



Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council held at Meeting Room, Bletchley Library, Westfield Road, Bletchley, MK2 2RA on Tuesday, 7th January, 2020 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs R Graham, M Arshad, S Browne, K Ely, R Haine, E Kelly-Wilson, E Hume, G Kenworthy, M McDonald and E O'Rourke

Absent: Cllr S Porter

Apologies: Cllrs A Kennedy, W Hewitt, T Hyde, S Rolfe, M Rohim and R Smith

In attendance: Delia Shephard (Town Clerk), Gill Long (Support Services Manager) and Ruth Horgsburch (Projects & Media Officer)

Min Ref

FC19/20-210 **To note apologies for absence**

It was RESOLVED to note the apologies as listed above.

FC19/20-211 **To note Members' declarations of interest in matters on the agenda**

Cllr Kenworthy drew attention to his Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in matters concerning traffic calming measures in Eaton Avenue because of his residence in that road.

FC19/20-212 **To approve the minutes of previous meeting**

It was RESOLVED to approve the draft minutes of the meeting of full council held on 3 December 2019 as an accurate record of proceedings.

FC19/20-213 **Minutes of Committees**

FC19/20-213.i **Planning Committee held on Tuesday 3 December 2019**

It was RESOLVED to note the minutes.

FC19/20-213.ii **Planning Committee held on 17 December 2019**

It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes of the meeting.

FC19/20-213.iii **Newton Leys Pavilion Committee 4 December 2019**

It was RESOLVED to note that the meeting due to take place on this date could not proceed for lack of a quorum of councillors and that a recommendation about the committee would be considered on 4 February 2020.

FC19/20-213.iv **Finance Committee meeting held on 17 December 2019**

It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes of the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to approve the review of the council's internal controls including the effectiveness of the internal audit as recommended by the Finance Committee (Minute reference F19/113) with one correction ie to note that Finance Training should be provided for all councillors and not just members of the Finance Committee.

It was RESOLVED to adopt the Revised Risk Management Policy and updated Risk Management Register for 2019-20 as recommended by the Finance Committee (Minute Reference F19/114).

It was RESOLVED to authorise the clerk to regularly arrange an annual VAT Partial



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Exemption calculation and to include sufficient funds in the annual budget for professional advice on VAT.

FC19/20-214

Public Speaking Time

Twenty two members of the public were present at the meeting.

Four residents of Eaton Road made representations on proposed traffic calming measures proposals in their road (agenda item 6).

A resident spoke on behalf of residents of the properties directly affected by the proposed informal crossing and parking restrictions and firstly stressed that although the residents objected to the proposed scheme there was agreement that something needed to be done to address the concerns originally raised by residents about speeding and the hope was that a mutually acceptable solution could be achieved through collaborative working with the Town Council and MK Council. This resident noted the safety audit conducted by Milton Keynes council appeared to have driven the introduction of parking restrictions on the informal crossing in the scheme but this was not mandated by the Department of Transport and the audit recommended that "the designer should investigate the feasibility of including waiting restrictions or physical features to prevent obstruction of the crossing". He asserted that the introduction of parking restrictions in front of the eight properties affected would negatively affect their market value, restrict proximity of parking for residents, invalidate insurance policies (where distance from property clauses applied), restrict pick up and deliveries, restrict parking for essential utility services, restrict disabled parking to 3 hours affected several disabled residents, cause parking issues on either side of the restrictions, reduce the impact of the other proposed measures as parked cars cause vehicles to slow down and involve residents needing to reverse onto the crossing which would be a dangerous manoeuvre. He stated that the current proposal only partly addressed the original concerns about speeding and that he felt the case for crossing had not been justified or fully consulted upon.

A second resident fully supported the concerns of the first speaker and supported work to reduce speed in Eaton Avenue but agreed that there was no evidence of need for a crossing. She argued that this would create a new safety hazard, she would need to exit by reversing from her property onto the crossing which would be very difficult and dangerous and a clear view of the crossing would not be possible. This resident also expressed concerns about pollution caused by acceleration and noise made by users of the public footpath.

A third resident noted that he would not have purchased his property if he had known about the proposed plans for an informal crossing and parking restrictions because of the complex needs of a member of his family for whom he had caring responsibilities. His was a three car family but only one vehicle could be on the drive because of a need for space to unload wheelchair and other disability equipment. He noted that in September 2019 he had requested an access protection marking for his property but this had been refused and asked whether this may have been because of the Town Council's knowledge of forthcoming parking restrictions. Further concerns included the potential loss of £20,000-£30,000 from the value of his house, queuing traffic caused by the crossing blocking the driveway and the fact that the proposals had not appeared in legal searches during his house purchase. This resident was in agreement that speeding down Eaton Avenue was a problem but preferred flat topped road humps and presented evidence which highlighted their efficiency. Further concerns included suggestions of inadequate consultation with residents. Finally evidence of a snapshot survey of pedestrians crossing Eaton Avenue was provided to



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the Town Council.

