

OPERATIONS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday 8th April 2026

To: All members of the **Operations & Resources Committee**

Cllrs Deanna Norris (Chair), Sue Smith (Vice Chair), Eamonn Bobey, Tony Coughlan, Penny Glasgow, Charlie Marsh, Ruth McMillan, D'Anne Mordecai, April Rennie, Alan Williamson, Donna Fuller.

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Operations and Resources Committee** to be held on **Monday 13th April 2026** commencing at **6:00pm** at the **Woughton Community Council Hub, The Local Centre, Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG**, when the business set out in the following agenda will be transacted.

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.

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/>



AGENDA

OC 81/25 Apologies:

To receive and accept apologies from members unable to attend the meeting.

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.

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

To receive questions and statements from members of the public.

OC 84/25 Chairs announcements:

To receive announcements from the Chair.

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

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

- Monday 9th March 2025.

(Attached)

OC 86/25 To review and approve the bank reconciliation and payments made during the months 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.

(To be provided at the meeting)

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

(Policies via website, for consultation prior to presentation at the Annual Meeting)

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

To propose and clarify that council has met the necessary standards around internal audit, with a view to formally appointing at the Annual Meeting.

(Paper attached)

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

To agree to the implementation of the pay increase proposed by the 'employers' of 3.3%

(Paper attached)



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

To review the final figures from the end of the 2025/26 financial year.

(Paper attached).

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).

To consider 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).

(Policy documents available at [Policy document for review](#))

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.



OPERATIONS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9th March 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, Ruth McMillan, April Rennie, Alan Williamson.

Also present:

Steve McNay (Council Manager)

Marta Sobis (Responsible Finance Officer – RFO)

Ian Tegerdine (Estates Manager)

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

OC 70/25 Apologies:

There were apologies received from Cllrs Bobey and Mordecai.

RESOLVED - noted

OC 71/25 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 72/25 Questions from the public (maximum 10 minutes):

There were no questions received.

RESOLVED - noted

OC 73/25 Chairs announcements:

The Chair shared details of the Men's Breakfast at No 99.

RESOLVED - noted

OC 74/25 Minutes of previous meeting(s):

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

- Monday 12th January 2025.

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 75/25 To review and approve the bank reconciliation and payments made during the months of January and February

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 Smith
RESOLVED by way of unanimous vote.

OC 76/25 To review and approve the following policies:

- a) Incident Plan. With the minor update of a change to Cllr McMillans phone number, the policy was submitted with the changes agreed in January. These were:
- Inclusion of cyclists and pedestrians in traffic accidents
 - Changes to Residents Association list

Proposal:

That the committee agrees to ratify the Incident Plan, with the changes noted.

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

OC 77/25 To ratify the 'Employers' Discretions Policy', following discussion at the previous meeting

To comply with the rules of the pension provider, the RFO spoke to the updated paper that detailed the agreements made (at the January meeting). The overall view was that the pension is generous and that any variations would be made on an 'ad hoc' basis, considering the specifics of each situation. As a result, a formal policy was presented.

Proposal:

That the Employers Discretions Policy presented is agreed and ratified as the policy for inclusion within the overall pension offer

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

OC 78/25 To receive and update on the buildings improvements and maintenance works undertaken, with future priorities highlighted.

The Estates Manager spoke to the paper, explaining the works that have been undertaken, clarifying that there is further planned work including PAT testing on 15th May (councillors to provide power leads for tablets, if possible, alongside any other WCC electrical equipment). They also explained that further works are planned, including a fire system at No 95 (very much needed as recently condemned), doors in Chambers, etc. They also gave an update on the roof at Eaglestone Activity Centre (MKCC dealing).

Before and after pictures were requested by the committee.

RESOLVED – noted.

OC 79/25 To receive an update on the budget for the current council year

The RFO gave an anticipated end of year outturn, explaining that income was higher than anticipated and expenditure lower, leading to an end of year surplus of around £100k. This was noted as primarily around grants received and staffing posts unfilled.

The committee thanked the officers and the RFO for this work, noting that unfilled posts mean more work for others and specific thanks offered to Landscapers who have worked through a very, very wet winter.

RESOLVED – noted.

OC 80/25 To begin considerations around policies relating to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and associated programmes



The Council Manager spoke to the paper, which offered initial documents relating to the provision of an AI policy, with a view to agreement on an approach that the council considers suitable. Various elements were considered, including AI making things up, needing to ensure that sources are cited, that 'closed systems' can be helpful (e.g. add policy documents and only use them for questions) and a need to consider any GDPR issues. AI is 'only as good as the input'.

It was suggested that WCC should consult with ALC / NALC / SLCC / etc. around whether they have anything, with councillors suggesting that there is a government system that could / should be utilised rather than reinventing the wheel.

RESOLVED – noted and will be discussed further at forthcoming meetings.

Date of next meeting:

Monday 13th April 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 6.49PM

Chair _____ Date _____



WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations and Resources Committee – 13th April 2026

Agenda Item 88/25

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To agree to appoint Auditing Solutions as internal audit provider at Annual Meeting

RECOMMENDATION:

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

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

In preparation for submitting the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, this paper looks into Assertion 6 – Internal Audit.

