



**MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF
WHITEHOUSE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**
Held on **THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2023** at 7pm
at The Library, Watling Academy, Barossa Way,
Whitehouse, MK8 1EP

Present: Councillor Julian Thomas (Chair); Councillors Varma Kanumuri and Jekaterina Kartasova.

Officer: Lesley Sung (Clerk)

Members of the Public: 1

C143 CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair of the Council, Councillor Eileen Card, the Vice-Chair of the Council, Councillor Julian Thomas, took the chair for the meeting.

C144 WELCOME AND PUBLIC FORUM

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended that welcome to members of the public viewing the proceedings via Teams.

C145 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fola Akinsowon, Eileen Card and Godwin Michael. All apologies received were accepted.

C146 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

C147 MINUTES

Resolved Unanimously: That the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Council, held on 12 October 2023 be approved, and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the proceedings.

C148 NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Paul Van Geete (Milton Keynes City Council) was present at the meeting, to update the Council on the development progress of new community facilities in Whitehouse.

(a) Allotment Site

Mr Van Geete reported that there had yet again, been further delay to the completion of the allotment site. He reported that landscaping contractors were now on site, but that the water had yet to be installed. He added that realistically, the allotment site would be completed around mid-March. The Clerk reported that the Council's solicitor had been instructed to start the transfer of the site from Milton Keynes City Council to Whitehouse Community Council.

The grass has been laid at the site and will continue to grow over the winter period, depending on weather. The grass needed some time to establish and because of recent weather conditions, it was advised that the ground is left and undisturbed until the opening. Allowing plot holders access to the allotment site earlier than March



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2024, could result in damage and the contractor not making good on the grass. Arrangements had been made for the Community Council to meet with Milton Keynes City Council and the contractors at the end of November 2023, for discussion on contract arrangements.

The Council considered holding an 'open day' in January or February for plot holders to have a look around the site and the location of their allocated plots.

The Clerk reported that a new bank account had been set up for the receipt of allotment payments.

Resolved Unanimously:

1. That, the Council notes the report and the estimated completion date of the allotment site in mid-March.
2. That, to ensure that the grass was established at the site, the earliest access to plots would be March 2023, which would still allow for a full growing season.
3. That the Council arranges an 'open day', early 2024, inviting plot holders to see the site and their allocated plot.
4. That the landscaping contract ITQ process starts once the current contractors confirm that the grass is well established.
5. That the Council starts to issue tenancy agreements to residents that have been allocated a plot, giving them 28 days to return a signed agreement, together with proof of residency in Whitehouse and for them to make payment of a deposit (50% of the yearly cost of their plot), into the Council's bank account.
6. That allotment tenants are charged a pro-rate payment from the date of access to the plot (around mid-March) up to 30 September 2024 and that, a full yearly charge is requested to run from 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2025.
7. That subsequent annual charges be made to cover the period 1 October to 30 September.

(b) Community Meeting Place

Mr Van Geete reported that there had been a delay to the internal works at the community centre as Milton Keynes City Council had not been able to secure a permanent electricity supply.

Whitehouse Community Council had ran a competition to name the Meeting Place, receiving 91 entries from residents. The winning entry was 'The Hive' as this reflected the hive of activity the community was envisaged to become. Maria Farrell was announced the winner of the competition and received a £50 Amazon Voucher and a special guest invite to the opening launch.



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Once completed, the Community Meeting Place would be transferred from Milton Keynes City Council to Whitehouse Community Council and the Council's appointed solicitor has been instructed to start the transfer process.

Resolved Unanimously: That the delay to the completion of the Community Meeting Place be noted and the report accepted.

(c) Temporary Shop

Mr Van Geete reported that there had been a delay to the provision of temporary shop in Whitehouse, prior to Christmas 2023. The developer had not submitted all the information required for Milton Keynes City Council to validate the planning application. A revised application was received and the application had now been validated.

Subject to no objections being received during the statutory neighbour notification period, the planning application could be completed in as little as 6 weeks from start of application to permission granted. It was now likely that the temporary shop would be up and running around mid-January 2024.

Prospective retailers will be assessed against a set of criteria to ensure they will provide the best service possible to Whitehouse residents.

