

Loughton Parish Council

Annual Meeting of Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20th May 2013 at the Great Holm Community Centre, 87, Kensington Drive, Great Holm

Present:

Cllrs Peter Todd (Chair), Peter Ballantyne, Andy Dransfield, Don Hoyle, Andy Lovett, Andy Sargent

In attendance:

Brian Barton (Parish Clerk)

Also in attendance:

Julienne Hanson (All Saints Church), Rachel Brain (Project Officer Green Deal and Communities Volunteer Manager of the National Energy Foundation), PCSO Gemma Harmycz and five (5) members of the public.

01/13 Election of Chair for the Council Year 2013/2014:

The Parish Clerk was in the Chair for this agenda item only.

Cllr Andy Dransfield moved and Cllr Don Hoyle seconded that Cllr Don Hoyle is nominated for the position of Chair for the Council Year 2013/2014.

Cllr Andy Sargent moved and Cllr Peter Ballantyne seconded that Cllr Peter Todd is nominated for the position of Chair for the Council year 2013/2014.

Both candidates agreed to their nomination.

There were no other candidates.

The voting then took place as follows:

Cllr Don Hoyle two (2) votes

Cllr Peter Todd three (3) votes

RESOLVED

That Cllr Peter Todd is elected Chair for the Council year 2013/2014

02/13 To sign the Declaration of Office Form:

Cllr Peter Todd then signed the Declaration of Office form.

NOTED

03/13 Election of Vice-Chair for the Council Year 2013/2014:

Cllr Peter Ballantyne moved and Cllr Andy Lovett seconded that Cllr Andy Sargent is nominated for the position of Vice-Chair for the Council Year 2013/2014.

Cllr Andy Dransfield moved that Cllr Don Hoyle is nominated for the position of Vice-Chair for the Council Year 2013/2014. Cllr Don Hoyle withdrew his nomination.

Cllr Andy Sargent agreed to his nomination.

There were no other candidates.

RESOLVED

That Cllr Andy Sargent is elected Vice-Chair for the Council Year 2013/2014

04/13 To sign the Declaration of Office Form:

Cllr Andy Sargent then signed his Declaration of Office form.

NOTED

05/13 Apologies:

Received from Cllrs Barry Barrington and Hilary Dyer

NOTED

06/13 Loughton Ward Vacancy:

An election has been called to fill the Loughton Ward vacancy as advised by Milton Keynes Council, The election if contested will be held on Thursday 4th July 2013.

The Parish Clerk has a Nomination Pack if any local elector who wishes to stand wants a copy.

The Nomination form can be delivered between Friday 31 May 2013 and up to Noon on Friday 7 June 2013.

Milton Keynes Council will send to the Parish Clerk a Notice of election in the next couple of weeks to display on the Notice Boards.

NOTED

07/13 Declarations of interest:

Cllr Andy Dransfield declared a personal interest in agenda item Presentations 22/13 (c) as he is a Milton Keynes Council representative for the United Sustainable Energy Agency.

NOTED

08/13 Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting:

The minutes of the previous Annual Meeting of Council held on Monday 21st May 2012 were **AGREED** as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

09/13 Matters arising from the previous minutes not on the agenda:

Cllr Andy Dransfield stated that the Parish Clerk's job description and person specification had been removed from the Parish website. The Chair said he doubted this was correct and would check. Cllr Dransfield requested that a copy of the Job and Person Specification along with the Contract of Employment for the Parish Clerk is sent to him. The Chair said he would arrange for this.

Cllr Dransfield informed the meeting that he had not been asked to an Editorial Team Meeting regarding the Newsletter. The Chair said that all members had been asked to supply material for the Newsletter. There had not been any meetings about the Newsletter but drafts had been circulated on several occasions by email to all

members during the preparation of the newsletter. A number of Councillors had produced content and made comments and amendments on the drafts.

NOTED

10/13 Questions from Members of the Public:

Mr John Howe asked how Loughton Parish Council could justify an increase in the Precept?

Why did Loughton Parish Council need to increase the hours of the Parish Clerk?

The Chair replied that he had had a lengthy email exchange with Mr Howe where he had raised the same points.

The Chair informed the meeting that the rise in Precept meant £30 in a year for a Band D property, which was less than half the average for MK Parishes so this was objectively not a high level. Loughton Parish Council had been largely moribund in the past. The Parish Council had previously not attempted to engage with local residents or be at all active in the local community and formerly was largely unknown. As a result Loughton did not have the same level of facilities that other areas in MK enjoyed e.g. play areas and community events. The Chair had noted in correspondence with Mr Howe that he did not seem to have any insight into the workload of the Parish Clerk and was expressing a view without having made any enquiry as to the position.

