

Minutes

Parishes Forum

17th September 2020

19.00 –21.20hrs

Via Zoom

In Attendance

Cllr Emily Darlington	Chair and Cabinet Member
Cllr Sue Smith	Vice Chair
Andrea Jones - Clerk	Astwood & Hardmead PC
Delia Shepard – Clerk	Bletchley & Fenny Stratford TC
Cllr Ed Hume	Bletchley & Fenny Stratford TC
Cllr Janes Alexander	Bradwell PC
Cllr David Monk	Broughton & Milton Keynes PC
Vicky Mote - Clerk	Broughton & Milton Keynes PC
Cllr Terry Baines	Campbell Park PC & Ward Cllr
Cllr Tubo Uranta	Campbell Park PC
Cllr Crispina Odunewu	Campbell Park PC
Cllr Phil Ayles	Castlethorpe PC
Cllr John Keane	Castlethorpe PC
Cllr Rebecca Kurth	CMK TC
Cllr Len Greenwood	Clifton Reynes & Newton Blossomville PC
Robin Thomson	Gayhurst PM
Cllr Peter Widdowson	Great Linford PC
Eirwen Tagg - Clerk	Great Linford PC
Gill Merryman - Clerk	Hanslope PC
Cllr Carol Langham	Haversham- cum Little Linford PC
Cllr Paul Grindley	Kents Hill & Monkston PC
Abi Bassett - Clerk	Kents Hill & Monkston PC
Cllr Steve Axtell	Lavendon PC
Cllr Ann Kelcey	Lavendon PC
Cllr Peter Todd	Loughton & Great Holm PC
Cllr John Hamilton	Moulsoe PC
Cllr Alan Francis	New Bradwell PC
Cllr Phil Winsor	Newport Pagnell TC
Cllr Sue Garner	North Crawley PC
Sheila Bushnell -Clerk	North Crawley PC
Cllr Mary Major	Old Woughton PC

Cllr Helen Anderson	Ravenstone PC
Cllr Michael Cato	Shenley Brook End & Tattenhoe PC
Cllr Steve Weller	Shenley Church End PC
Cllr David Pye	Simpson & Ashland PC
Cllr Peter Kirkham	Stantonbury PC
Cllr Chris Letts	Stoke Goldington PC
Lynne Compton – Clerk	Stony Stratford TC
Cllr Amanda Taylor	Walton Community Council
Cllr David Hopkins	Wavendon PC & Ward Cllr
Cllr Veronica Belcher	West Bletchley Council
Cllr Ernie Thomas	West Bletchley Council
Cllr Brian Stainton	Weston Underwood
Cllr Hilary Saunders	Wolverton & Greenleys TC
Cllr Victoria Bamisile	Wolverton & Greenleys TC
Steve McNay - Clerk	Woughton Community Council
Cllr Janette Bobey	Woughton Community Council
Cllr Donna Fuller	Woughton Community Council
Officers	
Sarah Gonsalves	Director of Policy, Insight and Communications
Kay Pettit	Programme Manager – Parish & Town Councils
Heather Baker	MKC Partnership Officer – Parish & Town Councils
Apologies	
Cllr Adan Karim	Campbell Park PC
Cllr Simon Webb	Fairfields PC
Cllr Ian Hunt	Fairfields PC
Cllr David Stabler	Great Linford PC
Cllr Malcolm Messenger	Olney TC
Cllr Chris Williams	Shenley Brook End & Tattenhoe PC
Cllr Mark Covington	Weston Underwood PC
Cllr Eileen Tate	Whitehouse CC
Cllr Howard Turner	Whitehouse CC

Unfortunately, as we were using Zoom, I may not have all the names of those in attendance. If I have missed you off, please accept my apologies and let me know, so that I can add you to the attendee list. Thank you – Heather Baker.

