

Emberton Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting held in The Pavilion
Monday 12th February 2024 at 7pm

Present:

Cllr Melanie Duncan – Chair
 Cllr Colin Jamieson
 Cllr Angela Laval
 Cllr Guy Palmer
 Cllr Joe Walker
 Cllr Harry White

Ward Councillor Peter Geary (part meeting)

1 resident

Mrs Karen Goss – Clerk and RFO

Welcome by the Chair – The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

To accept apologies for absence – Apologies were received from Councillor Paul Flowers and Ward Cllrs Keith McLean and Debbie Whitworth.

Declarations of interest in items on the agenda – Cllr Duncan declared an interest in item 2.1.17 and in items 4.371 and 4.372 having recently been to the applicant's house on a personal basis.

1. To confirm the **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on the 8th January 2024 – The Minutes of the meeting held on the 8th January 2024 were agreed and duly signed by the Chair.
- 1.2 **Public questions** – The resident of West Lane House spoke to support the current planning applications for flush PV panels on the roof of the outbuilding at West Lane House which would be inset into the slate roof. The current property was not able to have a gas upgrade, hence the application for PV panels.
- 1.3 **Risk** – A discussion took place regarding producing a risk assessment for the clock tower and purchasing a safety harness. It was felt that there should be a single point of contact for anyone wishing to access the clock tower to put up flags so that health and safety supervision could be maintained and that permission for anything else should be sought from the parish council. The clerk to obtain quotes for the harness. **Action: KG.**
2. **TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND AGREE ANY DECISIONS/ACTION**
- 2.1 **Ward Councillors' Report** – report from Ward Cllr Geary as follows:-

Water in Olney Road outside Acorn Early Years – It was noted that one part of the repair had taken place but further costly work was required. The contractor would be coming out again in the next couple of weeks with a tanker and camera. A number of poles had been replaced at the same time and it was possible that the damage had been caused during these

works. Salt bags would be placed around the outlet to help prevent ice forming on the road if temperatures dropped.

Street light (outside Manor Croft) – Noted that this had been repaired.

Acorn Nurseries Newton Rd - application for outline planning permission for up to 29 dwellings – It was noted that the appeal had been dismissed.

Ousedale School – There was no more detail available at this stage on admissions to Ousedale but it was hoped that everyone applying for September 2024 would be catered for.

New City Plan – A meeting would be held for the 17 parishes from the Olney Ward on the 13th February 2024 to hear the proposals for the New City Plan which were significant. This was probably the third of these meetings as presentations had already been held for other areas, which was why information was already appearing on Olney Noticeboard (Facebook). There would be significant encroachment from MK into the rural areas with Olney possibly having 1,100 further homes (a 30% expansion of the town), the rural areas taking between 2,500 to 3,800 homes which could result in a 50-75% increase in homes in each village. Alternatively, sitting behind all of this was a presumption that a new major settlement or town in the north of the borough could be created with 30,000 – 40,000 houses, which would put a large area of agricultural land under concrete. One theory was that the proposals for these levels of housing in the rural areas were intended to create support for this alternative plan of a major new settlement. MKCC would need to put their submission to the government by June 2025 to obtain the funding available for new towns. Cllr Geary commented it would be sensible for the parishes from the Olney Ward to pool their resources. Cllr Duncan asked to what extent these housing numbers were required by the government or were due to MKCC's own ambition for growth. Ward Cllr Geary responded that the figures were at least 10,000 homes over the maximum figure of what was required by government. Also, the New City Plan was set for a period of 17 years, almost twice the usual period, which increased the amount of housing planned. Cllr Laval asked how the New City Plan fed into the Emberton Neighbourhood Plan. Ward Cllr Geary stated that the New City Plan would take precedence. Cllr Palmer spoke regarding communicating this information to residents. It was agreed that, unless there was a full report available on Olney Noticeboard from the Ward Councillors which could be copied across, Cllrs Duncan and Flowers would prepare a draft report after the Olney Centre meeting the next day, to put on the Emberton Echo whatsapp group and the EPC website. **Action: MD/PF.**

2.2 **PLUG (meeting held 18/1/24)** – Cllr White reported that an order had been placed for the Changing Places unit. A discussion took place as to whether a grant would be forthcoming from the Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund for solar panels for the gatehouse and Ward Cllr McLean was going to look into this.

2.3 **New ways of working – environmental services contract (meeting held 1/2/24)** – Cllr Duncan reported that the contract with Suez was for 5 years with an option to extend. Attendees were encouraged to report fly tipping. It was noted that Suez could provide teams of their employees as volunteers to work on community green spaces. MKCC's new contract provided for litter bins in the borough to be emptied whenever necessary to stop them overflowing, so more frequently than the previous cycle under the old contract. MKCC could provide waste bags for community litter picks and would pick up the rubbish after. The new wheelie bin system had seen an increase in recycling of between 20-25% and a 30% reduction in black waste.

- 2.4 **Dates for Diaries** – There would not be a parish council presentation at the Annual Assembly to be held on the 18th March – instead it should be publicised as a “Have your say” residents’ meeting. The workshop on Areas of Attractive Landscapes s and feed in to the New City Plan was being held online on Thursday 29th February 2024 at 6.30pm. Cllrs Duncan and Walker to attend. **Action: MD/JW.**
- 2.5 **Clerk’s Report**
- 2.1.17 **Bridleway claim at Petsoe End** – Nothing to report.
- 2.1.50 **Pothole, Olney Road** – Pothole in Gravel Walk has now been marked for repair but recent rain had washed away the markings.
- 2.1.55 **Fly tipping between Newport Road and Prospect Place** – Nothing to report.
- 2.1.82 **Residents parking – Hulton Drive** – It was noted that 3 fixed penalty notices had been issued to vehicles parked in Hulton Drive on the 13th January without a parking permit.
- 2.1.117 **Surface water drain outside Acorn Early Years** – Reported on by Ward Cllr Geary.
- 2.1.118 **Street light outside Manor Croft** - This was first reported on the 5th December and reported further by residents and the clerk. Work was undertaken on the column during the first week of February and the light was now working. It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.
- 3.6.15 **Rat running and restricted access** – Speedwatch could start up again now days were getting lighter, but it would be good to have more volunteers to join the team.
- 3.6.30 **Allotments** – It was proposed by Cllr Laval and seconded by Cllr Jamieson that Rushford & McCarville solicitors be instructed to undertake the necessary legal work to transfer the allotments from MKCC to EPC. The clerk to make contact. **Action: KG.**
- 3.6.50 **Dog fouling** – It was noted that at the current time, there were no smells emanating from the dog waste bin but this would be monitored again in July.
- 3.6.63 **Newton Road/Petsoe End – frequent collision issues** – Nothing to report.
- 3.6.68 **Well at Petsoe End** – Nothing to report.
- 3.6.114 **Steps in High Street (no 5)** – It was noted that an upright post was still in place where the handrail had been. The clerk to ask highways to remove this. **Action: KG.**
- 3.6.115 **Questionnaire** – In previous meetings the councillors had considered the questionnaire replies, reported on them in Well & Towers and taken action where appropriate, so nothing further to report.
- 3. SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS**
- 3.1 **Emberton Park** – Reported on under item 2.2.

- 3.74 **Emberton Neighbourhood Plan** – It was noted that the neighbourhood plan had now been made and there would be further opportunity for residents to raise any questions on the Neighbourhood Plan at the Annual Assembly.
- 3.85 **Emberton School (School House Fund)** – Cllr Walker reported that he had met with the trustees of EUC who were very enthusiastic to take over as trustees of the School House Fund. Cllr Walker had also been in contact with the Chair of the School House Fund, Noel Sibbald, who asked that Cllr Walker attended the trustees' next meeting. There was still some work to be done as to how the fund would work for the children of Emberton. The EUC went through a couple of examples of how they currently helped children in Emberton. Cllr Laval suggested that speaking to a previous school governor could be helpful, as she might have some information on how the fund had been used previously. **Action: AL.** Cllr Duncan commented that the trustees would need to go back to the Charities Commission to get the new proposals authorised.
- 3.97 **Sports & Recreation Committee** – Meeting to be held on 5th April 2024.
- 3.99 **Conservation area – review of 1997 Conservation Area Statement by MKC** – It was noted that MKCC had acknowledged the parish council's response. An email had been received from a resident suggesting that the parish council might wish to contact the MK Forum regarding the limiting and generic approach of MKCC to the new conservation area statements. The meeting agreed to do this, and to recommend that the resident should also raise these points with the MK Forum. **Action: KG.**
- 3.103 **Demand Responsive Transport (21 bus service) and double yellow lines** – Cllr Laval reported on the inconsiderate parking around the clock tower and Institute last Thursday. The clerk to request a visit by the PCSO. **Action: KG.**
- 3.113 **Climate Change** – No update yet from the Environmental Agency regarding the feasibility of a hydroelectric plant at Olney Weir.
- 3.116 **Access to playing field from residential properties and general access** – Agreed to take this forward to the next meeting.
- 3.118 **New City Plan (MK Design code scoping consultation)** – Agreed to advise residents via the Echo What'sApp group of the meeting taking place on the 13th Feb with town and parish councils and MKCC, using the draft provided by Cllr Duncan. **Action: KG.** Cllr White reminded the meeting that the eastern by pass route had been removed from the plans and that this should be raised again. Cllr Duncan responded that the eastern bypass had been removed from the MK Futures 2050 vision, which was only an MKCC policy document not a statutory development plan - this explained why the new draft modifications version of the Olney Neighbourhood Plan, currently being consulted on, still showed both the eastern and western bypass routes. The meeting agreed that it would be helpful to send MKCC the drone footage on social media of the recent flooding in Emberton Park and surrounding area, if the drone owner gave permission. The clerk to contact Cllr Flowers regarding this.
Action: KG.
- 3.121 **Consideration of proposals to extend the restrictions on street trading by mobile vendors throughout Milton Keynes** – The clerk reported that there would be further consultation on this.

- 3.122 **Milton Keynes City Council traffic sensitive streets review October 2023** – nothing to report. The clerk to investigate this. **Action: KG.**
- 3.123 **Ousedale School – admission arrangements for September 2025 consultation** – It was noted that a response had been sent to this. The school had since confirmed that the admission arrangements had been adopted as proposed. (Post meeting note - these arrangements give priority to the children of school staff members, after (1) children with statements of special education needs (2) Looked after Children and Previously Looked after Children and (3) children living in the catchment area.)

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 **Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund** – Nothing to report.

previous applications status

- 4.352 **23/00342/OUT** – Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) for the redevelopment of the Acorn (MK) Nurseries site for up to 29 no. dwellings including affordable housing, alongside access and other off-site highways improvements, following the demolition and removal of all existing structures and hardstanding from the site at Acorn MK Nurseries, Newton Road – **appeal dismissed.**
- 4.361 **23/00275/ENF** – Hollington Wood, Newport Road – Description of alleged breach Continued use of the ancient woodland for airsoft activities following refusal of planning permission – Update from MKCC as follows:- Having investigated case ref shown above until a clear and concise breach can be established, it is recommended that the case be referred to the Senior Compliance and Monitoring officer for active monitoring of the activities that are taking place. The case file will be closed in accordance with the Local Enforcement Plan 2021.