A fourth resident noted that the two main problems with traffic in Eaton Avenue were excessive speed and its use as a rat-run between Manor Road and the Town Centre. He argued that the proposed traffic calming measures only addressed the issue of speed. Traffic-flow had been made worse by the one way systems introduced at the junctions of Westfield Road and Brooklands Road with Queensway which resulted in Eaton Avenue being preferred to Brooklands Road and the resident argued the one way changes should be reversed. This resident was in favour of speed cushions but advocated additional measures to address the rat run problem ie introduction of a 20 mph speed limit, max weight limit to stop HGVs using Eaton Avenue as a regular route, pavement parking ban, introduction of a road narrowing chicane at the existing crossing point between alleys to reduce flow to single file traffic and deter rat run use, review and redesign the town centre one way scheme. Finally the resident was not in favour of any parking restrictions and hoped that Highways engineers would meet directly with residents to discuss options.

Two members of the public made representations about agenda item 11 which concerned the Town Council's response to the climate emergency. A resident of Fenny Stratford spoke about MK Council's ambitious target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and welcomed this goal and MK Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in January 2019 both of which recognised the severity of the problems caused by climate change. This resident expressed her support for the motion now being put forward by Cllr Hume and agreed that it was very important for smaller groups, including parish councils and individuals to contribute to the collective action necessary to mitigate the emergency. She indicated her personal commitment to joining a climate emergency action group if the proposed motion was approved and described some of the achievements made by the Open University

A member of the public expressed support for the motion to declare a climate emergency and welcomed the statement that the Town Council wished to work with Milton Keynes Council in addressing the challenges of climate change. He hoped that this might lead to other Parishes taking similar action. He noted that West Bletchley Council had declared a climate emergency in December 2019 and hoped that more councils would do the same including Great Linford. Of which he was a member.

The Chairman thanked all members of the public for their contributions.

FC19/20-215

Traffic calming scheme on Eaton Avenue

(Cllr Kenworthy left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or voting on this item of business.)

Members were reminded that the proposed traffic calming scheme on Eaton Avenue had been designed by the Highways Authority following submission of a request from the Town Council for traffic calming measures under the Community Infrastructure Fund Scheme to be delivered during the current year. The original submission to MK Council had been for traffic calming measures only (ie speed cushions) and did not include enhancements to the existing informal crossing between two alleyways or any parking restrictions. The Clerk noted that the Town Council had had no involvement in the APN application mentioned by one of the speakers and that the introduction of the additional measures followed the safety audit under taken by MK Council. Also the final drawing had not been available from MK Council for consultation until December 2019 and so the Town Council's consultation period had necessarily been short. The next stage of the process of would be a more detailed public consultation organised by Milton Keynes Council whose Highways Engineers would be best placed to answer



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questions on the scheme and explain the thinking behind it. The Clerk confirmed that a TRRO would be needed if a 20 mph was introduced and that the additional lighting column was thought to be required for safety because of the introduction of the speed cushions. A document had been tabled with a summary of the final outcome of the Town Council's online survey of residents. In response to the question "*Based on the information provided regarding the proposals are you in favour of the intended solutions?*" 29 residents had responded yes and 18 had responded no meaning 62% of respondents were in favour of the scheme. One response had been removed from the survey results which came from a Wolverton postcode (if included this would have added to the negative responses). Details of individual comments in response to the scheme had also been collected and most of these points had been covered during the public speaking session. Details of all responses and comments (including those made at the Town Council meeting) would be passed to Milton Keynes Council.

Members discussed the background to the scheme noting that there were genuine safety concerns caused by speeding traffic in Eaton Avenue and that it was important to protect the safety of pedestrians but also recognising the concerns of residents who opposed the parking restrictions and other aspects of the scheme.

It was RESOLVED to advise Milton Keynes Council that in principle the Town Council was still in favour of traffic calming measures in Eaton Avenue and that the Town Council's survey showed the majority of residents were in favour of measures to reduce speed but it was also clear that residents were concerned about the implications of enhancements to the crossing and the proposed parking restrictions. Therefore the Town Council would now ask Milton Keynes Council to consult with residents on these matters and in particular the position of the speed cushions exploring whether cushions could be positioned nearer to the informal crossing itself. The Council also requested the Milton Keynes Council should consult residents on all the proposed measures individually (ie speed limit, speed cushions, parking restrictions, enhancements to crossing).