2	Minutes from last meeting	Action
	Minutes from the 23 rd July 2020 meeting were agreed	
3	Covid 19 Information and Update	
	<p>We want to make sure everyone has up to date information and overview of Covid in Milton Keynes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rate but are seeing an increase, Government looking at intervention. There are 2 Pillars. Pillar 2 is normal (transmissions) whereas Pillar 1 is hospitalisation. We have 30 cases of Pillar 2 (6-12 September) – previous week was 38 Latest cases in Pillar 1 is 1 – 	

	<p>previous week was 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marked increase equalling to across the country • No Pattern in MK – outbreaks in households, no particular community, no particular area – whole range of areas and households. • Schools affected – 6 schools with cases and 3 with outbreaks (an ‘outbreak’ is 2 or more cases) • Mixture of staff and students, no particular area. Managed outbreaks - bubble system is working well. • Communities and work positive – responded very well Increasingly more and more is being pushed onto Local Authorities. In a transition period, Public Health England usually deal with schools and care homes, seeing more passed on. • Cases we know about more information is coming through, but we don’t know everything. • Analysis is Ward based – no particular Ward is higher than another hoping to share information – no particular pattern - there is an even distribution. 	
	<p>Q. Is it possible for data at parish level? It would be helpful to overcome lockdown fatigue?</p> <p>A. In terms of parish data, the advice from Public Health is that we are unable to publish parish level data. Ward data is currently published; i.e. the number of cases per ward per week when the number of cases exceeds three.</p> <p>Further Note: The reason for this is a diagnosis of Covid-19 is part of somebody’s medical data and as such is treated as ‘highly sensitive’ information. There is extensive national guidance about how health data can be made public. All the health data that councils handle carries conditions restricting its wider publication in any form that may compromise people's privacy. Essentially, where the population is small and/or there are low numbers of cases, even if the data is aggregated (e.g. 'There were two cases in this parish in the last fortnight'), there is a risk others could cross-reference several data sources and potentially re-identify who the cases are. This potential re-identification would compromise a case's privacy and may cause harm. As such publishing case number data for areas with small populations, such as parishes, is not appropriate. In order to protect patient privacy, where data is published publicly (e.g. the weekly Covid-19 Snapshot provided for each local authority), cases are aggregated by ward and reported only where at least three cases occur.</p> <p>Keep pushing out messages and key messages, don’t want to put out anything that would stray from this</p> <p>Q. Pete Marland has talked about walk in centres?</p> <p>A. Regional test centre – lots of work to establish 2 extra drive throughs- waiting to be actioned by Secretary of State. Hoping to do something with regional power shortly; we have sufficient capacity but not to process results – this is an ongoing issue and we are lobbying as much as we can</p>	

