

LITTLE BRICKHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 07 April 2025 at 7.45pm in the Community Centre, Little Brickhill, Milton Keynes.

Present:

Cllr D Lewis - Chair
 Cllr K Morgan
 Cllr E Priestley
 Cllr L Walker
 Cllr D Hopkins (Ward Councillor)
 Cllr T Bailey (Ward Councillor)
 A Kemp (Parish Clerk)

In attendance:

E Morgan (Resident)
 R D'Souza (Resident)
 S Warne (Resident)
 J Hannah (Resident)
 S Flowerdew (Resident)
 N Baker (Resident)
 R Avery (Resident)
 S Avery (Resident)
 D Priestley (Resident)
 G Bailey (Resident)
 C Till (Resident)

<p>1. Apologies for Absence:</p> <p>Ward Cllr V Hopkins.</p>	
<p>2. Public Open Session:</p> <p>2.1 – Roundacre Field - Residents attended the meeting to ask for an update on ongoing discussions regarding the future of this facility. <u>For a record of discussion see notes in minute reference 11.</u></p> <p>2.2 – Woburn Road – Residents attended the meeting to ask for an update on installing a barrier to try and reduce anti-social behaviour. <u>For a record of discussion see notes in minute reference 5.10.</u></p>	
<p>3. Declaration of Interest:</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>4. Approval of the Minutes of Meeting held on 3 March 2025: 3545</p> <p>Minutes signed and approved.</p>	
<p>5. Progress on matters from last Minutes: 3546</p> <p>5.0 – Parish Council Vacancy.</p> <p>Three people have expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council.</p> <p><u>Carried forward to the next Parish Council meeting.</u></p> <p>5.1 - (item 2.3 of minutes 06/03/23) - Street Lighting – A resident asked if consideration could be given to installing some more street lighting on Watling Street near the George / Community Centre.</p> <p><u>It was noted that MKCC Streetlighting team will be installing a new streetlight on this road later in the year. No Change.</u></p> <p>5.2 - (item 2.2 of minutes 26/06/23) - Old playground in Wyness Avenue. It was noted that some tree work had been completed on the 4 November 2024, however residents are concerned that not enough work was completed and that a crown uplift should be completed.</p> <p>This has now been completed by MKCC. <u>Item closed.</u></p>	

5.3 - (item 8.8 of minutes 26/06/23) – Pavement on Great Brickhill Lane from the flats to the entrance of Wyness Avenue requires a safety check / repair by MKCC. Clerk has reported this again to MKCC on the 28 February 2025 under reference number FS691615500.

The following response was received from MKCC on the 25 March 2025.

- Thanks for letting us know about an issue on the highway. We have carried out an investigation into this issue and made an assessment, and this does not currently meet our criteria for a repair, so we will not be taking any immediate action. If possible, we will try to include a repair in a future programme of works. We carry out regular inspections across the network and if this issue gets worse, we will pick it up in this process. If you notice the issue worsen in the meantime, please let us know. If you would like to know more about our Codes of Practice, inspections and decision-making process, visit the Highways section on the MKCC website.

5.4 - (item 2.3 of minutes 03/06/24) - Pot hole on Great Brickhill Lane. There is an enormous pothole on the Great Brickhill lane adjacent to Springfield Farm entrance. MKCC assessed this issue on the 17 September 2024 as a **MEDIUM** risk and plan a repair over the next few weeks usually within 28-90 days depending on the road type and volume of traffic.

Update provided to Cllr D Hopkins on the 20 March 2025 from MKCC confirming that an emergency repair was completed on the 17 September 2024. Clerk was asked to report this issue again to MKCC.

Clerk

5.5 - (item 6.1 of minutes 03/06/24) - Recommendation from BALC received 10/04/24 for moving to Gov.UK Domains for websites and Email for better security.

Our web provider has completed the changeover for the Clerk and Website. Clerk will now request new email addresses to be created for Parish Councillors.

Clerk

5.6 – (item 15.2 of minutes 04/11/24) – Coals Charity – Cllr K Morgan asked if an article could be included in the current edition of the newsletter advising how residents can access some help with fuel bills this winter. Cllr K Morgan stated that he was disappointed with the Newsletter article as he thought that it would not encourage residents to enquire about a grant. He asked if a meeting of the Trustees of the Charity could be arranged. It was noted that the Parish Council Chair had email the Clerk for the Charity on the 2 December 2024 to request for a meeting of trustees to be held as quickly as possible.

Parish Clerk has contacted the Clerk for the Charity again requesting confirmation that a date for a meeting of the trustees had been arranged and received a reply stating that the Charity was waiting for the Chair to convene a meeting. No change.

