



## Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024

An ORDINARY MEETING of the PARISH COUNCIL will be held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 7.00pm at Kents Hill Community Centre, 4 Frithwood Crescent, Kents Hill, MK7 6HG and the following business will be transacted. All Councillors are summoned to attend.

Subject to Standing Order 3(m), a person who attends a Council meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To 'report' means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later, or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present. The press and public are welcome to attend the meeting.

Ryan Fuller  
Chief Officer/Clerk/RFO

### AGENDA

ITEM NO.	ITEM
FC 134/24	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> MOTION: Council to receive and approve apologies for absence.
FC 135/24	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> Members to declare any disclosable personal or pecuniary interests they may have and the nature of those interests relating to any agenda item.
FC 136/24	<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b> MOTION: Council to approve and sign the minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 03.10.24 – Fitness Classes. MOTION: Council to approve and sign the minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 03.10.24 – Community Centre. MOTION: Council to approve and sign the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 22.10.24.
FC 137/24	<b>OPEN MEETING</b> Public participation: Members of the public will be invited to speak and/or question the Parish Council on issues relating to this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration. The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders 3f and 3g shall not exceed 15 minutes, maximum 3 minutes per person, and will be under the direction of the Chair of the meeting. The Chair will invite members of the public to speak.
FC 138/24	<b>COUNCILLOR AND CLERK REPORTS</b> MOTION: Council to note reports from the Locum Clerk and the Clerk. MOTION: Council to note reports from Members.

FC 139/24	<p><b>FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and approve invoices for payment.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to note the payments made by the Clerk using delegated power.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to note income received.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to note direct debit/standing order payments made.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to note internal transfers made.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to note the bank balances.</p>
FC 140/24	<p><b>BUDGET REVIEW</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to receive an update on the 2024/25 budget and the 2025/26 budget preparation timeline.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and decide upon the addition of a new budget line for a Chair's allowance and the virement of £400.00 from general reserves to resource this budget line for the remainder of the 2024/25 financial year.</p>
FC 141/24	<p><b>ACCOUNTS SOFTWARE</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and decide upon approving the purchase of Scribe accounts software on a three-year contract at a cost of £45.00 + VAT per month plus a one-off set up fee of £449.00 + VAT.</p>
FC 142/24	<p><b>GRAPHIC DESIGN TOOLS</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and decide upon approving the purchase of an annual subscription for the Canva graphic design platform at a cost of £100.00.</p>
FC 143/24	<p><b>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to note the correspondence received.</p>
FC 144/24	<p><b>ALLOTMENTS</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to receive a verbal update from the Clerk and Cllr Hippey regarding the allotments, and to approve options being investigated and reported to a future meeting to update the administrative arrangements.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and decide upon joining the National Allotment Society at a cost of £55.00 + VAT plus £1.00 share fee.</p>
FC 145/24	<p><b>WEBSITE WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and approve the Terms of Reference for the Website Working Group.</p>
FC 146/24	<p><b>DELEGATED POWER</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and approve the Clerk having full delegated power.</p>
FC 147/24	<p><b>TRAINING AND RESOURCES</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to note that the Clerk has booked Cllr Hippey onto the NALC 'Empowering the young Councillors of tomorrow' and 'Breaking the mould of local councils' courses being held on 13.12.24 and 26.3.25 respectively, at a total cost of £86.74 + VAT.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and approve the Clerk undertaking the ILCA, FILCA, and CiLCA training.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and approve the Clerk's subscription to the SLCC.</p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider and approve the purchase of three local government law reference books.</p>
FC 148/24	<p><b>PLANNING</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to consider planning applications received.</p>
FC 149/24	<p><b>RESIDENTS' MEETING</b></p> <p>MOTION: Council to reflect upon the residents' meeting held on 16.11.24 and to consider feedback received.</p>

FC 150/24	<b>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</b> MOTION: Pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as extended by s100 of the Local Government Act 1972, Council to decide on whether the press and public be excluded from the meeting for any agenda item on the grounds that its consideration would involve the disclosure of exempt information. RECOMMENDATION: The meeting be closed to the press and public for the following two agenda items under Standing Order 3d.
FC 151/24	<b>CHIEF OFFICER/CLERK/RFO</b> MOTION: Council to note that Ryan Fuller has been appointed to the role of Chief Officer/Clerk/RFO, and to consider and decide upon associated matters.
FC 152/24	<b>ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE OFFICER CONTRACT</b> MOTION: Council to consider and decide upon whether to extend the Administration and Finance Officer's temporary contract beyond 30.11.24.
FC 153/24	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> MOTION: Council to consider and decide upon the date of the next Ordinary Council meeting.

**Members of the press and public are welcome.**

## APPENDIX

### **AGENDA ITEM FC 139/24 – FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS**

Invoices for approval for payment:

Payee	Invoice No	Amount	Description	Power to pay
Kents Hill Community Centre	5291	£20.00	Room hire – Council meeting	LG Act 1972 s112
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Kee IT Services Ltd	9694	£354.00	Annual IT support	LG Act 1972 s111
South Central Ambulance Charity	Email	£100.00	Donation for providing Residents' Meeting CPR & defibrillator training	LG Act 1972 s145
Monkston Community Centre	INV - 1371	£75.00	Residents' meeting venue	LG Act 1972 s145
Monkston Community Centre	INV - 1383	£100.00	Donation for providing refreshments for the residents' meeting	LG Act 1972 s145
LGRC Associates Ltd	2005	£4,333.13	Locum services Sep 24	LG Act 1972 s112
Viking Office UK Ltd	5031356	£265.74	Printer and printer paper	LG Act 1972 s111
Viking Office UK Ltd	5023737	£92.26	Stationery	LG Act 1972 s111
Starboard Systems Ltd t/a Scribe Accounts	INV - 7472	£1,567.20	Scribe Allotments subscription	LG Act 1972 s111
Estelle Coaching	0020241101	£455.00	Fitness class coaching - Sep – Nov 24	LG Act 1972 s145