	<p>Q. Is there anything else you need from Parish Councils? A. We have a few things established i.e. communication channels, it's about consistency of messages, it is confusing about what you can and cannot do, there is lots of information that is not accurate.</p> <p>Q. Re the schools, could you be able to say whether cases are north or south? A. All over, it will become apparent over the next few days - affected all geographical areas no pattern. To give assurance in schools it's not just pupils but also staff.</p> <p>Q. Covid fatigue message is vital hope you trust parish councils and Ward Councillors.? A. The information is beginning to trickle through and would like to share how we do this- more of interest nothing sticks out re locality. Tried looking at deprivation – no link, its spread evenly over MK. We will be sharing. If there had been an issue in any area, we would have informed you</p> <p>Q. Really helpful if MKC uses parishes to put messages to communicate. Parishes would be supportive. A. Many thanks for that. We will be running campaigns on social media channels 80,000 people have signed up and 40,000 on E-Gov alerts. If we sent everything to parish councils you may find that it is too much i.e. Information on what's happening, don't want to bombard you. Cllr ED and SG will think about this Cllr D Pye informed the forum that data legislation did change to enable LA to share. It's those that are vulnerable – to be able to give better support. He was told it was a resource issue; it's a more localised challenge. He will forward latest guidance to SG.</p> <p>Q. E-Gov alerts what are these? A. These are alerts with all of the latest MKC News and information. . You can sign up on MKC website in the pop-up box where it asks for your details. https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/ KP sent out an original email about this on 28.7.20 to all parish clerks. Further emails sent by KP on 21.9.20 and further one on 22.9.20</p>	
	<p>Testing / accessing capacity has been challenging – we are quite low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test and trace – we are part of a pilot – starting to contact people-national try once then it comes to us. • Parish and town councils can help – training involved / risk assessments needed and need PPE • People need to self-isolate – some are not doing as they should. • Not very good success rate up to now • Waiting for national team to start pushing numbers through 	
	<p>Outbreak Prevention Plan – how we respond to Covid Lots of support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide PPE 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up Faith groups which meet every Wednesday • Afternoon of action – distribution 3,000 face mask targeting over 50's • Feel - seeing less over 50's around • 400 questionnaires • Set up email – email concerns for areas and members of public – 300 queries received so far - all are replied to • Email covidconcern@milton-keynes.gov.uk <p>Financial Position has not improved - if anything its worse – uncertainty has risen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • radical decisions • Council tax collection rates reducing as are business rates collection rates • Empty premises affect business rates • Parking reduction – £7m deficit with no plans for full staff levels to return at many businesses / employers • Unlikely that parking income will ever recover • Significant home working / people not driving and parking • Spending review at Government -will not find out until end of November so will not know what MKC allocation will be. We need to know before the budget is worked out. • Public Realm and Adult Services - everything is on the table at the moment 	
	<p>Q. What is happening to money from Central Government for Parishes A. What is said is not reality. There is a pot of money that we are waiting for - £112m to support business / leisure; have tried to pass on what we can to Parishes who have leisure facilities. We are still waiting for guidance – trying to pass on what we can – struggling at moment as guidance has not come through.</p> <p>LGA commented that where money is coming through, it is nowhere near enough and is a huge challenge for councils especially after having 10 years of austerity. At a national level it is a really dire situation and aware it is affecting all parish councils.</p> <p>Need to let the public know about finances and where we are at, explaining impact on council tax, etc; we are in recession, uncertainty about Brexit and what will happen there, triple whammy of business in lockdown creating uncomfortable things for residents. Expecting pandemic to be with us for 18/24 months</p> <p>Furlough scheme – 1/3 of the employed workforce in MK have been furloughed – scheme due to end in October - we have no idea how many will be back in work – uncharted territory, high unemployment rate in MK higher than the national rate. We are focusing on people most affected – mostly young people.</p>	

	<p>Partnerships with MK College, education and training 12-month programme, MK business supported and SME's. How we are going to get out of recession— opportunities to innovate, creating green jobs – looking at climate change and biodiversity has not gone away.</p> <p>Looking at building council homes – creating apprenticeships in this industry We may have to do more next year. More severe recession than ever. Older people support to start businesses and for people who have never been unemployed before. Seeing more '50 plus' people losing their jobs. We have made £3m in year cuts so we could divert money into recovery / economic plan - many dealing with the consequences.</p> <p>https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/covid-19-in-milton-keynes</p>	
	<p>Q. Bus services for rural areas - if there is going to be a reduction could officers please engage with parishes</p> <p>A. Absolutely - there is a Delegated Decision on subsidised transport in next few weeks which we are doing well ahead of time. Some are completely commercial, some subsidised - there will be discussions with parishes.</p>	
4	Local Council Showcase (Covid 19 response)	
	<p>Woughton CC</p> <p>Cllr Donna Fuller gave presentation – see attached</p> <p>They had serious flooding 10 years ago which highlighted the fact that they were not prepared for issues, in terms of continuing with their business (e.g. IT and infrastructure). They responded to this, and when Covid struck and they had the infrastructure in place to continue delivering services.</p> <p>They are now giving out tonnes of food each month in the community fridge which is becoming a vital service for some residents in Woughton</p>	
	<p>West Bletchley Council</p> <p>Cllr Veronica Belcher gave details about what had been happening in West Bletchley. West Bletchley has done not a dissimilar procedure to Woughton CC. We closed the offices although the clerk has been at the office every day speaking to people through the window. People in need could access a computer to be able to access services. There is a 5 day a week foodbank need of which is increasing, shopping for people and collecting medicine, advice and signposting, telephone befriending at least 70 residents and providing support. Plans going forward - community fridge is a priority, social isolation, mental health problems etc. In longer term plan more employed, home schooling not always easy for some without IT. Proud of volunteers helping out and working flat out, numbers in need are increasing.</p> <p>Going to look seriously at change of direction on long term plans to try to protect our population, need to review what we were going to do and to protect services.</p>	
	<p>Simpson and Ashland Parish Council</p> <p>Cllr David Pye gave details of what had been happening in Simpson and Ashland. We are a small parish almost rural parish in an urban area with no shops and generally an older and vulnerable population. Unfortunately, we</p>	

	<p>had to close the village hall, but we have lots of green space which is managed by us. We got information from MKC and Community Action etc. and lots of people like events that are being undertaken on open space where possible. One of our councillors started a tai chi class twice a week practicing social distancing and whilst doing this one day, a tea/coffee van went past which we hijacked! Now every Thursday and Saturday the coffee van comes along, and people come out and have a coffee and chat which has grown as time goes on and grown organically. People started bringing plants and other things and things have grown from there, but we as a parish have been able to engage and give out information and talk to them about things like planning, etc. We are now thinking of doing a 'slow walk' suitable for our residents, some of whom have mobility scooters etc. It may be very small in comparison to the likes of Woughton but it is something to get residents out and about and engaging.</p>	
	<p>All parishes are doing things that reflect your parish council and meets the needs of your community. Each continue to look at how parishes can adapt and evolve.</p>	
	<p>Q. To what extent have ethnic communities been involved? A. Cllr D Fuller Woughton found they had to work harder with the diverse community. BME communities are very self-sufficient and the council is working hard to include these, they are working with the Temple to try and encourage them. You are not alone trying to get them involved. She advised that parishes are not alone in the challenges of getting some community sectors involved.</p> <p>In Tattenhoe there is an Asian based group linked to Ward Cllrs and PC to reach out and they also work with the armed forces. CPPC (Cllr Baines) said it is very hard to get some parts of the community involved and gave one inspiring example of how someone got in touch with him who was trying to sell fruit in an area and asked for help. Cllr Baines is now involved and advised that, these communities will eventually come out and engage if you keep trying.</p> <p>There are some challenges there and we may look at this, at another Parishes Forum</p>	
5	Good News and Hot Issues	
	<p>Together We Can Everyone should have a revised draft copy which was sent out on the 1st September.</p> <p>A previous version was consulted on in December last year, the consultation of which ran over a few months. There was a workshop the March 2020 Parishes Forum and feedback was incorporated into the document, and then taken back to PAG for further comment and discussion</p> <p>The latest version is now on a 6 week consultation due to close on 14th October although parishes have a problem meeting this deadline, please let</p>	

