Emberton Parish Council
Minutes of Annual Meeting held in The Pavilion
Monday 19th May 2025 at 7pm

Present:

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

Ward Peter Geary (part meeting)

2 residents

Mrs Karen Goss – Clerk and RFO

Election of Chairman and Signing of Acceptance of Office – Welcome by the Chair – It was proposed by Cllr Laval and seconded by Cllr Walker that Cllr Duncan be appointed Chair. Cllr Duncan accepted the proposal and took the Chair, welcoming everyone to the meeting. Cllr Duncan duly signed the Acceptance of Office. Apologies were received from Ward Cllrs Keith McLean and Debbie Whitworth, PCSO Arlene Ormston and PCSO Tilly Skippen.

Election of Vice Chairman – It was proposed by Cllr Palmer and seconded by Cllr Laval that Cllr White be appointed Vice Chair. Cllr White accepted the proposal.

Update of Register of Members' Interests – The Register of Members' Interests was updated by Councillors.

Election of Parish Council representative to the Sports & Recreation Committee – It was proposed by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Flowers that Cllr Palmer be appointed the pc representative to the Sports & Recreation Committee.

Election of Parish Council representative to Emberton Sports & Social Club – It was proposed by Cllr Laval and seconded by Cllr Palmer that Cllr Flowers be appointed the pc representative to Emberton Sports & Social Club.

Election of Parish Council representative to the Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Committee – It was proposed by Cllr Palmer and seconded by Cllr Laval that Cllr White be appointed the pc representative to the Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Committee.

Election of Parish Council representatives to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Committee – It was proposed by Cllr Laval and seconded by Cllr Walker that Cllrs White and Jamieson be appointed the pc representatives to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Committee.

Chairman's signature Date

Election of Parish Council representatives to the Emberton Park Liaison User's Group - It was proposed by Cllr Jamieson and seconded by Cllr Flowers that Cllrs White and Laval be appointed the pc representatives to the Emberton Park Liaison User's Group.

Election of Parish Council representatives to attend Milton Keynes Council Meetings – Parishes Forum (Chair and Vice Chair) – Councillors Duncan and White to attend these meetings.

Nominate Parish Council representative to attend North East Rural Community Forum – It was proposed by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Laval that Cllr Jamieson be appointed the pc representative to attend the North East Rural Community Forum.

Declarations of interest in items on the agenda – Cllr Duncan declared an interest in item 2.1.17 and item 4.398.

1.1 To confirm the **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on the 7th April 2025.
The Minutes of the meeting held on the 7th April 2025 were signed by the Chair.

1.2 **Public questions –** The members of the public stated that they were attending as observers.

1.3 **Risk – Martyn's Law –** Cllr Laval reported that this legislation should not affect the parish council with the exception of the fete because of numbers and if there were likely to be more than 200 people, tickets had to be sold. Music events had been given as an example and if tickets were sold in advance, the number of those attending would be known. Cllr Flowers commented that the field was a public open space. Cllr Laval explained that Martyn's Law was brought in as a result of the Manchester Arena bombings to have better controls and protection for people at large gatherings. Cllr Palmer asked who was responsible for implementing it. Cllr Laval responded that it was the owner of the premises. It was noted that the number attending the fete in previous years could probably be worked out from gate entry takings. Cllr Laval to gather further information for the next meeting. **Action: AL**

2. TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND AGREE ANY DECISIONS/ACTION

2.1 **Ward Councillors' Report –** Ward Geary reported as follows:

Constitutional changes in MKCC – The MKCC meeting held on 14 May 2025 had made important constitutional changes, to the effect that executive decisions made by MKCC could no longer be called in by parish or town councils, a minimum of two Ward Councillors or a minimum of 20 members of the public; instead executive decisions made by MKCC could in future only be called in by a minimum of six Ward Councillors, and then only if the relevant decision had not already been scrutinised. Parish and town councils would however have the opportunity to "support" a call in by theWard Councillors, which would at least give these councils limited rights to be heard. The decision to close the waste tip at Newport Pagnell was an example of an MKCC executive decision recently called in by Ward Councillors. It should be noted that these constitutional changes had no effect on planning or licensing processes. Many parishes were disappointed that only six days' notice of these constitutional changes had been given, in most cases not allowing them the opportunity to meet and discuss in advance, contrary to the principles of the recently reissued "Together We Can" documentation which was implemented to encourage a better partnership and working dialogue between MKCC and parishes.