NOTED

11/13 Chairman's Annual Report:

The Chairman's Annual Report was tabled at the meeting covering the activities of the Parish Council during the 2012/2013 Council Year.

NOTED

12/13 Committees and Working Groups:

a) To resolve to renew for a further year the existing terms of reference and membership of the Planning Committee, Finance and Staffing Committee and Neighbourhood Development Plan Committee.

AGREED

b) To agree the 2013/2014 Calendar of Meetings

RESOLVED

1. **To alternate the meetings of the Finance and Staffing and the Planning Committees between the Loughton Memorial Hall and the Great Holm Community Centre**
2. **That the Planning Committee should meet on the first Monday of the month**

c) To decide the future of the Community Emergency Plan project and Working Group

RESOLVED

To disband the Community Emergency Plan project and Working Group

13/13 Memberships for the Council Year 2013/2014:

To agree the membership of the following organisations for the Council Year 2013/2014:

a) Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire Association of Local Councils

Cllr Dransfield suggested the Parish had obtained no significant benefit from being a Member of BALC. The Chair said he had appreciated the support of BALC during the year (1) they were helpful when the former Clerk became unavailable at short notice for two meetings of the Parish Council – in that they had supplied contact details for a qualified locum Clerk which had enabled meetings to go ahead. Also, (2) when dealing with the appointment of the new Parish Council they had assisted with the recruitment process and also advising on the appropriate contract of service of the Parish Clerk. They also (3) provided useful training courses so that Members of the Council could be trained on how to be effective and to understand their responsibilities – such as the Code of Conduct. The Chair acknowledged that non-members could attend the training for an additional fee but if no Councils supported the organisation it might not be there in future.

RESOLVED

- 1. To defer this agenda item to the next meeting**
- 2. That the Clerk to obtain from the organisations details of the benefits that Loughton Parish Council would obtain from being a member**

b) Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils

There was a discussion of the benefits of membership. Cllr Dransfield said that he had been instrumental in forming this organisation as it represented the urban parishes more than other organisations which were dominated by rural parishes. It was understood that there were attempts to revive the organisation but it was not wholly clear what the status of the organisation was.

RESOLVED

- 1. To defer this agenda item to the next meeting**
- 2. The Clerk to obtain from the organisation details of the benefits that Loughton Parish Council would obtain from being a member**

c) Society of Local Council Clerks

AGREED to renew membership

d) Open Spaces Society

AGREED to proceed with recent membership application

14/13 Membership of Outside Bodies for the Council Year 2013/2014:

To agree the appointments for the Council Year 2013/2014 to the following outside bodies:

a) Jubilee Graveyard Committee

Cllrs Andy Sargent and Peter Todd

AGREED

b) Hugh Parke Charitable Trust

Cllrs Hilary Dyer and Ray Harrison

AGREED

c) Milton Keynes Council Parishes Forum
Cllrs Barry Barrington and Peter Ballantyne
AGREED

d) Loughton Sports and Social Club Management Committee
Simon Kirkman and Cllr Peter Ballantyne
AGREED

15/13 To resolve whether to renew the following constitutional documents and policy documents for the Council Year 2013/2014:

- a) Standing Orders
- b) Financial Regulations
- c) Dispensations Policy
- d) Equality Policy
- e) Health and Safety Policy

All the above documents were **AGREED**

16/13 Finance:

a) To receive the internally audited accounts for the Council Year 2012/2013
NOTED

b) To receive and agree any recommendations from the report of the internal auditor
NOTED

c) To appoint an internal auditor for the 2013/2014 financial accounts
Three quotes had been obtained and there was a discussion of these. Cllrs Dransfield and Hoyle were in favour of the quote from Haines Watts. The Chair pointed out that the quote was for a visit and a letter only and it did not include preparation of the financial statements (i.e. P&L & balance sheet) as per previous years. It was agreed the quote from Connollys was unclear and would have been better if it had detailed the work which would be included. It was mentioned that Connollys had paid for advertising in the last two newsletters although Cllr Hoyle stated he thought it was criminal corruption for this to be taken into account. The Chair pointed out advertising was available freely on a commercial basis and Connollys had received full value for their payments. The Chair's mentioned there would likely be additional costs of a change in auditor to set up the audit and during the year it was likely there would be a call for professional advice

RESOLVED

That the Parish Clerk seeks more comprehensive/detailed quotes and reports back to the next meeting.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE ANNUAL MEETING AT 22:03PM

Ordinary Meeting

17/13 Apologies:

Received from Cllrs Barry Barrington and Hilary Dyer
NOTED

18/13 Declarations of interest:

Cllr Andy Dransfield declared a personal interest in agenda item Presentations 22/13 (c) as he is a Milton Keynes Council representative for the United Sustainable Energy Agency.