	KP know	
	<p>Q. Just a minor point – it does not include Parish Meetings could you please include us also?</p> <p>Comment - At the clerks meeting the CEO Michael Bracey was there and Eirwen Tagg felt disappointed as he didn't seem to be leading on Together We Can. If its not coming from the top how are we going to work together Cllr ED will take back and discuss further SG and KP. Sarah and Kay are working hard on this and recognise that CLT are focused on budgets and Covid etc. Internally there have been discussions from the CEO down and this is transforming the way we are working with our partners.</p> <p>All know that Kay is the champion and ambassador for MKC; recognise that this alone is not the perfect solution but she is there to support. As Cabinet member, Cllr ED is leading many colleagues working with parishes – KP is keeping everyone involved. It's about getting the balance right - the CEO is really interested in working with you.</p> <p>Comment – Many officers do not understand parish councils. Lessons were learnt from the Armed Forces work. We must have buy in from every level of MKC and change of culture – hopefully there is more communication taking place.</p> <p>Ernie Thomas took part in the development of the previous Parish Protocol and thinks it's Deja Vu. One of the things in a relationship is to keep talking, trying to get away from 'us and you', we are trying to communicate and collaborate - it's a 2-way street.</p> <p>Vicky Mote (Broughton and MK Village PC) has seen great improvements and a change in the right direction. Together We Can (in terms of Ward Cllrs) is not as good as it could be / not getting open feedback or working with them.</p> <p>Interesting point - appreciate Ward Cllrs are all different some work with parishes and some don't work as well. There are ward councillor representatives from all 3 parties on the PAG and Cllr ED will take this back. Cllr Baines is a Ward Cllr, has 4 parishes in his ward and tries to communicate with all but it's not always easy and can be difficult to manage. Hopefully things will change across the piece but note that sometimes meetings clash – note that every Ward is different.</p> <p>It's all about relationships and without them,, partnership working is extremely difficult.</p> <p>Phil Ayles did some presentations to new officers (mainly heads of service). This now seems to have stopped but the discipline of parish training is good. KP advised that there has not been a great turnover of heads of service in recent times. Anyone new that starts (that is a strategic lead / head of service) she gets a slot in their diaries to talk to them.</p>	

	<p>Parish Advisory Group</p> <p>There has been discussion on the makeup of the PAG in terms of it needing to be more inclusive and to be a more representative. We are struggling to fill vacancies and want to encourage BME and women to come along and observe / find out more. PAG members are available for conversations / discussions about the role on the PAG. Information about the PAG was issued to all P&TC's in the lead up to this Parishes Forum</p> <p>Really important that small parishes are represented as other parishes who are on the PAG are massive. As a PAG member, you will encourage and engage with officers and get to discuss what is really important; discussions are not always easy; its about changing relationships. We want the PAG to be representative of MK and Cllr ED wants to encourage people to join us. Please let us know if you are interested. You know where we are.</p>	
	<p>National Planning Changes</p> <p>There are concerns with the proposed planning changes.</p> <p>MKALC has information – Cllr P Ayles has put together his response for his Parish – Castlethorpe and will share this with MKALC; he is happy for them to circulate. There will sure to be much discussion and comment in respect of how local plans are done and s106. Also extend permitted development rights – will result in neighbourly disputes. There has been a discussion at PAG in terms of how MKC responds. We have spoken to planning colleagues and unfortunately don't have time to consult with all parishes about the MKC response, given the complexity and internal communications needed with technical experts and officers</p> <p>We can look to jointly writing a letter covering some of the broad things and the uniqueness of MK, which can be sent to the two MP's and Minister..</p> <p>There are</p> <p>2 consultations - one on permitted development rights the other on the white paper which is very concerning. Cllr P Ayles has recorded in his response (for Castlethorpe PC) that where local Planning Authority it is reasonable for plans to stay in force for the time being. Zoning stage then things go through without resident's participation. Would like MKC Plan to stay in place</p> <p>MKALC is meeting on 30th September where there will be a long discussion and there is a hope that as many parishes as possible attend.</p> <p>There is very little time and efforts are being made to draft something and share with all parishes.</p> <p>Rushing this legislation / changes through will have serious consequences for MK</p> <p>There is a planning meeting on U Tube channel if you wish to take a look.</p>	
	<p>AOB</p> <p>Parishes Forum has a new format – parishes sharing etc. If you have</p>	

<p>suggestions on how to improve the agenda going forward, please get in touch</p> <p>CPPC doing a conference in March at the Oldbrook Centre on everything Policing – drugs gangs, crime etc. Everyone will be sent an invite along with Ward Cllrs and officers. We are inviting Kit Malthouse and Priti Patel and hopefully opposition members. Watch this space.</p> <p>Thank you all for all attending once again we have good attendance to the meeting. The next meeting will likely be online once again.</p>	
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Dates of future meetings

- 10th December 2020 - Online
- 18th March 2021

Further suggested dates

- 17th June 2021
- 16th September 2021
- 9th December 2021
- 17th March 2022