



Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council held at Sports Hall at Newton Leys Pavilion, Furzey Way, Newton Leys on Tuesday, 24th October, 2023 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs K Ely, R Graham, R Haine, E Kelly-Wilson and U Osumili

Absent: Cllrs E O'Rourke and A Segebrecht

Apologies: Cllrs S Browne

In attendance: Cllr S Browne (member of the committee attending virtually), Alison Brown (Finance Manager) (Clerk) and Delia Shephard (Town Clerk)

Min Ref

- FC23/24-53 **To note apologies for absence**
It was RESOLVED to note the apologies listed above.
- FC23/24-54 **To note councillors' declarations of interest in matters on the agenda**
There were no declarations of interest.
- FC23/24-55 **To approve the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the committee**
It was RESOLVED that the draft minutes of the previous meeting on 22 August 2023 be approved as a correct record.
- FC23/24-56 **Public Speaking Time**
A representative from the Canals and Waterways Trust spoke in support of the part-funding of a service bollard for Electra, taking over ownership and on-going maintenance costs to be discussed in item 18 of the agenda. The representative stayed to respond to members' questions.
- FC23/24-57 **To review and comment on any planning applications due for review by Milton Keynes City Council**
- FC23/24-57i **23/02186/HOU - 11 Windsor Street Bletchley Milton Keynes MK2 2LN - Proposed garage conversion to an office and replacing the dilapidated shed with a permanent structure play room**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the planning application.
- FC23/24-57ii **23/02108/FUL - Broadway Stampings And Pressings Ltd Second Avenue Bletchley Milton Keynes MK1 1ED - Demolition of dilapidated buildings, construction of new two storey front extension, construction of two storey partial side extension, alteration to principal car park, boundary treatment alterations and creation of service yard**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the planning application.
- FC23/24-57iii **23/02156/HOU - 23 Staple Hall Road Bletchley Milton Keynes MK1 1BQ - Erection of a single storey side/front extension and the installation of cladding to the front elevation**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the planning application.



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- FC23/24-58 **To review and comment on the following notices due for review by Milton Keynes City Council**
- FC23/24-58i **Notice of Proposal - To reduce the speed limit on part of Watling Street to 40mph (TRO-360)**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the notice of proposal.
- FC23/24-59 **Notice of Proposal - To introduce off-street limited waiting parking within the Manor Road cemetery car park in Bletchley (TRO-375)**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the notice of proposal.
- FC23/24-60 **Notice of Proposal - To introduce an off-street residents permit parking area in Rowlands Close in Bletchley (TRO-365)**
It was RESOLVED to make no comments on the notice of proposal.
- FC23/24-61 **To note the approval of planning consent for Sycamore House and Hall**
The clerk informed members that formal planning approval had been granted for the redevelopment of Sycamore Hall and the link with Sycamore House. Permission had been granted with no unusual conditions in place; the only amendment to the scheme had been the introduction of cycle racks, which had been added to the original application.

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.
- FC23/24-62 **To consider taking over the lease in respect of the Denmark Street car park from MKCC**
The Clerk informed members that Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC) had approached the town council to consider taking over the lease in respect of 23 parking spaces in the Denmark Street car park. MKCC currently leases the spaces at a cost of £4,000 per annum, however, as the lease is now in a rolling contract, the costs would be potentially higher. It was noted that the spaces were currently in a poor state of repair and the landlord had applied for planning approval for building works on the land, however, this application had since been withdrawn. Members discussed whether the car park fell within the area designated within the Public Realm Improvements; the Clerk agreed to check the designated zone, but believed it did not.

There was a long discussion amongst members in respect of the response to MKCC. It was RESOLVED to respond with three points;
1. The site is strategically important to Fenny Stratford,
 2. The town council wishes to engage with MKCC, however, it should be in the context of all carparking which is central to the regeneration of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford,
 3. MKCC should purchase the land or use its influence within the Town Deal Board.
- FC23/24-63 **To review and note a financial management information report showing income and expenditure against budget for the year to 30 September 2023**
The RFO highlighted that the NJC pay award for 2023/24 had still not been agreed and interest received on cash reserves was substantially more than originally budgeted.



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It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

- FC23/24-64 **To review and note cash and investment reconciliations to 30 September 2023**
It was RESOLVED that the cash and investment reconciliations be noted.
- FC23/24-65 **To review and note the council's balance sheet as at 30 September 2023**
It was RESOLVED that the balance sheet to 30 September 2023 be noted.
It was RESOLVED that the list of individual transactions over £500 for the period be noted.
- FC23/24-66 **To ratify a list of payments made or due to be made to 31 October 2023**
It was RESOLVED that the list of payments made or due to be made which had been published with the agenda be ratified.
- FC23/24-67 **To review the interim internal audit report for 2023-24 and recommend to Full Council for approval**
Members reviewed an interim internal audit report completed on behalf of the Town Council by Auditing Solutions dated 11 October 2023. There were no matters brought to the attention of the Town Council. It was also noted that the council would carry out a procurement exercise for the provision of internal audit services for the 2024/25 financial year.
It was RESOLVED to recommend to full council that the report be formally approved.
- FC23/24-68 **To review the following policies for recommendation to full council**
- FC23/24-69 **Investment Policy**
It was RESOLVED that the draft investment policy circulated before the meeting be recommended to full council for adoption with no changes.
- FC23/24-70 **Procurement Policy**
It was RESOLVED that the draft procurement policy circulated before the meeting be recommended to full council for adoption with no changes.
- FC23/24-71 **To consider and recommend input into the 2024/25 budget preparation**
Members discussed the 2024/25 budget preparation process and the requirement to ensure that any budget is based upon the current delivery plan. It was noted that the results of the community survey would be available at the next full council meeting.
- FC23/24-72 **To consider a proposed Scale of Charges for 2024/25**
The RFO reminded members that at the Finance and Governance Committee, on the 25 October 2022, it was decided that the scale of charges for any given year would be uplifted by the CPI in the July of the previous year; rates had been rounded to the nearest 5p, 50p or £1 depending on type of charge. On this basis, the recommendation was that the scale of charges should be increased by at least 6.8% with effect from 1 April 2024. It was also noted that as a result of the option to tax on both Fenny Stratford Community Centre and Newton Leys Pavilion, revenue from charges had been reduced significantly.



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It was RESOLVED to recommend to council that:

i. the scale of charges for Newton Leys Pavilion and Fenny Stratford Community Centre should be increased by CPI (July 2023) at a rate of 6.8% plus 3.2% with effect from 1 April 2024,

ii. the charges for photocopying should all increase by 5p with effect from 1 April 2024,

iii. all other charges should be increased by CPI (July 2023) at a rate of 6.8% with effect from 1 April 2024.

FC23/24-73

To ratify a decision to increase the frequency of emptying dog bins on the Newton Leys Estate

It was RESOLVED to ratify the decision to increase the frequency of the emptying of the 15 dog bins on the Newton Leys Estate on a temporary basis whilst monitoring of the situation continues.

It was RESOLVED to recommend that an additional provision is included in the 2024/25 budget, in the sum of £2,500, to reflect the increased frequency of the 15 dog bins on the Newton Leys Estate, whilst monitoring continues.

FC23/24-74

To consider the part-funding of a service bollard for Electra, taking over ownership and on-going maintenance costs.

The RFO reminded members that the council entered into a partnership agreement with the Canals and Waterways Trust specifically to fund costs in respect of Electra and an amount of £13,700 remains unspent.

It was RESOLVED to approve a 50% contribution towards the projected cost of £16,260.20, equating to no more than £8,130.10 from the funds already set aside in the partnership agreement.

FC23/24-75

To ratify the decision to renew the firewall licence at Newton Leys Pavilion and Fenny Stratford Community Centre and replace access points (APs)

It was RESOLVED to ratify the decision to renew the firewall licence at Newton Leys Pavilion and Fenny Stratford Community Centre and to replace the access points (APs) at a cost of £2,594.00 plus vat with an on-going annual cost of £295.00 plus vat.

FC23/24-76

To approve the transfer of land to the North of Galapagos Grove to MKCC

It was RESOLVED to approve the transfer of land to the North of Galapagos Grove to Milton Keynes City Council.

FC23/24-77

To discuss councillor training requirements

The RFO highlighted to members that whilst there is a budget set aside specially for councillor training, they would be prepared to arrange more ad-hoc training at Sycamore House (in-person or virtual) or after hours on a virtual basis.

FC23/24-78

To consider the exclusion of the public for the following items of business

It was RESOLVED to exclude members of the public for the following item of business as it may be prejudicial to the public interest to discuss this item in public because it concerns commercially sensitive information.

FC23/24-79

To review quotes for asset valuation at Fenny Stratford Community Centre



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Following consideration of quotations, it was RESOLVED to appoint Berrys UK Ltd to provide the asset valuation of Fenny Stratford Community Centre at a cost of £1,200 plus vat.

The meeting closed at 9.04 pm