view that whilst parish councillors did not stand for office for any financial reward, an allowance could actively support someone in the councillor role and that it was essential to be able to attract parish councillors from a wide range of backgrounds. Councillors should also not be out of pocket for undertaking the role.



## 5. Recommendations

---

### Basic Allowance

The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1021 state the basic allowance recommended by a Parish Independent Remuneration Panel can be for any amount up to 100 per cent of the basic allowance paid by Milton Keynes Council.

**The Panel therefore recommends that those parishes who feel that a basic allowance would be appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 10% of the Basic Allowance for Milton Keynes Council for Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS) Silver or Gold Award Parish Councils.**

**For those Councils that are not LCAS Silver or Gold Award accredited they should be able to pay an amount up to 7.5% of the Basic Allowance for Milton Keynes Council.**

The recommended Basic Allowance for Milton Keynes Council is **£14,473**; 10% of this is **£1,447** and 7.5% of this is **£1,085**. This should **only** be paid to Members who are elected not those co-opted.

### Chair's Allowance

The Chair's allowance that can be recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel can be for any amount up to 100 percent of the Basic Allowance paid by Milton Keynes Council. The Panel is of the view that any decision regarding the payment of a Chair's Allowance and the level of that allowance should be left entirely to the discretion of individual parish and town councils, considering individual local circumstances, whilst adhering to the recommended maximum allowance.

**The Panel therefore recommends the Chair's Allowance for LCAS Silver or Gold Award Parish and Town Councils should be up to 20% of Milton Keynes Council's recommended Basic Allowance. The recommended Basic Allowance is £14,473; 20% of this is £2,895.**

**The Panel further recommends that the Chair's Allowance for those Councils not LCAS Silver or Gold Award accredited should be up to 15% of Milton Keynes Council's recommended Basic Allowance. The recommended Basic Allowance is £14,473; 15% of this is £2,171.**

**The Chair's allowance can be in addition to the Basic Allowance, or not, if no Basic Allowance is paid.**

## 6. Travel and Subsistence

---

The Panel recommended that travel and subsistence for Parish and Town Councils should be at the same rates paid to the Milton Keynes Council Members. **The Panel recommends that the Parish Councils should pay a mileage allowance of 45p per mile (for a car) and 4p per mile for an electric car which are in line with the HMRC**



**recommendations. Subsistence rates should be paid in line with Milton Keynes Councillors. Travel and subsistence is for approved councillor duties only.**

### **Indexation of Allowances**

The indexation of the allowances paid to Members of the parish and town councils should be in line with the indexation applied to Members Allowances at Milton Keynes Council, namely linked to staff salary increases of Council employees.

### **Withdrawal of Allowances**

The Panel recommends that where a member is suspended or partially suspended, all or part of their allowance should be withheld. This would also apply to Travel and Subsistence allowances.

### **Foregoing Allowances**

A parish/town councillor may choose not to receive all or part of any allowance to which they would otherwise be entitled. To do so they must give written notice to the proper officer of the parish/town council.

### **Publicity**

Regarding the allowances, the Panel recommends that the Parish Councils act in accordance with the following guidance (Section 5, Paragraph 30 of the Regulations (SI2003 No. 1021):

*“Parish councils are required to publicise their allowances in a notice or notices conspicuous in their area. These notices must remain in place for at least 14 days. In addition, they must make a record of the allowances they have paid available for inspection at reasonable notice. They must provide copies of this record on request and may charge a reasonable fee for this. Parishes must also publish details of the parish remuneration panel reports. Again, these are minimum requirements, and parish councils may wish to go further in making local people aware of their allowances scheme and payment levels. For example, they may wish to circulate details of their allowances in the parish newsletter, if they have one, place them on a website, or publish them in one or more local newspapers.”*

### **Publication**

**The Panel recommends that the Parish Clerk should publicise the allowances scheme to all Parish and Town Councillors and the public. Each Parish and Town Council is required to formally adopt the recommendations in this report.**

### **Implementation**

**The Panel recommends the Basic Allowance and Chair’s Allowance should be implemented from May 2026.**

Mark Palmer  
Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel  
November 2025

# WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

*Full Council – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026*

*Agenda Item FC 40/26*

**PURPOSE OF REPORT: To update the committee on planned events**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the committee notes the report and consider the proposal below

**MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

The following events are taking place over the coming months. Councillors are welcome at all events and if any would like to have a more defined role at any, please contact the Council Manager for information.



The Annual Meeting of the Parish will be held tomorrow (Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2026) and will be at Netherfield Meeting Place. The proposed 'agenda' is that we review the minutes from last year, introduce councillors, review the works that have been undertaken within Netherfield, the other meeting places and more widely across the parish and look to future events and activities within the estate of Netherfield and across the parish. There will also be a chance to look back on the overall achievements of the council and for any questions to be put to councillors / officers be members of the public.

Refreshments will be provided at the end of the meeting.

June 2026

**We Live Here Beneath the Surface**  
**WOUGHTON COMMUNITY GARDEN**  
SATURDAY 13 JUNE | 11AM-4PM  
\*BETWEEN 102-104 ROCHFORDS, COFFEE HALL, MK6 5DJ

Join us for this art and nature based event exploring the hidden world 'Beneath the Surface' at the Woughton Community Garden.

