

OPERATIONS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8th December 2025, 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), Donna Fuller, Charlie Marsh, D'Anne Mordecai, April Rennie, Alan Williamson.

Also present:

Steve McNay (Council Manager)

Marta Sobis (Responsible Finance Officer – RFO)

OC 48/25 Apologies:

There were apologies received from Cllrs Tony Coughlan and Penny Glasgow

RESOLVED - noted

OC 49/25 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 50/25 Questions from the public (maximum 10 minutes):

There were no questions received.

RESOLVED - noted

OC 51/25 Chairs announcements:

The Chair shared details of the upcoming Santa Sleigh tours.

RESOLVED - noted

OC 52/25 Minutes of previous meeting(s):

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

- Monday 10th November 2025.

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

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote

OC 53/25 To review and approve the following policies:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Handbook

The committee discussed the policies, with the Council Manager explaining the changes proposed. These included in the whistleblowing policy some adjustments around detailing what might lead to whistleblowing, external disclosures and a more comprehensive policy.

With regard to the Staff Handbook, mainly changes to language, with an aim to making the document more accessible and inclusive, alongside updating some information and minor changes to some aspects (e.g. inclusion of vapes within the smoking policy).



Proposal

That the committee agrees to ratify the changes proposed within the documents provided and with the review dates noted. The committee also agrees to the Staff Handbook being further reviewed during 2026 to ensure all policies and procedures are consistent across the council.

Proposed by: Cllr Norris. Seconded by: Cllr Marsh

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

OC 54/25 To consider an initial draft of a councillor safety policy

Following concerns raised at a recent training session, an initial draft of a councillor safety policy was provided to be considered by the committee. There was a positive discussion that explored issues around safety and potential options for ways to ensure all working with the council could be kept safe. The Council Manager explained the purpose and reasoning behind the approach.

Linked to the Lone Working policy. Ideas included:

- Using shared diaries.
- Personal alarms (either linked to call centres or otherwise)

Issues were noted around the fact that risk can be managed to some extent, but issues remain (e.g. traveling between appointments, issues in the street, etc.).

It was agreed that the Council Manager would look at training as part of this approach (e.g. use of shared calendars, etc.) and return to the committee with an updated version.

RESOLVED – noted.

OC 55/25 To agree a budget proposal for the 2026/2027 council year.

The RFO reviewed the up-to-date budget proposals, which included a variety of scenarios as requested previously by the committee. The RFO explained that the scenarios included the options around both inflation and any precept increase, with 3% the default inflation rate (despite it being slightly higher, currently). The RFO also explained the impact of LCTRS ending. The Council Manager also provided updates on financial impacts (based on banded tax rates) and feedback from the annual survey.

Having spoken through the various proposals, the committee discussed options and linked this to the precept discussion (see below).

OC 56/25 To agree a precept recommendation for the 2026/2027 council year

Following the budget discussions, the committee also provided a recommendation for the Full Council meeting, regarding the precept level suggested.

Proposal:

That the committee recommends a 7% increase each year for the next three years to be take to the Full Council meeting for formal ratification.

Proposed by: Cllr Williamson. Seconded by: Cllr Marsh

RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

OC 57/25 To update the committee on the recruitment process for the Operations Manager / Deputy Clerk position

The Council Manager updated the committee on the recruitment process, explaining that Mable Kong Rawlinson has been appointed to the position, coming with an impressive CV and impressing the interview panel. They are enthusiastic about starting and eager to get all the necessary information so that she is as well informed as possible.

It was suggested that the council could invite them to attend some activities in advance, so that they can get to meet people in advance.

Mable is due to start at the beginning of March, as has a three month notice period to work.

RESOLVED – noted.



Date of next meeting:

Monday 17th January 2026 @ 6.00pm

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 _____