Resolved Unanimously: That the report be accepted.

(d) Grit Bins

Four out of five grit bins had now been installed in the area:

- Junction of Longhorn Drive and Berrenda
- Red Poll Way, adjacent to the electricity station.
- Randall Avenue – adjacent to noticeboard
- Barrosa Way – on the red way close to the dog waste bin.

A fifth grit bin at the junction of Anatolian Avenue and Portland Avenue was still to be installed.

Resolved unanimously: That the Council was pleased that the grit bins had been installed by Milton Keynes City Council after a long delay.

(e) Dog Waste Bins

Two dog waste bins had been ordered and would be delivered direct to Marcus Young Environmental Services Ltd, the Council's dog bin waste emptying contractor, for fitting.



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The Clerk reported that she was waiting for a response from Bovis for it to install a pole for the new dog waste bin at Anatolian Avenue/Portland Avenue. The pole for a dog waste bin to be located on North Bucks Way, opposite Watling Academy, had already been installed.

Resolved Unanimously: That the report be accepted.

(f) Defibrillators

The Chair announced that the first defibrillator in Whitehouse had been installed on the external wall at Whitehouse Primary School. He reported that the defibrillator had been donated by the school, to the community and that Councillor Joe Hearnshaw had purchased the Bleed Control Kit from his Ward Based Budget. The Council had purchased the combined cabinet and TS Electrical, a local electrician had installed the cabinet free of charge.

Resolved Unanimously: That the report be accepted.

C149 MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC AMENITY LAND AND OPEN SPACE – LACK OF MAINTENANCE

The Council was still chasing up maintenance work that had yet to be completed in Whitehouse.

Resolved Unanimously: That a meeting of the Landscaping Working Group be arranged to discuss a way forward and to consider alternative landscaping contractor options in the future.

C150 DECISIONS MADE UNDER THE COUNCIL'S ADOPTED SCHEME OF DELEGATED AUTHORITY (SODA)

Resolved Unanimously: That the Council accepts the following decisions, made under its adopted Scheme of Delegated Authority:

SODA No.	Decision
23/24 - 11	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Council increases the value of the Amazon Voucher to the winner of the Community Meeting Place naming competition from £25 to £50.2. That a £25 Amazon Voucher be awarded to 2 runners-up and that their suggestions be used to name the Hall and the Meeting Room.
23/24 - 12	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Community Meeting Place be named 'The Hive', to reflect the hive of activity the new Meeting Place was expected to become.2. That the winner of the naming competition, Maria Farrell, be awarded the £50 Amazon Voucher Prize and invited as a special guest to the opening launch.



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	<p>3. That the Hall be named 'The Barn' and the Meeting Room 'The Parlour' and that the winners be advised and awarded a £25 Amazon Voucher,</p> <p>4. That the new name of the Community Meeting place (The Hive) be submitted to Milton Keynes City Council for it to organise appropriate signage at the Centre.</p>
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C151 EVENTS UPDATE – DIWALI CELEBRATION – 11 NOVEMBER 2023

Councillor Varma Kanumuri reported on the successful Diwali Celebration that took place at Whitehouse Primary School on 11 November 2023. He reported that he had received good feedback and felt that residents had been appreciative of event. There had been a mixture of activities on offer with Indian cultural activities that had originated from both north and south India. Good feedback had been received on the Council's social media about the range of activities and the firework display.

Resolved Unanimously: That the report be accepted and that the Council places sufficient funds in the 2024/2025 budget for another celebration next year.

C152 EVENTS UPDATE – CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION – 10 DECEMBER 2023

Councillor Julian Thomas updated the Council on the work carried out by the Christmas Fayre Working Group to date. The event would be held at Whitehouse Primary School, hosting a brass band, semi-professional carol singers and a Christmas Market with a variety of Christmas themed stalls. Santa would be travelling the usual route around the Whitehouse estate. Whitehouse Primary School children would also be performing Christmas carols and a Christmas themed dance routine.

Leaflets for the event had been distributed to all households and banners had been installed around the area.

Resolved Unanimously: That the report and the work carried out to date, be accepted.