NOTED

19/13 Minutes of previous meetings:

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

- Extra Ordinary Meeting Monday 8th April 2013
- Annual Parish and Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 15th April 2013

Were **AGREED** and signed by the Chair as a true and correct record.

20/13 Matters arising from the previous minutes not on the agenda:

Cllr Andy Sargent reported on planning application (12/02543/FUL 22 Greenhill Close Loughton Milton Keynes MK5 8DG Part change of use from dwelling house to childminder use.) which Milton Keynes Council's Development Control Committee had recently refused.

Cllr Sargent said that had visited the neighbour to the above property who is now keeping a diary of all activity.

NOTED

21/13 Questions from Members of the Public:

Mr Stephen Smith raised the following points:

What are the financial benefits in relation to the part of the Milton Keynes Parks Trust land in connection of the redevelopment of the Badminton Centre?

The Chairman responded and went into the background regarding the Milton Keynes Parks Trust and the transfer of their land to the Badminton Centre.

Mr Smith said the new development at the Badminton Centre site is likely to result in significant alteration of the existing landform and could have an impact on the nearby woodland vegetation.

Mr Smith said it would be useful to know the current land ownership of the Great Holm Village Green and the landscape management responsibilities. Is the area privately or publicly owned? The Parish Council replied – the land is owned by Mk Council

NOTED

22/13 Presentations:

- a) Update report on the Scarecrow Trail by Julienne Hanson from All Saints Church, Loughton

There are fifty nine (59) entries twenty nine (29) are adults and families, eight (8) children, ten (10) businesses and twelve (12) schools and Children's organisations. The trail has been provisionally mapped out; the extended trail is about five (5) miles long. A car trail is being worked on to take in the longer route.

Julienne will be checking to ensure the trail is suitable for wheelchairs and mobility scooters. There will be certificates for those who complete the trail.

The prizes will be vouchers to spend in leading Milton Keynes stores rather than having cash prizes.

Three (3) Judges have been appointed from Milton Keynes Arts Gateway and the Milton Keynes Gallery.

Raffle tickets will be on sale for 50p each prizes have already been donated with more to follow nearer the event.

The event will be taking place between 10:00am – 5:00pm pm on Saturday 29th June and Saturday 6th July 2013 and Sunday 30th June 2013 11:00am – 5:00pm All Saints Church will also be open to visitors with all sorts of activities taking place.

On Saturday 6th July between 7:00pm – 10:00pm there will be a bring and share supper with various activities taking place tickets will be available soon.

A blog has been set up to keep everyone in touch with what is happening.

The Chair thanked Julienne Hanson for her presentation.

NOTED

b) Report from PC Albert Bernard of Thames Valley Police

In the absence of PC Albert Barnard PCSO Gemma Harmycz presented the report instead.

In Great Holm there were twenty eight (28) offences last month seven (7) were priority crimes, two (2) of which were a burglary in Haddon and criminal damage including graffiti at Lodge Lake.

There were four (4) priority crimes in Loughton, criminal damage in Glebe Close, a burglary in London Road, and two (2) thefts from insecure vehicles one (1) in Holmcroft Court and another at the Milton Keynes National Bowl.

There then followed questions by members.

The Chairman thanked PCSO Gemma Harmycz for her report.

NOTED

c) Rachel Brain, Project Officer Green Deal and Communities Volunteer Manager of the National Energy Foundation, Knowlhill.

Cllr Andy Dransfield declared a personal interest in this agenda item as he is a Milton Keynes Council representative for the United Sustainable Energy Agency.

The Western Power Distribution Neighbourhood Electricity Demand Challenge is a new project funded by OFGEM.

A total of ten (10) neighbourhoods are being sought to trial different methods of managing electricity demand from between fifty (50) and two hundred and fifty (250) homes all connected to the same substation. Monitoring the data of the substation will be used to measure the effects of the local projects.

Neighbourhoods that have shown any positive impacts on their electricity use will be awarded between £2,000 and £5,000 to use for community projects.

Each community group will be asked to volunteer and design and implement from their resources a range of activities and monitor and evaluate their project as regards influencing the communities' use of electricity.

This project will start in August/September 2013 and could last until July 2014.

There then followed questions and statements from members.

The Chairman thanked Rachel Brain for her presentation.

RESOLVED

That Loughton Parish Council endorse this project and will cooperate with the National Energy Foundation on any publicity material and in holding a public meeting, and that the local residents should decide on how the possible £2,000 - £5,000 monies is spend in their community. No expenditure by the Parish Council was being sought.