(Cllr Kenworthy returned to the room and re-joined the meeting.)

FC19/20-216

Grant application

A grant application in the sum of £445 from Bletchley Lions Club for the purpose of taking twenty local residents on a Senior Citizens outing was reviewed and a representative of Bletchley Lions answered Members' questions about the application. It was RESOLVED to award a grant in the sum of £445.00 as requested.

FC19/20-217

Change to planned order of business

It was RESOLVED to bring forward items 11 and 12 on the agenda as there were budget implications for both these items so they would precede decisions about the annual budget and precept..

FC19/20-218

Declaration of Climate emergency

Cllr Hume introduced a proposal that Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council should recognise the biggest single issue facing the country by declaring a climate emergency and working along with partners to promote collective action to address this. The Chair of the Finance Committee noted that there were financial implications involved in taking action and proposed that a budget of £10,000 should be set aside for the financial year 2020-21 to allow the Council to initiate and develop its climate action project. Several members spoke in support of the proposal noting concerns about the potential extension of the landfill site in Newton Leys, the proposed East West Express way (the route of which would be very close to the parish) yet the benefits of the Oxford Cambridge rail had not yet been realised, the potential problems



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with flooding in our area and the importance of working with other groups outside the parish.

It was unanimously RESOLVED that Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council would now

- i declare a climate emergency;
and
- ii commit to work towards making Bletchley and Fenny Stratford carbon neutral by 2030;
- iii pledge to work with Milton Keynes Council towards assisting that Council in realising the aspirations of making Milton Keynes the World's Greenest City (making Milton Keynes carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050);
- iv commit to act as a voice for the community and to lobby for action on climate change
- v commit to work with the community of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford and surrounding parishes and community groups to deliver these goals through all relevant Town Council strategies and plans
- vi commit to establish a Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Climate Action Group which within 6 months of its first meeting would prepare an Action Plan to address the climate emergency
- vii allocate an additional £10,000 for climate change action to the 2020-21 budget.

FC19/20-219

Response to MKC's "call for evidence" on achieving carbon neutrality

Milton Keynes Council had asked for views and evidence from environmental experts as well as local people and businesses on how MK Council could be transformed into the world's first post carbon city as part of a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group. Members discussed a potential response to this call for evidence.

It was RESOLVED to delegate the Clerk to compile a written response based on the following ideas from councillors and officers:

- Stress to MKC the importance of working closely with all the parish councils in the area as genuine partners in the challenge of meeting this aspiration
- Parishes Forum could be used to raise awareness and provide information to Town and Parish Councils
- Produce a Zero Carbon toolkit for parish councils and/or community organisations with practical advice and information
- Work actively with the parishes to promote awareness events (such as International Walk to School month, Clean Air Day, Cycle to Work Day, Zero Emissions Day) in order to promote collective engagement with the "post carbon" agenda
- Provide planning training for Town and Parish Councillors and Clerks on the implications of the Environment Bill, Future Homes Standard and New National Design Guide as well as on MKC's own planning policies so that parish councils can scrutinize planning applications with climate change in mind and make effective observations to the Local Planning authority
- Provide a funding stream for Parish Councils (or adapt the criteria for existing funding such as the Community Infrastructure Scheme) to incentivise parishes to develop projects which align with MK Council's goals.

FC19/20-220

Scale of Charges for 2020-21

Members noted a scale of council charges recommended by the Finance Committee on 17 December 2019 (minute reference F19/116) and it was noted that the only



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increases to charges proposed concerned allotment rent (which would increase for all plot holders from 25 p per m² to 35 p per m² and the previous concessionary rate would be removed), and increases to charges for Newton Leys on Saturday evenings. All other charges remained the same.

It was RESOLVED to approve the following charges with effect from 1 April 2020 for the financial year 2020-21. The only increases to charges concerned the