Marcus Young Environmental Services Ltd	4406	£1,373.76	Bin emptying – Sep 24	PHA 1875 s164. OSA 1906 ss 9 & 10
Marcus Young Environmental Services Ltd	4419	£1,571.40	Bin emptying – Oct 24	PHA 1875 s164. OSA 1906 ss 9 & 10
RTM Landscapes Ltd	4998	£593.13	Monthly allotment maintenance – Oct 24	Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908 ss 23, 26 & 42
R Fuller	18.11.24	£384.19	Reimbursement for mileage, stationery, and printing for the residents' meeting	LG Act 1972 s111
Hippey Accounting Services Ltd	INV - 21867	£0.37	Non-payment interest	LG Act 1972 s111
Hippey Accounting Services Ltd	INV - 21868	£52.77	Monthly payroll services	LG Act 1972 s112

*All invoices are available at the meeting for inspection. A list of invoices is signed by a Councillor at each meeting. Invoices and bank reconciliations are signed by two Councillors.*

Invoices paid out of meeting by the Clerk using delegated power:

Payee	Invoice No	Amount	Description	Power to pay
Shurguard UK	2405802121	£138.46	Storage unit rent 07.11.24 – 06.12.24	LG Act 1972 s133
Officers	N/A	£1,114.45	Salaries Oct 24	LG Act 1972 s112
Officers	N/A	£3,223.26	Salaries Nov 24	LG Act 1972 s112
Buckinghamshire Pension Fund	N/A	£304.52	Pension liabilities Oct 24	LG Act 1972 s112
Buckinghamshire Pension Fund	N/A	£1,199.50	Pension liabilities Nov 24	LG Act 1972 s112
Dor-2-Dor	INV-0008	£417.59	Residents' meeting leaflet printing and delivery	LG Act 1972 s145
Hippey Accounting Services Ltd	INV-21819	£40.42	Monthly payroll services	LG Act 1972 s112
Hippey Accounting Services Ltd	INV-21863	£40.00	Late payment charge	LG Act 1972 s111
S Haywood	1.11.24	£119.99	Reimbursement – Clerk's new phone – Handtec	LG Act 1972 s112

Income received October 2024:

Source	Bank account	Amount	Description
Metro Bank	Business Community Current Account	£200.00	Compensation payment

Direct debit / standing order payments made October 2024:

Payee	Payment type	Amount	Description	Power to pay
Unity Trust Bank	SO	£5.55	Service charge	LG Act 1972 s111
Unity Trust Bank	SO	£0.02	Debit interest	LG Act 1972 s111
Anglian Water (Wave)	DD	£56.23 £46.53	Allotment water	Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908 ss 23, 26 & 42

Internal transfers 11 October – 21 November 2024:

From	To	Amount	Date
Current account	Allotment account	£2,000	21.11.24

Bank balances:

- 1) Allotments account. £2,000.00
- 2) Instant access deposit account. £205,000.00
- 3) Current account £9,211.30
- 4) Cambridge Building Society. £21,693.34
- 5) Cambridge & Counties Savings. £88,705.66

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 148/24 – PLANNING**

### **New Planning Applications:**

**1. Application Reference:** PLN/2024/2118

**Proposal:** The proposed works include the erection of a single-storey rear extension connecting to the conversion and extension of the existing garage into a utility room and office with a W/C. Additional works include the replacement of a side door with a window and the installation of a front rooflight at **91 Blanchland Circle, Monkston, Milton Keynes, MK10 9DR.**

**2. Application Reference:** PLN/2024/2206

**Proposal:** Proposed loft conversion, including the addition of a rear dormer and new rooflights at **81 Crowborough Lane, Kents Hill, Milton Keynes, MK7 6JN.**

**3. Application Reference:** PLN/2024/2385

**Proposal:** Installation of new 2.4-metre-high galvanised metal palisade fencing and gates to the east and south boundaries, matching the existing fencing, at **1 Whitehall Avenue, Kingston, Milton Keynes, MK10 0AX.**

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 136/24 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

All minutes can be viewed at <http://www.kentshill-monkston-pc.org.uk/meetings/>

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 138/24 – CLERK’S REPORT**

### **Locum Clerk**

The Locum Clerk has circulated a work report/handover document to all Members and the Clerk.

### **Clerk**

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to the Council for appointing me. I look forward to working with Members to address the needs of the community.

As I write this, I am approaching three weeks in post and have already made progress in several key areas. However, there remains a significant amount of work ahead, including addressing the backlog, managing ongoing operations, reviewing governance, financial, staffing, and compliance matters, and supporting the development of both a budget and a strategic plan.

The efforts of the Locum Clerk in stabilising the Council have been substantial, but the list of tasks continues to grow daily. Achieving our goals will undoubtedly require a sustained team effort to bring the Council to the standard we aspire to.

While I had hoped to begin my first report on a purely positive note, I must acknowledge a recurring theme in the feedback I've received: concerns about the Council's reputation. I've heard about some of the challenges faced in the past, encountered evidence of certain issues within the files, and, unfortunately, I have already experienced some of them firsthand.

That said, I firmly believe the Council is at a turning point. We have a valuable opportunity to make a fresh start, renew our focus on delivering for the community, and rebuild trust. I hope all Members will embrace this opportunity as we work towards shared goals.

### Handover/setting up an office

The Locum Clerk and I completed a handover, and she has continued to provide additional support and context as needed via email over the past two weeks.

One of my first tasks was to establish a functioning office, as the Council lacked basic stationery, office supplies, and printing facilities. After thoroughly checking the storage unit, I found very few usable items. As a result, a new printer has been purchased, and essential stationery was ordered to support both my work and the residents' meeting.