23/13 Community Asset Transfer:

a) To report on the meeting held on Friday 26th April 2013 with Officers at Milton Keynes Council regarding the Great Holm Community Centre

The Chairman informed the meeting that that none of the trustees were able to be present.

Having looked at the accounts it appears that the Community Centre receives about £9,500 income per annum and spends about £10,500 on salaries (cleaning and caretaking) approx per annum. Therefore the operation runs at a small deficit which could be closed with some small raise in hire charges

Last year the Community Centre Company had received an £11,760 grant from Milton Keynes Council for improvements, but this is not guaranteed in the future. Cllr Dransfield said if he has his way it will stop.

The Trustees have made it known that they are not willing to take on any of the external repairs. If the Parish Council takes over ownership therefore, it will take on the future repairing liabilities of the premises and may well have no support from MK

Council. The current premises look somewhat run-down and uninspiring, but nevertheless are an important community asset in Great Holm.

Milton Keynes Council have now put the asset transfer process on hold as no interest has been shown from anyone who wishes to take the property on. The Parish Council are the only likely bidder. The Parish probably has the option of proceeding to acquire the freehold should it want to.

There was a discussion as to whether the Parish Council should acquire the premises. Cllr Dransfield said if the Parish Council was taking on the Loughton Sports ground and associated premises then why not take on the Great Holm Community Centre too. He said it was like choosing to favour one child but not another child and they should be treated equally.

The Chairman noted these comments but said that further investigations should be made to assess the potential liabilities the Parish Council would be exposed to. A local architect had agreed to view the premises with the Chairman and to advise on the costs which might be incurred for long term renewal and repair liabilities. Further consultation could be carried out as to whether the community wants the premises acquired by the Parish Council or not.

NOTED

b) To discuss and consider the Heads of Terms for the Loughton Sports and Social Club and Sports Ground.

The Chairman informed the meeting that heads of terms had been agreed (subject to approval of the Parish Council) for the freehold of the Loughton Sports ground and associated premises and car park to be transferred to Loughton Parish Council for a sum of £1. There will be a clawback by Milton Keynes Council for a period of twenty five (25) Years if the Parish Council wished to dispose of the asset.

There will be a £10k commuted sum paid to the Parish Council for the repair of the Car Park. Full details are set out in the draft Heads of Terms.

RESOLVED

To approve the Heads of Terms to acquire the freehold of the Loughton Sports ground and associated premises and car park and proceed with the transaction

c) To approve a quote for legal services from Geoffrey Leaver Solicitors relating to the Loughton Sports grounds etc.

The quote received from Geoffrey Leaver Solicitors relating to all the legal work regarding the Loughton Sports and Social Club is £1,750.00p plus VAT for dealing with the transfer and registration, plus £330.00 for the local searches.

RESOLVED

To agree to the quote from Geoffrey Leaver Solicitors of £1,750.00p plus VAT for dealing with the transfer and registration of the Loughton Sports ground etc, and £330.00 for the local searches.

24/13 To consider changing the name of the Parish Council to Loughton and Great Holm Parish Council:

There was a discussion of this proposal. This had been considered by the Council previously when it had been agreed to adjourn the proposal for further consultation with local residents before there was any decision. Since then the issue had been featured in the spring newsletter and an online poll had been promoted. 41 residents had voted with 31 in favour of the proposed change and 10 against – i.e. 75% in favour to 25% against. This ratio had now stayed pretty constant as more votes came in. It was suggested this indicated there was generally broad support for the proposal.

Cllr Dransfield spoke against the resolution. He said the name of the Parish Council had been as it is for a very long time and we should be very slow to change it. He said the poll was too small to carry any real weight. He said this was a long meeting which had now lasted to a late hour and it was not a good time when members were tired to make a profound decision of this nature. He called for the resolution to be adjourned for further consideration on another occasion.

RESOLVED

Due to the lateness of the hour, it was agreed to defer this agenda item and a number of others to the next meeting

25/13 To consider the installation of a telephone line at the home of the Parish Clerk:

RESOLVED

To defer this agenda item to the next meeting for further discussion

26/13 To report on external meetings:

a) Loughton and Great Holm Neighbourhood Action Group

Cllr Peter Ballantyne requested that a letter is sent on behalf of the Chairman thanking Mr Mike Evans for all his hard work on the Loughton Planters.

This was agreed and Cllr Ballantyne would send a form of words to the Parish Clerk who will then send the letter to Mr Evans.