Bletchley Market with effect from 1/4/2020				
Stalls		Tuesday & Thursday		
Up to 10 ft frontage	Regulars	£ 10.00	per pitch	
	Thereafter	£ 1.00	per ft	
	Casuals	£ 15.00	per pitch	
	Thereafter	£ 1.50	per ft	
Mobiles		Regulars	£ 15.00	
		Specialised	£ 40.00	
		Casuals	£ 20.00	
Stalls		Friday		
Up to 10 ft frontage	Regulars	£ 13.00	per pitch	
	Thereafter	£ 1.30	per ft	
	Casuals	£ 18.00	per pitch	
	Thereafter	£ 1.80	per ft	
Mobiles		Regulars	£ 18.00	
		Specialised	£ 40.00	
		Casuals	£ 23.00	
Stalls		Saturday		
Up to 10 ft frontage	Regulars	£ 15.00	per pitch	
	Thereafter	£ 1.50	per ft	
	Casuals	£ 20.00	per pitch	
	Thereafter	£ 2.00	per ft	
Mobiles		Regulars	£ 20.00	
		Specialised	£ 40.00	
		Casuals	£ 25.00	
Newton Leys Pavilion with effect from 1/4/2020				
Sports Hall hire charge	Community	£ 20.00	per hr	
	Private	£ 25.00	per hr	
	Deposit	£ 100.00	Low Risk	
	Deposit	£ 200.00	High Risk	
	ALL Saturday 5pm-11.30pm	£ 250.00	Session	
Community Hall hire charge	Community	£ 15.00	per hr	
	Private	£ 20.00	per hr	
	Deposit	£ 100.00	Low Risk	
	Deposit	£ 200.00	High Risk	



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	ALL Saturday 5pm-11.30pm	£ 200.00	Session
Both Sports & Community Hall	5pm to 11:30 pm	£ 300.00	Session
Meeting Room	ALL	£ 15.00	per hr
	Deposit	£ 100.00	Low Risk
	Deposit	£ 200.00	High Risk
Counselling Room	ALL	£ 7.50	per hr
	Deposit	£ 100.00	Low Risk
	Deposit	£ 200.00	High Risk
Storage Cupboard	ALL	£ 10.00	per week
Spotlight with effect from 1/4/2020			
Community Room	Private	£ 10.00	per hr
	Community	£ 8.00	per hr
Office 1,2 & 3	ALL	£ 5.00	per hr
Counselling Room	ALL	£ 5.00	per hr
All Allotment Rent with effect from 1/10/20 all sites (except Newton Leys new charges to apply as soon as site is open)			
Plot	ALL	£ 0.35	per m ²
Concessionary Discount		0%	
Photocopying Charges			
*A4 black and white		£ 0.10	per copy
A4 colour		£ 0.20	per copy
A3 black and white		£ 0.20	per copy
A3 colour		£ 0.40	per copy

* IT Suite users at Spotlight get the first 6 black and white sheets free

FC19/20-221

Budget for the financial year 2020-21

Members discussed the budget proposals recommended by the Finance Committee for the financial year 2020-21 at a meeting on 17 December 2019 (Minute reference F19/116 Budget V5 Final Draft). It was RESOLVED to approve the budget as recommended by the Finance Committee on 17 December 2019 with the addition of £10,000 for expenditure on climate change. (A copy of the budget is attached to these minutes.)

FC19/20-222

Precept demand for the year 2020-21

Members discussed the recommendations of the finance committee made at a meeting on 2020-21 (Minute reference F19/118) that the precept should be set at



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£722,473 and the balance of planned expenditure in 2020-21 should be met from the Town Council's general reserves.

It was RESOLVED to set the total precept demand £722,473 which would be the equivalent of an average Band D contribution of £142.16 based on the known tax base of 5082.11 for 2020-21 as notified by Milton Keynes Council. There would therefore be a 0% increase on individual Band D contributions. A sum of £53,909 would be required from general reserves to balance the budget

It was RESOLVED to authorise the clerk to submit the precept demand to MK Council accordingly.

FC19/20-223

Criteria for the Community Infrastructure Scheme and potential projects for 2020-2022 applications

A report on the Community Infrastructure Fund for 2020-22 had been circulated prior to the meeting which included details of MK Council's approved criteria for the scheme and illustrative cost guidance. The report also included an update on potential projects so far proposed by members. Since the time of writing a technical assessment and cost estimate on work to the gateways to the area (previously specified by the Town Council) the parish had been completed by MK Council and this document was tabled. The Clerk noted the limited time available for additional information to be collected before the Community Infrastructure projects could be submitted. The total estimate for the proposed works was £35,100 and the clerk noted that phasing of the works or scaling back of the project could be considered. Discussion followed and members reviewed different signage options and wordings, locations and difficulties with introducing signage of any sort.

The clerk noted that this would be one project for the scheme but two additional projects could be put forward for consideration by MK Council. The only other proposal put forward by members was to improve the planters. Members agreed to send proposals to the Clerk in time for the next full council meeting on 4 February 2020.

It was RESOLVED that a proposal would be submitted to the Community Infrastructure Scheme for two new two signs for Newton Leys and for correction of the misleading sign in Fenny Stratford.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm