

Malvern Wells Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting held on **Wednesday 29th May 2024 at 7.30pm** at Malvern Wells Village Hall.

Present:

- a) Cllrs. P. Stanier [PS], R. Price [RP], C. Gates [CG], C O'Donnell [CO].
- b) **Absent:** none notified.
- c) **In attendance** - Dr K Howe (Clerk), one member of public (MOP).

Public Participation:

No request to speak in session.

1. Election of chair.

a) CO proposed, CG seconded, council **resolved** to **elect** Cllr. P. Stanier as Chair of Council for the forthcoming year.

2. Signing of acceptance of office.

a) CO proposed, CG seconded, council **resolved** to postpone chair **signing** Declaration of Acceptance of Office to June Council meeting.

3. Election of vice chair.

a) CO proposed, RP seconded, council **resolved** to **elect** Cllr. C. Gates as Vice Chair of council.

4. Apologies for absence.

- a) Council **noted** apologies received from Cllrs. J. Baker, J. Black, P. Merrifield and **resolved** to accept.
- b) Council **noted** apologies received from Cllr. C. Wild.

5. Declarations of Interest

a) Chair reminded councillors of the need to update their register of interests. None notified.

6. Minutes of previous council meeting

a) CO proposed, CG seconded, Council **approved** the minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 27th March 2024 (circulated). Council **noted** April council meeting was informal and not minuted.

7. Matters Arising:

a) Council **noted** Cemetery meeting 29th May at Green Lane Cemetery. New cemetery notice board installed. Need to add new 2024 Cemetery Fees and contacts.

8. District and County Councillor reports

- a) None in attendance.
- b) Council **noted** report from Cllr. C. Wild previously circulated.

9. Governance

a) Chair **notified** four councillor resignations:

- M Birks (MB) as MWPC co-opted councillor. Chair congratulated MB on election as Mayor of Malvern Wells Town Council. Council **noted** MB resignation leaves gaps on Committees / WGs / partner appointments and thanked MB for her work on behalf of MWPC.
- G. Turrell (GT) as MWPC co-opted councillor due to health. Chair thanked GT for all his work on behalf of MWPC. GT resignation accepted with great regret; he will be hugely missed by council. Chair will organise card from council to GT. Council **noted** GT resignation requires new signatory / online payment authoriser / leaves gaps on Committees / WGs / partner appointments.
- G Lowe as MWPC co-opted councillor. Chair acknowledged her contribution as a Councillor.

- A Pitt (AP) as elected councillor. Chair thanked AP for work done on behalf of MWPC. Council **noted** Chair advice AP will continue to work on behalf of MWPC as 'affiliated' volunteer. Council **noted** AP resignation leaves gaps on Committees / WGs.
- b) CO proposed, RP seconded, Council **elected** Cllr. J. Baker as Chair of Finance & Governance Committee.
- c) Council **noted** (as Staffing terms of reference) Vice Chair becomes Chair of Staffing Committee. CO proposed, RP seconded, council **approved** appointment of CG (newly elected Vice Chair) as Chair of Staffing Committee.
- d) Council **noted** updated current appointments to Committee / Working Groups / external partners (circulated) and **confirmed**.
- e) CG proposed, RP seconded, council **adopted** revised Standing Orders (minor amendment – four members of council for quorate meeting) for Malvern Wells Parish Council (as circulated).
- f) Clerk advised new 2024 NALC model amended Financial Regulations need to comply with Scheme of Delegation for Malvern Wells Parish Council (circulated). Chair suggested Council postpone to June Council when new Chair F&G available. RP proposed, CG seconded, Council **resolved**.
- g) RP proposed, CG seconded, Council **adopted** the Complaints Policy for Malvern Wells Parish Council (circulated).
- h) CO proposed, CG seconded, Council **adopted** the Code of Conduct for Malvern Wells Parish Council (circulated).
- i) CG proposed, RP seconded, council **adopted** the Employee Grievance Policy for Malvern Wells Parish Council (circulated).

10. Co-option of Members

- a) Council **noted** there are now six vacancies.
- b) Clerk advised four resignations notified to MHDC within relevant time, will be published 3rd June (circulated) advised missing line in agenda notified.
- c) CO proposed, CG seconded, if following no election requested by public, Council **resolved** take any steps to publish vacancies at minimum cost. PS will request inclusion of flyer in All About Malvern Magazine (and request cost), RP will publish on website, Comms. WG will publish on noticeboards recognising:

(i) Council believes that it is in the interests of the parish that the vacancies on the Council are filled, and that this be achieved by co-option.

(ii) That persons eligible to become co-opted be encouraged to put their names forward to the Chair.