### Residents' meeting

Given the limited time between my appointment and the residents' meeting, this event became my immediate priority, occupying a significant portion of my first week.

While bookings for the free life-saving skills training fell short of expectations, we still had around 15 participants for the second session of the morning. Three community groups and organisations attended the meeting, and although resident attendance was lower than we may have liked, we received valuable feedback and established some useful connections. A more detailed report on the feedback is provided under a separate agenda item.

It is disappointing that many community organisations and representatives did not respond to our invitation; however, the event served as a solid starting point and offers a foundation we can build upon for future initiatives.

I would like to particularly extend my thanks to Cllr Hippey for her invaluable support. Her help in transporting equipment to and from the storage unit, setting up the evening before, and arranging the refreshments was greatly appreciated.

### Introductions

I have been in contact with a range of local stakeholders to introduce myself and let them know that the Council now has a permanent Clerk in post. There are still many people who I have not yet had a chance to contact or meet and this will therefore be ongoing as time allows.

### Allotments

There is a huge amount of work that needs to be done to bring the administration of the allotments up to date and I am incredibly grateful to Cllr Hippey for taking much of this on. Scribe Allotments software has now been set up, Cllr Hippey and I have both had training, and details are starting to be entered. There is a separate item on the agenda regarding an update on this issue.

## Banking

Banking arrangements continue to be problematic. Unity Trust Bank now has my details and is in the process of adding me to the account in place of the Locum Clerk. We do also need to add more Councillors as signatories to all accounts as previously resolved to ensure that payments can be processed in a timely manner and to avoid further late payment charges. The Locum Clerk is in the process of closing the Metro Bank accounts and I have been able to update the Cambridge Building Society (CBS) passbook for the first time in eleven years! I have also discussed with CBS the complex process for changing the signatories on that account. By the time of the meeting, I also hope to have made progress with the Cambridge & Counties Bank.

## Accounts/budget/payroll

The Locum Clerk did a great job bringing the accounts up to date over the last few months and has recommended that the Council considers changing its accounts software. There is an item on the agenda for this that goes into more detail.

The budget is a pressing matter as we are a little late in the year to be starting to think about next year's budget, and for 2026/27 I hope that we will start the process much earlier. We don't seem to have a copy of the current year's approved budget anywhere in the files and are therefore working from a spreadsheet that was presented to a meeting of the Full Council for consideration. It is unclear from the files or the minutes if any significant changes were made to the budget that was presented but we will have to work with what we have. Again, I will go into more detail during the agenda item on this subject.

I have registered for payroll, met with our payroll provider, and completed the processing for this month.

## Meetings

Something that is proving difficult is making arrangements for council meetings due to the lack of responses to requests to Councillors to confirm suitable dates. As we are so low on Councillors it is difficult to arrange meetings that we can be sure will be quorate and therefore matters such as an informal meeting for the budget review are being delayed which then reduces even further the very tight timescale we have to produce a proper budget. Councillors have been very clear that they wish to be driving council policy and strategy and therefore this must be done via properly convened meetings. Starting in January, I would like Council to agree on a regular meeting day so that a schedule of future meetings can be produced and publicised.

## Phones

The new phones for officers are now set up and in use. I have been in contact with the former Clerk and once final invoices have been received from him the final payments can be reimbursed and the matter closed.

## Community centres

This issue will require a lot of work over the next few weeks given the timescale for transfer. I have met with officers of MKCC to discuss expectations and the timeline, and I am concerned that beyond agreeing to accept the freehold transfers, we do not yet have an agreed Council position on plans for the centres, particularly Monkston Community Centre. This is something else I would like Councillors to quickly get in place an agreed strategy for and is something we must consider as part of the budget planning process. MKCC want to start preparing the heads of terms for the transfer(s) and we will therefore need to consider this at the December meeting and appoint solicitors.

## Co-options

We desperately need to recruit more Councillors to ensure that we are able to hold quorate meetings and to tackle the backlog of issues that require attention. The co-option item has been withdrawn from this agenda because advice has had to be sought from BMKALC on points of law. I hope that we can return to the issue of co-option at the December meeting.

## Governance review/training

I have begun compiling a list of policies that the Council should have in place and will start bringing batches of new or updated policies for consideration at future meetings. This is a significant area of work, as many policies are either outdated or entirely missing.

Additionally, I have started creating a resolutions tracker to record Council resolutions from the past two years. This will help ensure regular review and follow-up to confirm that resolutions are properly actioned.

I have also been in contact with officers from the MKCC Democratic Services team to discuss arrangements for Standards and Code of Conduct training for all Members. I am hopeful that this can be scheduled for January, by which time we may also have one or two new Members.

Regarding training, there is a separate agenda item on my own development, and I note that some Members have recently been booked onto NALC/BMKALC training courses. However, I have not found any evidence of structured training plans or schedules. I hope we can agree on a co-ordinated approach to Member and staff training and budget accordingly.

## Website

I have not yet had the opportunity to conduct a detailed review of the plans for a new website. However, I have prepared draft terms of reference for the Website Working Group, which are presented for consideration at this meeting. Subject to their approval, I hope that we can proceed promptly to address the necessary tasks and deliver a new website, as the current platform is inadequate in several key areas.

## Committees

Members will note that the items concerning the establishment of HR and Communications Committees are not included on this month's agenda. This is primarily due to the ongoing challenges in scheduling quorate meetings and identifying suitable dates for Members. Additionally, the Council currently has several active working groups and a number of other pressing matters requiring Members' attention.

## Social media

I have contacted a former clerk to the Council who may have the login details for the Facebook page. I hope to have a further update by the time of the meeting.

