



Minutes of the meeting of Loughton & Great Holm Parish Council held on Monday 17/12/18 at 7.30pm at the Moot Hall, MacIntyre, 54 Haddon, Great Holm MK8 9HP

Present: Councillors Nolan (Vice-Chair), Boland, Gray, Ballantyne, Sargent, Jones (left early), Dyer (late), Howe (late) and Dransfield (late and left early), Todd (Chair, late)

Staff present: Parish Clerk

Members of the public present: 1 PCSO

Councillor Nolan chaired the meeting to agenda item FC165/18 and Councillor Todd then took the Chair.

FC154/18 Apologies: None

FC155/18 Declarations of interest: Councillor Dransfield declared an interest in agenda item FC169/18 as he is a trustee of MK Dons SET and did not participate or vote on this item.

Councillor Dyer arrived at 7.32pm
Councillors Howe and Dransfield arrived at 7.34pm

FC156/18 Thames Valley Police: The crime statistics report from Thames Valley Police was received as follows:

There were a total of 191 crime reports in November. 70 are broken down below and 121 were crime related incidents (CRI's):

Fraud x 1 SCE
Assaults x 9 on SCE, 1 L/GH
Burglaries x 7 on SCE, 1 L/GH
Criminal Damage x 5 SCE, 3 x L/GH
Dangerous Driving x 1 SCE.
Drugs offences 3 x SCE, 1 x GH/L
Hate Incident x 1 GH/L
Bilking x 2 SCE.
Public Order x 3 SCE.
Robbery x 1 SCE.
Shoplifting x 3 GH/L
Theft x 2 GH/L, 5 SCE.
Theft from vehicle x 2 GH/L, 7 x SCE.
Theft of motor vehicles x 1 GH/L, 2 SCE.
Theft of Pedal Cycles x 8 SCE.

Key: SCE=Shenley Church End GH/L = Great Holm and Loughton

PCSO Harrison was thanked for his hard work in the Parish this year.

FC157/18 City Fibre: Apologies were received from the development manager of City Fibre due to a family health issue. Information on the imminent delivery of full fibre broadband to Loughton and Great Holm using duct and pole (DPA) by City Fibre was distributed to each member, with an invitation to contact the manager directly with any questions or concerns. A community evening will be arranged by City Fibre in January 2019 and the Parish Council is invited to attend this event. The Parish Clerk is working with City Fibre to organise and promote the evening for residents of the Parish.

Councillor Dransfield left the meeting at 7.48pm

FC158/18 Public participation: None

FC159/18 Planning and licensing applications: Representations to be made to Milton Keynes Council were considered for 18/02957/FUL 8 Mentmore Court, Great Holm MK8 9AT for a single storey rear extension

Resolved: No objection

FC160/18 Recent planning and licensing applications: None

FC161/18 Minutes: The minutes of the meeting held on 19/11/18 were approved and signed as an accurate record.

FC162/18 Matters arising: For agenda item FC149/18 Councillor Howe has been investigating funding and quotes for a cricket square and is in the process of liaising a new quote with Sports Ground Services.

FC163/18 Minutes of Committee meetings: The draft minutes of the following committees were received and noted:

- a) Premises Committee on 03/12/18.
- b) Finance and Staffing Committee on 06/12/18.

FC164/18 Business Plan for 2019/20: The Business Plan for 2019/20 recommended by the Finance and Staffing Committee was discussed. Considering a Neighbourhood Plan is important, adding footpaths to the landscaping project (item P) and to expand item H to include all ages. The trees in Horseshoe Walk need maintenance.

Councillor Nolan said that the trees are owned by Milton Keynes Council who have planned a funded survey, consultation and maintenance programme for 2019/20.

Resolved: To approve the Business Plan for 2019/20 with the addition at "P" of footpaths and at "H" the words "and others".

Councillor Ballantyne left the meeting at 8.18pm and returned at 8.25pm

Councillor Todd arrived at 8.29pm during item FC165/18

FC165/18 Budget for 2019/20: The budget and parish precept for 2019/20 recommended by the Finance and Staffing Committee, with a proposed increase of 3% were considered. Changes in income and expenditure on the two premises and proposed projects were considered carefully by the committee. Any refurbishment for the Pavilion will use the reserves. One view is to use reserves and not increase the precept. Another is that it is important to maintain parity with inflation and match the purchasing power of the precept. The precept has been kept low in recent years and any increases should be done gradually. The Parish Council has new responsibilities for the premises and the proposed rent for the Pavilion may not be fully realised in 2019/20. Money will continue to be earmarked for a Parish office, which could be added as an extension to one of the premises in later years. More activities in the Parish would be welcomed. A community or activities co-ordinator would be beneficial.

Proposal to increase the precept by 3% made by Councillor Boland and seconded by Councillor Nolan:

In favour: 3 against: 5 abstained :1

Not carried.

