



# 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, 3rd March, 2020 commencing at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Cllrs A Kennedy, R Graham, M Arshad, S Browne, K Ely, R Haine, T Hyde, E Kelly-Wilson, S Rolfe, E Hume, M McDonald and E O'Rourke

**Absent:** Cllrs W Hewitt, G Kenworthy and R Smith

**Apologies:** Cllrs S Porter and M Rohim

**In attendance:** Delia Shephard (Town Clerk) (Clerk)

### Min Ref

FC19/20-238 **Members apologies for absence**  
Before the meeting began the Chairman noted the recent death of Reg Edwards. Mr Edwards had been a long serving champion of the local community and a former member of Milton Keynes Council whose work in the community was greatly appreciated. A minute's silence was observed by all present at the meeting as a mark of respect.

It was RESOLVED to note the apologies as listed above. (Cllr Graham had originally sent apologies for absence but arrived part way through the meeting.)

FC19/20-239 **Members' declarations of interest in matters on the agenda**  
No declarations of interest were made.

FC19/20-240 **Minutes of previous meeting**  
It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting of the meeting held on 15 February 2020 as an accurate record of proceedings.

FC19/20-241 **Minutes of committee meetings and recommendations therein**

FC19/20-241.i **Draft Minutes of HR Committee held on 28 January 2020**  
It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes.

FC19/20-241.ii **Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 11 February 2020**  
It was RESOLVED to note the minutes.

FC19/20-241.iii **Draft Minutes of Planning Committee held on 18 February 2020**  
It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes.

FC19/20-241.iv **Draft minutes of Finance Committee held on 18 March 2020**  
It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes.

The recommendation of the Finance Committee that the Town Council's Asset



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Register be approved and that the annual return for 2019-20 should show the corrected figure was discussed (Minute reference F19/141.)

It was RESOLVED to approve the recommendation and re-state the Town Council's physical assets (excluding funds held at the bank and in investment accounts) in the sum of £230,578.59 and to complete the AGAR for 2019-20 on this basis.

The recommendation of the Finance Committee that

- i the Manor Road site should not be further developed for use as a storage location
- ii alternative storage locations should be investigated
- iii the existing building on site should be demolished and all salvageable building materials re-sold
- iv investigations into using the site as a green space to enhance the area should be undertaken

was discussed (Minute reference F19/141.)

It was RESOLVED to approve the recommendation.

### FC19/20-242 **Public Speaking Time**

Several members of The Mill Residents Association were present and their Chairman spoke in support of their grant application for the Somewhere Safe Garden Project which was to be discussed later during the meeting. The Chairman noted that this was a long term ambitious project which relied on the continuing good will of local people. The Residents Association would be contributing addition funds of their own (not in the grant application paperwork) to provide outdoor seating in addition to the planters. Full permissions for the project had been given by the charity and the landlord and the work would not affect the listed building involved. The Support Services Manager and the Projects and Media Officer of the Town Council were thanked with their help with the grant application.

### FC19/20-243 **Grant Applications**

#### FC19/20-243.i **The Somewhere Safe Garden Project - Application from The Mill Residents Association**

An application for community grant funding in the sum of £868.00 submitted by the Mill Residents' Association was considered for the purpose of constructing a courtyard garden for the Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub and Assessment Centre in Drayton Road was discussed.

Following questions from Members it was RESOLVED to award the grant of £868.00 as requested this would be funded by £470 which remained in the community grant funding budget with the balance of £398.00 to be taken from general reserves.

Members expressed their thanks to the Residents Association for undertaking such a worthwhile and valuable project.

#### FC19/20-243.ii **MK Pride Grant - Decision made 4/6/19**

It was RESOLVED to note that community grant funding of £1,500 had been allocated and paid to MK Pride CIC for a weather dependent event which could not go ahead. (It was noted this was a separate event from the MK Pride Festival event which took



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place in Milton Keynes during 2019.) A condition of the grant was that a written statement and invoices must be provided to the Town Council. Attempts to secure a response from the organisation explaining how the money had been spent and to establish whether there was any surplus left unspent had been unsuccessful.

The Clerk advised that all grant recipients would be invited to the annual meeting of electors to take place on 12 May 2020 when they would be given the opportunity to explain how they had spent their grants and the benefits this had brought.

