

## Woughton Community Council

### Services & Communities Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 6:30pm, Woughton Community Council Hub, Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.**

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

**Also present:**

Brian Barton (Committee & Member Services Officer)  
Tash Darling (Youth Manager & Safeguarding Lead)  
Steve McNay (Council Manager)  
Sean Perry (Community Services Manager)

**SC 01/23 Apologies:**

Cllr Liz Simpkins (personal)

**AGREED**

**SC 02/23 Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr April Rennie agenda item SC 06/23 (personal).

**NOTED**

**SC 03/23 Questions from the public (maximum 10 minutes):**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**NOTED**

**SC 04/23 Chairs announcements:**

There were no chairs announcements.

**NOTED**

**SC 05/23 Minutes of previous meetings:**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were **AGREED** as a true and correct record and was signed by the Chair.

### **Communities and Environment Fund Application(s)**

**SC 06/23 Tinkers Bridge Residents Association:**

Application received for £981 towards coach hire costs for a trip to Hunstanton and Skegness.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the committee awards £981.00p to the Tinkers Bridge Residents Association towards coach hire costs for a trip to Hunstanton and Skegness.**

## **SC 07/23 Moorfriends:**

Application received for £2,425.91p towards coach hire costs and entry tickets to Twinlakes.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the committee agrees to funding the coach hire costs only.**
- 3. To review the funding policy looking at what venues can and cannot be funded, including whether entrance fees should also be funded for attendance at events.**
- 4. To look into producing an estate based formula taking population figures into consideration.**
- 5. That a discussion paper including all of the above is considered at the next committee meeting.**

## **Reports**

### **SC 08/23 To inform the committee of an opportunity for some collaborative work with the City Discovery Centre:**

The City Discovery Centre got in touch to see if residents' associations or local organisations in the older parts of the new city estates (e.g. Netherfield, Beanhill) would be interested in a supper club session as part of the Good City project to animate the original masterplan for Milton Keynes.

The Good City project is aiming to introduce the Milton Keynes community to the original planning and design principles of the new city by revisiting the original masterplan from 1970 and inspiring people to consider what they feel is important and special about Milton Keynes.

The project focuses on The Plan for Milton Keynes and the supper clubs will be to converse and helping people form opinions on what they want to retain for the future.

The sessions will be led by Studio Chehade and will be creative and interactive, with discussion and activity over some food.

Following on from these sessions, wider workshops will be held for participants to feed into a community artwork and exhibitions that utilise the outputs. There will also be activities and re-enactments for younger audiences in the public libraries.

The sessions are fully funded and will be run one at a time and with a venue that is convenient (any venue hire costs will be covered), or to host a session at Bradwell Abbey.

The sessions have spaces for up to ten (10) people and food is provided. Some will be filmed in order to create a video that can document the process and also some sessions will also have an artist present to draw activities as they happen.

**RESOLVED**

**That the committee notes the report and agrees to the Council Manager progressing discussions with the City Discovery Centre.**

**SC 09/23 To update the committee on the Community Centres, as part of the review of the services programme.**

The Council Manager informed the committee that as part of the annual schedule of reports, June is the Community Centre update month, the report covered the main issues surrounding the community centres, gave an overview of relevant statistics, finances, bookings and makes some proposals for the future. The report did not include any information about the Chambers, the Wellbeing Room or No 95 Jonathans Youth Centre on Coffee Hall, as this was dealt with in a further agenda item later on in the meeting.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. That the committee notes the report and tables any questions or queries.**
- 2. That the Council Manager and relevant officers will provide a further update in line with the programme of reports.**

**SC 10/23 To update the committee on preparations and proposals for community centre improvements:**

The Council Manager updated the committee on preparations and proposals for community centre improvements.

The same report had been considered at the last meeting of the Operations & Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023 (minute no OC 18/23 refers).

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the committee begins to consider approaches that they would like to see to 'cover' any closures and suspension of services during that time.**
- 3. That the committee agrees to any additional funds that may be needed to enable ongoing provision and decide what is a reasonable level to allocate.**
- 4. That the Council Manager and Ward Councillors continue to chase up Milton Keynes City Council for the agreed funding to enable works to start.**
- 5. That this report and any recommendations are shared with the Services & Communities Committee, to ensure that service provision can also be managed effectively.**

**SC 11/23 To propose a trial of a Table Tennis Club at Eaglestone Activity Centre:**

The committee was requested to establish and evaluate the feasibility and sustainability of a table tennis club at the Eaglestone Activity Centre.

Ninety minute sessions will be run every other Monday evening for a trial period of six (6) months. The project team will be led by a local resident, who will coordinate and manage the club's activities. The project will be reviewed at the end of the six (6) month trial period.

There is one (1) tennis table in place at the Eaglestone Activity Centre. This should be sufficient to gauge interest during the six (6) month evaluation period, but the group is exploring funding from Table Tennis England and others for more equipment should the trial be deemed successful.

The building would be provided free of charge for the duration of the session, which is a potential hire loss of £33 per hour. Sessions will be free of charge to users during the evaluation period, but it is envisaged that a session fee will be charged to help cover the cost of building hire if sessions continue afterwards.

