

Emberton Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting held in The Pavilion
Monday 4th December 2023 at 7pm

Present:

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

Fred Markland - resident

Ward Councillor Peter Geary (part meeting)

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 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. Cllr Laval declared an interest in item 5.3 (Well & Towers).

1. To confirm the **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on the 6th November 2023 – The Minutes of the meeting held on the 6th November 2023 were agreed and duly signed by the Chair.

3.99 **Emberton Conservation Area Review** – The Chair welcomed Fred Markland to the meeting and thanked him for sharing his observations on the Emberton conservation area review, which was out for consultation until 22nd December. Mr Markland shared his comments with councillors which mainly focused on the historical accuracy of the document. Some of the historical views that were represented in the previous document had now been omitted. There was no mention of the Posthouse and cottages beside it, which were believed to date from the 17th century. There was little reference to trees and landscaping. Councillors agreed that they were not in favour of the proposed changes to the boundary areas and the question was raised as to whether the properties on the other side of the A509 such as Emberton House Farm, should be included, or at least referred to as an important view. It was noted that the document had made little or no reference to the preschool, pub or Emberton Park and appeared to be negative in its tone. Cllr Palmer commented that the proposed boundary in West Farm Way was not consistent as it removed four properties out of the conservation area while leaving in two properties.

1.2 **Public questions** – nothing to report.

1.3 **Risk** – Cllr Laval commented that there were leaves on the footpath between Olney Road and

the clock tower which was making the path slippery. The clerk to report this to MKCC. **Action: KG.** It was also noted that the street light outside Manor Croft was also out. The clerk to report this. **Action: KG.** Ward Cllr Geary responded that Emberton would receive one clearing of leaves per year. Cllr Duncan referred to the risk assessment for the clock tower. The clerk to look at this. **Action: KG.**

2. TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND AGREE ANY DECISIONS/ACTION

2.1 Ward Councillors' Report – report from Ward Cllr Geary as follows:

Triangle at Petsoe End – Ward Cllr Geary reported that some meetings had taken place over the last few months to look at making this part of the highway safer. Following a meeting with Ward Cllr Keith McLean and Keith Wheeler (MKCC's Road safety officer), MKCC has accepted that there was an issue at the triangle and the action was to improve signage. Ward Cllr Geary had suggested road marking and this was being investigated with getting someone to undertake the design work and how the triangle could be reprofiled.

Parish related – Ward Cllr Geary urged the parish council to report faulty street lights and empty grit bins to MKCC. The drain on Olney Road was a constant problem which was understood to have been caused by a utility's contractor with someone damaging the pipe. Ward Cllr Geary had spoken to the officer concerned. Grit bins would be filled by MKCC upon request.

MK Connect – An update regarding MK Connect had been received from Ward Cllr Whitworth as follows; - "The City Council's transport team have been monitoring bus services in the northern area of Milton Keynes, as several bus routes are suffering low uptake and are at risk of reduction or removal. They have also been monitoring the demand-responsive MK Connect in the area, which currently has a long drive to reach the villages in the north and provide a service where there is no bus.

MKCC has shown further support for local bus services by taking a collaborative approach, which we hope will increase passenger numbers. Soon, an MK Connect vehicle will solely serve the northern, more rural areas of Milton Keynes – it will pick up residents and take them to Newport Pagnell where they can use the bus network should they wish to travel elsewhere across the city. As this is an experimental trial, the trips on MK Connect will be free. It is hoped that it will provide additional support for buses in area, and help shape the next phase of demand-responsive transport in Milton Keynes. The proposed schedule is:

Monday to Saturday from 6am to 7pm – Free trips within the area of Newport Pagnell as the southernmost point, M1 as westernmost boundary, to the north and east boundaries of Milton Keynes.

Ultimately this should help to boost uptake of local bus services and MK Connect. We await further details."

Cllr Duncan queried the rationale on this, as a free MK Connect service would compete even more with the no 21 bus which was on a "use it or lose it" basis. Ward Cllr Geary commented that MK Connect had taken away patronage from other commercial bus companies. More information would be forthcoming on the proposals.

PCSO – PCSO Ormston had been covering the area since PCSO Huckle had left to go to MKCC.

Emberton Neighbourhood Plan – Ward Cllr Geary confirmed that the neighbourhood plan had gone through and congratulated those on the steering group. The neighbourhood plan would be dealt with by delegated decision later in December.

2.2 **Dates for Diaries** – These were noted.

2.3 **Clerk's Report**

2.1.17 **Bridleway claim at Petsoe End** – Nothing to report.

2.1.24 **Weed spraying** – Information obtained from MKCC website that weeds on hard surfaces were sprayed once yearly in Emberton between May and September.

2.1.50 **Pothole, Olney Road** – Pothole in Gravel Walk reported to MKCC. Clerk requested an update on 28/11/23.

2.1.55 **Fly tipping between Newport Road and Prospect Place** – Nothing to report.

2.1.82 **Residents parking – Hulton Drive** – Awaiting results of questionnaire.