New applications

- 4.369 **24/00058/TCA** – The felling of a Yew tree (T1) at Manor House, 9 Olney Road. It was agreed that the parish council would agree with the recommendations made by MKCC's tree officer.
- 4.370 **24/00057/TPO** – The removal of storm damaged branches to suitable growth points and reduction of overextended lateral branches by 2-3 metres of a Cedar tree (T001) protected by Milton Keynes Council Tree Preservation Order No. PS/540/15/331 at Manor House, 9 Olney Road. It was agreed that the parish council would agree with the recommendations made by MKCC's tree officer.
- 4.371 **24/00054/HOU** – Installation of flush PV panels into outbuilding slate roof at West Lane House, West Lane.
- 4.372 **24/00022/LBC** – Listed Building Consent for the proposed installation of flush PV panels into outbuilding slate roof at West Lane House, West Lane.

Cllr White led these items; Cllr Duncan having previously declared an interest. A discussion took place regarding both applications, with the meeting divided between those opposing the applications to protect the conservation area and those supporting the applications to provide renewable energy in the current climate change crisis. One councillor suggested that supporting the applications would set an unfavourable precedent for the conservation area.

Other councillors pointed out that the conservation area already contained solar panels, and that the applications related to a new roof not a historic roof. One councillor argued that the neighbourhood plan policies protected the conservation area, but another councillor replied that the neighbourhood plan policies also supported renewable energy. The meeting referred to the recent government review of this issue, published in January 2024, which had been circulated to the councillors prior to the meeting. The applicant had quoted from the same document when speaking in the public comment part of the meeting. The government review document stated that it was currently a postcode lottery on whether local authorities, in making planning decisions on solar panels in conservation areas or on listed buildings, chose to support conservation areas or to support renewable energy. The review document proposed that the government should make it clear that in future more planning weight should be placed on renewable energy objectives than on conservation area objectives. The meeting decided to support the applications, with three councillors supporting and two opposing.

5. ACCOUNTS

5.1 **To receive the RFO's Report for the 12th February 2023** and approve payments. A discussion took place regarding the arrangements for Emberton Parish Council to insure the Pavilion and the nature of any additional insurance being put in place by the SRC and the ESSC. The clerk to investigate this. **Action: KG.** It was proposed by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Laval that the payments be approved, apart from the invoice for Zurich Insurance which would be carried forward to the next meeting. Cllr White to approve the payments. **Action: HW.**

5.2 **Community Infrastructure Fund** – Nothing to report.

5.3 **Draft budget for EPC – A further discussion took place on how to reduce expenditure.** It was agreed to carry this forward to the next meeting.

5.4 **Raising funds – sponsorship and open gardens** – It was agreed to put an article in the Well & Towers regarding sponsoring hanging baskets and the idea of open gardens. The clerk to send the information on open gardens to councillors. **Action: KG.** Cllr Laval suggested approaching Olney Town Council regarding open gardens. **Action: KG.**

6. **CORRESPONDENCE** – Nothing to report.

7. PARISH RELATED MATTERS

7.1 **Village publicity** – The clerk to draft for circulation, including the housing expansions proposed in the New City Plan, the Annual Assembly, enforcement of the Residents' Parking Scheme, recruitment for Speedwatch, sponsoring hanging baskets and the Open Gardens scheme. **Action: KG.**

7.2 **Cllrs' concerns** –

Alison Fraser Walk – It was noted that the boundary fence from Mounts House had been moved and the meeting queried whether parish council land was affected.

Manhole cover outside Stonepits House – Cllr Jamieson reported that the manhole cover outside Stonepits House and the entrance to Church Farm buildings had sunk in the middle of the road. The clerk to report this. **Action: KG.**

Tractor warning sign – Cllr Duncan reported that the tractor warning sign on Newton Road (on the approach to the Petsoe End junction from Emberton) had disappeared from its post. The clerk to report this. **Action: KG.**

10 Hulton Drive – It was reported that the boundary fence between 10 Hulton Drive and the ridge and furrow field in Emberton Park was removed about two years ago. The clerk was requested to report this to the estates department. **Action: KG.**

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 11th March 2024 at 7pm to be held at the Pavilion.

The meeting closed at 9.14pm

DRAFT