

# CASTLETHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Parish Council General Meeting held on Monday 5/11/2012 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors Keane, Presant-Collins, Hinds, Sweetland, Ayles, Stacey & Markham. The Clerk Mr S Bradbury and Ward Cllr Geary were also present along with twenty members of the public.

The Chair introduced the public forum at 7:30 and commenced by asking those present to keep a look out as there have been thefts of lead from church roofs at Hanslope, Haversham and Broughton.

A member of the public asked whether there will be public consultation on the proposed village centre re-generation. The Chair replied that there had already been some, but MKC were currently drawing up final drafts that would again go to public consultation.

The owner of the Carrington Arms then gave an update on the current position. Whilst he understands the views of the village, the economic climate has not been right to start the major work required just yet. There is currently some work in progress but he intends to take a view on the pub when he has finished projects in Bedford and Wavendon. He thought that this would probably be around next May. There were several more questions that he and his architect answered.

The same person then gave an update on his revised application to develop 9 dwellings in Station Yard. He had looked at the reasons for the refusal of his earlier application and had worked hard to address specific criticisms. In doing so he felt that the proposed development would now integrate better with the village. There were some questions which again the applicant and his architect answered.

There being no further matters for the Open Forum the meeting commenced at 8.07 pm

- |          |   |                   |
|----------|---|-------------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  | <b>Action</b>     |
|          | None  |                   |
| <b>2</b> | <b>TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  |                   |
|          | 2.1. Cllr Stacey declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 7.3.   |                   |
|          | 2.2. Cllr Hinds declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 8.4.  |                   |
|          | 2.3. Cllr Ayles declared a personal interest in item 8.5.   |                   |
| <b>3</b> | <b>TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</b>   |                   |
|          | Proposed Cllr Sweetland seconded Cllr Stacey. Agreed unanimously.   |                   |
| <b>4</b> | <b>TO RECEIVE REPORTS</b>   |                   |
|          | <b>4.1. CLERK'S REPORT &amp; REVIEW OF ACTIONS (appended to minutes). Matters arising:</b>  |                   |
|          | 4.1.1. Item 1.28. – Clerk to pursue state of footpaths as part of current exercise to re-define the MKC Highways List   | <b>Clerk</b>      |
|          | 4.1.2. Item 1.43 – Cllr Ayles had heard nothing back about dog control enforcement. Cllr Geary to progress.   | <b>Cllr Geary</b> |
|          | 4.1.3. Item 1. 45 – The Clerk shared the response from MKC about drainage, landscaping and road width on the Maltings Field development. The response about drainage was not understood. Cllr Markham recalled an agreement to have pavements and Victorian style street lights provided. Cllr Geary agreed to speak to a Neil Allen with a view to setting up a meeting with the Parish Council. | <b>Cllr Geary</b> |
|          | 4.1.4. Item 1.51 – Cllr Ayles gave credit to MKC for responding to the problems with the school bus to Hanslope. All agreed.  |                   |
|          | 4.1.5. Item 1.55 – it was thought that there are still problems with the Village Hall back door. Clerk and VH Cllrs to liaise with Village Hall Committee to get a final fix to everyone's satisfaction. Clerk to use emergency powers to spend up to £200 if necessary. Agreed unanimously.  | <b>Clerk</b>      |
|          | <b>4.2. COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM 5TH OCTOBER 2012 (appended to minutes)</b>   |                   |
|          | Presented by Cllr Ayles, no matters arising.  |                   |
|          | <b>4.3 CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING 10TH OCTOBER 2012 (appended to minutes).</b>  |                   |
|          | 4.3.1. Presented by Cllr Ayles who recommended that there would be worth in Cllrs attending should more courses be set up in the future   |                   |
|          | <b>4.4. BROADBAND UPDATE (appended to minutes).</b>   |                   |
|          | 4.4.1 Cllr Ayles presented the file note. Only 60 out of the c. 450 households had registered interest. Cllr Ayles to produce another article for the November newsletter.  | <b>Cllr Ayles</b> |
|          | <b>4.5. HPCAF 25TH OCTOBER 2012 (APPENDED TO MINUTES)</b>   |                   |
|          | 4.5.1. Cllr Ayles presented the file note. The major highlight was that due to structural works on the flood relief gullies traffic controls will be in use on the Haversham bridge from May to September 2013.   |                   |
| <b>5</b> | <b>TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS</b>  |                   |