Proposal to approve the budget with an increase of 5% made by Councillor Sargent and seconded by Councillor Ballantyne. A recorded vote was requested by Councillor Howe.

In favour: Councillors Sargent, Ballantyne, Gray and Dyer (4)

Against: Councillor Howe (1)

Abstained: Councillors Boland, Todd, Nolan and Jones (4)

Carried.

Resolved:

To approve the budget for 2019/20 with a 5% increase. The provisional tax base for band D equivalent properties is 2,255.62 for 2019/20. The budget requirement will be £82,840.00, therefore, since the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) grant will be reduced to £513.35 the precept claim will be £82,327.00 to be received in two instalments.

Councillor Todd chaired the remainder of the meeting.

FC166/18 Finance: The finance report was received and noted.

FC167/18 Insurance: The insurance proposal from Zurich Municipal for 3 years at a cost of £1089.51 per year was recommended by the Finance and Staffing committee following the consideration of 4 quotes. The provider has been reliable, and the quote is significantly lower than the other quotes with adequate cover provided.

Resolved: To commission Zurich Municipal for insurance cover for 3 years at the cost of £1089.51 per year.

FC168/18 Scaffolding Licence: A 7-day scaffolding licence is required from Highways MKC in order to erect scaffolding to re-point the Obelisk in Great Holm.

Resolved: To pay £242.14 to Milton Keynes Council for a scaffolding licence for the re-pointing work on the Obelisk in Great Holm.

Councillor Jones left the meeting at 9.07pm

FC169/18 MK Dons SET sessions: Football sessions were considered during the February and April 2019 school holidays at a cost of £50.00 per session. These are excellent and popular sessions, and there are few other activities available for young people during these school holidays.

Resolved: To pay for one session per week based at the sports ground in Lincslade Grove, Loughton during the February and Easter school holidays 2019. Total of 3 sessions agreed at a cost of £150.00.

FC170/18 Cheques for payment: The cheques were authorised for payment.

FC171/18 Deposits for hall hire: The recommendation from the Finance and Staffing Committee to adapt the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for the management of deposits for the Great Holm Community Centre was considered, with research from other Parish Councils and advice from the internal auditor on "Safeguarding Public Money". On completion of a letting (subject to inspection and retention) the Parish Clerk will obtain 2 signatures on an ad hoc basis, whether by cheque or electronically. The Parish Clerk will report the transactions to the full Council as part of the payment schedule. No cash should be accepted, all deposit payments must be via cheque or electronic payment. No change is required to the Standing Orders which state in paragraph 17b)(i) "*All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.*"

Resolved:

- a) That the Financial Regulations are adapted in order that the Parish Clerk/RFO is authorised to reimburse hall hire deposits as they arise. Two signatures will be required and can be obtained on an ad hoc basis and the transaction must be reported at the next meeting of full Council.
- b) The Financial Regulations state at item 6.6: "*Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council [or the Finance & Staffing Committee] at the next convenient meeting.*"
 - (i) Insert into item 6.6 the words "other than deposits for hall hire, see item 6.23"
 - (ii) Insert new paragraph 6.23 "Cheques or orders for payment to reimburse (fully or partially) deposits for hall hire may be presented for signature as they arise, and the transactions reported to the following full Council meeting."

FC172/18 Employment: The recommendation from the Finance and Staffing Committee for two new employees was considered. The aim is to enable the Great Holm Community Centre to be used to its full potential. Advice was sought from other Parish Councils who recommended careful management of one-off lettings, to encourage responsible hiring. A cleaner is needed after a hire and there are small maintenance jobs that arise. In addition, cleaning could be undertaken at the sports changing rooms. Extra support is also needed for the daily running of the premises, for example, in providing cleaning supplies, responding to practical problems, group communication, bookings, promoting use of the hall as well as work that needs to be done on risk management and ensuring that Health and Safety requirements are met and maintained.

There may be scope to increase the roles and hours, and the posts should be for a 1 year contract with a review in 9 months. It important to set the rate of pay above the real living wage.

Resolved:

- a) To employ a cleaner/caretaker for 5 hours per week to focus on the weekend e.g. Friday to Monday. The duties will be to inspect and clean after each event at the Great Holm Community Centre and to undertake minor repairs and maintenance. To clean and maintain the sports changing rooms in Loughton when bookings are low. Salary will be within a range of NJC scale points 16-20 (between £9.52-£10.30 per hour).
- b) To employ a premises assistant for 8 hours per week to be worked flexibly to facilitate access and viewings for hirers of the Great Holm Community Centre, to promote use of the hall, to support the administration and running of the Centre including the cleaning supplies, responding to enquiries and concerns and arranging for appropriate contractors if needed, the administration of Health and Safety assessments and supporting communication with all hirers. Home office based with a salary range of NJC scale points 18-23 (between £9.80-£11.27 per hour)
- c) The Parish Clerk to undertake the recruitment process, and to delegate the selection and appointment of candidates to the Finance and Staffing committee.

FC173/18 Parish Clean-Up Fund: A joint proposal from 6 Town, Community and Parish Councils for the use of the Parish Clean-Up fund for a shared Foamstream vehicle and sweeper was considered. This gives control of the facility to Parishes but would be difficult to ensure equal access to the equipment and the staffing may be problematic. The annual charge should be proportionate to the level of use for a small parish. Weeds and litter are the main concerns in Loughton and Great Holm, and there is an uncontrollable element to the unknown ongoing maintenance costs of the vehicles.

Proposal on agenda: In favour 2, against or abstaining 6. Not carried.

Proposal to request from the Parish Clean Up fund a fair proportion of the fund (e.g. approx. £2,000.00) to spend with our contractors (Serco) and partner organisations on weed-killing, litter and other clean-up priorities made by Councillor Todd and seconded by Councillor Sargent.
In favour 6, against/abstaining 2. Carried.

Resolved: To write to Milton Keynes council and request a fair proportion of the Parish Clean Up fund (approx. £2,000.00) to be spent with Serco and other partners on weed killing, litter and other clean up priorities.

FC174/18 Neighbourhood Plan: Information on the benefits and challenges of developing a Neighbourhood Plan was considered, and how it would affect the approach to planning applications in the Parish. Milton Keynes Council (MKC) have offered to meet with the Parish Council and support the process. A Neighbourhood Plan is helpful if there is likely to be a large development, but could also protect areas like the pony paddocks, conservation area and the church land off Bradwell Rd. The Fire Station will be sold for development and there was an abandoned plan to develop around Lodge Lake that could be pursued again. There is future development around the expansion of Santander and Milton Keynes University that may affect the Parish. There is some grant funding that can be applied for and support from MKC for this work. A Neighbourhood Plan was produced round 6 years ago by the Chair, but the format was not accepted. Subsequently, the Conservation Area was adopted by MKC. A Neighbourhood Plan must be consistent with the Local Plan and national policy. A professional consultant would be needed to undertake the work. It may be late to develop a plan since the MK Plan is now in place.

Resolved: To start the process to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Loughton and Great Holm.

FC175/18 Consideration of a complaint about a Planning Decision: The Chairman of the Planning Committee was not satisfied with the way the process was handled for the decision on planning application 18/00373/FUL for Loughton Rectory for a conversion to a 7-room bed and breakfast establishment. Residents who were objecting have also expressed concern. The presentation to the Development Control Panel (DCP) was unsatisfactory; the locality description did not fit, and it even included a photo of a different lane by mistake. The parking and volume of traffic concerns were not fully addressed by Highways MKC. Councillor Nolan complained at the time and the Head of Planning at MKC apologised for the slides and also corrected the wrong statement by the officer that the conservation area was not adopted. The application came within permitted development.

Councillor Todd commented that the planning officers are professional, skilled and are working within laws and guidance that are complex. Some of the disappointment is with weaknesses in the planning law rather than the planning team at MKC.

No proposal was made, and the concerns of the Planning Committee were noted.

FC176/18 Parish Clerk's report: The Parish Clerk was thanked for the report that showed she is busy and proactive. Noted.

FC177/18 Section 137 grant reports: The section 137 grant reports were received and noted from:

- a) **Loughton Environmental Group:** thank you for helping LEG to buy the crocus bulbs quickly. Buying from 3 different retailers to get the quantity, the volunteers have planted around 5,000 bulbs along Ashpole Furlong as well as the junctions with Redland Drive, Whitworth Lane, Bradwell Road and Olde Bell Lane. Thank you for helping us so much, and so quickly.
- b) **Friends of Holmwood PTA:** thank you for the grant which was used to pay for a bouncy castle and candy floss machine at the summer fete. The leavers event was at MK Safari with a picnic and leavers disco with a photo memento. Without your support they would not have had this opportunity.

FC178/18 Reports from Members: A report was given by Councillor Ballantyne who attended the Loughton and Great Holm Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG). The NAG met on 06/12/18 with 6 established members and 2 apologies. One new person attended from the Loughton Environmental Group (LEG), and it was explained that the LEG does not have meetings but arranges to undertake tasks in the Parish via WhatsApp and social media. Jan Lamsden has been elected as the Chair, but no projects are being planned yet. A meeting has been arranged for 09/01/19 at 11.00am at Petworth with a seasonal lunch to follow. Councillor Dyer confirmed that meetings will be bi-monthly.

FC179/18 Exclusion of the Public: in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted for agenda item FC180/18, the public were temporarily excluded, and they were instructed to withdraw (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960).

FC180/18 Complaint: The Parish Clerk reported that in accordance with the guidelines of the Complaints Policy she has investigated and resolved a complaint.

FC181/18 Items for the next agenda: None

Date and time of Next Meeting: Monday 21/01/19 at 7.30pm at the Moot Hall, MacIntyre, 54 Haddon, Great Holm MK8 9HP

The meeting closed at 10.24pm

Signed:

Date: