



Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council held at Sports Hall - Newton Leys Pavilion on Tuesday, 25th April, 2023 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs E Kelly-Wilson, R Graham, Elhasoglu, Palmer, G Bedford, S Browne, R Haine, M Imran, M McDonald, T Stephens, M Wymer, Hussein and Osumili

Absent: Cllrs L Campbell, E O'Rourke and A Khanom

Apologies: Cllrs S Clark, K Ely, E Hume and A Segebrecht

In attendance: Delia Shephard (Town Clerk) (Clerk) and John Fairclough (Support Services Manager)

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FC23/24-1 **Councillors' apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and ran through the housekeeping arrangements. It was RESOLVED to note the apologies for absence and the absences without apologies as listed above.

The Chair announced that Sean Porter had resigned from the council with immediate effect as he had now moved away from Fenny Stratford and had been elected to office at Great Linford Parish Council. It was unanimously RESOLVED to thank former Cllr Porter for his 8 years of service as a town councillor for Fenny Stratford.

FC23/24-2 **Councillors' declarations of interest in matters on the agenda**

There were no declarations of interest.

FC23/24-3 **Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 28 March 2023 of Full Council**

It was RESOLVED that the draft minutes of the meeting be approved as an accurate record.

FC23/24-4 **Public Speaking**

The Chair of Water Eaton Residents Association made representations concerning the town council's subsidised swimming scheme at Bletchley Leisure Centre noting the price increases which had been introduced and stressing the importance of providing swimming sessions for residents during the current cost of living crisis especially for those in receipt of benefits.

FC23/24-5 **Variation of order of business**

It was RESOLVED to vary the order of business and deal with agenda item 16 next.

FC23/24-6 **Increase in swimming prices at Bletchley Leisure Centre**

Members noted the comments made by the Chair of Eater Eaton Residents Association and discussion followed. It was noted that swimming prices were set by InspireAll and it was agreed that officers would seek information about the rationale for the differences in costs between the different categories of swimmers and this would be reported to the Community Committee which has responsibility for the swimming scheme. It was confirmed that the budget set for 2023-2024 the swimming scheme included sufficient funds to cover the anticipated price rise which provided usage remained at a similar level as in previous years.



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It was RESOLVED to note the increase in prices as follows:

Swim category	2022 Price	2023 Price
3 – 16 years (junior)	£2.30	£2.50
16-19 in full time education (further education)	£2.30	£2.50
60+ (senior)	£2.20	£2.50
other*	£3.80	£4.00
*Includes those in receipt of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax Reduction • Universal Credit • Personal Independence Payment • Employment and Support Allowance • Income Support • Invalid Care Allowance • Working Tax Credit • Pension Credit 		

FC23/24-7 **Draft minutes of recent meetings of committees of the council and to consider any recommendations therein not included on the agenda**

FC23/24-7.i **Draft Minutes of Community Committee 4 April 2023**
It was RESOLVED that the minutes be noted and there were no recommendations for consideration by full council.

FC23/24-7.ii **Draft minutes of Finance and Governance Committee 18 April 2023**
It was RESOLVED that the draft minutes be noted. There were several recommendations for consideration by the town council which were included as individual items on the agenda following this item.

FC23/24-8 **Changes to the financial regulations as recommended by the Finance and Governance Committee**
It was RESOLVED that the recommendation of the Finance and Governance Committee be approved and the Town Council’s Financial Regulations be amended as shown below.

Item 6.14 – updated to reflect the change to the single transaction limit approved in minute FC22/23-75. The item will now read as follows:

Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk [and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1,500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed. On-line purchases for software that are in excess of £1,500, delegated officer powers should be used (RFO or Proper Officer) in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Finance and Governance whose approval would be sought in advance.

Item 6.16 a – the current petty cash float is £250, however, on the basis that the local NatWest branch is closing in June 2023, the RFO would like the limit increased to



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£500. The item will now read as follows:

The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £500 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

FC23/24-9 **Receipt and approval of internal auditor's final report for the financial year 2022-2023 as recommended by the Finance and Governance Committee**

It was RESOLVED that the recommendation of the Finance and Governance Committee that the final internal audit report for the financial year 2022-2023 prepared by Auditing Solutions Ltd be noted and approved.

FC23/24-10 **Approval of the council's annual governance statement and accountability return as recommended by the Finance and Governance Committee**

It was RESOLVED that both the council's annual governance statement and accountability return (AGAR) for the financial year 2022-2023 be approved and signed as a correct representation of the council's position as had been recommended by the Finance and Governance Committee on 18 April 2023.

FC23/24-11 **Arrangements for advertising the period during which electors and interested persons may exercise rights relating to the annual accounts**

It was RESOLVED that the arrangements for advertising the period during which electors and interested persons may exercise their rights relating to the annual accounts during the period Monday 12 June 2023 to Friday 23 July 2023 be noted.

FC23/24-12 **Town Council's Annual Report for the year 2022- 23 to be presented at the annual meeting of electors on 11 May 2023**

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council's draft annual report for the year 2022-23 be noted and approved.

FC23/24-13 **Town Council's delivery plan for the year 2022-2023**

The Chair commented that the delivery plan for the past year had not included several projects which had not been anticipated and had, in any event, been an ambitious plan given the council's resources. There were some target which had not been achieved but these had been explored and did not reflect lack of effort on the part of team.

It was RESOLVED that the delivery plan for the year 2022-23 be noted.

FC23/24-14 **Town Council's delivery plan for the financial year 2023-2024**

The draft delivery plan for the year 2023-24 was discussed and a typing error was noted on key where Strategic Priority 5 had been overtyped with the word "Key" and this would be corrected by officers. The clerk noted that the plan was as yet incomplete (ie progress column) but members were asked to approve the project items within the plan. At the Finance and Governance Committee meeting on 18 April 2023 it had been recommended that the delivery plan was restricted to new projects and actions for review by members rather than included all the "business as usual" items which would be contained in a separate internal document which could be made available to councillors on request. The draft delivery plan had therefore been prepared on that basis.

It was RESOLVED that the draft delivery plan for the year 2023-24 be approved and adopted with the addition of an item to review the information and advice service to be provided to residents which had been included in the budget and had previously been



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delivered by MK Citizens Advice.

FC23/24-15

Town Council constitution document and associated policies including the scheme of delegations and committee structure

Members reviewed and discussed a report from the clerk on production of a Town Council constitution and it was RESOLVED that staff time be used to activate the constitution module of Modern Gov and produce an integrated space for all policy documents.

The Town Council's scheme of delegations and committee structure had been revised in line with decisions made during the year and the new draft was discussed. There was general agreement that the existing committee structure was working well for both members and officers. However several members expressed concern that not all their fellow councillors were attending the meetings they had been summoned to and not all were preparing for meetings in advance. Discussion followed on the obligations of those who took public office.

It was RESOLVED that the draft scheme of delegations document be approved and the current committee structure be retained for the year 2023-2024.

FC23/24-16

Town Council's draft communications action plan for 2023-24 which includes resumption of live streaming of town council and committee meetings

It was RESOLVED that the draft communications action plan for 2023-24 be approved and adopted. Councillors noted that the new website was an improvement and the clerk advised that further changes to the website were planned in the next few months. It was agreed that analytics data on the website be made available at the next Community Committee meeting. Members noted that the town council's communications were not reaching all parts of the community (as evidenced at a recent public meeting not organised by the town council) and it was agreed that thought be given to improved measurement of the efficacy of all communications.

Members also noted that arrangements had been made for recording and live streaming of town council and committee meetings and the introduction of hybrid meetings in order to encourage participation and transparency. The clerk advised that legislation required that members of the council must attend full council and committee meetings in person and be physically present in order to be marked as present in the minutes and in order to speak and vote on any business. If members were unable to attend physically in person they would be able to join the meeting remotely in the same way as any member of the public and would be permitted to speak at the discretion of the person chairing the meetings. It was agreed that the clerk would issue an internal briefing note to all members on hybrid meeting arrangements and etiquette.

FC23/24-17

Proposal to extend the free period of usage of Newton Leys Pavilion by Ping Pong Social at a cost of up to £2,574

A report on a request for an extended period of free hall hire up to a cost of £2,574 (representing 39 weeks) from Ping Pong Social was discussed. It was noted that the sessions on Wednesday evenings currently used by Ping Pong Social could be let to other organisations at the usual rate and an original period of 15 weeks free use had already been agreed to help the group get started. The equipment used was owned by the town council.

It was RESOLVED that a further period of 3 months usage at no charge would be offered to this group and that if the group could demonstrate at the end of this period



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that they had made an application for grant funding from third parties a further 3 month period would be considered.

FC23/24-17.i **Review of licensing application DBI04474 New Premises Licence Application - B2B, Unit 3 Stanier Square, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK2 2FY - Sale of alcohol: 4pm - 10.30pm indoors only. Late Night Refreshment and sale of alcohol 11pm - 4am via online/phone deliveries only.**

Following some discussion it was RESOLVED that no representations be sent to the licensing authority about this application as the town council had no evidence to support any objections. It was agreed that members would report to the clerk any incidents of concern about this or any other licensed premises in the area.

The meeting closed at 8.29 pm