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 138/24 – MEMBER REPORTS**

### **1. Cllr Hippey's Report**

#### Monkston Community Centre

I'm pleased to announce that 8 trustees were voted in to replace the outgoing management committee at the Centre. The committee / trustees have started working to get themselves acquainted with the running of the centre and to create a plan for the venue moving forward.

I've started working on the business plan as requested and been collating information based on the costs and responsibilities that are likely to fall to the Parish Council on transfer of the asset. This work continues.

#### Allotments

I am getting acquainted with the role of allotment officer and have received access to some of the historic information held by Council on the plot details etc. along with a large number of emails from plot holders



over the last 12-18 months.

I've been working through the emails and responding to queries regarding issues on the allotments, relinquishment of plots and requests for plots in an endeavour to get the core information up to date in readiness for entering into the new allotment management system.

### Bin Working Group

- 17/10/24 First meeting of Bin Working Group
- 19/10/24 Walkaround – Monkston Park to assess litter and dog waste bin provision – attendees: Cllr Hippey, Cllr Boungou-Pouaty & Parish Warden
- 26/10/24 Walkaround – Monkston to assess litter and dog waste bin provision – attendees: Cllr Hippey, Cllr Boungou-Pouaty & Parish Warden
- 09/11/24 Walkaround – Kents Hill to assess litter and dog waste bin provision – attendees: Cllr Hippey, Cllr Boungou-Pouaty
- I have also been compiling the photos and notes to create a report to review provision for the working group to make recommendations.

### Local Issues

- I noticed there had been some work done to secure a large log in the natural childrens' play area in Monkston Park, when it floods the log floats around and get deposited in different positions. It looks like Parks Trust have tried to stop this by hammering in some stakes either side of it, I did notice however that the stakes are just sawn-off wood at the top with very rough edges. I was concerned that if somebody was to slip off the log or fall against it, the rough edges could cause a nasty traumatic injury. It was my thoughts that if the edges of these stakes were just rounded off they could reduce the likelihood of a severe injury significantly. I emailed Parks Trust with my comments and received a response to say they would look into it – this work has since been completed.
- Responded to email from City Cllr Ferrans regarding areas of foul waste / sewage spillage in Monkston Park. Sent a brief but detailed report of areas affected.
- Reported Dumped Rubbish on Colindale St, Monkston Park to MKC – ref: MKCC656951122. Later received response to confirm removal.
- Reported Graffiti in underpass, between Monkston Park & Monkston near the H8 / V10 roundabout, to MKC – ref: MKCC660763126. Later received response to confirm removal
- Reported block of street lights out on redway at Arnos Grove, Monkston Park, to MKC – ref: FS656946121. Later received response to confirm repair.
- Reported underpass lights out at Tewksbury Lane/V10, to MKC – ref: FS660763421. Later received response to confirm repair.
- Reported street lamps out on Queensbury Lane / Harlesden Close, Monkston Park, to MKC – ref: FS660765791. Later received response to confirm repair.
- Reported street lamps out on V10 Redway, Monkston, to MKC – ref: FS660763740. Later received response to confirm repair.
- Reported Graffiti in underpass between Monkston Park & Monkston near the H7 / V10 roundabout, to MKC – ref: MKCC656950170
- Reported Graffiti on 2 bus stops either side of H7, between Monkston & Middleton, to MKC – ref: MKCC661795064
- Reported broken kerb stone on Queensbury Lane to MKC – ref: FS656947913
- Responding to an enquiry from a local resident regarding overgrown planting near allotments.

### Training

Attended NALC Online Event on Emergency planning on 23/10/24 which gave me a really good insight into how local councils can be involved when things go wrong. I heard how other parish & town councils approach emergency planning in their areas, from other organisations that are set to mobilise in certain situations and heard about how the upcoming Martyn's Law legislation may affect local venues in the future once it passes through parliament.

## Other

Attended event held by one of the local housing associations which has 3 developments within the parish to better understand how they deal with managing their resources and deal with maintenance and repairs required by their residents. They have a number of customer engagement schemes where representatives from their tenants & shared owners work in voluntary roles alongside the organisation to carry out roles like reviewing complaints, inspecting work carried out and service improvement panels. BPHA has expressed an interest in understanding how perhaps they could assist with anything in the local area to better serve their residents.

- 2. Report: Fitness Class Attendance and Future Plans**  
**Prepared by: Taimyr Boungou Pouaty / Laurent Veignal**  
**Trainer: Estelle Wilkinson**  
**Location: Monkston Primary School**

### **Current Fitness Classes**

- **Format:** 2x30-minute Training sessions on Mondays at 6:00 pm and 6:30 pm.
- **Registration:** 39 community members registered on Spond from a pool of 95 enquiries.
- **Attendance:** Attendance per class ranges between 9 and 18 participants.
- **Feedback:** Positive feedback has been consistently received, with attendees praising the structured warm-up, varied intensity levels for inclusivity, and comprehensive cool-down/stretching sessions.

### **Attendance Data**

Below is the attendance data for the two 30-minute sessions:

Date	6:00 pm	6:30 pm	Total
16/09/2024	16	9	25
23/09/2024	9	9	18
30/09/2024	11	15	26
07/10/2024	14	17	31
14/10/2024	13	19	32
21/10/2024	17	17	34
28/10/2024	11	11	22
04/11/2024	14	14	28
11/11/2024	14	14	28
18/11/2024	11	11	22

### **Observations and Recommendations**

- **Capacity:** The current sessions have not yet reached maximum capacity, with 39 registrations despite 95 initial enquiries.
- **Waiting List:** There are still 34 residents on the waiting list who have not expressed their consent to join Spond and the WhatsApp group.
- **Engagement:** Many attendees consistently return, indicating strong community interest and satisfaction.
- **Expansion Plans:** Due to sustained demand, we propose adding a second class to provide more options for residents and meet growing interest.