5.7 – (item 14.4 of minutes 02/12/24) – Village organisations – It was felt that as we have several groups in the village that we should understand and publicise when each group meet, and the objectives are.

- Parish Council
- Community Centre Committee
- Residents Association
- Allotments?
- Church
- Friendship Group
- Open Gardens (every two years)
- Others?

Further work to complete this task is required by the Clerk. No change.

5.8 - (item **2.1** of minutes 03/03/25) – A Resident raised a concern with a pothole at the Watling Street / Great Brickhill junction and asked if the Parish Council would report this to MKCC for inspection / repair. Clerk has reported this to MKCC under reference number FS691216447.

The following response was received from MKCC on the 3 March 2025.

- Not investigatory level. Our highways inspector has checked the defect you reported to us and assessed it based on our criteria that categorises defects into low, medium or high risk. Those assessed as high risk will usually be repaired between 2 -24 hours depending on the severity. Medium level defects will be planned in for repairs from 28-90 days depending on the road type and volume of traffic. Defects classed as Low risk are unlikely to be repaired unless they get worse, and we will monitor them. The defect you reported has been assessed as LOW.

Clerk to monitor and report this issue again in April / May 2025.

Clerk

5.9 – (item **2.3** of minutes 03/03/25) – A resident advised that some branches on some of the trees on Watsons Field had been damaged and asked the Parish Council to investigate.

The tree is in conflict / obstructing a streetlight and the cost to complete some pruning will be £140.00 + VAT. Clerk was given authorisation to proceed at the Parish Council meeting. Following approval Clerk will now have to seek approval from MKCC as we are in a conservation area.

Clerk

5.10 – (item **2.4** of minutes 03/03/25) – A resident advised that there is still evidence of anti-social behaviour taking place on Woburn Road and asked that the Parish Council contact MKCC for help and suggestions on how to resolve this issue.

Following the Parish Council meeting on the 3 February 2025, Ward Cllr D Hopkins contacted the MKCC Environmental Crime Managers and received the reply below:

- We will continue to monitor the fly tipping and will investigate any that takes place. To date there are no reports and no clearances that I am aware of. If residents do experience fly tipping, they should report it us on line.

Clerk has contacted MKCC (Highways Team) to ask for consideration and funding of installing a barrier to deter anti-social behaviour and recent confirmation that there are no funds available from MKCC.

Should the Parish Council have funds available to install a barrier a formal request for approval must be submitted to MKCC asking for the necessary permissions. A typical cost for supply and installation is £2,668.78 + VAT. Clerk provided a barrier example at the Parish Council meeting.

It was agreed to review this at a future Parish Council meeting to allow the Clerk review the financial position following the year end position.

Clerk

5.11 – (item **6.2** of minutes 03/03/25) – Email received 23/01/25 from **MKCC** advising of a **Community Governance Review taking place from Thursday 23 January 2025 to Friday 28 March 2025.** Following discussion, it was suggested that we should ask for consideration to increase the number of Councillors to six for Little Brickhill Parish Council.

Clerk confirmed that he had responded to this consultation. Item closed.

5.12 – (item **14.1** of minutes 03/03/25) – **Parking in High View, Little Brickhill – Cllr E Priestley has received the following request from resident.**

It was noted that an MKCC (Housing Officer) and Clerk met the resident to discuss the above on the 11 February 2025. The Housing Officer has now confirmed that Neighbourhood Services cannot police the parking area on High View, so this remains an area for all residents to use.

It was agreed that nothing more could be achieved. Item closed.

<p>5.13 – (item 14.2 of minutes 03/03/25) – Parking Issue – It was noted that there is an issue with cars damaging the grass verge outside the apartments. <u>Clerk asked the MKCC Housing Officer on the 11 February 2025 who agreed to investigate this issue.</u></p> <p>MKCC have sent a letter to all occupants in relation to parking on the grass verge. Most of the tenants are Leaseholders, so once I can establish what number is parking there, I can look at which service area can take action.</p> <p>It was noted that the situation had improved. <u>Item closed.</u></p> <p>5.14 – (item 7.5 of minutes 03/03/25) – CPR Training – Clerk confirmed that 6 residents have now expressed an interest in attending a training event.</p> <p><u>South Central Ambulance Service have confirmed that the necessary training equipment will be available and the date for the training was confirmed for the 16 April 2025 commencing 16 April 2025.</u></p> <p>5.15 - (item 7.6 of minutes 03/03/25) – Hall Honour Boards displayed in the Community Centre – These require updating.</p> <p><u>Clerk has contacted the contractor, and they still have the art work from when the boards were update last time. When we are ready to have the boards updated, they can provide a quotation.</u></p> <p>5.16 – (item 7.7 of minutes 03/03/25) – School Sign on Great Brickhill Lane.</p> <p>This has now been permanently removed by MKCC. <u>Item closed.</u></p> <p>5.17 – (item 7.8 of minutes 03/03/25) – Watling Street – Clerk has reported to MKCC (02/02/25 that as you exit the Village from Fox Farm Road to the A5 northbound on Watling Street in Little Brickhill that the pavements on both sides of the road are covered in moss and asking for them to be cleaned. <u>Clerk confirmed that he had reported this again to MKCC under reference number MKCC691213300.</u></p> <p>MKCC have now completed this request. <u>Item closed.</u></p> <p>5.18 – (item 2.1 of minutes 03/03/25) – Clerk reported that he had received an email from a resident advising of a Water leak he saw in the road by Fox Hills Farm Road and reported to Anglian Water, who fixed it quickly. The flushing of pipes seems to have caused some discolouration of the drinking water for some houses. Anglian Water reported to say the blockage in the sewer was caused partly by lots of water wipes being flushed down toilets.</p> <p>Clerk confirmed that he had contacted Anglian Water, but they did not have any marketing materials on this type of incident. He has however included this in the latest issue of the letter. <u>Item closed.</u></p>	
<p>6. Correspondence: 3547</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>7. Clerks Report / Local Issues: 3548</p> <p>7.1 – Newsletter – Next Edition planned for the end of July 2025. <u>Clerk will ask for content by the June 2025.</u></p> <p>7.2 – Procedures / Policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Policy – <u>Still to be completed by the Clerk.</u> • Standing Orders – A revised version has been issued by NALC to reflect procurement changes. <u>Clerk to update.</u> 	Clerk

<p>5.3 – Damaged Metal Cover – Clerk confirmed that he had reported a damaged manhole cover outside the flats on Great Brickhill Lane to MKCC under reference number FS697706616 on the 26 March 2025 and received the following response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue you have reported is for a utility company to investigate and carry out any necessary repairs. Our Street works team will notify them of the problem. <p>5.4 – Grass verge between Watsons Field and the Church – Clerk advised that as this is overgrown and not being maintained by MKCC that he had reported this on the 28 March 2025 under reference number MKCC700561356.</p> <p>5.5 – Issues following Risk Assessment Review / Maintenance Review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhanging Tree at Roundacre Field - <i>Clerk confirmed that Tree Contractor had inspected the tree and will provide a quotation this month.</i> • Bus Shelter needs a repair and could do with re-staining. <u>See note below.</u> • The three benches on Watsons Field require staining. <u>See note below.</u> • There is an old bench in Wyness Avenue that could do with replacing. <u>See note below.</u> • Watsons Field Boundary Fence - Minor damage to be repaired. <u>See note below.</u> • Highway issues – <i>To be monitored monthly.</i> • Wall north of the Clock house – <i>Clerk has again reported this to Woburn Estates.</i> • <i>Bushes and old bench on Wyness Avenue.</i> <p>Note – The handyperson that the Community Centre Committee use is now not available. <i>Clerk to find an alternative contractor.</i></p> <p>5.6 – Football Parking – Clerk has contacted the football club to raise concerns that users are not parking in the agreed location who attend football matches. The football club have agreed to display a sign ‘FOOTBALL PARKING THIS WAY’ and display some traffic no-parking cones.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>8. Unitary Councillors’ Report: 3549</p> <p>A copy of the Ward Councillor’s reports to Little Brickhill Parish Council for April 2025 are available to view on the Parish Council website and are appended to these minutes.</p> <p>Cllr T Bailey advised that she continues to ask MKCC (Highways Team) if they have received any updates from National Highways England on the A5 slip road planned safely improvements. It was also mentioned that new Government figures show that Milton Keynes has the biggest rise in recycling rates of any place in England, leapfrogging dozens of other areas to become one of the country’s greenest recycling cities. Milton Keynes is now one of the top recyclers, rising an incredible 76 places in the rankings from 83 to 7.</p>	
<p>9. Planning: 3550</p> <p>9.1 - PLN/2025/0458 – The removal of a Conifer at Fir Tree Cottage, Watling Street, Little Brickhill.</p> <p><i>No issues were raised.</i></p> <p>9.2 – PLN/2025/0533 – The removal to ground level of Portuguese Laurel (T1) and Ash tree (T2), and reduction all round by 7m of Sycamore tree (T3) at The Old Rectory, Woburn Road, Little Brickhill.</p> <p><i>No issues were raised.</i></p> <p>9.3 – PLN/2025/2565 – To remove existing chain link fence and replace with approx. 1.3m wooden post and rail fence at 18 Great Brickhill Lane, Little Brickhill.</p> <p><i>No issues were raised.</i></p>	

10. To discuss any Highway issues: 3551

10.1 - Clerk confirmed that he notified MKCC of our priorities on the 21 March 2025 and received confirmation from them on the 2 April 2025 that they have a new starter starting within the next couple of weeks who will be leading this project and will get in touch with you soon about your list.

