



Minutes of the Meeting of Loughton & Great Holm Parish Council held remotely on Monday 19 October 2020 at 7.30pm

Location: held virtually by zoom technology.

Councillors present: Councillors Nolan (in the Chair) Todd (in the Chair for item FC95/20 only), Altieri-Douglas, Bailey, Dyer, Feeney, Howe, Hoyle, Nayee, Sargent.

Staff : Philip Compton (Parish Clerk)

Members of the public present: 19

Cllrs were reminded all the rules about code of conduct at meetings applied to virtual meetings, and the Clerk reminded everyone the meeting would be recorded.

FC89/20 Apologies: Apologies for anticipated lateness had been received from Cllr Todd. In his absence, Cllr Nolan Chaired the bulk of the Meeting.

FC90/20 Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.

FC91/20 Public participation: Members of the public were invited to speak on agenda items they considered pertinent to their particular interests. On account of the high number of members of the public, the Chair restricted each member of the public's speaking time to two minutes, and requested the Clerk to assist in this.

The first member of the public commented on a planning application (Application no: 20/02391/FUL Proposal: Garage conversion, external decking, back gate and garden shed at 4 Peckover Court Great Holm, Milton Keynes MK8 9HA), and wished Councillors to consider her concerns over the proposed bar, in particular noise and how her privacy would likely be affected.

The remainder of the members of public were present to comment on the Ashpole Furlong Play Area. All members of the public were provided the opportunity to speak, and made comments along the lines of:

- The proposal had a focus on under-4s, and that there were no chairs in the design. The location was an excellent viewing point over the area, and seating would be welcome.
- Concern was expressed over bins and bin emptying in other play areas across Milton Keynes.
- support of the design was expressed, and concern that the Parish Council had appeared to renege on an agreement.
- Comments over the picturesque location were echoed, a bench that was there had been removed, concern about parking, and a desire to see evidence of the public

consultation that is mentioned in the application form for the grant, to see if residents who live along the crescent approve of the project.

- Some groundworks appear to have begun, there were small wooden pillars that have been removed, disappointment displayed that the play area didn't appear to be going ahead.
- Concerned about play areas generally in the Parish, that are appearing out-of-date, in particular the one to the north of Redland Drive, and also there are lights broken near station bridge.
- The Petition appears to demonstrate a public sentiment in favour of the design, with over 300 signatures, all obstacles to the project could be overcome, and currently the play area was not being sufficiently utilized.
- Endorsement of earlier comments about the Parish Council, in that the decision not to proceed with the project appeared to be politically motivated.
- request to keep the view over the equestrian centre, concern about lack of parking provision and health and safety worries with proximity to the main road.
- Considers the design aesthetically pleasing, currently drives to Willen Lake and the parking was never a serious problem there and disappointed the play area not going ahead.
- Echo of previous comment about disappointment the project was not going ahead.
- thanks offered to the Parish Council for permitting this spontaneous and ad-hoc public consultation to proceed. Asks if the project really needs Parish Council support. Adding parking provision would be a good idea, supports outside activities in the current climate in general.
- Echoes points already made, general support of the project provided.
- Empathy displayed to the Parish Councillors, in being placed in a tricky position. Impressed by the level of public participation. Trusts the Parish Councillors in their desire to improve the Parish and represent the people who live in it. Wished to remind those present of public sector funding constraints. Notes issues of due process had arisen, and wished this not to interfere with the project.

In light of the public interest in the matter, the Chair (Cllr Nolan) brought forward item FC95/20:

FC95/20 update on the Ashpole Furlong Play Area: Councillors noted public sentiment to the project.

Cllr Nolan drew to the Council's attention a report written by the Clerk, which had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting, and which included a timeline into the history of Councillor involvement with the project, an email by the Strategic Landscape and Countryside Manager at MKC, and advice from the Head of Democratic Services on how and under what circumstances could the Parish's standing orders (the Parish's written rules) be suspended. The Clerk reminded those present that advice from Democratic Services was not binding upon the Council, but that it had been distributed as the Clerk considered it did not radically deviate from the advice that had been received from the SLCC and BucksALC (Society of Local Council Clerks and Bucks Association of Local Councils, respectively), who had advised that the rules should broadly be followed. Democratic Services had looked into the Parish's standing orders and commented that some standing orders (those not written in bold) could be suspended if Councillors voted to suspend them, and in this instance the reason for doing this would be upon the provision of new information.

Cllr Nolan, as Chair, brought to the Council's attention by way of new information the fact that the play area equipment had already been purchased, and that the deadline for installing it was 14 December 2020 (in order for MKC to claim the grant funding).

Councillors commented upon the lack of due process that had happened, in that the Chair (Cllr Todd) had applied for the grant without consent or approval from the Parish Council, and

that there was little evidence of public consultation, or what the results were, and that the public consultation had not been done by the Parish Council but by the Chair and the project had been publicised by the Vice-Chair, and this could prove problematic in the event of providing an audit trail.

Cllr Todd joined the meeting at this point (8:37pm), and the Clerk notified the meeting that whilst Cllr Todd was present, he would Chair the Meeting.

Under Standing Order 10(a) xv Cllr Nolan proposed a motion to suspend Standing Orders 9(b) and 7(b), in order for Councillors to re-consider the Ashpole Furlong play area without breaching standing orders on re-voting on motions and providing motions on agendas to be voted on in the usual way.

Cllr Hoyle requested more detail on the potential implications of suspending standing orders. The Clerk explained these were not legally-binding standing orders, which, he had been informed by Head of Democratic Services and the SLCC advisor, were there to protect Councillors from legal challenge. The Chair (Cllr Todd) informed those present this was an area of his profession where he had some expertise and informed Councillors that legal challenge could happen with or without the provision of standing orders.