FC19/20-244

### **Response to Milton Keynes Council's Estates Regeneration Strategy**

A draft response to MK Council's Estates Regeneration Strategy had been prepared for discussion purposes and this was tabled. Following due consideration, it was RESOLVED to submit the following response to MK Council.

#### ***"Foreword and Working with Local People***

*Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council welcomes MKC's decision to produce a new strategy on regeneration/estate renewal not least because it believes that lack of clarity and confusion about terms and scope has affected recent regeneration work in the Lakes Estate in our parish.*

*We agree that the word "regeneration" has developed negative associations but it should be possible to define a meaning of the word within the strategy (or the meaning of the alternative phrase "estate renewal") and this is important so as to manage both expectations, aspirations and concerns within the community.*

*The term "community led" can also be misinterpreted by some residents and again based on experiences in the Lakes we believe this term should be clearly defined within the strategy. More accurate phrases such as "a programme which is shaped and informed by" residents may be more honest and helpful to residents.*

#### ***Vision, priorities and commitments***

*Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council strongly supports the four strategic priorities set out in the document which are interdependent and are all essential for regeneration.*

*Learning from recent experience we note that the regeneration work in the Lakes has been predominantly housing focused. Work on the environment, open spaces, infrastructure and community facilities has seemed a much lower priority than the effort to re-provide existing housing and build new homes for sale. Community engagement seems to have reflected this pattern. Equally the support for business within the Lakes estate seems to have been limited during the regeneration consultation period (to the detriment of the existing businesses). Without minimizing the very urgent need for more and better affordable housing we believe that the four strategic priorities are all important and should have equal weight in the strategy. Community consultation on the different elements of these priorities should also be evenly distributed so that everyone who lives and/or works in a particular locality has the same opportunities to share their views.*

*The strategy appears to reflect this position but proper resourcing for the "Communities" "Health and wellbeing" and "Better jobs" priorities is essential and we have concerns about funding for these priorities as included in the strategy. If sufficient resources are not available, it would more transparent and honest to narrow the focus*



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*of the strategy.*

*We also strongly support the commitments in the strategy towards the reduction of carbon consumption, promotion of sustainable transport, the development of local facilities and green spaces, and improvements to well-being and health.*

### **Delivery**

*Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council would like to see the delivery section of the strategy strengthened and made more explicit. How will MK Council deliver this strategy and how will they work with the differing types of partners? We note the monitoring and reviews which are planned but suggest that the strategy needs to be supported with a more detailed framework showing how the partnership working will be achieved, identifying what constitutes a “community” and making explicit the “range of methods” which are to be used in this work. It is only through such a framework that proper evaluation can be undertaken by all interested parties.*

*It may also be helpful to include information about how any regeneration process will start and how it will be continued. The development of the “vision” at the start of the process for each community and the measuring and testing of community resilience once the consultation period is over and the physical regeneration activity is completed are also very important and should be made explicit.”*

FC19/20-245

### **Remembrance Event 2020**

A report on arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday commemoration on 8 November 2020 was noted and discussed. It was anticipated that the Bletchley Freemasons would again wish to be involved and this was appreciated by the Council. It was RESOLVED to authorise Officers to replicate the arrangements from 2019 as laid out in the written report.

FC19/20-246

### **VE Day Celebrations**

A written report on local VE day celebrations had been circulated before the meeting. It was RESOLVED to note the report.

A request from Bletchley Freemasons for support of their event on 8 May 2020 was discussed. It was RESOLVED to support and promote the event locally and that the Chair of the Council would accept the invitation to open the event but it was not possible for the Town Council to run a stall at this event. In part this was because the Town Council election count would be taking place at the same time. Members noted that use of the Town Council's logo on posters publicised by the Freemasons in anticipation of this event being discussed at Council had been due to their use of a previous poster template.

FC19/20-247

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

It was RESOLVED to note that the formal neighbourhood area consultation for designation of the area of the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Neighbourhood plan began on Friday 21 February 2020 and would conclude on Friday 3 April 2020.

In response to questions the Clerk confirmed that MK Council was responsible for conducting the consultation but the Town Council had published details on a dedicated Neighbourhood Plan page on the Town Council's website, had emailed all those on the distribution lists held by the Town Council and would be advertising the consultation via the forthcoming short newsletter due to go out in March.



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Officers had scheduled a community meeting for April 2020 to elicit interest in joining the steering group and it was agreed to hold this meeting in the week after Easter week (ie week beginning 20 April).

*(Cllr Graham joined the meeting during discussion of this item of business.)*

### FC19/20-248 **Towns Fund Board Representation**

A written report concerning Milton Keynes Council's recent decision that Bletchley would be the focus of a Towns Fund bid has been circulated prior to the meeting.

One of the Government's requirements was for each Town Deal to set out a programme of how renewal work will be done ensuring effective engagement with all key partners. This included the requirement to establish a Towns Deal Board to help set and manage the overall direction of the Town Deal Programme.

MKC had indicated that it will be asking Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council and West Bletchley Council to appoint one representative each to serve on the Board.

It was RESOLVED to note the report and, taking into account the level and nature of participation that would be required, to appoint the Clerk to represent the Town Council on the Board.

### FC19/20-249 **Town Council's CCTV policy**

It was RESOLVED to adopt a revised version of the Town Council's CCTV policy with immediate effect.

### FC19/20-250 **Response to the Climate Emergency**

Members considered a written report on proposed actions following Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council's declaration of a climate emergency in January 2020.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Hume would chair the planned community meeting on 26 March 2020 and would work with the officer team to agree the agenda and form of the meeting. Local organisations working to combat climate change would all be invited to attend.

It had previously been agreed to develop an action plan and a community action group and it was decided that the best way to decide on how these should be created was to recruit the expertise of those at the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to commission or undertake a carbon audit for Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council looking at the amounts of greenhouse gases generated from

- i Direct emissions from owned or controlled sources eg petrol in council vehicles or tools
- ii Indirect emissions eg purchased electricity
- iii Other indirect emissions from purchased goods and service, travel and commuting.

Quotations and support with this were being sought by officers and it was RESOLVED to delegate approval of commissioning and costs for any carbon audit to the Finance Committee.

It was also RESOLVED to work towards inclusion of environmental implications in all officer reports on matter put to council.



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### FC19/20-251 **Parking on Queensway**

The Clerk gave a verbal report on the delayed introduction of activation of the pavement parking prohibition in Queensway by Milton Keynes Council and noted that the Town Council had been asked to consider whether this activation was now needed as the waiting time for issuing tickets on double yellow lines had been reduced from 5 minutes to 2 minutes.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to advise MK Council that the Town Council was both disappointed and very unhappy that its request for activation had not been actioned in October 2019 when it was submitted. Councillors expressed their concern that the request to withdraw the request for activation demonstrated that MKC did not always understand the way Town and Parish Councils work. The Town Council could not withdraw the request for activation because it had undertaken a community consultation and notified residents that the activation would take place following the outcome of the consultation. This had been arranged in agreement with MKC.

Members noted the information that the activation might make no practical difference to enforcement and also noted the information that MK Council's procedures had changed and this activation now need to take its place in a queue of competing priorities. The Clerk was instructed to advise MKC that the Town Council expected this activation to be prioritised on the basis that the request was submitted in October 2019 and no action was taken by MKC.

### FC19/20-252 **Revised committee structure and calendar for the council year 2020-21**

A revised committee structure, scheme of delegations and calendar of meetings had been circulated prior to the meeting. Following some discussion it was RESOLVED to approve the new structure, calendar and scheme of delegations to take effect from the annual meeting of the Town Council in May 2020.

### FC19/20-253 **Code of Conduct Investigation and Outcome**

The outcome of an investigation into alleged breaches of the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Code of Conduct by Cllr Richard Graham has been formally notified to the Town Council. This investigation related to behaviour following a Town Council meeting held on 6 March 2018.

The finding of the investigation was that on 6 March 2018 Cllr Graham lost his temper due to the circumstances of the evening and that in so doing his behaviour fell short of the high standards of conduct expected by those serving in a public post. Therefore, a complaint that Cllr Graham failed to treat persons with respect and thus breached the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council Code of Conduct was upheld. Other allegations of breaches of the Code by Cllr Graham were not upheld.

It was recommended by the investigator appointed by Milton Keynes Council that the breach of the Code of Conduct be resolved with Town Councillor Graham informally. A meeting had been held between the Deputy Monitoring Officer and Cllr Graham to this end and this concluded the matter. There were no recommendations from Milton Keynes Council for any further action.

All the complainants had been notified by the Deputy Monitoring Officer to advise them of the outcome of the investigation. Milton Keynes Council acknowledged that it



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regretted that this investigation had taken a long time to process.

It was RESOLVED to note the report.

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm

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