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The next MKCC cabinet meeting would by on 3 June 2025. There were significant financial shortages to be addressed, a forecast gap of 32m, which was likely to involve the reduction of middle management and would also mean MKCC working more closely with parishes to deliver services. There would also be further constitutional changes to limit the rights of political groups to put items on the MKCC agenda, in proportion to the numbers of councillors in that group.

A509 – Noted that the opening of the A509 was still scheduled for the end of August with a link between the current roundabout and the major junction.

Public transport – No changes at present but waiting for a Bill to go through Parliament on public transport which would allow Councils to franchise the service.

Litter picking – Cllr McLean was working on having sight of a litter picking schedule for the A509.

2.2 **Update from Thames Valley Police –** Crime statistics between 16/3/25 and 19/5/25 were as follows: March 2025 – 1 x public order/road rage incident (no further action as victim not supporting the case). April 2025 – 1 x Harassment, 1 x Criminal damage (wind turbines – no witnesses). Other incidents not related to crime – March 2025 – 1 x poor parking on West Lane causing obstruction, 1 x road traffic collision (no injuries). April 2025 – 1 x careless driving on A509. May 2025 – 1 x suspicious circumstances (bag of women's clothing found in wooded area in Emberton Park), 1 x fly tipping at Petsoe End, 1 x suspicious person (taking photos of cars and property in Olney Road).

2.3 **Dates for Diaries –** These were noted. The clerk to send a reminder for the meeting with Chris Curtis MP on the 30th May. **Action: KG**

2.4 **Clerk's Report**

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

2.1.82 **Residents parking – Hulton Drive –** Nothing to report.

2.1.85 **Potholes, Petsoe End –** Councillor Duncan confirmed that potholes outside Hill Farm had been repaired and that builders working in Petsoe had filled potholes outside the Charity Cottages. The clerk emailed Murray Woodburn on the 13th May to seek advice regarding the "depressions" in the highway at Petsoe End.

3.6.15 **Rat running and restricted access –** Cllr Jamieson reported that there was a Sentinel session held last week to try it out which had proved successful with further sessions planned. TVP had undertaken enforcement on the A509. Cllr Duncan asked whether locations needed to be given approval. Cllr Jamieson responded that he had done this already with 2 locations on the A509 and 3 locations in the village being approved.

3.6.30 **Allotments –** Nothing to report.

Grass cutting – Nothing to report.

3.6.50 **Litter warden –** Nothing to report. It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

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3.6.68 **Well at Petsoe End –** Nothing to report.

3.6.114 **Steps in High Street (no 5) –** The clerk reported that MKCC had advised that, due to there being an accessibility issue at this location, the handrail would be replaced.

3.107 **Tree planting –** To put forward to budget in November 2025.

3.108 **West Lane flooding –** Nothing to report.

3.109 **Ivy on stone bus shelter –** Working party to be arranged.

3.110 **Potholes in Hulton Drive at junction with Olney Road –** The clerk reported two potholes at the junction with Olney Road and Hulton Drive to MKCC on 24th February. (Ref: FS69033640478). These have been marked for repair as well as previously reported potholes on Olney Road (northern end of village).

3.112 **Parking on verge (Olney Road) –** It was noted that vehicles were parking on the grass verge in Olney Road; one being a visitor to Emberton Park and the other a resident. Noted that one resident had been in touch with MKCC regarding visitors parking on verge to go to Emberton Park. The resident in Olney Road who had parked on the verge had suggested extending the resident parking scheme and he had only parked on the verge due to vehicle requiring to be towed away.

3. SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS

3.1 **Emberton Park –** Cllr White reported that following a conversation with the park warden, it was noted that the Lithuanian event planned for the summer would not be as intrusive as the last one. Cllr Duncan responded that the organisers circulated a telephone number to report any issues and put up signage and requested that it be repeated for this year. Cllr Flowers reported that the 60th anniversary event was the same weekend as the beer festival at the Bell and Bear and people did not realise that a season ticket for the park was available to alleviate issues with parking being reported on social media.

3.85 **Emberton School (School House Fund)** – Cllr Walker reported on the accounts that had been submitted by the VSF which showed zero expenditure over the past five years and £80,000 in the account. The Virgin account held the cash and the investment fund was in Friends Provident with the account growing by £500 per year. The VSF have stated on the telephone in person and now in the statement that they have not spent any of the capital. It was allegedly reported that between £40,000 - £50,000 had been spent in the past and the parish council were aware that money had been spent on marketing. The next step was to invite the School House Fund trustees to demonstrate their commitment to support the children of Emberton by continuing to give to the children of Emberton in the manner originally envisaged by the School House Fund. The parish council could assist by encouraging children of primary school age in the village to test the grant scheme. Cllr Walker to liaise with Cllr Laval. **Action: JW/AL**

3.97 **Sports & Recreation Committee –** Cllr Palmer reported that no meeting had taken place.