We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems

To warrant a positive response to this assertion, we need to appoint an internal auditor to undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes. There are two key principles an authority must follow in appointing an internal audit provider: independence and competence. Adherence to these principles should be reviewed every year, before Annual Meeting, where formal appointment takes place. Independence (personal, financial and professional) requires absence of any actual or perceived conflict of interest. It means that the person carrying out internal audit role should not have any involvement in, or responsibility for, the financial decision making, management or control of the authority, or for the authority's financial controls and procedures. As for competence, there is no requirement for the internal auditor to be professionally qualified, however essential competencies required for the role include: understanding basic book-keeping and accounting processes, understanding the role of internal audit in reviewing systems and awareness of relevant principles and practice of financial and other risk management.

Having reviewed both the competency and independence of our current internal audit provider, Auditing Solutions, we are confident that they meet all the criteria set out in the JPAG guidance.

SUGGESTED PROPOSAL:

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

AUTHOR

Marta Sobis – RFO

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations and Resources Committee – 13th April 2026

Agenda Item OC 89/25

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To propose the implementation of the 3.3% pay increase proposed by the ‘employers’, in line with ‘Green Book’ terms and conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Council notes the report
2. Council considers the ‘custom and practice’ approach
3. Council agrees to make, ratify and vote on the suggested proposal below.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

As is usual, the ongoing negotiations between the ‘employers’ and the unions around pay increases has started but has not been concluded in a timely manner for agreement at the start of the financial year. However, a ‘full and final’ proposal has been made by the employers, namely that all pay points increase by a flat 3.3% rate. This is similar to last year which was, in turn, a diversion from recent years, where the employers have offered a specific cash amount on all scale points (e.g. £1925 for two years, £1260 last year).

In previous years, council has agreed to implement the pay increase offered, with a view that the increase will not be lower than the employers offer and, in the event that there is any further increase, this can be awarded at a later date. The reason for this approach is to minimise the impact on officers, reflect a more accurate cash flow approach within the council’s accounts (staffing being the largest cost centre) and to take a proactive approach to managing public funds.

The 3.3% increase is lower than was budgeted for in the 2025/26 council year and will have a positive impact on the bottom line. When budgets were prepared, a 3.5% increase was predicted, so this award falls under the budgeted amount.

This approach also means that impact on National Insurance, student loans, benefits income or other additional income is reduced and does not lead to any additional hardship.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

As noted above, this approach has been appreciated by officers as it reduces the financial impact for many, in terms of additional payments being needed in the event of a large ‘back pay’ amount being included in a single month.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

As noted, there will be a minor saving against the budget – 0.2%, which is around £2,000.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

This increase relates to pay scale for officers – the Council Manager is investigating any recommendations made regarding councillor allowances.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

The formal proposal, as detailed on the SLCC website is:

The National Employers have now responded to the Trade Unions' claim regarding the pay offer for 2026/27. This is a full and final offer of:

- *a 3.3% increase on all SCP points from 1 April 2026*
- *all other parts of the unions claim are rejected.*

Please note that this offer is for a one year deal only.

The current Consumer Prices Index for February was 3.2%.

The unions joint claim was submitted in December 2025, the National Employers consulted councils and met on 24 February and adjourned for private political discussions before coming back with this offer.

As a reminder the claim was for (one year deal):

- *an increase of at least £3,000 or 10% (whichever is greater) across all NJC spinal column points*
- *a minimum pay rate of £15 an hour for the NJC pay spine*
- *a two-hour reduction in the working week*
- *an increase of one day annual leave*

Or for a multi year deal:

- *year 1: £3,000 or 10% (whichever is greater) on all spinal column points, alongside the introduction of a £15 minimum hourly rate*
- *year 2: An increase of RPI + 3%*
- *year 3: An increase of RPI + 2%*

The unions will be considering this and responding to it shortly.

We will keep members advised of progress.

SUGGESTED 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.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Marta Sobis – Responsible Finance Officer

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations and Resources Committee – 13th April 2026

Agenda Item OC 90/25

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To provide the committee with an initial end of year financial report

RECOMMENDATION:

That the committee notes the report, in preparation for a full review in line with the demands of the AGAR and end of year reporting more fully

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

As of 31 March 2026, the financial year concludes with a gross surplus of £105,511.41

Budgeted Receipts: £1,313,718.00

Actual Receipts: £1,362,540.44

Variance: £48,822.44

Budgeted Payments: £1,364,717.92

Actual Payments: £1,308,028.95

Variance: £56,688.97

Gross surplus: $48,822.44 + 56,688.97 = £105,511.41$

This is in line with the forecasted surplus of £103,435.07.

This figure will be subject to adjustments in the coming weeks, including accruals and prepayments to reflect costs incurred but not yet invoiced, and payments made in advance for the next financial year (e.g. insurance). The RFO will finalise the year-end figures and report the final net position ahead of AGAR submission.

The net surplus will be transferred to General Reserves, strengthening the Council's financial position for the new year and ensuring capacity to address upcoming challenges, including ongoing investment in meeting places and the anticipated loss of LCTRS funding.

AUTHOR

Marta Sobis - RFO