- **New LADS sign - PRIORITY 1** - Proposed change: signage to state, 'Access to village centre and Great Brickhill only STRAIGHT ON' and 'Woburn, Milton Keynes and all other routes TURN RIGHT.'
- **Visibility issue as you exit Great Brickhill Lane onto Watling Street - PRIORITY 1** - With parked cars on Watling Street, it does provide limited visibility when motorists look to their left. Possible waiting restrictions (DYL's) would help improve visibility, but there would be a high number of objections to this from residents. There is no history of collisions at this junction. Installation of safety railings on the footpath in front of Chew Cottages and Wisteria House to discourage this practice. Looks like there are services in the footway, which might be an issue. I will look into this prior to making a decision on what is the best course of action.
- **Install new SID on Gt Brickhill Lane - PRIORITY 2** - It was agreed that a new SID as vehicles enter the village from Gt Brickhill Lane would be of benefit.
- **Speeding issue as vehicles exit the village - PRIORITY 2** - MKCC to look at relocating the existing national speed limit sign, which might deter speeding. MKCC also advised the PC to reduce the trigger speeds for both existing SID's.
- **Improve existing gateway feature as you enter the village from the A5 northbound PRIORITY 3** - new signs potentially depending on budget availability. No red coloured surfacing will be installed due to the cost and ongoing maintenance cost to the Council.
- **Informal crossing point opposite playground - PRIORITY 3** - MKCC explained that it was not possible to upgrade this to a zebra, due to the significant cost and how the numbers crossing would not meet the requirement for a zebra. Additional warning signs have already been put in place advising motorists of the crossing point.
- **New gateway feature and speed count - PRIORITY 4** - At the meeting, a new gateway feature similar to the one shown below in Sherington was mentioned as an option. MKCC will also arrange for a speed count on Gt Brickhill Lane in the new year to get an idea of current speeds.

10.2 - November 2023 Incident at the A5 slip road – National Highways have provided MKCC with an initial design showing proposed improvements to the junction and MKCC have provided feedback on this option. It was noted that there are still instances of vehicles entering the A5 the wrong way.

Update received from MKCC (Highways Team) that they did receive an email last month (March 2025) asking for information about their assets from the consultant working on behalf of National Highways. I would assume they are committed to carrying out some work this financial year but have yet to receive confirmation on dates yet.

10.3 - Damaged / Missing Road Sign as you exit the A5 to Woburn and Little Brickhill / Great Brickhill.

MKCC have now confirmed that it is the responsibility of Highways England to replace these signs and will consult with them to make sure that the job is completed when the exit junction safety repairs are undertaken. No change.

10.4 – (item 16.2 of minutes 06/03/23) - Great Brickhill Lane Pot Holes - Bucks CC have confirmed the road is inspected on a regular basis. Cllr D Hopkins has reported this problem to Bucks CC again, but the same response has been received that it does not still meet the criteria yet.

It was noted that Ward Cllr D Hopkins has received the following response from the Leader of Bucks CC on the 2 March 2025.

- Yes, happy to forward this to our Head of Highways and ask the Local Area Technician to inspect and arrange a repair.
- The recent very wet and cold weather has yet again this year done enormous damage to our more rural roads. We are making safe where necessary with more permanent repairs planned for when the weather improves sufficiently.

Ongoing.

10.5 – Speed Indicator Devices – Clerk confirmed that Swarco have confirmed that the 2 SID's would have their annual service on Friday the 7 February 2025 and that he has asked that they are set to operate at 26 MPH.

It was noted that the change of activation speed was completed however there are some concerns that the sign does not activate in the dark and that the Clerk is in contact with SWARCO on this issue.

11 – To discuss the Future of Roundacre Field: 3552

It was noted that Cllr K Morgan suggestion for consideration of building affordable houses for residents on Roundacre Field at the Parish Council meeting on the 3 February 2025.

The following advice has been obtained from a planning consultant.