## **Recommendations**

**To enhance the fitness program and further engage the community, the following actions are proposed:**

1. Enhanced Advertising and Marketing:
  - Run targeted campaigns through newsletters, social media, and community notice boards to raise awareness of the classes.
  - Collaborate with local groups or organizations to promote the program.
2. Follow-Up Outreach:
  - Contact individuals on the waiting list to encourage registration and address barriers to participation.
  - Provide clear instructions for joining Spond and the WhatsApp group.
3. Bootcamp Sessions:
  - Organize a bootcamp session every two months to offer an additional fitness option and build stronger community engagement.

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 140/24 – BUDGET REVIEW**

### **1. Budget Preparation Timeline**

The Council's budget preparation process for the 2025/26 financial year will continue with an informal review session of the existing budget in late November or early December. This meeting will provide an opportunity to assess the current year's financial performance, identify any variances, and gather insights that will inform the development of the forthcoming budget. This session will also serve as a forum for Councillors to discuss priorities, consider emerging challenges, and provide strategic direction for the preparation of the 2025/26 budget.

If possible, all Members should indicate any changes they wish to put forward for consideration within the 2025/26 budget as soon as possible. Any project put forward should ideally be more than just an idea and should include some background detail in order for an informed decision to be made as to whether the project should be progressed for consideration as part of the budget.

Following the informal review, a draft budget will be presented at the December meeting of Full Council. This draft will reflect the outcomes of the preliminary discussions, incorporate projected income and expenditure, and outline funding requirements for proposed projects and services. Councillors will have the opportunity to scrutinise the draft, suggest adjustments, and ensure alignment with the Council's objectives. Explicit consideration of the council's reserves position should also be taken.

The final budget and precept requirement will be set at the January meeting of Full Council. By this stage, all feedback from earlier discussions will have been incorporated, and the budget will be ready for formal adoption. The Council will also confirm the precept requirement to ensure sufficient resources to deliver its planned activities. The precept requirement must be submitted to MKCC by 30 January 2025.

### **2. Introduction of a Chair's Allowance Budget Line**

The role of the Chair involves extra responsibilities, including representing the Council at official functions, engaging with community stakeholders, and attending or hosting additional meetings. These duties often necessitate incidental expenses.

To ensure the Chair is adequately supported in fulfilling these responsibilities, it is proposed to introduce a Chair's allowance. This allowance would enable the reimbursement of incidental expenses.

The proposed allocation is £400.00 for the remainder of the 2024/25 financial year. It is proposed that this amount is vired from the Council's general reserves.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Council resolves to:

1. Approve the establishment of a Chair's allowance budget line:  
Add a new budget line titled 'Chair's Allowance' to the Council's budget for the 2024/25 financial year.
2. Authorise a virement from general reserves:  
Allocate £400.00 from the Council's general reserves to resource the newly established Chair's allowance budget line for the remainder of the 2024/25 financial year.

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 141/24 – ACCOUNTS SOFTWARE**

The Council currently uses Rialtas accounts software under a contract that expires on 31 March 2025, at which point the agreement will transition to an annual rolling contract. The cost then for support and maintenance of the existing license would be £203.00 + VAT per year.

Until recently, the Council also used Rialtas to manage its allotments. However, in October 2024, the Council resolved to switch to Scribe for allotment management. The new system is now in place, and both the Clerk and the Allotment Officer have completed initial training.

**Proposal:** As part of the Locum Clerk's handover recommendations, it was suggested that the Council consider transitioning its entire accounts system from Rialtas to Scribe. Key reasons for this recommendation include:

1. **Modernity and Usability:** Scribe is more modern and user-friendly than Rialtas.
2. **Integration:** Scribe integrates seamlessly with the Council's new allotment software, enabling features such as linked invoicing.
3. **Enhanced Features:** Scribe offers superior functionality, along with robust training and user support.

The proposed move would involve entering into a three-year contract with Scribe at a cost of £45.00 + VAT per month plus an initial setup fee of £449.00 + VAT, totalling £2069.00 + VAT for the three-year period. This includes a 10% discount for committing to a three-year term.

A third quote has been sought and will be presented to Council for consideration.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Council resolves to:

1. Approve the transition from Rialtas to Scribe accounts software.
2. Enter into a three-year contract with Scribe at a cost of £45.00 + VAT per month and an initial setup fee of £449.00 + VAT (total contract value: £2069.00 + VAT, billed up-front).

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 142/24 – GRAPHIC DESIGN TOOLS**

The Council has identified a need to enhance both the frequency and quality of its communications. Officers are often required to create high-quality promotional materials such as social media posts, posters, flyers, banners, consultation displays, and other resources to support the Council's activities.

Currently, both the Locum Clerk and the Clerk use the online graphic design tool Canva for these tasks.

However, to fully leverage the tool's capabilities and access its broader range of features, it is recommended that the Council purchases its own Canva Pro subscription. This would ensure the Council can independently manage and streamline its design needs with access to advanced tools, templates, and features.

The annual cost of a Canva Pro subscription is £100.00.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Council resolves to approve the purchase of an annual subscription to Canva Pro at a cost of £100.00.

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 143/24 – CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

Emails received:

- MKCC. Emergency planning briefs. (Emailed: Members)
- MKCC. Notification of new Cabinet member. (Emailed: Members)
- MKCC. Details of road closures / road works. (Emailed: Members)
- MKCC. Details of Interfaith Week. (Emailed: Members)
- MKCC. Councillor newsletters. (Emailed: Members)
- MKPA. Notification of AGM. (Emailed: Members)
- East West Rail. New consultation. (Emailed: Members)
- MKCDPE. Christmas Lunch event update. (Emailed: Members)
- UnityMK. Details of volunteering opportunities and services. (Emailed: Members)
- Parish Online. Newsletter. (Emailed: Members)
- NALC. E-newsletters, including events newsletters. (Emailed: Members)
- MK Melting Pot e-newsletters (Emailed: Members)
- MKCAN. E-newsletters. (Emailed: Members)
- BALC. E-newsletters and training details. (Emailed: Members)
- Open University. Poverty Survey. (Emailed: Members)

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 144/24 – THE NATIONAL ALLOTMENT SOCIETY**

The National Allotment Society is a nationwide membership organisation that offers extensive expertise and resources on allotment-related matters. Membership for local authorities provides a range of benefits, including:

- Access to expert advice and guidance.
- Template documents, such as draft tenancy agreements, to support effective allotment management.