What lives below our feet, underground-within the soil? From the earthworms that work the soil, to the microbes and fungi that break compost and leaf litter down, we explore what lives below our feet creating fertile soil in which to grow food.

**Fun for the whole family**

GIANT BUGS BY ALICE BOLAND-RHODES  
AN EXPERIENCE BY STUDIO SAM  
WILDLIFE ID  
BUG HUNT  
PLANT YOUR OWN SEED  
NATURE SURVEYING  
COMPOST DEMO  
AND MORE...

**FREE**

To book go to [miltonkeynesartscentre.org](http://miltonkeynesartscentre.org)  
or call 01908 608108

Milton Keynes Arts Centre



# Summertime 26

**THE WHEELIE BIG PICNIC** CYCLING FUN FOR ALL  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MK CITY COUNCIL & CYCLE SAVIOURS  
SPONSORED BY RIDE 2 GIVE

- 4 organised rides
- Prize Giveaways
- Pump track
- Food & Refreshments
- Entertainment
- Dr Bike : Safety checks & Repairs
- Mountain Bike Prize Raffle
- Play, Craft & Cycling Activities

DATE: 27 JUNE 26 TIME: 12 - 4 PM LOCATION: GEORGE'S PLAYING FIELD, COFFEE HALL, MK6 5DL

**PEARTREE BRIDGE DINOSAUR PICNIC** FAMILY FUN DAY  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  The Parks Trust MILTON KEYNES

- Fairground Rides
- Giant Games
- Refreshments
- Inflatables Fun
- Bug Hunt
- Dinosaur Fossil Hunt
- Craft Activities
- Ice Cream
- Great Picnic location

DATE: 29 JULY 26 TIME: 11 - 3 PM LOCATION: DINOSAUR FIELD, PEARTREE BRIDGE, MK6 3DQ

ALONGSIDE THESE TWO GREAT EVENTS, THE YOUTH TEAM WILL BRING YOU A GREAT SUMMER HOLIDAY PROGRAMME FOR ALL

**PLAY RANGERS:** Multiple FREE outdoor play sessions for all ages at different play areas across the parish each week. 

**WEEKLY YOUTH PROJECTS:** Junior & Senior Youth Groups & projects every week.

**HAF: HOLIDAY ACTIVITY FUND:** 4 weeks of fully funded, pre-bookable trips and sessions for families in receipt of Free School Meals.

KEEP AN EYE ON OUR WEBSITE, SOCIALS & NOTICE BOARDS OR CALL THE YOUTH TEAM FOR MORE INFORMATION  
TEL: 01908 395681 / 07983 598279 E: [reception@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk](mailto:reception@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk)  
[www.woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk](http://www.woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk)



Working with MK Arts Centre, this event covers a range of activities up at the Community Garden. Suitable for the whole family, this looks like a great event (especially if the sun shines!).

*In addition, Wheelie Big Picnic will take place on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June, between 12 noon and 4pm. With loads of rides, activities, partner organisations, food, music and a 'festival' atmosphere, this event will build on the really positive feedback from the past couple of years events, with something even bigger!*

*For EVERYONE in the community to join in with – further publicity to come shortly, once all partners agreed and in place.*

## July 2026

29<sup>th</sup> July – 11am – 3pm

**Peartree Bridge Picnic.** Working with the Parks Trust, this will build upon the previous two years of activity with this event, bring more 'stuff' to the field and encourage more residents to attend.

## August 2026

Summer programme – details TBC

### *Picnics in the Park events*

**Coffee Hall on Wed 5<sup>th</sup> August.** Same day as Andy is doing the Rockets at the Community Garden. These should complement each other nicely.

There is no larder that day so Farah can take part and provide a WCC food offering.

**Eaglestone is Sat 15<sup>th</sup> August.** Tony, Liz and Luke can make it. Discussions have taken place with a few residents who can also be involved that day.

Initial discussions have been around holding this one in the green space next to EAC.  
Hall is currently free all day on sat 15<sup>th</sup> August.

### **September 2026**

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September – FESTIVAL.

It is suggested that this remains similar to the previous two years, based on Netherfield and taking a similar approach (stalls, stage, inflatables, etc.). If the committee considers an alternative would be preferable, please propose alternatives to enable sufficient time to plan accordingly.

### **December 2026**

Santa Sleigh to take place on the week of 14<sup>th</sup> December. It is suggested that any estate based activities are considered as early as possible, to enable suitable planning and delivery of any WCC expectations and to ensure project plans are in place by end of October.

## **Additional**

As agreed previously, both listening events and outdoor estate based activities are in the process of being agreed. Councillors are encouraged to discuss with Kevin (Community Development and Events) their availability and proposals for dates, activities or otherwise, as previously agreed at council as part of the wider engagement / estate based activity programme.

### **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

These activities are all within the agreed plans and reflect staffing capacity. Involvement of councillors within the estate based activities (listening and picnics) was previously agreed by council.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Currently working within the agreed budgets and sourcing any additional funding that may be available. This will include any sponsorship opportunities, grant funding and donations in kind / partner involvement.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

### **SUGGESTED PROPOSAL:**

*For information only.*

### **AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager