



Minutes of the meeting of Loughton & Great Holm Parish Council held on Monday 18/11/19 at 7.30pm at the Community Centre, 87 Kensington Drive, Great Holm MK8 9AY.

**Councillors present:** Councillors Todd (Chair), Howe, Nolan, Altieri-Douglas, Feeney, Bailey, Hoyle, Dyer (late)

**Staff present:** Bev Field (Parish Clerk)

**Members of the public present:** 5

**Chair's announcements:** Councillor Todd welcomed the incoming Parish Clerk and made a presentation to the outgoing Clerk at the end of the meeting.

**FC122/19 Apologies:** Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Sargent and Nayee.

7.32pm Councillor Dyer arrived.

**FC123/19 Declarations of interest:** for item FC127/19 Councillor Nolan declared that her spouse is on the board of the Community Foundation.

Councillor Nolan raised concern that Councillor Feeney has not submitted a declaration for the register of interests. Councillor Todd advised that all Councillors should submit one and it is their responsibility to decide whether to participate in the meeting. Councillor Feeney should consider if any declaration is needed for each item on the agenda tonight, since he does not have any standing declaration in place.

**FC124/19 Thames Valley Police:** The crime statistics report and verbal update for Loughton Park was received from PCSO Capstick as follows:

Offence	Shenley Church End	Loughton
Action fraud	3	1
Assault with injury	1	0
Assault without injury	3	0
Bilking	0	1
Burglary	1	0
Criminal damage to cars	4	0
Criminal damage to property	2	0
Dangerous dog	1	0
Drink/drug driving	1	0
Drug offences	4	0
Fire-arms offences	3	0
Garage break in/attempt	1	1
Malicious communications	3	1
Offensive weapons	3	0
Public order	3	0
Road traffic incident	1	5
Robbery	1	1
Shoplifting	8	0
Theft from motor vehicle	4	2
Theft of bicycle	2	0
Theft of property	6	2
Theft of vehicle	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>14</b>

PC Steve Prestige has joined the Neighbourhood Policing Team and apologised he could not attend this evening. He brings 16 years of experience working with gangs and in neighbourhood policing. Details of incidents included that a pushbike was used to cycle around and perform wheelies inside Sainsburys, the firearm incident in Crownhill involved BB guns; the offenders have been charged, but it is not gang related.

There is an increase in scams on elderly people across the city and a Trading Standards officer will come to the police community forum on 28/11/19 to speak on this topic. There is an increase in thefts from BMW's across the city to take the steering wheels and columns. Work has been done on the parking at Loughton and Holmwood School and the traffic wardens attended twice last week. Please support the next police community forum on 28/11/19 at the Grumpy Cook, the doors will open at 6.30pm for cake and refreshment sales and the meeting will start at 7.00pm.

Councillor Todd thanked PCSO Capstick for arranging a forum in the Parish and taking the time to attend this evening.

**FC125/19 Public participation:**

**Resident 1:** an email was received from a resident requesting fencing around the perimeter of the playing field at the Great Holm Community Centre. This is because footballs regularly get lost in the bushes and are hard to retrieve.

**Answer:** Councillor Todd said that the area is not designed to be fenced, but this could be looked at as part of the landscaping review in the Spring.

**Resident 2:** some of the bushes by the sidewalks are overgrown and scruffy, along Kensington Drive and the bridge with Two Mile Ash.

**Answer:** Councillor Todd said that this will be looked at during the landscaping review in the Spring.

**FC126/19 Visiting Speaker:** The Group Scout Leader spoke about a proposal by the Loughton Scout Group to buy the community land opposite Loughton School (on the corner of Paynes Drive & Bradwell Rd) to build a dedicated scout hut and increase the number of local groups. There are 23 groups in Milton Keynes with a waiting list of 1,200 young people. Beavers (6-8 years old), Cubs (8-10 years old) and Scouts (10-14 years old) meet at the Memorial Hall in Loughton. They need a larger venue with increased storage for tents. However, they met with the Memorial Hall committee two weeks ago, and found that they are an essential tenant for the hall to continue to operate. The Hall supports the community values of scouting and a partnership was explored. Therefore, they have started work on an alternative plan to extend the hall, renovate the building, add a teaching kitchen, and improve storage without increasing the building footprint. At this stage they are simply consulting with the Parish Council for feedback on both proposals.

Councillor Todd has previously investigated the use of the Community Foundation land and found it must be sold at market value (£130,000 3 years ago) plus the building budget. It is too expensive for a Parish Council office, but should be brought into public use.

Councillors expressed support for the Memorial Hall and commented that the School has looked at the land for parking, but it was too expensive. There is a lack of provision for teenagers to have a place to go and one suggestion was that the new build could be rented out to accommodate a youth service. The Memorial Hall may suffer from parking problems and the residents of Bradwell Rd should be consulted about any plans to extend the use of the Memorial Hall. Councillor Nolan suggested using the Guide Centre at Heron Lodge, however, this is in use at similar times to the Scout meetings and expensive. Councillor Todd invited the Scout group Leader to update the Parish Council on their plans as they develop.

**FC127/19 Scout Hut proposal:** This item was withdrawn.

**FC128/19 Planning applications:** Representations to be made to Milton Keynes were considered for the following planning applications:

a) 25 Chawton Crescent, Great Holm MK8 9EG application 19/02876/FUL for a proposed first floor side extension

**Resolved:** No objection

b) The Stone Barn, 4 Leys Road, Loughton MK5 8AZ application 19/02673/TCA for the notification of the intention to fell to ground level and grind out the stumps of 4 plum trees (G1) and reduce the overall crown of a cherry tree (T2) by 5 metres.

**Resolved:** no objection

**FC129/19 Planning applications arising:** None

**FC130/19 Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting held on 21/10/19 were approved and signed as an accurate record.

**FC131/19 Matters arising:** FC120/19 Councillor Dyer has not had an internet connection for 2-3 weeks and apologised for not getting back to the Parish Clerk regarding damage to the environment by City Fibre; she will do so in the next few days.

**FC132/19 Committee minutes:** The draft minutes from the Finance Committee extraordinary meeting held on 04/11/19 were received.

**Advisory Note:** The Parish Clerk circulated advice on proposing motions and how to scrutinise or re-visit decisions that have been taken. The motion proposed in FSC30/19 was allowed by the Chair of the Finance Committee (standing order 26d) and therefore is final for that meeting.

In summary, to challenge a decision of the full Council, the SLCC has advised that a special motion to review a council resolution can be requested in writing by 3 Councillors to go on the agenda of the next full Council, or a motion can be published in advance on the agenda of a committee, to debate referring the resolution back to full Council (standing order 7a).

Either way, the motion should be part of a published agenda and requested in advance within the timeframes allowed. This upholds the principle of transparency, that members and the public are informed in advance about all proposals under consideration through the published agenda, so they have the option to attend the meeting and speak on that issue. Anyone with responsibility for chairing meetings should always seek to follow standing orders.

**Noted.**

**FC133/19 Recommendation of the Finance Committee:** to review council resolution FC83/19 made on 16/09/19 which was "Not to budget for a project manager or consultant to support the work of developing a Neighbourhood Plan in 2020/21".

**Agreed:** This item was deferred to enable the chair of the Planning Committee to participate in the debate next month.

**FC134/19 Parish Clerk:** The report of the Parish Clerk was received. It was noted that a third mandate to request the closing of 3 bank accounts and to transfer the balances into the main treasurers account has been prepared. Lloyds refused one because of a signature query and the second request was only partly actioned.

The advice from Highways at MK Council regarding the obelisk in Great Holm was noted. Councillors did not agree that the work is cosmetic and would like at least the horizontal sections repaired. It is an original structure that marks a physical highpoint across Milton Keynes and used to be a viewing point for visitors.

**Agreed:** Councillor Dyer will take photos of the areas of concern and the Parish Clerk will contact the ward Councillors to ask for their support in improving the condition of the obelisk at a reduced quote for specific areas. Councillor Nolan will ask for the quote and advice to be reviewed.

**FC135/19 Finance:** The RFO's income and expenditure report with a balance sheet for October 2019 was received.

a) The cash position on 18/11/19 was a total of £103,776.55 this has increased partly due to a remittance from the Jubilee graveyard committee in final payment of their debt.

b) The RFO reported that under financial regulation 4.5, and in consultation with Councillors Todd and Altieri-Douglas, she has authorised emergency repair work to the blocked drains and toilets at the Great Holm Community Centre by Reeds-Dynorod and Blue Flame MK (plumbers).

