

# Woughton Community Council

## Operations & Resources Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024, 6:30pm at the Woughton Community Council Hub, the Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.**

**Present: Cllrs Sue Smith (Chair), Deanna Norris (Vice-Chair), Eamonn Bobey, Tony Coughlan, Penny Glasgow, Ruth McMillan, April Rennie, Liz Simpkins, Alan Williamson**

**Also present:**

Steve McNay (Council Manager)  
Sean Perry (Operations Manager)  
Marta Sobis (Responsible Finance Officer).

**OC 124/24 Apologies:**

Cllr Ruth McMillan  
Cllr D'Anne Mordecai

**Agreed and accepted.**

**OC 125/24 Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

**NOTED**

**OC 126/24 Chairs Announcements:**

The Chair passed on her thanks for the D-Day event, including specific note that the Chip Shop has received positive feedback.

Chair also noted that tomorrow was Blue Bin day.

**OC 127/24 Questions from the public:**

No questions received.

**OC 128/24 Minutes of the previous meeting:**

The minutes of the Operations & Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 Were **AGREED** as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote**

**Proposed: Cllr Sue Smith. Seconded: Cllr Penny Glasgow**

**OC 129/24 To agree the List of Payments, Bank Reconciliations for the months of April and May 2024:**

Cllrs Sue Smith and Deanna Norris have examined the paperwork, are satisfied that they are a true and accurate record and will sign them. This was agreed by all present.

**RESOLVED - noted**

**OC 130/24 To agree recommendations for the Model Financial Regulations.**

The RFO spoke to the paper, explaining the background and agreement at last Full Council to pass to this committee for a more in-depth discussion, prior to returning to Full Council for ratification. The document includes some 'musts' (the items in bold, which are legislative) and some areas where the document can be altered to meet the needs of the council – this document is intended for ALL local (town, parish, community) councils, who vary from under £1000 a year to multi-million pound operations and as such, some flexibility is necessary.

The RFO / Council Manager have made some suggestions, including around delegated authority for spending. It was noted that the original document had amounts that were very low (£500 maximum) and that this would not be suitable for a council the size and complexity of WCC.

The Council Manager noted some areas which will need to be addressed in future (e.g. council tax arrears exclude councillors from voting on budgets / precepts) and recommended that this is noted in future.

It was agreed that as this document needs to be ratified at Full Council, any further comments could be passed to the RFO / Council Manager, prior to going to the next Full Council meeting.

**Proposal:**

*That the committee makes the following recommendations regarding the Financial Regulations:*

- *That the term 'Operations Committee' replaces 'Finance Committee' throughout and is used as 'shorthand' for Operations and Resources committee*
- *That the agreed levels of authority for spending are as stated in the attached document, namely:*
  - o *Up to £3,000 delegated to Council Manager / RFO or other officer, within agreed budgets*
  - o *£3,000 - £12,000 delegated to Clerk / RFO in agreement with Chair of Council / committee, within agreed budgets*
  - o *£12,000 - £25,000 – Committee / Council, if within agreed budgets.*
  - o *£10k plus – Full Council (if outside budget) or £25,000k plus in all cases*
- *That other inclusions, as noted in the draft regulations presented to the committee, are listed and included in the paper for Full Council.*
- *That once agreed, further adjustments are made to associated policies, including the Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, Procurement, etc.*

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

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**OC 131/24 To recommend provision of First Aid training for councillors, RA's and other community members.**

The Council Manager provide an overview of a short course provider, covering the essential elements of first aid, but doing so within a two hour session.

It was suggested that the sessions should start with councillors, who can then assess the value and benefits, prior to offering additional sessions to RA's and community groups, as previously agreed by council when discussing provision of defibrillators.

**Proposal**

*'That the committee tasks the Council Manager with booking, publicising and managing the delivery of sessions, with the initial course offered to councillors, with further community sessions for Resident Associations and other community groups / members provided during the coming year'*

**Proposed by Cllr Coughlan. Seconded by Cllr Smith.**

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**OC 132/24 To inform the committee of a request support to a campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries**

The Council Manager passed on an email that had been received requesting support for a campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries. This was sent by a researcher working with Lord Foster (House of Lords) who is promoting this campaign.

The committee was broadly supportive of the approach, but requested clarification of what 'support' meant, in terms of WCC. There were also comments regarding dangerous chargers, environmental impact of lithium and the banning scooters altogether.

**Proposal**

*'That the Council Manager responds to the request, asking for clarification in terms of what is meant by 'support' and, once clear, brings this issue back to this committee for agreement'.*

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

**RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**OC 133/24 Community Infrastructure Funding for 2025/6  
(Report by the Council Manager and associated documents attached)**

Further discussions took place around the options relating to the funding, following on from the deferment last meeting. Suggestions were made including speed bumps, ascot railings (or similar), Speed Indicator Devices (SiDS) and 'narrows', (like those on Lloyds in Coffee Hall) as an attempt to slow traffic.

A query was also noted about improvements to play areas – the Council Manager explained that following a meeting earlier that day, there was potential for funding coming through alternative means, but that the request was noted.

It was requested that the Council Manager investigate costs for the four items noted, with a view to returning to this committee for a final decision in July, for submission by August 31<sup>st</sup> 2024.

**DEFERRED**

**OC 134/24 Proposal to include Councillors in the BMKALC Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).**

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), offered as a 'member benefit' through the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (BMKALC) has been extended to now be offered to councillors and as such, it was suggested that the committee may want to consider this.

It was also suggested that a more formal 'mentoring' scheme be put in place for new councillors for additional support.

**Proposal**

*'That Woughton Community Council arranges to extend the subscription of the Employee Assistance Programme to include 19 members of the council'.*

**Proposed by: Cllr Smith Seconded by: Cllr Bobey**

**RSOLVED by way of unanimous vote.**

**Date of next meeting:**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024, 6:30pm at the Woughton Community Council Hub, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG

**THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 7.33 PM**

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