**RESOLVED**

**That the committee notes the report.**

**SC 12/23 To inform the committee of a proposed piece of work around youth services that extends beyond parish boundaries:**

Cllr Fuller, Leader of Woughton Community Council, is also a Ward Councillor and Chairs the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee.

As part of this role, alongside the role within Woughton Community Council, Cllr Fuller is interested to look at gathering evidence to support additional investment into youth services across the city. This may or may not have an impact within the area, given the strength and depth of the youth offer already in place.

To support this, Cllr Fuller has discussed the proposal to gather local providers together to begin this process, agree suitable statistics and data that can be gathered and shared, look at what is happening across the city (and indeed, what isn't), whether there is any correlation between investment into services and what happens within the community.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. That the committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the committee agrees to the Youth Manager working with the Milton Keynes City Council Ward Councillor / Childrens and Young Peoples Lead to investigate issues around youth support within the city.**
- 3. That the findings of any work, comes back to this committee.**

**SC 13/23 To update the committee on the Wellbeing and Advice Service (WAS):**

There are two (2) part-time advice officers, providing a total of 40 hours per week of advice. This breaks down as:

- Office = up to 20 hours (resident facing)
- Outreach = 7 hours
- Phone/Email/Zoom/Messenger/Background Research = 13 hours

### **Minimum advice hours per week (bookable/drop-in):**

- Coffee Hall = 10 hours, spread over a 5 day week
- Netherfield = 2 hours on a Tuesday
- Beanhill = 2 hours on a Wednesday

Regardless of drop-in session times, an advisor will see or make contact with any resident as necessary during the working week.

### **Wellbeing Room usage**

The wellbeing room is available for use during office hours. It is regularly booked out for sessions by the advice team, but can also be booked by councillors and other users (for example MK Dons SET, Job Club).

- Average usage per week has increased by 43% since the last report in November 2022
- Average usage per week = 10.2hrs (previously 7.1hrs)
- This still leaves the wellbeing room free for over 70% of the working week

### **Wellbeing Activities**

Following a successful pilot at Coffee Hall Meeting Place last October, there is just started another six (6) week chair yoga course at the Tinkers Bridge Meeting Place.

A recently planned 'fully funded' collaboration between Woughton Community Council and Arts for Health has not been pursued, as it would have cost Woughton Community Council in excess of £1,600 in addition to providing a hall and council officers. The Welfare Advice Service will continue to explore other opportunities for wellbeing activities.

### **Breakdown of casework**

Benefits and housing are the largest source of advice cases, making up two thirds of all enquiries.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) cases are the largest single benefits enquiry we receive. Recent Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) figures suggest that around 40% of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claims are rejected the first time round, and with this in mind advisors are undertaking PIP training for the Advice Service. This will give a better insight into the PIP process, and increase the chances of getting applications and appeals through.

### **Recent Successes**

- A resident moved from unsuitable accommodation into sheltered housing.
- Two (2) children now attending school after long-term absence. The school is funding their transport.
- Successful PIP tribunal with over £4,000 of benefits back paid to the claimant.

- Resolved an issue with a resident not being able to claim Universal Credit (UC) due to overpayment of sick pay.
- Getting Milton Keynes City Council to arrange a home visit for a resident who has a multitude of issues and felt they were being ignored.
- Youth Café established at Number 95 Jonathans, Coffee Hall offering a range of benefits, employment, housing and health advice for young people aged 16+
- The Advice Service has signed up as a referral partner with Better Housing Better Health, which will allow advisors to obtain utilities vouchers for residents in need. The Advice Service has already had success in obtaining vouchers for a vulnerable family.

### **Food Bank Vouchers**

Seven (7) Food Bank Vouchers have been issued to Woughton Residents in the first five (5) months of 2023, compared to eight (8) vouchers in the whole of 2022.

Cost of living is the main reason for issuing vouchers in 2023 so far. These vouchers were mostly issued during the first couple of months of the year, when heating and lighting were more in demand.

### **Referral Form**

As agreed at the Services & Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022, a referral form was introduced so that Councillors could hand cases over to the Woughton Advice Service. The form went live on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022, but to date no referrals have been received. The link will be resent to councillors as a reminder.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the committee notes the report.**
- 2. To adopt the Woughton Advice Service Referral Form at the next meeting of the committee.**
- 3. That the Community Services Manager to circulate a copy of the Woughton Advice Service Referral Form to all members.**

### **SC 14/23 To consider Participation in the MK CAN event:**

Milton Keynes Food Bank are launching Milton Keynes CAN for a Guinness World Record attempt for the longest line of cans of food at the Milton Keynes Rose on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 between 5:00pm to 6:30pm, and an invitation has been sent to Woughton Community Council.

The committee agreed to accept the invitation and if anyone wants to go to contact the Council Manager.

The committee further agreed that the hub should become a Milton Keynes Food Bank collection point.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the committee agrees to accept the invitation to attend the Milton Keynes Food Bank CAN event.**

- 2. That the committee further agrees that the hub should become a Milton Keynes Food Bank collection point.**

**Date of next meeting:**

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023, 6:30pm, at the Woughton Community Council Hub, Council Chamber, The Local Centre, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.

**THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 7:43 PM**

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

DRAFT