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- 5.1. **11/01593/FUL:** Erection of 9 dwellings and associated parking former Station Yard Goods Yard Castlethorpe  
It was remarked that a previous Housing Needs Survey had indicated the need for some additional low cost housing in the village. Additionally villagers had previously expressed a preference for low cost housing in preference to light industry on the site. It was then agreed that a current verbal agreement with the applicant to provide car parking spaces at the back of the green be formalised through an S106/Planning Gain agreement. In return the applicant would be granted use of the village green for tables and chairs on the proviso that the area be kept in good condition and that it be cleared if required for village events.  
The Chair suspended the meeting to allow the planning applicant to ask a question. He asked whether the provision of the parking spaces was dependant on the Village Centre Re-generation project. The Chair replied that the two initiatives were complimentary but that there are no fixed dependencies.  
The meeting resumed.  
It was further agreed that the Parish Council would want to agree the types of bricks to be used before development commences. Also that unsightly items such as waste bins, clothes lines and sheds not be sited in front of the dwellings.  
The Chair again suspended the meeting to allow another comment from the applicant; that there may be matters that will prevent some items being housed in back yards as they are adjacent to the railway lines. The Chair replied that any such cases would have to be accepted. The meeting resumed.  
Cllr Ayles proposed that the Parish Council support this revised application but request that planning conditions should be requested as above. This was agreed unanimously. Clerk to write to MKC. **Clerk**
- 5.2. **12/02177/LBC** Listed building consent for removal of a casement window to be replaced by installation of outward opening French window Manor Farm House 50 South Street Castlethorpe - No objections
- 5.3. **12/02220/TCA** intention to crown reduce by 40% and crown raise to 1.8m one Cherry tree Castlethorpe First School North Street Castlethorpe - No objections
- 5.4. **12/02238/NMA** Non material amendment to application 08/01873/FUL to amend kitchen roof from glazed roof to slate roof with rooflights, to change the use building adjacent Unit 1 from office to garden store and omit carport at Unit 5 and erect a stone wall Maltings Farm 48 South Street Castlethorpe  
Cllr Ayles proposed that there should be no objections subject to a parking space remaining with the removal of the car port. Agreed unanimously. Clerk to notify MKC. **Clerk**
- 6**
- 6.1. **12/00780/EIASC** Screening opinion for 1 wind turbine – MKC conclude that EIA not required - noted
- 6.2. **12/01952/TCA** Notification of intention to fell one Conifer Leylandii 14 North Street Castlethorpe - No Objection to Works to Tree - noted
- 6.3. **12/01769/FUL** : Erection of detached residential dwelling - Land at Fox Covert Lane Castlethorpe - Pending Consideration - noted
- 7**
- 7.1. A public excluded part 2 of the meeting to discuss financial matters relating to award of commercial contract to provide Village Hall acoustic improvements was proposed by Cllr Ayles and agreed unanimously.
- 7.2. Cllr Ayles proposed that the Clerk respond to the MKC consultation on behalf of the Parish Council as follows: **Clerk**
- Consultation needs to be given to extending the quality of the urban redway system to the rural cycleways
  - In particular the route from Haversham to Castlethorpe needs further work
  - The route into the village needs to be diverted along Fox Covert Lane rather than the existing route which is difficult to maintain and is frequently overgrown.
- All of these comments were agreed unanimously
- 7.3. Cllr Stacey left the meeting. Cllr Markham proposed that as the cost of re-fencing five trees in Castle Field needs to be done professionally and that the cost would be in the order of £500 to £700, that the Clerk should look at obtaining a grant.. Cllrs Markham **Clerk**

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and Presant-Collins will first review what is required and then inform the Clerk.