RESOLVED

- 1. To defer this agenda item to the next meeting for further discussion**
- 2. That a letter is sent on behalf of the Chairman thanking Mr Mike Evans for all his hard work on the Loughton Planters.**
- 3. That Cllr Ballantyne to send a form of words to the Parish Clerk who will then send the letter to Mr Evans.**

27/13 Lakeview Green Report:

RESOLVED

To defer this agenda item to the next meeting for further discussion

28/13 To consider/approve estimates for the maintenance/repair of the Loughton sports ground:

RESOLVED

To defer this agenda item to the next meeting for further discussion

29/13 Loughton Planters:

To agree a quote on the watering of the ten (10) Loughton Planters by Marcus Young Landscapes LTD

RESOLVED

To defer this agenda item to the next meeting for further discussion

30/13 Milton Keynes Parish Games:

To consider a proposal by Mayor Elect Cllr Brian White for a Milton Keynes Parish Games

RESOLVED

To defer this agenda item to the next meeting for further discussion

31/13 To consider a proposal to establish a street watch scheme for the Loughton Parish area:

RESOLVED

To defer this agenda item to the next meeting for further discussion

32/13 To approve a quote from Marcus Young Landscapes LTD for a proposed Litter Bin by the Milton Keynes Parks Trust at Loughton Lodge Car Park:

RESOLVED

To defer this agenda item to the next meeting for further discussion

33/13 Planning Applications:

To determine representations to be made to Milton Keynes Council on the following pending planning applications and any other action to be taken:

Planning applications awaiting a decision by Milton Keynes Council:

a) 13/00842/FUL 23 Holyrood Great Holm Milton Keynes MK8 9DR Erection of conservatory to side elevation – **No objection**

b) 13/00685/FUL Elm House School Lane Loughton Milton Keynes MK5 8AT Erection of shed - **No objection**

c) 13/00687/FUL 5 Breamore Court Great Holm Milton Keynes MK8 9AU Erection of a single storey front and side extension – **No objection**

d) 13/00677/TCA 17 Church Lane Loughton Milton Keynes MK5 8AS Notification of intention to remove to ground level a row of Thorn and 1 x Ash tree - **No objection**

e) 13/00653/FUL 12 The Meadway Loughton Milton Keynes MK5 8AN Pitched roof to existing garage, two storey rear extension and loft conversion

RESOLVED

That the Parish Clerk writes to Milton Keynes Council's Development Control Directorate that Loughton Parish Council wishes to object to this planning application on the grounds of over development, Cllr Andy Sargent to write to the Parish Clerk with a form of words.

f) 13/00641/CLUP 32 Linceslade Grove Loughton Milton Keynes MK5 8DT
Certificate of lawfulness for proposed 1m high brick wall, abutting highway - **No objection**

g) 13/00815/FUL 82 Bradwell Road Loughton Milton Keynes MK5 8AL Single storey rear extension - **No objection**

To note the outcome on the following planning applications as decided by Milton Keynes Council:

a) 13/00688/TPO Loughton Rectory Pitcher Lane Loughton Milton Keynes MK5 8AU Tree preservation order consent to cut back 2m from house, crown raise to 4m and remove deadwood of one Ash tree (T1), fell to ground level and treat the stump of one Willow tree (T3) and cut back by 2m one Beech tree (T4) - **No Objection to Works to Tree in CA**

b) 12/02543/FUL 22 Greenhill Close Loughton Milton Keynes MK5 8DG Part change of use from dwelling house to childminder use (retrospective) - **Application Refused**

c) The Badminton centre planning applications
NOTED

**34/13 Verbal Reports/Updates on the following Projects/Issues:
To decide what action (including expenditure) required on the following issues/projects**

d) Conservation Area Review

The Chairman informed the meeting that the document needs to be printed and distributed to all residents in the proposed Conservation Area along with all other stakeholders.

The cost for the printing of the Conservation Area Review document needs be approved so that the matter can be progressed; a quote had been received from Request Print of £425.00p.

RESOLVED

To approve the quote from Request Print of £425.00p for the printing of the Conservation Area Review document

35/13 Ward Matters:

To decide what action to take (including expenditure) in respect of the following matters

a) Vehicular damage to roadside verges – Cllr Peter Ballantyne

b) Replacement of fallen Willow Tree on Lakeview Green - Cllr Peter Ballantyne

RESOLVED

To defer this agenda item to the next meeting for further discussion

36/13 Cheques for Payment:

All cheques presented were authorised for payment

AGREED

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 11:25PM

Date and time of Next Meeting:

Monday 17th June 2013 7:30pm at the Loughton Memorial Hall, Bradwell Road, Loughton.

Signed _____ Chair Date _____