3.103 **Demand Responsive Transport (21 bus service) and double yellow lines –** Nothing to report. The clerk to chase this. **Action: KG**

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3.113 **Climate change –** Nothing to report.

3.118 **New City Plan –** Save the date – 10th September for update meeting.

3.122 **Milton Keynes Ward Boundary Review –** It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda as a response had been sent.

3.125 **Flooding and water management – maintenance of pumping station, flooding at lower Petsoe End and Olney Road, EPC's role in flood management –** Cllr Laval reported that she had gone through the Ravenstone flood plan and taken out the references to individuals and looked at areas where the parish council needed a discussion on where improvements could be made. Agreed to carry this forward to the next meeting **Action: AL**

3.127 **Changes to Scrutiny and Constitutional arrangements –** Reported on previously.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

4.2 **Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund –** Cllr White reported that Sherington had received a cheque for their SID. The Bell and Bear had put in an enquiry for windows but it fell outside the scope. The wind farm had new owners who seemed to be more interested in community presence.

4.394 **Turning low-yielding farmland into profit through BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain) –** The clerk reported that she had contacted Mr Soul and was trying to arrange a date for him to attend a meeting.

Previous applications

4.398 **ENF/2025/0001** – Rectory Farm, Newton Road, Emberton. Correspondence received 02/1/2025 alleging a breach of planning control at the above address had been lodged. Alleged breach details: unauthorised erection of café/bar that is being used to hold events and open on the weekend. Premises licence application submitted to MKCC. The Vice Chair took this item as the Chair had previously Declared an Interest in this item. It was noted that the pc had objected to the application on the grounds of noise and traffic issues and that these objections still stood as there was not enough information relating to the frequency and type of events. The clerk to respond to MKCC accordingly. **Action: KG.** Cllr Duncan made a general comment that the method of notifying residents of licencing applications was could be improved.

4.402 **PLN/2025/0332 –** Approval of details required by conditions 4 (sustainable construction), 5 (hard landscape works), 6 (soft landscape works), 10 (EV charging point) and 11 (superfast broadband infrastructure) of permission ref. 23/02176/FUL at 34 Gravel Walk – **split decision – conditions 4, 10 and 11 refused. Conditions 5 and 6 approved.**

4.403 **PLN/2025/0478 –** Certificate of Lawfulness for the installation of a dormer window to side elevation at 1 Harvey Drive - **permitted development**

4.404 **PLN/2025/0447 –** Variation of condition 1 (approved plans) seeking to amend window arrangement and include a first-floor balcony to rear elevation (relating to permission ref. 23/02176/FUL The erection of one dwelling with attached single garage) at 34 Gravel Walk – **approved with conditions.**

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4.405 **PLN/2025/0571 –** The removal to ground level of Cherry (T1) at 6 Church Lane. The location of this tree was queried as it appeared to be in the grounds of All Saints' Church - **approved**

New applications

4.406 **PLN/2025/0683 –** The erection of one front & two rear ground floor extensions, relocation of front entry with new entrance canopy, relocation and introduction of new windows and rooflights and associated internal works at 2 Downash Lodge, The Paddock. Agreed no objection but consideration to be given to access for neighbouring properties and restriction on external lighting. The clerk to respond accordingly. **Action: KG**

4.407 **PLN/2025/0795 –** Approval of details required by condition 4 (Sustainability) of permission ref. 23/02176/FUL at 34 Gravel Walk – **withdrawn**

4.408 **PLN/2025/0893 –** The pollarding of T1 (Willow) from approx. 11m to 5.5m at Oltons, 18 Olney Road. The parish council would be in agreement with the recommendations made by MKCC's tree officer. The clerk to respond accordingly. **Action: KG**

5. ACCOUNTS

5.1 **To receive the RFO's Report for the 19th May 2025** and approve payments**.** It was proposed by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Palmer that the payments be approved. Cllr White to approve the payments online. **Action: HW.** The clerk reported on a separate bank account for the Sports and Recreation Committee. It was noted that the internal auditor had suggested Unity Bank. The clerk to investigate this. **Action: KG**

5.2 **Application to Community Infrastructure Fund 2026/2027 –** The clerk referred to suggestions for the Community Infrastructure Fund and stated that any projects would have to be put forward in the budget and 50% funded. Agreed to take this forward to the next meeting.