**C153 PROPOSED REVISIONS TO WEA TOWN CENTRE AND
WHITEHOUSE SOUTH (AREA 10) DESIGN CODES**

The Council received the proposed revisions to the Whitehouse Town Centre and Area 10 design codes and was invited to submit comments or observations to Milton Keynes City Council by Monday 20 November 2023.

Councillor Julian Thomas said that there was no mention of play area provision in the Whitehouse South design code. Given the size of the parcel, and its distance from existing play areas, there was an expectation to see one or more play areas included.



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Resolved Unanimously: That the observation and comment made by Councillor Julian Thomas regarding play provision, be submitted to Milton Keynes Council by the consultation deadline.

C154 MILTON KEYNES CITY COUNCIL CONSULTATION – PROPOSED CHANGES TO COUNCIL TAX – LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES AND SECOND HOMES

The Council was invited to comment on Milton Keynes City Council's consultation on its proposals to Council Tax charges on long-term empty properties and second homes.

The Government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Act came into force on 26 October 2023 giving local councils the power to charge higher council tax on properties that are defined as long term empty homes and properties that are only occupied occasionally (second homes).

The additional charge was intended to encourage owners to bring homes back into use and boost the supply of properties available to rent in Milton Keynes.

Resolved Unanimously: That the intention of Milton Keynes City Council to increase charges on long-term empty properties and second homes, be noted.

C155 FINANCE - AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS

The Council received a financial report from the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) (the Clerk), including details of payments made during October 2023 and payments to be made in November 2023.

The Council received the October bank statement and the RFO reported a closing bank balance of £168,590.89 as of 31 October 2023.

Resolved Unanimously:

- That the following payments in October 2023 be authorised:

£2,264.23	Staff	Salaries
£1,191.75	TopSource Global	HMRC payment
£447.10	S2D Leaflets	Printing/Leaflet distribution
£100.00	Nivethitha Chinnai	Feel The Beat (SFFD)
£158.00	Alive Network	Carol Singers (Deposit) (Xmas)
£73.20	TopSource Global	Payroll
£27.60	Google Cloud	Google Drive
£30.00	MK Play Association	MKPA Membership
£635.00	Alive Network	Carol Singers (Balance)
£50.00	BALC	Training – Risk Mgt
£1,849.10	Pyro Cartel	Fireworks (Diwali)
£36.00	SLCC	Training – VAT
£120.00	MK Box	Storage Unit



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£339.47	Lesley Sung	Expenses
£2,264.23	Staff	Salaries
£1,191.75	TopSource Global	HMRC Payment
£175.00	A Imbimbo	Facepainting (Diwali)

2. That the Council accepts expenditure of £10,952.43 in October 2023.
4. That the Council accepts a closing bank balance of £168,590.89 as of 31 October 2023.
5. That the Council authorises payment of expenses to the Clerk of £1,688.29.
6. That the Council notes that payments and expenses to be made in November 2023 was estimated at £13,408.

C156 COUNCIL BUDGET 2024/2025

Resolved Unanimously:

1. That the Council establishes a Budget Working Group to consider the budget for 2024/2025 and that the Group comes back to the December Council meeting with its recommendations.
2. That the Budget Working Group consists of Councillors Eileen Card, Varma Kanumuri, Jekaterina Kartasova, Julian Thomas and the Responsible Finance Officer (The Clerk).

C157 DRAFT INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Resolved Unanimously: That the Draft Investment Strategy is deferred to the next meeting to allow time to consider ways to implement the proposed strategy to ensure the best financial return whilst prioritising security and liquidity.

C158 DRAFT FINANCIAL THRESHOLDS POLICY – QUOTES, INVITATIONS TO QUOTE AND TENDER

The Council received a Draft Financial Thresholds policy that would trigger the need to obtain quotes, invitations to quote and invitations to tender.

The proposed policy articulated the guiding principles and provisions that would apply when sourcing goods or services. The proposed policy complied with the public sector Procurement Rules 2015 and would apply to all expenditure on goods, services and building infrastructure and equipment.

The Council is required to use a competitive, efficient, fair and transparent procurement process with evaluation of bid proposals taken from a qualitative, as well as a quantitative perspective. Assessment of supplier bids should be conducted only in relation to evaluation criteria and relevant to the subject of a contract.



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Resolved unanimously:

1. That financial thresholds be set that trigger the need for quotes, invitations to quote and invitations to tender and that these triggers be annexed to the Council's adopted Financial Regulations.
2. That the draft policy financial thresholds for the purchase of goods and services (excluding VAT) be set as follows:
 - One-off purchased up to £500 – Direct Award
 - Purchase of goods and services above £500 and not exceeding £3,000 – A least three quotes
 - Purchase of goods and services between £3,000 and £25,000 (inclusive of VAT) – Invitation to Quote (ITQ)
 - Purchase of goods and services between £25,000 (inclusive of VAT) and £138,760 – Invitation to Tender (ITQ) and in accordance with the Government's Procurement Policy Note (PNN), the tender to be advertised on 'Contracts Finder'
 - Purchase of goods and services above £138,760 – subject to the Government's 'Find A Tender' rules.
3. That the draft Financial Thresholds Policy, as submitted, be adopted.

C159 INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN D-DAY 80 – 6 JUNE 2024

The Council received an invitation that had been sent to all Town and parish Council in England and Wales, to take part in the 80th Anniversary of D Day Commemorations on 6 June 2024. The D-Day 80 ceremony will involve the lighting of a beacon.

Resolved Unanimously: That the Council takes part in the D-Day 80 Commemorations on 6 June 2024.

C160 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Council considered the following planning applications for comment to Milton Keynes City Council.

- (a) **Application 23/02347/DISCON – WEA Area 10-1 – 10-3 Watling Street H3 to H4** – Approval of details required by Condition 8 (LMMP) and Condition 11 (SuDs Maintenance Plan) of permission ref: 22/02322/REM.
- (b) **Application 23/02437/HOU – 12 Berrenda Avenue, MK8 1DZ 1DF** - Conversion of the existing garage into a habitable living space with shower room and the erection of a garden gate to the existing fence.
- (c) **Application 23/02512/DISCON – Land off Watling Street (V4) Parcel W WEA ('Fairfield' – Areas 10.1 – 10.3)** – Approval of details required by Condition 29 (Boundary Treatment Plan) of permission ref: 05/00291/MKPCO.
- (d) **Application 23/02509/DISCON – Land off Watling Street (V4) Parcel W WEA ('Fairfield' – Areas 10.1 – 10.3)** – Approval of



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details required by Conditions 31 (Vehicle Wheel Cleansing Facilities) and 32 (CEMP) of permission ref: 05/00291/MKPCO.

- (e) Application 23/02509/DISCON – Parcel W Land off Watling Street (V4) WEA ('Fairfield' – Area 10.1 – 10.3) – Approval of details required by Condition 16 (Drainage Details) of permission Ref: 05/00291/MKPCO.**
- (f) Application 23/02516/DISCON – WEA 10.1 – 10.3 Watling Street H3 to H4 – Approval of details required by Condition 22 (Ground Contamination), 23 (Soils Action Pla), 26 (Landscape Protection Action Plan), 31 (Wheel Cleaning) and 32 (CEMP) of permission ref: 22/02322/REM.**
- (g) Application 23/02511/DISCON – Parcel W WEA Area 10.1 – 10.3 Watling Street H3 to H4 – Approval of details required by Condition 26 (Tree Protection and Survey) of permission ref: 05/00291/MKPCO.**
- (h) Application 23/02566/NMA – Site of Community Meeting Place, Barossa Way – Non-material amendment to permission ref 20/01378/FUL seeking the relocation of the bin store and adjustment to the landscape to suit, simplified path from Barossa Way and a slight adjustment to the car park relating to planning permission for the construction of a Community Meeting Place, parking and associated works**

Resolved Unanimously:

- 1. That the Council is supportive of planning application 23/02566/NMA relating to a non-material amendment at the new Community Meeting Place.
- 2. That the Council has no objections or comment to make on the remaining planning applications.

C161 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY AGREEMENT 2023

Resolved Unanimously: That this matter be considered by the HR Committee and that budgetary implications to the Council be reported back to the December meeting of the Council.

The meeting ended at 8.35pm

Signed as a true and correct record:

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Chair

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Date