2.1.117 **Surface water drain outside Acorn Early Years** – The clerk reported the blocked drain on the 7th November, reference FS560232407. Update in Ward Cllr's report.

3.6.15 **Rat running and restricted access** – Cllr Jamieson reported that the volunteer group had undertaken speed watch twice in November, once on the A509 with two cars exceeding the 40mph limit and in Olney Road with no offences reported. Cllr Laval to raise the enforcement of the restricted access at the North East Rural Community Forum on the 6th December. **Action: AL.**

3.6.30 **Allotments** – It was noted that the Heads of Terms and Title had been received from MKCC legal department for transfer of the allotments from MKCC to the parish council. The clerk to make enquiries with a solicitor to act on behalf of the parish council. **Action: KG.**

3.6.50 **Dog fouling** – Information on how to report dog fouling has been provided in the Well and Towers and on the pc website. An email had been received from a resident in Home Farm Court requesting that the dog waste bin in West Lane at the junction of West Farm Way be re-sited. The clerk to investigate this further. **Action: KG.**

3.6.63 **Newton Road/Petsoe End – frequent collision issues** – See Ward Cllr's report.

3.6.68 **Well at Petsoe End** – EUC contacted Peter Geary to request that the hedge behind the well was cut back.

3.6.114 **Steps in High Street (no 5)** – The handrail was damaged by a vehicle on the 16th November and subsequently removed. Details of the incident has been reported to MKCC highways and passed to their insurance department. The parish council agreed that at the request of residents, the handrail should not be replaced. The clerk to notify MKCC. **Action: KG.**

3.6.115 **Questionnaire** – The clerk to produce a summary of the questionnaire results. **Action: KG.**

3. SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS

3.1 **Emberton Park** – The clerk reported that an invitation had been received for two councillors to attend a tree planting service on the 17th January. Cllr Flowers and Cllr Jamieson to attend. The clerk to notify MKCC. **Action: KG.**

3.74 **Emberton Neighbourhood Plan** – Noted that the neighbourhood plan had been voted through. The meeting commented that it had been a poor turnout (34.5%), and that there had been 117 votes in favour and 60 votes against. Cllr Duncan had asked the steering group for their insights on what could have been done better/differently in the process, for passing to the next steering group when the plan fell to be updated. There would be more time to look at these at the next EPC meeting.

3.85 **Emberton School (School House Fund)** – Cllr Walker raised the question as to what accounts had previously been shared with the parish council to which Cllr Duncan responded that only the accounts that were on the Charities Commission website. Cllr Walker reported that he had spoken to Noel Sibbald, the newly appointed treasurer who agreed that the fund was for the children of Emberton and was adamant that the trustees had not spent any. It was understood that the trustees did not need to produce accounts if the income was less than £10,000. The last accounts produced were in 2009 and prior to this, the parish council would have to make a freedom of information request. Although the EUC seemed the best option to administer the fund, there were difficulties in the way of transferring the fund to the EUC as the charities had different objects. The money could not be released to an organisation that was not a registered charity, so the parish council could not administer the fund. Cllr Duncan commented that, rather than transferring the money out of the School House Fund, it might well be possible for the EUC trustee individuals to become trustees of the School House Fund charity as well (replacing the VSF individuals who were currently trustees of the School House Fund) while themselves continuing as trustees of the EUC, so running both Emberton charities in parallel. The EUC trustees had been open to this when first discussed a couple of years ago, but should be asked to reconfirm given the time which had passed. Noel Sibbald was going to have a discussion with the other trustees. It was understood that there was about £100,000 in the School House Fund account and that the trustees could not spend the capital, only the income. Cllr Laval commented that she was previously a governor of Emberton School and would look to see if she had any documents. **Action: AL.** Cllr Walker to speak to EUC. **Action: JW.** The clerk to email to JW details of the secretary to the EUC trustees. **Action: KG.**

3.97 **Sports & Recreation Committee** – Meeting to be held on 22nd January 2024.

3.99 **Conservation area – review of 1997 Conservation Area Statement by MKC** – Reported on previously. The Chair to draft a response. **Action: MD.**

3.103 **Demand Responsive Transport (21 bus service)** – Reported on previously.

3.113 **Climate Change** – Cllr Flowers reported that a response from the Environmental Agency was expected before 20th December.

3.115 **Grit bins** – The clerk reported that a grant application had been made for the Ward Cllr's

Budget. Cllr Duncan suggested that a risk assessment for residents to use grit bins should be published on the EPC website. **Action: KG.**

- 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** - Cllr Duncan reported that she had attended a planning conference arranged by Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils. There had been some helpful points arising, which could be considered at the next EPC meeting when there would be more time. The clerk reported that a response had been sent to the Carbon and climate study public consultation in connection with the New City Plan.
- 3.121 **Consideration of proposals to extend the restrictions on street trading by mobile vendors throughout Milton Keynes** – nothing to report.
- 3.122 **Milton Keynes City Council traffic sensitive streets review October 2023** – nothing to report.
- 3.123 **Ousedale School – admission arrangements for September 2025 consultation** – It was agreed to respond that the parish council agreed with the recommendations made in the consultation. **Action: KG**
- 3.124 **MK Design code scoping consultation** – It was agreed to carry this forward to the next meeting and should be included under item 3.118 as the consultation fed into the New City Plan. **Action: KG.**

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 **Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund** – Cllr White stated that a meeting had been held but no applications had been received. It was noted that the funds had been transferred to a high interest account. It was suggested to look at the whole of the fund and the criteria for grants.

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 for non-determination**
- 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 - **pending**
- 4.362 **23/02155/HOU** – The erection of a single storey front extension with integrated garage conversion to include new bay window and render. New doors and windows to all elevations. Barn conversion to annexe at Manor Croft, Olney Road – **permitted**
- 4.363 **23/02057/HOU** – Erection of a single storey rear extension with solar panels to the roof to replace existing outbuilding/pool enclosure. Single storey front and side extensions to include alterations to the roof, garage conversion, new doors and windows and additional roof lights,

new external render/cladding. New double garage with study above and new boundary wall and improved vehicle access at Springside Pasture – **refused**

- 4.364 **23/01929/HOU** – Proposed installation of new back door to property retrospective at 3 Home Farm Court – **permitted**
- 4.365 **23/02069/DISCON** – Approval of details required by condition 4 (Stonework sample), condition 6 (Roof materials) and condition 7 (Door details) of permission ref 21/01374/LBC at West Lane House, West Lane – **conditions discharged**
- 4.366 **23/02176/FUL** – The erection of one dwelling with attached single garage at 34 Gravel Walk - **pending**
- 4.367 **23/02349/TCA** – The reduction in height of two cherry trees (1 and 2) by 1.5 metres, the reduction in height of a field maple (3) by 4-5 metres, the reduction in height of three silver birch trees (4, 5 and 6) by 2-3 metres and the reduction in height of a beech hedge (7) by 0.5 metres at 1 Home Farm Court – **pending**

New applications

- 4.368 **23/02399/TCA** – Remove T1 (silver birch) to ground level, reduce TG1 (yew) by 2m and prune side away from garage, and reduce 2-T5 (4 apple trees) to compact shape and remove epicormic growth at Dower House, 19 Olney Road. It was agreed that the parish council would agree with the recommendations made by MKCC’s tree officer regarding this application. The clerk to respond accordingly. **Action: KG.**

5. ACCOUNTS

- 5.1 **To receive the RFO’s Report for the 4th December 2023** and approve payments. It was proposed by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Palmer that the payments be approved as per the RFO’s Report. Cllr White to approve the payments online. **Action: HW.** It was noted that an application to MKCC for a winter grant had been approved in the sum of £500. It was noted that the EUC had not proposed a use for its share of the grant which accorded with the terms of the grant, so the parish council could not correctly distribute the grant to the EUC. Accordingly the whole of the grant would be provided to All Saints’ Church in the sum of £500. The clerk to advise EUC and All Saints Church. **Action: KG.**
- 5.2 **Community Infrastructure Fund** – Nothing further to report since the previous meeting, when the clerk had reported that MKCC had requested sight of the residents’ questionnaire and the results regarding speeding, which the clerk had forwarded.
- 5.3 **Community grant applications** –

Well & Towers – Cllr Laval left the meeting for this discussion. Grant application agreed in the sum of £750.00.

Sports & Recreation Committee – Grant application agreed in the sum of £3665.57.

Seniors’ Christmas party – Grant application agreed in the sum of £450.00.

History Society – A discussion took place which ascertained that the grant was paid by the History Society to the ESSC for hire of the archive room. It was noted that the History Society was currently inactive. It was agreed to set the grant at £100 and for Cllr Flowers to speak to the ESSC. **Action: PF.**

- 5.4 **Draft budget** – A discussion took place regarding the draft budget. The budget required some adjustment to prevent outgoings exceeding income. It was agreed to remove the well at Petsoe End as an asset as MKCC had already stated that they owned it. It was agreed to remove the weed spraying in May. It was agreed to include legal fees for the transfer of the title of the allotments. The councillors discussed ways of raising funds for the parish council. Residents could be asked if they wished to sponsor a hanging basket. A car boot sale was also considered. Cllr Walker suggested an open gardens event in Summer 2024 with proceeds going to the parish council. **Action: KG** to amend budget for approval at next meeting.

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

7. **PARISH RELATED MATTERS**

7.1 **Village publicity** – Noted that there would not be a Well & Towers in January.

7.2 **Cllrs' concerns** – Cllr White reported that a resident had asked if the bench by the bus stop in Olney Road was going to be replaced following its removal. It was noted that this was going to be the location for the grit bin; permission had been sought from highways.

Cllr Duncan reported that she had spoken to a resident in Newport Road who had concerns regarding the layout of the T junction to Newport Road/Prospect Place when turning right, heading north on the A509. Cllr Laval to take this to the North East Rural Community Forum on the 6th December. **Action: AL.** The clerk to forward the details to Cllr Laval. **Action: KG.**

Cllr Jamieson reported that the drain outside Acorn Early Years Nursery was totally blocked. The clerk to report this. **Action: KG**

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

The meeting closed at 9.57pm