Membership can be a valuable resource for councils managing allotments, ensuring best practice and compliance with relevant regulations. Further details about the society and its offering can be found at [www.thenas.org.uk](http://www.thenas.org.uk).

The cost of membership is:

- £55.00 + VAT for the first year, plus a £1 share fee.
- £55.00 + VAT per year for subsequent renewals.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Council resolves to approve membership of the National Allotment Society at a cost of £55.00 + VAT plus a £1 share fee for the first year, with an annual renewal cost of £55.00 + VAT thereafter.

Clerk

# **AGENDA ITEM FC 145/24 – WEBSITE WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE**

## **Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council Website Working Group - Terms of Reference**

### **1. Purpose**

The Website Working Group has been established by the Parish Council to oversee the creation of a new Parish Council website that will enhance communication, improve transparency, and meet the needs of the community.

### **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the Website Working Group are to:

1. Create a modern, user-friendly, and accessible website for the Parish Council that meets the needs of residents, stakeholders, and Councillors.
2. Enhance communication between the Parish Council and the community through an effective digital platform.
3. Ensure compliance with all relevant legal and accessibility standards, such as WCAG and GDPR.
4. Promote transparency by providing easy access to Parish Council documents, news, and updates.
5. Develop a sustainable solution that ensures the website can be updated and maintained effectively in the long term.
6. Foster community involvement by gathering input and feedback during the website development process.
7. Provide a platform that reflects the Parish Council's values and identity, serving as a central hub for local information and engagement.

### **3. Scope**

Working Groups are not committees or sub-committees and are not empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Council. They are 'task and finish' groups appointed to carry out specific tasks. The Working Group's role is advisory, and any recommendations must be submitted to Full Council for approval. Recommendations of the Working Group cannot bind the Council, and it is the responsibility of the Council to consider and determine the final actions. Once the new website has been launched and the project formally closed, the Working Group will be disbanded.

The scope of work includes, but is not limited to:

- Conducting a thorough evaluation of the existing Parish Council website and identifying opportunities for improvement.
- Developing a detailed specification for the website, including functionality, accessibility, and design.
- Researching and shortlisting website platforms, providers, and developers capable of delivering a high-quality product.
- Engaging with the community to gather input on desired website features and content, ensuring the website reflects the needs of residents.
- Proposing costed solutions for website development, hosting, and ongoing maintenance.
- Ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation, including accessibility standards and data protection laws.
- Drafting a strategy for website content management and long-term upkeep to ensure the site remains useful and up-to-date.

- Exploring opportunities to integrate new technologies or features that enhance user experience and engagement (e.g., event calendars, community feedback forms).
- Considering branding, design elements, and navigation to ensure the website is user-friendly and professional.

The Working Group will liaise with external experts, stakeholders, and members of the public as needed. The Group will work transparently and inclusively to achieve the best outcome for the Parish Council and the community.

#### **4. Responsibilities**

The Website Working Group has no delegated powers and cannot make decisions on behalf of the Parish Council. The Group will act as an advisory body and submit all recommendations to the Full Council for approval. These recommendations should include:

- A comprehensive, costed proposal for the website development, including timelines and deliverables.
- Suggestions for a provider or platform, along with supporting rationale.
- A plan for testing, launching, and promoting the new website to the community.
- Ongoing management and content update strategies.
- Any additional recommendations or insights deemed necessary to complete the project successfully.

All actions and proposals must align with the Parish Council's Standing Orders, policies, and procedures.

#### **5. Reporting and Accountability**

- The Working Group will maintain regular communication with the Parish Council to provide updates on progress, seek feedback, and ensure alignment with Council priorities.
- Key updates will be provided at Full Council meetings, and interim reports may be submitted as required.
- A final report will be submitted by the Working Group to the Parish Council, including any recommended actions, budget implications, and timelines for implementation.

#### **6. Membership**

The Working Group members will be appointed by Full Council. Membership is open to all serving Councillors, and appointments will be based on the skills and expertise required to deliver the project successfully.

The Working Group should consist of at least two Councillors to ensure diversity of skills and perspectives. Membership may include individuals with experience in:

- IT and web development.
- Digital communications or marketing.
- Project management.

External individuals or organisations with expertise in relevant areas may be invited to attend meetings or provide input on an ad hoc basis. These contributors will not have voting rights.

The quorum for the Working Group will be a minimum of two Councillors.

#### **7. Chair**

The Working Group shall appoint a Chair from among its members. The Chair will be responsible for:

- Setting the agenda and chairing meetings.

- Ensuring meetings are conducted fairly and efficiently.
- Representing the Working Group at Full Council meetings, as needed.

## **8. Meetings**

Meetings will be held as necessary to progress the project.

- Where possible, a schedule of meetings and key project milestones will be reported to Full Council in advance.
- Meetings will be informal and may be held in person, virtually, or in a hybrid format.
- Notes will be taken at all meetings, and these notes will be submitted to the Clerk, published on the Parish Council's website, and included in the next Full Council meeting agenda for noting.
- Meetings will focus on specific deliverables, including community consultation results, provider evaluations, and draft proposals.

## **9. Public participation**

Engagement with the public is essential to ensure the new website meets the needs of the community.

- Members of the public will be invited to share their views, ideas, and feedback through consultations, surveys, and other appropriate means.
- Up to four members of the public may be invited to attend specific meetings where their input is relevant.
- Invitations to participate will be shared through the Parish Council's communication channels, including social media, newsletters, and noticeboards.

The Working Group will ensure that public input is documented and considered as part of its process of determining its recommendations.

## **10. Political Proportionality**

The Working Group should be politically proportional. It is preferable that each electoral ward should be represented by at least one member.

## **11. Budget**

The Website Working Group does not have a budget but may request funds from the Parish Council for specific initiatives or improvements identified during their work.

## **12. Dissolution**

Once the Working Group has completed its assigned tasks, it will be disbanded, and the Parish Council will consider the group's findings at its discretion.

## **13. Amendments**

These Terms of Reference may be amended by the Parish Council as deemed necessary.

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 146/24 – DELEGATED POWER**

In May 2024, following a period of upheaval within the Council, it was resolved to grant the Locum Clerk full delegated powers while in post. This measure facilitated substantial progress in addressing outstanding matters.

With the appointment of a permanent Clerk progress continues to be made. However, several ongoing



issues still require timely action to ensure the continued efficient operation of the Council. It is therefore proposed that full delegated powers be granted to the Clerk to enable progress to continue uninterrupted.

Clarification of the proposed delegated power:

The Clerk may do anything pursuant to the delegated power or duty which it would be lawful for the Council to do, including anything reasonably implied or incidental to that power or duty. This includes the power to:

- deal with any urgent matters that cannot wait until the next Council meeting. Member opinion to be sought via email where possible before a decision is made.
- respond to any urgent planning matters that cannot wait until the next meeting. Member opinion to be sought via email before any responses are submitted.
- Process any urgent payments that cannot wait until the next meeting. All payments to be reported to the next meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Council resolves to grant the Clerk/RFO full delegated powers as outlined above.

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 147/24 – TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

### **1. Cllr Hippey**

Council is asked to note that the Clerk has booked Cllr Hippey onto the NALC 'Empowering the young Councillors of tomorrow' and 'Breaking the mould of local councils' courses being held on 13.12.24 and 26.3.25 respectively, at a total cost of £86.74 + VAT.

### **2. The Clerk**

The Council has expressed a commitment to supporting the Clerk in obtaining sector-specific qualifications relevant to the role of Clerk/RFO. These qualifications will enhance the Clerk's skills and knowledge, ensuring the Council benefits from effective and informed administration.

It is proposed that the Council approves the Clerk's registration for the following training and qualifications:

#### **Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA):**

- An introductory course covering the basics of local council administration.
- Cost: £120.00 + VAT.

#### **Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration (FILCA):**

- A companion course focusing on financial administration for local councils.
- Cost: £120.00 + VAT.

Both ILCA and FILCA are foundation courses intended to prepare clerks for the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA). While CiLCA is typically pursued after at least 12 months in post, BMKALC has approved an earlier start date of May 2025 for the Clerk due to his prior local government experience.

#### **Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA):**

- A comprehensive qualification for local council clerks, covering a wide range of topics

- related to council management and governance.
- Cost: £360.00.

### **Financial Summary:**

The total cost for all three courses is £600.00 + VAT (VAT only applies to ILCA and FILCA).

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Council resolves to approve the Clerk's registration for the following qualifications at a total cost of £600.00 + VAT:

- ILCA – £120.00 + VAT
- FILCA – £120.00 + VAT
- CiLCA – £360.00

### **3. Membership of the SLCC**

The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) is the professional body for local council clerks and senior council employees, representing clerks in over 5,000 councils across England and Wales. Membership of the SLCC provides significant benefits to both the Clerk and the Council, including:

- Access to legal, financial, and administrative advice.
- A wide range of training opportunities.
- Guidance and support through a network of experienced clerks.

Membership ensures the Clerk remains properly trained, fully informed on current issues, and able to access fast, accurate advice when addressing challenges. Research shows that 97% of councils cover the cost of their Clerk's subscription to the SLCC, recognising the value of this support.

The membership fees are reviewed annually by the SLCC. For 2024, the first-year membership includes:

- Annual subscription fee: £298.00.
- One-time joining fee: £20.00.
- Total cost: £318.00.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Council resolves to approve the Clerk's joining fee and annual subscription to the SLCC.

### **4. Local Government Law Reference Books**

Clerks frequently rely on specialist legal texts and reference materials to effectively carry out their diverse responsibilities. Having access to these resources not only supports the Clerk's work but also benefits Councillors by ensuring informed decision-making and compliance with legal standards.

It is proposed that the Council approves the purchase of the following key reference books:

- Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration (13th Edition)
- The Law of Allotments (5th Edition)
- The Clerk's Manual 2023

These resources are available for purchase from the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC). Depending on the decision regarding the Clerk's membership of the SLCC, the Council may benefit from discounted member rates, or alternatively, the standard non-member rates will apply.

### **Cost Summary:**

- Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration:
  - Member Rate: £137.00
  - Non-Member Rate: £163.00
- The Law of Allotments:
  - Member Rate: £24.80
  - Non-Member Rate: £29.00
- The Clerk's Manual 2023:
  - Member Rate: £47.50
  - Non-Member Rate: £67.50

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Council resolves to approve the purchase of the following reference books at either the member rate or non-member rate as applicable, based on the decision regarding the Clerk's SLCC membership:

1. Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration (13th Edition).
2. The Law of Allotments (5th Edition).
3. The Clerk's Manual 2023.