Agreed unanimously. Cllr Stacey re-joined the meeting.

- 7.4. Cllr Sweetland raised the matter of bad drainage to properties in South Street and also the state of the footpaths. Cllr Ayles said that footpaths in the village were generally in a poor state of repair. Clerk to write to Highways department about the drainage. Cllr Geary will discuss the overall state of footpaths (to be consolidated as at 4.1.1) with Highways department.

**Clerk  
Cllr Geary**

- 7.5. Cllr Ayles proposed that Standing Orders be amended to delegate authority to the Clerk to give dispensations to Councillors declaring an interest in a resolution to participate in debate and, separately, to vote. Agreed unanimously. Clerk to amend Standing Orders.

**Clerk**

- 7.6. Cllr Ayles proposed that Standing Orders be amended so that, in the event of a Cllr declaring an interest and not having a dispensation, that the Cllr will withdraw to the public gallery as opposed to leaving the room. Agreed unanimously. Clerk to amend Standing Orders.

**Clerk**

- 7.7. Cllr Ayles proposed that the Parish Council put forward a member to represent the Parish Council in the forthcoming review of the Parishes' Protocol and volunteered to do so himself. All agreed. Clerk to return nomination form to MKC.

**Clerk**

### 8 **TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL MATTERS**

- 8.1. The RFO payments schedule (circulated prior to meeting) was proposed by Cllr Ayles. Seconded by Cllr Hinds and agreed unanimously with the following caveats (agreed by all):

- Clerk to review ongoing membership of Bucks Playing Fields before Standing Order is drawn next year
- Clerk to clarify position re Safety Deposit Box
- Resolutions 8.2, 8.4 & 8.6 are agreed

**Clerk**

**Clerk**

Payee	Description	Invoice	Amount	VAT	Sub-Total
S Bradbury	Salary Oct 2012	per pay slip	£454.84	£0.00	£454.84
S Bradbury	Incidental Expenses	per attached	£90.85	£0.00	£90.85
G. Hinds	Oct 2012 invoice	per attached	£180.00	£0.00	£180.00
P Stone	work Oct invoice 124	per attached	£110.00	£0.00	£110.00
A H Contracts	Empty dog bins Oct	per attached	£37.50	£7.50	£45.00
UK Fire	VH - fire equipment checks	per attached	£205.00	£41.00	£246.00
T. Fricker	Mole eradication	per attached	£106.00	£20.00	£126.00
BT	Phone bill	per attached	£77.77	£15.55	£93.32
Flogas	Standing charge (quarterly)	per attached	£21.29	£1.06	£22.35
Village Show Committee	Senior Citizens Lunch	per resolution 5/11/12 8.2	£250.00	£0.00	£250.00
D. Hinds	re-imbusement cleaning products	per resolution 5/11/12 8.5	£28.04	£0.00	£28.04
Beadwell Silver Band	Bugler for remembrance day	per resolution 5/11/12 8.6	£25.00	£0.00	£25.00
Royal British Legion	Wreath	per resolution 5/11/12 8.6	£25.00	£0.00	£25.00
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>£1,611.29</b>	<b>£85.11</b>	<b>£1,696.40</b>
<b>Standing Orders/Direct Debits</b>					
E.ON	electricity SG - Oct DD	4166 2268 6480	£28.00	£0.00	
E.ON	gas VH - Oct DD	89208742670	£125.00	£0.00	
LTSB Safe Custody	Standing Order	safety deposit box 6 monthly chg	£7.50	£0.00	

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Bucks CO	Standing Order	Bucks Playing Fields - annual	£30.00	£0.00	
	<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>£190.50</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	

- 8.2. Cllr Ayles proposed that £250 be donated for the Senior Citizen's Christmas lunch. A question was asked whether the entire £250 would be spent. The Chair suspended the meeting to allow the Treasurer of the Village Show Committee to answer that every penny will be spent. All were happy and the Chair resumed the meeting. The donation was then agreed unanimously.
- 8.3. Cllr Hinds proposed approval for the cost of re-fitting the Christmas lighting up to £300. He stressed that this was an upper limit and doubted that it would all be spent. Seconded by Cllr Keane and agreed unanimously.
- 8.4. Cllr Hinds withdrew to the public gallery. Cllr Ayles proposed that Cllr Hinds be reimbursed the sum of £28.04 spent on cleaning materials. Seconded Cllr Sweetland and agreed unanimously. Cllr Hinds re-joined the meeting.
- 8.5. Cllr Ayles re-affirmed a personal interest but not such that it would prejudice his judgement against the public interest. He would therefore introduce and discuss but not vote on the resolution; that the cricket club be re-funded some money in light of the extremely bad weather conditions that had caused the postponement of several fixtures. This led to a loss of match fees, the Club's main form of revenue. All other Cllrs were wary about setting a precedent in that conditions may be as bad if not worse in future and that the Sports Ground budget depends on the full contribution. The resolution was declined unanimously with Cllr Ayles not voting.
- 8.6. Cllr Ayles proposed an award of £25.00 towards the purchase of a wreath (from the British Legion) and £25.00 donation towards the use of a bugler on Remembrance Day. Cllr Sweetland seconded and agreed unanimously
- 9 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**
- 9.1. A resident has requested information on the Water Tower just off of the cycleway. The tower belongs to the Borough and the most likely sources of information are Wolverton Historic Society and Milton Keynes Museum. Clerk to respond accordingly. Cllr Markham requested that the state of the tower be put on the next agenda. Clerk  
Clerk
- 10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 10.1 It was agreed that Cllr Ayles will represent the Parish Council on the Development Control meeting that includes the Station Yard development.
- 11 TO AGREE DATE AND ATTENDANCE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:**
- 11.1. Next Parish Council meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> December 7:30 – agreed
- 11.2. Clerk and Cllr Stacey to discuss outstanding business and then arrange a Sports Ground Committee meeting Clerk  
Cllr Stacey
- 11.3. Clerk to meet with Cllrs Ayles and Presant-Collins to prepare for Finance Committee meeting. Clerk to arrange. Clerk
- There being no further business, part 1 of the meeting closed at 9:30.
- PART 2** This part of the meeting resumed at 9.30pm
- 12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** by Councillors in any of the agenda items below  
None
- 13 13.1** Requirements to improve the acoustics of Castlethorpe Village Hall had been communicated to three companies. The PC were in receipt of 2 written quotes and 1 response indicating that a competitive quote could not be given. It was unanimously decided (with Cllr Stacey abstaining) that the Clerk was delegated the power to offer an award of tender in cost terms up to the lowest written quote to Sounds Amazing. Clerk

There being no further business to discuss, this part of the meeting closed at 9.55pm

### Appendix A – Schedule of Reports & File Notes

#### [Clerk's Report 11.05.2012](#)

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4.1	CLERKS REPORT & REVIEW OF ACTIONS	
1	Actions/progress	Status
1.6	Risk to be added to Risk Assessment on long term sick leave by Clerk will be done for time of Finance sub-Committee	ongoing
1.13	Clerk still to discuss layout of accounts with Cllr Presant-Collins. This will roll forward until just before next year's accounts are put together	ongoing
1.19	Clerk still to discuss 'drop box' for MK News with CVSA no progress due to pressure of other work	ongoing
1.21	Village Centre Redesign. Intermediate Highways design received but still awaiting final design and costings from MKC. Clerk to contact BT Openreach for quote for burying cables.	Ongoing –
1.24	Restoration of the posts & chain in North Street . Last note: Clerk to liaise with handyman	ongoing
1.25	Restoration of benches in village (Shepperton Close, Chequers Cllr Markham has provided planks. Clerk to now liaise with handyman	ongoing
1.26	Diseased Horse Chestnut tree Fish Ponds: reported to environ svcs ref 8000687627. Assessment completed. 3 trees need urgent work. 1 x to be replaced. Not in any danger to public	ongoing
1.28	Write up of village walk received from MKC. Clerk to review and highlight matters arising no progress due to pressure of other work	ongoing
1.34	Arrange with handyman/Cllr Markham to fix guttering on bus shelter	ongoing
1.35	Amend Standing Orders: in the absence of the Clerk that any three Councillors may nominate a deputy to fill in where required to include the Clerk's emergency powers. To be included with other changes to Standing Orders when time allows.	ongoing
1.36	Still awaiting Philip Sawbridge's response re: production of 'virtual images' of the constructed turbine .	ongoing
1.41	Clerk to write on behalf of the Parish Council to support the new arrangements on 'Payments by Parish Councils & Community Trustees' - no progress as yet due to other work pressures	ongoing
1.43	Dog control issues raised by Cllr Ayles with lodged with Mike Brown/Auzra Flynn	ongoing
1.44	Cllr Keane to produce feature about support for carers for next newsletter and an article for the village web site	Carry forward until next newsletter
1.45	Clerk has received responses from MKC about drainage, landscaping, road width and on-going maintenance at Maltings Field development to be discussed at meeting 5/11	Discuss 5/11
1.51	<b>New</b> Clerk had written to MKC about the problems with the bus service to Hanslope school. MKC have now agreed to restore the service using minibuses but the contract will have to go out to fresh tender	To consider and close 5/11
1.53	<b>New</b> Clerk had asked Phil Homer to look at the bell tower and he had attended the Village Hall with the Clerk. The feedback was that it looks stable enough from the ground but there was no time/remaining light to go up a ladder as work on the back door took considerable time.	Discuss 5/11
1.56	<b>New</b> Awaiting final design and costs from MKC before engaging previous Clerk to complete WREN grant application. Other specific information has also been requested of Richard Duffield.	ongoing
1.57	<b>New</b> Clerk had obtained 2 quotes from local companies (plus one request for quote that was not responded to) for fire & equipment checks and had engaged MK Fire of Stony Stratford to do the work. Work completed and reports received still to be digested. Additionally resolution from 1/10 meeting only delegated engagement for this year. On-going contract to be considered although Clerk and H & S Officer would recommend using same company.	Discuss 5/11
1.58	<b>New</b> Cllr Markham will inspect the position re debris left on Fox Covert Lane before the 5/11 meeting	Discuss 5/11

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1.59	<b>New</b> Cllr Ayles to produce item for next newsletter about dog fouling in Castle Field and to include this in overall considerations	ongoing
<b>2. Actions closed this period</b>		
Action		
1.8	Pollards account opened – details of how to order communicated	closed
1.16	Balmoral bench has been delivered to Cllr Stacey	closed
1.22	Protective cages around trees in Castle Field – closed to agenda item 7.3. of CPC meeting 5/11/12	closed
1.29	State of cycle track path off of Wolverton Road to be raise as part of response to MKC re: consultation on cycle ways	closed
1.32	Cllr Hinds still awaiting MKC response about potential purchase of a Speed Indication Device and whether MKC are now managing the exercises	Closed as agreed at 1/10 meeting
1.42	Pest Controller has completed the work to remove moles from play area	closed
1.46	Thrupp Close hedge now cut back – was found to belong to Guinness Housing Management company	closed
1.49	Position of Carrington Arms covered in file note to be associated with .minutes for 5/11 meeting	closed
1.50	<b>New</b> Clerk has responded to MKC as per minutes of 1/10 meeting	closed
1.52	<b>New</b> Clerk had contacted Network Rail and they have now tidied up the railway footbridge and removed the worst of the graffiti. An order has been placed longer term to remove the remainder where specialist equipment is required.	closed
1.54	<b>New</b> Clerk had communicated the agreement on street names for the Maltings development. Manor Close was unacceptable to MKC so subsequently agreed 'Paddock Close' was agreed on and communicated.	closed
1.55	<b>New</b> Clerk had asked Phil Homer to look at the lock on the VH back door. The lock had been fitted badly and needed re-fitting which was authorised by the Clerk and done there and then, obviously at additional cost.	closed
1.59	<b>New</b> Clerk had circulated response from Network Rail re human excrement near footbridge	closed
1.60	<b>New</b> Clerk had gained agreement from MKC that the email saying that a cost effective estimate cannot be provided will be acceptable. Successful tender to be chosen in closed session 5/11	Closed to part 2 of 5/11 meet
1.61	<b>New</b> Clerk had included donation of £250 to senior citizens xmas meal fund on the agenda for 5/11.	closed
<b>ACTIVITIES/ITEMS OF NOTE</b>		
3.1.	Internal Auditor has resigned. Clerk to investigate replacement and put to Parish Council	To do
3.2.	Meeting held with Community Impact Bucks – information provided to allow them to scope and quote for the work to develop the Neighbourhood Plan	Awaiting CiB response
3.3.	Half year financial report and draft budget #1 to be produced as a matter of urgency	

## 2. Community Safety Forum 5th October 2012

I attended this Forum as a member of the Responsible Authorities Group representing MK Rural Parishes. The purpose of the Forum was for the Community Safety Partnership (or CSP aka SaferMK) to give a status update to its stakeholders (organisations such as Crimestoppers and victim support groups as well as parish and town councils) of the activities of the 'responsible authorities' (police, police authority, probation, Fire Service, MKC and NHS) particularly in the light of funding reductions and especially with the election of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) on 15th November. As a reminder, CSPs are statutory bodies mandated to address

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crime and anti-social behaviour problems which require several organisations to resolve. RAG has set its priorities as addressing Domestic Violence, Preventing Re-Offending, Promoting Social Behaviour, Preventing Public Place Violence and Preventing Violent Extremism. Nationally and in MK, CSPs are regarded as one of the causes of a significant reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour. MK is regarded as a national exemplar in a number of areas including its NAG organisation.

The format of the day was presentations in the morning and workshops in the afternoon to understand the needs of the stakeholders.

There was generally good news on the impact of funding reductions. TVP have achieved their funding targets by removing an organisational layer (the Basic Command Unit). This has resulted in some central functions being moved to Aylesbury rather than being in Milton Keynes but overall the number of officers and PCSOs has actually increased slightly despite the budget reduction. Furthermore, crime levels in MK have decreased by 13.5% which is remarkable. Similarly, the Fire Service, which has had to cope with a 25% reduction in the central government component of funding, has achieved this through removing organisational layers entirely through not replacing staff retiring or leaving at senior levels and they state that the speed to respond to incidents and number of appliances will not reduce. The only sour note is that the NHS is so focussed on its own re-organisation that they are not being represented at the CSP despite being a statutory member. The significance is a loss of co-ordination with other agencies in a number of areas such as Drugs and Alcohol or Domestic Abuse where the hospital is often the first port of call of victims.

Chris Williams from the LGA gave an excellent presentation on the new PCCs. The PCC will take office a week after the election and the police authority will simultaneously be abolished. Existing budgets will be transferred to the PCC to administer. In 2013/14, the PCC will have two funding blocks; for TVP itself and for third party organisations including the CSPs. However he will have total freedom to allocate the third party funding as he wishes. The final stage in 2014/15 will be when the PCC receives a single grant / precept and he can use it as he wishes for example diverting more or less funding to third party organisations.

Chris explained that the TVP area was the most complex police area in the country. Most other areas were based on historical counties and there was either a single CSP or the CSPs were amalgamating. However, Thames Valley consists of Bucks, Berks and Oxon as well as MK. It includes Slough and Reading as well as Bracknell and Oxford. It is so diverse that it is hard to see how the 18 CSPs could amalgamate without losing their local touch which is a major *raison d'etre*. The potential risk is that the CSPs will compete with each other for funds and the danger is that a PCC could become impatient with dealing with 18 CSPs and direct funding to an alternative third party who might not give MK the same priority as at present. The CSPs are well advanced with a single briefing document to give to the incoming PCC in November but there are significant reservations about the representation of MK in the document and, along with some other CSPs, MK is preparing its own supplementary document.