Action: A vote was held:

Those in favour of suspension of standing orders 9(b) and 7(b): 5

Those against: 4

Abstain: 1

The motion passed, and for the purpose of the meeting only, standing orders 9(b) and 7(b) were suspended.

A second vote was moved, as to whether the Parish Council should approve the Ashpole Furlong Play Area project design and linked cost of 10% (£7,391). At the request of Councillor Hoyle, the vote was recorded:

Those in favour: 4, Cllrs Todd, Altieri-Douglas, Nayee, Nolan.

Those against: 4, Cllrs Bailey, Feeney, Howe, Hoyle

Abstain: 2, Cllrs Dyer and Sargent.

The Chair (Cllr Todd) used his casting vote and the motion passed. The Clerk would inform the Strategic Landscape and Countryside Manager at MKC accordingly, that the Parish Council had approved their involvement in the project and the linked 10% contribution (£7,391).

Ten members of the public and the Chair (Cllr Todd) left the meeting at this point, and Cllr Nolan resumed the post of Chair. Nine members of the public remained.

FC92/20 Thames Valley Police: The crime statistics report from Thames Valley Police was noted.

FC93/20 Planning and licensing applications: Councillors considered the following planning application

- a) Nightflix Milton Keynes Drive-in Cinema, Elfield Park, Milton Keynes, MK5 8AA New Premises Licence LICENSING ACT 2003

Action: After discussion it was resolved not to object, but upon condition that lighting focusses away from the nearby nature reserve, and that litter will not be left on site after events. Cllr Sargent and the Clerk would compile a letter along these lines and submit to licensing at MKC.

FC94/20 Planning Applications: There were no representations to be made to Milton Keynes Council on any applications validated since the publication of the agenda.

FC96/20 Water Risk Assessment conducted at Greenhill Close allotments:

Action: Noted.

FC97/20 Minutes: Minutes of the extraordinary meeting on 05 October 2020 were approved as an accurate record subject to two amendments:

- that Cllr Dyer was present
- to include under item FC87/20 the Chair's comment that there would be no further discussion on the matter of the Ashpole Furlong Play Area for six months.

FC98/20 Committee meetings: The following minutes, which had previously been uploaded to the Parish Council website and included in the paperwork for the meeting, were noted:

- a) Planning Committee Meeting 05 October 2020

Three members of the public left the meeting at this time, leaving six remaining (9:40pm).

FC99/20 Payments:

Action: monthly payments for October were authorised and the Council noted the current bank balance.

FC100/20 Allotments Project feasibility design costings:

Action: This item was deferred to the November Full Council meeting, by which time the Finance Committee would have had time to consider budgetary implications and could recommend to the Full Council the project.

FC101/20 Contract for dog litter services: Cllrs considered extending the current contract for a period of two years, at an increased cost of 20p/bin empty (to £2.70/bin empty). A draft contract had been included in the pack.

Action: The motion was proposed by Cllr Altieri-Douglas, and seconded by Cllr Nolan, and put to the vote:

Those in favour of extending the contract: 5

Against: 3

Abstain: 1

Councillors resolved therefore to agree to this two-year extension, upon condition that the twenty-seventh bin was moved from around the sports pitch to opposite the Kensington pub, at the end of the horse-shoe walk where there was frequently dog litter on the ground.

FC102/20 Railing around Sports Pitches in Loughton: Councillors considered whether to authorize expenditure on Serco replacing rotten posts (50x posts, £25/each to replace = £1,250).

Councillors noted the reason for the ascot railing was likely a historical requirement by the FA that sports pitches must be fenced-in.

The motion was voted upon:

In favour: 4

Against: 0

Abstain: 5

Action: The motion passed and the Clerk would authorize the expenditure by Serco.

The remaining six members of the public had left the meeting by this point (9:55pm).

FC103/20 policies and risk assessment: Councillors consider for adoption a covid-focussed community centre policy and risk assessment, copies of which had been included in the paperwork. Councillors asked if there was any material cost in adopting the policies, and the Clerk informed that it was just the anti-bac hand cleaner cost.

Action: The policies and risk assessment were adopted.

FC104/20 Parks Trust trim trail update on progress:

Action: Cllrs noted 3 of the 5 pieces of equipment will be installed in Spring 2021 – delay caused by bad weather, and the Clerk was requested to put a note out on the Council's website to inform members of the public accordingly.

FC105/20 report on MKPA (Milton Keynes Play Association) summer activities:

Action: Councillors noted report on summer activities and considered extra sessions, which was included in the paperwork. Councillors noted the budgeted expenditure on MKPA had already been used up for the year, and resolved not to subsidise any further expenditure for the autumn half-term's activities.

FC106/20 autumn landscape quotes for Loughton work: This item was deferred until the November Full Council meeting, by which time it was hoped the quotes for work emanating from the Great Holm autumn landscape review would be received.

FC107/20 Knowl Gate/Childs Way/Ashpole Furlong Junction: Cllrs noted the Clerk would be in communication with MKC on this.

FC108/20 Reports from members: The Clerk and Cllr Dyer had attended recent meetings of the Committee of the Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG), and Cllr Dyer updated the Parish Council accordingly, in that there had been complications regarding the purchasing of bulbs from Dobbies Garden Centre.

FC109/20 Items for the next agenda. Councillors were reminded to contact the Clerk and follow the rules as set out in the Parish's Standing Orders for items to be requested on the agenda for the next meeting.

Date and time of Next Meeting: Monday 16 November 2020 at 7.30pm

The Meeting was declared closed at 10:30pm.