5.3 **Approval of Risk Assessment –** It was proposed by Cllr Flowers and seconded by Cllr Laval that the Risk Assessment be approved. Cllr Duncan suggested that the Risk Assessments previously undertaken on the allotments and clock tower be reviewed on an annual basis. **Action: KG**

5.4 **Approval of Fixed Asset Register –** The clerk reported that there had been a change in the Fixed Asset Register because of the newly purchased gang mower for the playing field in exchange for the old one and several purchases, including the safety harness and ladder stop for the clock tower, had been made. It was proposed by Cllr Flowers and seconded by Cllr White that the Fixed Asset Register be approved.

5.5 **Approval of Annual Governance Statement –** It was proposed by Cllr Walker and seconded by Cllr Palmer that the Annual Governance Statement be approved. This document was then signed by the Chair and clerk.

5.6 **Approval of Accounting Statements –** It was proposed by Cllr Laval and seconded by Cllr Flowers that the Accounting Statement be approved. This document was then signed by the Chair and clerk.

Chairman's signature Date

5.7 **Confirmation of Internal Auditor's Report (with suggested proposals) and appointment for 2025/2026 –** It was noted that there were no suggested proposals from the internal auditor. It was proposed by Cllr Laval and seconded by Cllr Walker that the Internal Auditor's Report and his appointment for 2025/2026 be approved.

5.8 **Approval of PKF Littlejohn as external auditors and adoption of Notice of Public Rights –** It was proposed by Cllr Laval and seconded by Cllr Walker that PKF Littlejohn be approved as external auditors and the Notice of Public Rights was adopted with the dates of 3rd June to 14th July 2025 inclusive.

5.9 **Approval of Standing Orders –** No change to this document. It was proposed by Cllr Flowers and seconded by Cllr Palmer that the Standing Orders be approved.

5.10 **Approval of Financial Regulations –** No change to this document. It was proposed by Cllr Flowers and seconded by Cllr Palmer that the Financial Regulations be approved.

5.11 **Approval of Information and Data Protection Policy –** No change to this document. It was proposed by Cllr Flowers and seconded by Cllr Palmer that the Information and Data Protection Policy be approved.

5.12 **Approval of Internet Banking Policy –** No change to this document. It was approved by Cllr Flowers and seconded by Cllr Palmer that the Internet Banking Policy be approved.

6. CORRESPONDENCE – Nothing to report.

6.1 **Letter received from EUC–** A letter had been received from Emberton United Charity requesting the approval for the appointment of Mr Richard Laval as a trustee to EUC and the K A H Sams charity. This was agreed. The clerk to respond accordingly. **Action: KG**

7. PARISH RELATED MATTERS

7.1 **Village publicity –** Licensing application, rubbish in West Lane, crime stats, new Vicar for All Saints' Emberton.

7.2 **Cllrs' concerns** – Cllr Palmer commented that some black sacks had been ripped open in West Lane and rubbish left on the verge; a reminder in the Well & Towers to ask residents to put food waste in the green bin and wash out food containers.

Cllr Jamieson reported visitors to Emberton Park, parking on the grass verge in Olney Road.

Cllr Jamieson made reference to an incident where a family member had asked to use the car park of Acorn Nursery as the High Street was full and had been refused permission. Noted that the nursery had agreed that resident's parking would only be allowed at weekends.

Cllr Jamieson expressed a concern regarding parents from Acorn Nursery reversing out of the car park on to Olney Road, leading to safety concerns. Cllrs Flowers to take this back to Acorn Nursery. **Action: PF**

Cllr White stated that 7 Westpits had been empty for two years. Agreed that this was not a parish council issue.

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Cllr Duncan stated that the weeds in Alison Fraser Walk needed cutting back. Cllrs Duncan and Laval to set up a working party. **Action: MD/AL**

Cllr Duncan commented that TVP were seeking more information on the fly tipping at Petsoe End.

Cllr Laval – Reported that there was a pothole at the entrance to Emberton Park. The clerk to report this. **Action: KG**

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – The date of the next meeting was confirmed as the parish council meeting on Monday 23rd June 2025 at 7pm to be held at the Pavilion.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Chairman's signature Date