The outcome from the workshops is being written up. Main concerns seemed to be about funding (many of the stakeholders receive funding from the CSP), the issue of co-operation / competition between the TV CSPs, need to improve communication and the loss of knowledge when Richard Solly, who has headed the CSP since its creation in 1998, retires with unfortunate coincidence in November. He will be succeeded by Lee Westlake who is the head of the MK Youth Offending Service (YOTS) though he will also continue in YOTS.

The presentations and notes will be circulated in due course and I am happy to send them to anyone who wants a copy.

*Philip Ayles*

### **3. Code of Conduct Training 10th October 2012**

Attended by Cllr Philip Ayles

The training session was to clarify the obligations of Cllrs under the Localism Act which came into force with the adoption of a new code of conduct by parish and town councils, whether the MKC code or the NALC code, which had been each been adopted by about half the councils present. A new decision chart was distributed and is attached as are the slides used.

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There are now two types of interest replacing the previous prejudicial and personal interests; disclosable pecuniary interests and personal interests. The new definition of personal interests is different to the old definition as is the necessary action so care needs to be taken.

Disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI) are strictly defined by law and it is a criminal offence (punishable by a fine and/or disqualification) not to register DPI nor to keep them up to date. For example, if a Cllr declares a new DPI at the beginning of a meeting, then the Cllr must update the disclosure record within 28 days. This isn't hard but it is really important that Cllrs declare their DPI. DPIs will be available on the MKC website and it is recommended that parish websites link to the MKC website rather than posting their own copy - this avoids any synchronisation problems.

Personal interests can be very broad and the recommendation is to declare virtually any membership that might have a bearing on a matter being discussed by council. However, after declaring a personal interest, a Cllr may remain in the Council, debate and vote unless the Cllr judges that ***the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest.*** i.e the 'man on the Clapham omnibus' test. Note that it is the Cllr's own judgement on this so a member of the public taking an unreasonable stance would not have to be taken into account.

One of the examples related to a son of a Cllr owning property that is affected by a planning application. A DPI would only have to be declared if the land was owned by the Cllr or his partner so this is a personal interest but very likely to lead, in the reasonable view of a member of the public, to a conflict of interest.

If a conflict of interest arises either from a DPI or a personal interest, then the council has the option to grant a dispensation to allow the Cllr(s) to remain in the council, debate and vote. Typically, this would be when the council would otherwise not be quorate or, in a politicised council, if the political balance was upset. I specifically had this point clarified; it is the council not the officer who gives the dispensation though it would be good practice to delegate authority to dispense to the officer. I recommend we do this.

Specifically, the NAG and CVSA would be examples where a personal interest should be declared by up to 4 Cllrs but where the Clerk might consider a dispensation.

If there is a conflict of interest and no dispensation or the Cllr is pre-determined on the matter, then the Cllr should withdraw. (Cllrs are allowed to have a pre-disposition but not a pre-determination on matters before them.) There was a specific discussion about parishes where there were no suitable rooms into which the Cllr could withdraw and it was said that the Cllr could withdraw to the public gallery and the Minutes should record this. I recommend that we amend Standing Orders so that Cllrs withdraw to the public gallery as opposed to the previous Code of Conduct when they had to leave the room.

Incidentally, a Cllr may still speak from the public gallery providing this right is extended to other members of the public. However, this is covered for CPC by the Open Forum at the beginning of the meeting.

The Standards Board was abolished as statutory body and there is a new complaints procedure. Complaints are still made to the Monitoring Officer at MKC and MKC has created a local Standards Committee who can consider the complaint. However, the committee does not take sanctions itself but recommends sanctions to the parish council. The sanctions are much more limited and do not include suspension or disqualification. There is a full list in the slides.

Of course, Cllrs are still subject to criminal law (e.g. bribery, misconduct in a public office) and civil liabilities (e.g. defamation).

There was a short discussion about complaints and Freedom of Information (FoI). It should be noted that all emails, social networking sites and websites relating to the council's business are subject to FoI. Electronic or paper Information does not have to be retained indefinitely but, once an FoI request has been received, it is a criminal offence to delete it before the request has been answered. It was recommended that councils have a retention policy for documents and emails.

# CASTLETHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Parish Council General Meeting held on Monday 5/11/2012 7.30pm

### Actions:

- Link village website to MKC website for Cllr disclosures of pecuniary interests.
- Recommendation that the Council delegates authority to grant dispensations to the Clerk.
- Recommendation that Cllrs with a conflict of interest, whether DPI or personal, withdraw to the public gallery.
- Recommendation that CPC develops a document and email retention policy.

Philip Ayles

### 4. Broadband Update

- Following the meeting with BT on 1st August which was reported previously, an article was placed in the September 'Castlethorpe News' asking residents to send their postcodes and telephone numbers through to Jackie Palman to help BT to a mapping of Castlethorpe addresses to the 3 exchanges which serve us being Hanslope, Wolverton and Yardley Gobion. By mid-October, Jackie had received about 60 responses which we have now forwarded to BT through the broadband co-ordinator at MKC, Martyn Smith.
- BT is currently rolling out superfast broadband in urban MK where a commercial case exists. For the rural areas, where it is not commercially viable, a government fund, Broadband UK (BDUK), makes grants available though the EU has to be satisfied that the grants won't distort competition especially as BT is usually the only provider who expresses interest. This approval is expected in early November.
- Martyn Smith has advised that the BDUK procurement now looks like starting in January 2013 and MKC is now putting together the Invitation to Tender.
- It is likely that the rural areas will get superfast broadband by about 2017 in any case. Our objective is to try and ensure that Hanslope exchange is near the top of the list which hopefully will start implementation in early 2014.

Philip Ayles

### 5. HPCAF 25th October 2012

Castlethorpe representatives; Cllrs Sweetland and Ayles

- **Grass cutting.** Rob Ward said that Neighbourhood Management had received numerous complaints across the Borough about grass cutting. The root causes were (a) that early season cuts were lost because of the bad weather which put the programme behind and (b) that a rigid 3 weekly cut doesn't take account of different growing patterns due to the weather. MKC are intending to put this service out to contract (with a more flexible criteria) but this would not be in place until 2014 so we will have 2013 on the same 3 week cycle. I said that I had received complaints from residents about the quality of cuts and others complained about cuttings being left in the road and on the path. Rob said it was important that problems were reported to Environmental Services (see below).
- **Highways Update.** John Pryor, the new Assistant Director, Transport, had been invited to attend but had a previous business commitment but would attend the next HPCAF meeting in January. There is also a new Head of Service, Highways, Rachael Kingsley, who was also unable to attend but she had sent a note describing a new process to allow parish councils to submit requests for Highways schemes annually in August as well as in-year urgent requests.

There was quite a long discussion on verge parking in Hanslope and Haversham and the need for MKC Enforcement to take action when the verges are damaged by vehicles.

# CASTLETHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

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Rob Ward circulated a copy of the Castlethorpe Highways Issues list as extracted from the Environmental Services database. This is different to the lists we have been maintaining with Neighbourhood Management for the past few years. Rob asked that Clerks review the list (which should have been sent electronically to Clerks) and work with Heather Baker to amend the lists. The list will need a fair amount of work e.g. one item is actually for Station Road in Bow Brickhill. **Action: Steve Bradbury**

Rob said that there was a disconnect between the online fault reporting system and the Environmental Services database. This was expected to be resolved with a new customer communications system early in 2013. For the time being, **all faults should be reported by email to [envservices@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:envservices@milton-keynes.gov.uk).**

- **Other Updates**

- Devil's Dips Flood Works. These are being delayed by negotiations with one of the affected landowners.
- Haversham bridge. Due to structural works on the flood relief gullies, **traffic controls will be in use on the bridge from May to September 2013**. We will need to advise our residents nearer the time.
- A508 junction improvement. The scheme is now with Andrew Geary to negotiate with Northants CC through the joint highways forum.
- 2013 dates published as 31 Jan (Hanslope), 24 April (Haversham), 18 July (Castlethorpe), 24 October (Hanslope), 29 January 2014 (Haversham)

Philip Ayles