- Please find attached our initial site investigation for Little Brickhill and my initial thoughts below.
- As you are aware, the main issue with the development of the site would be to justify this as a rural exception site, for which a housing need survey would be required. However, in addition to this, the site is currently designated in Plan:MK as Amenity Open Space where policies L2 and L3 apply. On the Land Registry details you provided, the site is described as 'Roundacre, Children's Playground.' Historic Google imagery shows that there was previously play equipment on the site, but this disappeared somewhere between 2007 and 2017. There is another play park in the village on Watling Street which seemingly replaced it.
- The site is assessed as a play area in the 2018 Open Space Assessment but not in the 2023 version produced as part of the Evidence Base for the New City Local Plan. The map published with the Reg 18 NCLP does not show Amenity Open Space designations although there is an emerging policy - CEA8 Provision and Protection of Accessible Open Space.
- Therefore, as well as the need to meet the Policy HN10 (rural exception) requirements, the potential loss of the site as amenity/public open space will be a key consideration. Other considerations would be heritage as the site is in the conservation area, highways as the site access is just within the derestriction zone where the road then bends and impact on trees and ecology.
- It is not a straightforward site for development and would require justification (rural exception/housing needs support as well as requirement to show the play space was no longer required) as well as support from the Parish Council to ensure that any planning application would succeed.

- If you did want to take this forward, the next step would be a pre-app with MKCC.
- I hope that helps but happy to talk through on the phone if that would be easier.

It was agreed that we need to undertake more research (housing needs survey) on this as it was felt that villages would prefer the field to stay as open space for residents to use and improvements made as per the application for lottery funding that was not successful last year. Clerk to investigate how much a Housing need Survey will cost.

Have any other Councils undertaken any similar housing schemes that we could seek advice and guidance from?

Concerns were raised on how the dwellings could be retained for locals from a legal point of view.

What happens if the Levante Gate development ever does get planning approval? This would provide enough affordable housing to the village.

It was noted that this will be discussed at all future Parish Council meetings until a decision is made.

Clerk

12. Financial: 3553

12.1 - Cheques presented for payment:

101040	£322.00	XL Circondare Ltd - Newsletter
S/O	£196.80	Alan Kemp – Salary April 2025
101041	£136.00	HMRC – Tax for Clerk – April 2025
101042	£27.86	Alan Kemp – Salary shortfall / Inject Cartridges

This expenditure was proposed, seconded, and carried unanimously.

12.2 – Payments received: None

12.3 - It was noted that the **Bank Balance** following the payments made tonight (£360.66) and cheques not cashed (£584.66) was **£27,773.18.**

12.4 - Bank Mandate:

Clerk confirmed that he had contacted Barclays Bank and that he would have to ring back with a current signatory to arrange for a new mandate to be generated to add other signatories. It was agreed that all Parish Councillors should become signatories. No change.

12.5 - (item 5.6 of minutes 07/10/24) – **Play Equipment** – Clerk to ask MKCC if they can clean all the play equipment on Watsons Field. Clerk confirmed that the cost for MKCC to clean all the play equipment is £300 for two men at £75 per hour.

Clerk to arrange for this to be completed in May / June 2025.

12.6 – Year end tasks:

Clerk will arrange for the internal audit to be completed by Auditing Solutions Limited, complete PAYE reports and re-claim VAT in 2024/2025 of £1,190.72.

12.7 – Year end 2024/2025 / Budget 2025/2026:

Clerk will update the budget at the end of this fiscal year to reflect the precept increase and year end balances. This will be completed when the bank statement is received showing the balance as of 31 March 2025.

<p>13. To discuss the Clerks Position: 3554</p> <p>It was agreed that there would be no change to the current Clerk salary for budget year (2025/2026) will be £3,819.00 plus £250.00 for home working, making the total for the year of £ 4069.00.</p> <p>Clerk advised that it was time for him to step down as Clerk and start the process of recruiting a replacement. The following actions are required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to prepare Job Specification, agreed hours and pay. Purchase Laptop and Office Software for a new Clerk. <p><i>Clerk will prepare a comprehensive list of actions required for discussion at a future Parish Council meeting.</i></p>	
<p>14. To receive reports on the Community Centre: 3555</p> <p>Cllr E Prestley confirmed that she would be representing the Parish Council at the Village Hall Committee meeting (AGM) on the 23 April 2025.</p>	
<p>16. Councillors Report: 3556</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>17. Items for the next / future agendas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change Review – June 2025. • Risk Assessment Review – September 2025. 	
<p>18. Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>Future dates are noted below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 8 May 2025 – AGM / Annual Village Meeting – Commencing 7.30 pm. • Monday 2 June 2025 - Clerk is unable to attend this meeting. • Monday 7 July 2025 <p><u>There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00 pm.</u></p> <p>.....</p> <p>Chair for Little Brickhill Parish Council</p>	