**Agreed:** The Parish Clerk will investigate if insurance is available for plumbing repairs as this is a regular item.

c) The insurance premium from Zurich Municipal is due for payment. This contract was reviewed last year, and the 3-year fixed rate presented a competitive rate. Details of the policy can be requested from the RFO.

**FC136/19 Payments:** The payment schedule was authorised with the addition of the salary for November for the new Parish Clerk which had been omitted.

**Resolved:** To request that the payroll accountants run a payslip for the new Parish Clerk and add the November salary to the electronic payments tomorrow. To notify the Parish Council on the payment schedule for December.

**FC137/19 Allotment maintenance:** A request for £216.27 to pay for materials to restore the retaining wall between the car park and allotment plot no.18 was considered. The plot holder has offered to undertake the labour.

The expenditure on allotments is higher than the income. Some of this was spent on the Jubilee allotment site, as well as Greenhill Close. This project could be deferred until next year. The allotment rents need to be reviewed so that they break even, to be fair to other residents.

However, if the plot holder is taking the initiative to improve the site and the work is needed, then winter is the season to undertake it. Delay could result in more damage and expense.

5 In favour  
1 Against  
2 Abstained

**Resolved:** To pay £216.27 for the cost of materials to restore the retaining wall between the car park and allotment plot no. 18 at the Greenhill Close allotment site.

**FC138/19 Lodge Lake Trim Trail upgrade:** A request from the Parks Trust for a £5,000.00 contribution towards an upgrade of the trim trail around Lodge Lake, Great Holm towards a total project cost of £15,932.50+VAT was considered. The project was initiated by the Parish Council.

In February 2019 Councillor Todd and the Parish Clerk met with the Play Area Manager for the Parks Trust to initiate working in partnership to improve this facility. The Parks Trust did not consider the area was due for a refurbishment for another 2 years, but budget and grant options were discussed to aim at bringing this forward as a stronger priority, in response to the Parish Council. The proposal uses good quality robinia wood, with sympathetic materials at a low level to blend with the environment, to improve 5 play/fitness spaces.

**Resolved:** to pay a £5,000 contribution towards the improvements to the trim trail at Lodge Lake, on the condition that the Parish Council contribution is acknowledged, and the logo is included on the equipment.

**FC139/19 Quote for 2 infra-red lights for the Pavilion car park:** A quote from Tickford Security for two infra-red external lights to cover the car park entrance and front parking area to improve the quality of CCTV footage at night was considered. The quote includes installation and two visits at a cost of £675.00+VAT.

Using infra-red will mean that the CCTV footage will be visible at night, but won't be a nuisance to the neighbours. The purpose was to identify car registration numbers at night due to complaints of anti-social behaviour. Some Councillors would like to consider further lighting for visitors after dark to the Pavilion, others were concerned about the ongoing expenditure at the Pavilion which can be a bottomless money pit. The infra-red lights are cheaper than a barrier, and just installing one is an option.

**Resolved:** To agree to pay Tickford Security £675.00+VAT for two external infra-red lights to be installed at the car park entrance and front parking area at the Pavilion, Loughton.

**FC140/19 Quote to restore the grass verges next to the bus stops in Bradwell Rd, Loughton:** A quote from Serco for £100.00+VAT was proposed by Councillor Todd. A resident contacted him with concerns that the verge was overgrown with large weeds in the summer. She asked to have them weeded and sown with grass, so that the verge could be included in the regular mowing contract for MK Council. Serco were not able to undertake the work at short notice, and in August strimmed all the weeds and nettles free of charge. Serco have provided quotes for two options; to remove the debris and either plant with lavender and use woodchip around them, or to sow grass seed.

**Resolved:** To pay Serco £100.00+VAT to remove the debris and over-seed both verges with grass for inclusion in the MK Council mowing contract.

**FC141/19 Solar panels for the Great Holm Community Centre:** Two outline quotes to provide solar PV system and battery storage for the Community Centre were considered. The companies have MCS certification (microgeneration certification scheme). Three quotes were sought but only two remote desktop quotes were received from First4Solar and Synergy Power Ltd, which vary considerably. The next step is for a site visit and detailed quotes with a feasibility study.

Councillor Hoyle has provided information about Long Meadow School which has solar panels and wind turbines, who could be asked for some practical feedback. He also identified a 2017 grant from the rural community energy fund (RCEF) which is now being co-ordinated by local enterprise partnerships (LEP's). The RCEF and its' urban equivalent do provide grants for funding a feasibility study, but the current eligibility criteria needs to be investigated.

Synergy Power Ltd uses 70 panels with 275 wattage per panel and 19.2 kwp of energy (kilowatts at peak performance), and First4Solar has 27 panels with 305 wattage per panel providing 8.2 kwh of energy (kilowatt hours). This country has an uneven 8:1 renewable energy ratio because it is often generated in a season when we don't need it. Energy can be sold back at a low model of 25-30%. The payback term seems optimistic and relies on electricity prices increasing by 6% per year which is not born out online, and the widely varying figures in the quotes caused concern that they are unreliable.

Clarification needs to be sought about how vulnerable the panels would be to footballs or vandalism, since it is a low roof. Clarification will also be needed about responsible, safe disposal at the end of the solar panel's useful life.

Councillor Todd summarised that it is good to look at renewable energies. However, it does not seem to be a justified use of public funds, taking into account current consumption and the realistic offset which is not convincing. Councillor Hoyle thanked Councillor Bailey and the Clerk for ploughing through the information.

Proposed by Councillor Todd: Not to further investigate the use of solar panels but to reconsider their use next year, seconded by Councillor Hoyle.

**Resolved:** Not to further investigate solar panels for the Great Holm Community Centre at the current time, but consider reviewing the use of solar panels next year.

**FC142/19 NAG shed location:** Consideration was given to a request from the Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) to site a shed at the Great Holm Community Centre to store equipment relating to litter-picking and gardening. A provisional budget request has been made to pay for the shed in the 2020/21 budget. It needs to be safe, accessible and not vulnerable to vandalism.

**Resolved:** to approve the siting of a shed for the NAG to store litter-picking and gardening equipment on the grounds of the Great Holm Community Centre. The specific location is delegated to the Parish Clerk in consultation with the Great Holm Pre-School.

**FC143/19 Reports from members:** Members reported on meetings that they have attended as follows:

- a) Councillor Dyer attended a meeting of the NAG. They discussed needing new members as the core group are long-standing. They would like to put an article in the next Parish Council newsletter to promote membership. The litter pick on 26/10/19 was a success with a good turnout by the Cubs in Loughton. 35 bags of rubbish + other items were collected. The advent windows project is going well, with 24 windows agreed including Petworth House and the Cubs are supporting it.

Councillor Dyer asked if non-Councillors could be members of the Planning Committee. The Parish Clerk advised that they could not.

Councillor Hoyle attended a meeting of the Shenley Leisure Trust, as did Councillor Howe. The management have dynamic ideas to stimulate business including comedy nights and other performances, and a wider choice of ales at the bar.

- b) Ward Councillor Nolan reported that Milton Keynes Council has initiated a Poverty Commission and is looking for citizen involvement, they are specifically investigating solutions to child poverty. The library strategy was considered by the cabinet which proposed to refurbish the central library, to replace the library bus with an electric vehicle, to refurbish the Newport Pagnell library and increase the range of access and use of libraries, for example, for Knit and Natter groups. New parking meters will arrive soon in Milton Keynes.

**FC144/19 Items for the next agenda:** None

**Date and time of Next Meeting:** Monday 16/12/19 at 7.30pm at the Community Centre, 87 Kensington Drive, Great Holm MK8 9AY

**Chairs Announcements:** On behalf of the Parish Council, Philip Compton was welcomed to the meeting as the new Parish Clerk and thanked for attending prior to starting in the role. Councillor Todd said he is looking forward to working with him.

On behalf of the Parish Council, Councillor Todd thanked Bev Field, the Parish Clerk, for her outstanding service to the Parish Council over the last 2 years. Although new to clerking, she has worked hard in a polite, friendly and determined manner and has been greatly appreciated. Councillor Todd presented Bev with an engraved vase and flowers. Bev replied that it has been a time of learning and development for her which she has greatly enjoyed, is sorry to be leaving but leaves as a friend to the Parish Council.

The meeting closed at 9.22pm

Signed

Date: