

ABBEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL



MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday, 8th February 2024 at 7.30pm at The Church of the Holy Cross

Present: Cllrs D. Simpson (Chairman), K. Ryan (Vice Chairman), Dr A Evans, P Blyth, A. Pant; Anne Vine (Community Projects volunteer coordinator)

Residents: None

Ward Cllrs: None

Clerk: J Vischer.

1. **Apologies** – None

2. **Open Forum** - None.

3. **Declarations of Interest in any of the agenda items** - None

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

4.1. **January 2024 Minutes approval** - unanimously approved. Proposer Cllr Evans, seconder Cllr Blyth.

4.2. **Matters Arising from these Minutes other than those listed on the agenda**

4.2.1. **Thames Valley Police** weblink for reporting motorbike and similar incidents. To be placed on AHPC website 'Useful Links'. Still outstanding **CLK**

4.2.2. **Strimmer and other equipment** - Risk Assessment pro-forma — Final version has another line to add. To follow. **CLK**

4.2.3. **The Church of the Holy Cross as meeting venue** - Awaiting confirmation from Reverend Adebisi. Clerk to chase. **CLK**

4.2.4. **Website - Usage Statistics** - The host provider had provided graphs and basic statistics.

4.2.5. **Allotments Agreement Meeting** - Comments had been received from the Allotments Association regarding the draft Agreement. Date for review meeting with the Association remains to be set. **CLK/KR**

4.2.6. **Proposed Youth Club** - No further information received from Reverend Adebisi.

5. **Communications**

5.1. **Community projects**

5.1.1. **Coffee Morning sessions/Warm Places** - The volunteer coordinator Anne Vine (AV) reported that attendance continued to be good, the new lockable cupboard had been purchased, installed and was now in use.

AV explained that she had been using the newly approved grant to purchase items and equipment for more varied sessions such as: games, colouring books, jigsaw puzzles, scissors, card-making equipment (birthday cards etc), craft materials. A spreadsheet record had been circulated. The sewing machine (with associated supplies eg threads and needles) has yet to be purchased. **AV**

5.1.2. The coordinator asked if any S106 funds ('planning gain') were available for Two Mile Ash. Clerk to enquire. **CLK**

5.1.3. **MK Play Association sessions** - AV had circulated an 'options' spreadsheet to councillors for the coming season which included February half term this year and Easter sessions. It was agreed to approve 'Option 3' for £7,900 total (budget set at £8,000) by 3 votes for and 2 abstentions. Proposer Cllr Simpson, seconder Cllr Ryan. Advertising (prepared by MKPA) for this half term session to be placed on the website/noticeboard immediately. **DS/CLK**

5.2. **Feedback from the Community/Social Media** - no pressing concerns at present.

6. **Clerk/RFO vacancy**

6.1. The Clerk had contacted the Parish Councils liaison officer Kay Pettit regarding his retirement. She had circulated notice of the AHPC vacancy to all parish councils within Milton Keynes Council area on 22nd January (one expression of interest had been received but was withdrawn 4 days later.) The officer had also offered free access for AHPC to advertise the post on the MKCC vacancies page. The

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Clerk had accepted and put together basic details about the post to start the process as soon as possible. Ten expressions of interest had been received through this avenue altogether since then.

- 6.2. In-between meetings councillors had approved the formation of a Sub-committee to deal with the recruitment, made up of Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk. Details on the MKCC vacancies page had been updated twice. CV's had been requested by return of all candidates. [*post meeting note*: only 5 CV's have been received so far. Draft Job Description was finalised by the sub-committee and posted to all candidates on 9th Feb]
- 6.3. As no replies had been received from the 'All Parish Councils' circulation the Clerk would ask for it to be recirculated before the closing deadline (21st Feb) , emphasising the flexibility of the post.
- 6.4. Following requests the Clerk had agreed between meetings to clerk until the March 2024 meeting had passed.

7. Environment

7.1. Landscape Contract, Landscape Specification (for Abbey Hill), Schedule of Landscaping Rates -

7.1.1. The Head of Environment and Waste, Nick Hannon (NH), had emailed a copy of the new contractor's landscape specification (30 Jan). This had been forwarded to councillors. Regarding the Schedule of Rates NH went on to say that he had been informed that MKCC "would not release the completed pricing information even under FOI request as an exemption would apply to it (confidentiality and also commercial prejudice)".

7.1.2. The Clerk had passed on AHPC's Top-Up requirements based on those operated with the previous contractor (SERCO). As he could not attend the January 'remote' Parish Monitoring Meeting Cllrs Ryan and Blyth had offered to attend (*see below*).

7.2. **New Play Park Equipment** - This had been ordered (26th Jan) and should be installed within 6 - 8 weeks according to the contractor.

7.3. **Autumn Bulbs purchase** - it was agreed to postpone this item until the newly planted bulbs showed.

7.4. **VAS speed monitors** - it was agreed to defer this item for the time being.

7.5. **Xmas Lights & storage** - the cabinet key had been returned to the Chair by the contractor. The current Xmas Lights were being stored by the Chair at home - except for the Xmas Star which still dangled from the broken trunk (awaiting drier ground conditions to remove). Additional lights will be installed in the summer when ground conditions would be better.

7.6. **Project and Fault Log Update** - The February Log was reviewed. 28 open issues - 2 projects, 26 faults. The Clerk had introduced a new tab on the spreadsheet for most of the monitored-only issues by way of reducing the volume of issues on the open Log.

8. Finance

8.1. Payments for authorisation & Balances - since the January meeting:

Clerk's salary & expenses (period 11) - (£957.00 & £33.49) £990.49; Mid-month Warm Places expenditure refund (supplies + craft resources) £368.09; Warm Places expenditure refund (supplies + craft resources & cabinet) £442.39; Annual bin emptying (£3,886.08) and new bins (£540.00) £4,426.08. Unanimously approved. Proposer Cllr Evans, seconder Cllr Ryan.

Available funds at 31 January 2024 - bank reconciliation of main account: £104,700.

Reserves at 31 January 2024: £38,845.

9. Planning Applications

9.1. Previous

23/02648/HOU 1 Stone Hill Two Mile Ash, The erection of a single storey ground floor side and rear extension. *Permitted*

23/02755/HOU 39 The High Street Two Mile Ash, Replacement composite front door. *Permitted*

23/02761/HOU 20 Fairways Two Mile Ash - The erection of a single storey flat roof extension to rear. *Pending*

9.2. New

24/00108/CLUP 10 Clay Hill Two Mile Ash, Certificate of lawfulness for proposed loft conversion with rooflights to rear and side elevations. No comments.

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10. Grants and (Postal) Correspondence - The Clerk had notified Revd Adebisi of his successful grant award of £750 for the Food Pantry project, but was awaiting confirmation of correct bank account for the payment and further details of the project. Clerk to chase. **CLK**

11. Other Meetings and New Matters

11.1. Parishes Monitoring Option (PMO) Meeting feedback

11.1.1. Cllrs Ryan and Blyth reported that although the new contractor, Glendale, will price up our requested Top-Up's along with other Monitoring parishes requests, there are none planned for this season. It was explained that this was to allow the new contractor to experience the practical demands of carrying out the basic maintenance specification. Furthermore it may be necessary for them to review additional resource & manpower to manage Top-Up's. No timetable was promised.

11.1.2. It was confirmed that PMO parishes may not employ their own contractors.

11.1.3. PMO Parishes were warned to log in to their access to the MKCC GIS mapping system once a month or risk that their licence would lapse. The Clerk had been granted access initially for AHPC when he underwent the training at the beginning of the Third Option era (pre-Covid). However this was the first time such a stipulation had been stated. The Meeting Coordinator Jonathan Hawes offered the possibility of new training to any of the member parishes. Clerk to forward details of login and password to Cllr Ryan. **CLK/KR**

11.2. High St Refurbishment fund - AHPC had been notified of funds to be spent on 'refurbishing High Streets' across MK. The officer responsible had visited Two Mile Ash and believed it qualified for:

11.2.1. the replacement of 3 x bins with 2 x Derby Broxap bin in the community garden

11.2.2. 2 x wooden bollards

11.2.3. Councillors had approved adding the outstanding brick planter repairs in the community garden in-between meetings. To which the officer agreed should funds permit.

11.3. A new litter-pick was proposed by Cllr Evans, and agreed. Clerk to enquire as to who would be responsible in MKCC for sacks and pick-up of full sacks now the contract had changed. **CLK**

11.4. MK association of Local Councils - the Clerk believed AHPC was still a member of this local Association (under the Buckinghamshire Association of Local Councils, BALC) but he could not recall a recent annual membership invoice. The Clerk was invited to establish if AHPC was still a member. [post meeting note: AHPC is a member of both BALC and MKALC. Neither have charged membership fees since or during the Covid pandemic when it was deemed appropriate to waive the fees.]

12. Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 14th March 2024 at The Church of the Holy Cross at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.31pm

Signed

date