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 148/24 – PLANNING**

### **New Planning Applications**

**1. Application Reference:** PLN/2024/2118

**Proposal:** The proposed works include the erection of a single-storey rear extension connecting to the conversion and extension of the existing garage into a utility room and office with a W/C. Additional works include the replacement of a side door with a window and the installation of a front rooflight at **91 Blanchland Circle, Monkston, Milton Keynes, MK10 9DR.**

**2. Application Reference:** PLN/2024/2206

**Proposal:** Proposed loft conversion, including the addition of a rear dormer and new rooflights at **81 Crowborough Lane, Kents Hill, Milton Keynes, MK7 6JN.**

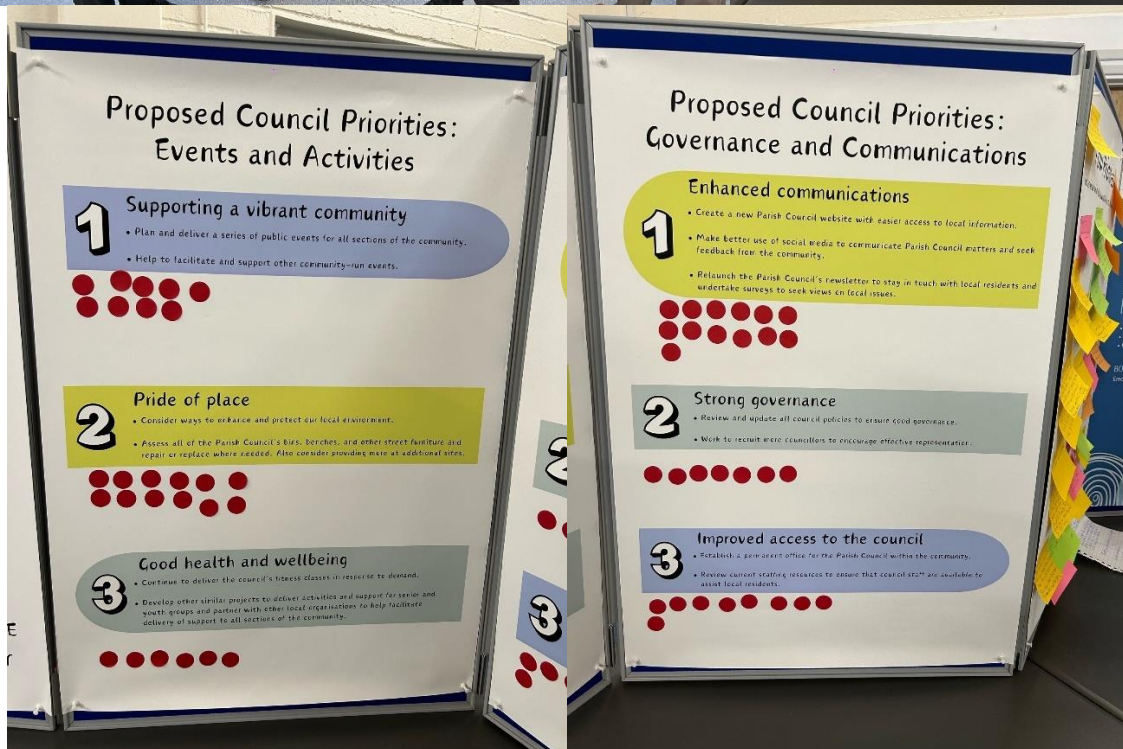
**3. Application Reference:** PLN/2024/2385

**Proposal:** Installation of new 2.4-metre-high galvanised metal palisade fencing and gates to the east and south boundaries, matching the existing fencing, at **1 Whitehall Avenue, Kingston, Milton Keynes, MK10 0AX.**

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 149/24 – RESIDENTS' MEETING**

At the residents' meeting that took place on Saturday 16 November at Monkston Community Centre, Councillors engaged directly with members of the public to discuss key issues and gather feedback. Additionally, a large display highlighted the proposed priorities for the Council's three-year plan, and

residents were invited to review these priorities and express their preferences by placing stickers on the display. A dedicated space was also provided for residents to share their own ideas and concerns, allowing them to suggest what they believe the Council should focus on. To ensure everyone could contribute in their preferred way, written feedback forms and a return box were made available for additional comments.



Approximately 30 comments were submitted on the feedback board, and 14 individual feedback forms were completed. Residents were also invited to rank the six priorities displayed by the Council. The results, while based on a small sample size, are as follows (from highest to lowest priority):

1. Enhanced communications from the Council – **13 votes.**
2. Pride of place (environment and public spaces) – **12 votes.**
3. Supporting a vibrant community (public events) and Improved access to the Council – **9 votes each.**
4. Strong governance (updating Council policies and recruiting more Councillors) – **7 votes.**
5. Good health and wellbeing (fitness classes and other wellbeing activities) – **6 votes.**

## Key Themes from the Feedback Board and Forms

### 1. Local Environment

- Calls for more litter bins and regular litter removal.
- Requests to keep streets and gutters clean and for better maintenance of hedges and trees.
- Concerns about flooding in certain areas.

### 2. Safety and Security

- Suggestions for installing CCTV cameras at key locations.
- Concerns about anti-social behaviour and poor lighting in certain areas.

### 3. Leisure and Public Spaces

- Requests for better facilities for all age groups, including playgrounds and community spaces.
- Ideas for upgrading local parks and facilities.

### 4. Transport

- Concerns about bus routes and accessibility.
- Requests to improve parking availability, particularly for local residents.

### 5. Infrastructure

- Desire for well-maintained roads and pathways.
- Focus on improving underpasses.

### 6. Engagement & Communication

- Residents expressing a need for more interaction with the Council and a desire to be consulted and listened to.

This feedback provides valuable insights into the areas of work residents value most and serves as a helpful guide for shaping the Council's priorities and future communications.

Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM FC 153/24 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Council to agree the date of the next meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the next Full Council meeting be held on Thursday 19 December 2024 at 7pm.

Clerk