*(iii) That consideration be given to advertising vacancies and a process of selection at the next meeting scheduled for **26th June 2024** or as soon as possible thereafter.*

Council **noted**:

Eligibility for co-option, is as follows:

(a) 21 years of age, **and**

(b) either:

- Be a local government elector for the parish, or
- Be an occupier (owner or tenant) of land or premises in the parish for the previous 12 months, or
- Have their place of work in the parish for the previous 12 months, or
- Have resided in the parish for the previous 12 months, or
- Have resided within three miles of the parish boundary for the previous 12 months.

11. Finance

- a) Council **noted** minor delay to internal audit due to Clerk's sick leave.
- b) Co proposed, CG seconded, council **resolved** to approve by delegated authority (on advice of Internal Auditor) Clerk requested from PKF Littlejohn (External Auditor) extended submission for MWPC External review to 31st July 2023 (latest legal date). PKF Littlejohn extension approved 16.5.24.
- c) RP proposed, CG seconded, Council **resolved** to approve Clerk delegated authority in consultation with Chair (as recommended by Staffing Committee meeting 24th April 2024) contract for Ann Dobbins to produce finance docs for Year End submission to Internal Auditor (cost £400) and 12-month contract £100 p.m. to produce monthly financial accounts.
- d) RP proposed, PS seconded, council **resolved** addition of Cllr. J. Baker as bank signatory to Lloyds and Nat West accounts. Council **noted** Clerk to administer Lloyds / Nat West bank mandate forms accordingly.

- e) RP proposed, PS seconded, council **resolved** to remove G. Turrell as signatory to Lloyds and Nat West bank accounts.
- f) PS proposed, CO seconded, council resolved to **appoint** Cllr. J. Baker as an online authoriser to replace G. Turrell on the Lloyds bank current account. Council **approved**.
- g) Council **noted** Clerk continues to work with Nat West bank to amend signatories, access Nat West accounts, amend mandate, change primary contact to Clerk and postal address to MWPC PO Box.
- h) RP proposed, CG seconded, council **considered** updated asset register 2023/24 and **approved**. (circulated).
- i) RP proposed, CO seconded, council **considered** updated risk register 2024, and **approved** (circulated).
- j) Council **noted** Scheme of delegation recommended by F&G Committee 15th December 2023 to council (circulated). CG proposed, RP seconded, council **resolved** to adopt Scheme of delegation.
- k) Council **noted** budget comparison to 30th April 2024 (circulated).

	Budget to April	Actual to April	Variance
Administration			
Audit and Payroll Fees	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank charges	20.00	7.00	13.00
Burial Ground Manager	0.00	0.00	0.00
Chair Allowance	0.00	0.00	0.00
Data protection	0.00	0.00	0.00
Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00
Meeting costs	30.00	0.00	30.00
Members expenses	20.83	0.00	20.83
Miscellaneous Payments	0.00	0.40	-0.40
Newsletters/Wells News	208.33	0.00	208.33
Office Admin and Travel	327.65	25.84	301.81
Salaries, PAYE, Pension and NI	4,958.23	0.00	4,958.23
Subscriptions WCALC and SLCC	0.00	0.00	0.00
Training	83.33	0.00	83.33
Website/Email hosting	83.33	30.00	53.33
Elections	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Administration	5,731.70	63.24	5,668.46
Maintenance			
Cemetery Labour and Maintenance	1,000.00	83.79	916.21
Grass cutting	316.67	0.00	316.67
Gas Lamps maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gas supply	0.00	0.00	0.00
Jubilee Garden	0.00	0.00	0.00
Lengthsman	333.33	0.00	333.33
Open spaces maintenance	209.17	0.00	209.17
Parish Assets (bus shelters, bins etc)	41.67	0.00	41.67
Playground safety Inspection	0.00	0.00	0.00
Tree surgery	83.33	0.00	83.33
Footpaths tools and safety gear	8.33	0.00	8.33
Cemetery equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00
Play Equipment - future	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Maintenance	1,992.50	83.79	1,908.71
Projects and Events			
Assarts Road Play Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00
Carol concert	0.00	0.00	0.00

Christmas trees/lights	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fete	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fruitlands Land All Saints	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gas Lamps painting/refurbishment	0.00	0.00	0.00
Neighbourhood Plan	0.00	0.00	0.00
Noticeboards	0.00	0.00	0.00
Platinum Jubilee	0.00	0.00	0.00
Remembrance	0.00	0.00	0.00
Telephone box Rothwell Rd/Green Lane	66.67	0.00	66.67
Speed gate and signage	0.00	0.00	0.00
Defibrillators project	0.00	0.00	0.00
Coronation - tree planting project	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cemetery mapping	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Projects and Events	66.67	0.00	66.67
Grants and Donations			
Community grants	0.00	0.00	0.00
Section 137 Grants	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Grants and Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Payments	7,790.87	147.03	7,643.84
Receipts			
	Budget to April	Actual to April	Variance
Precept			
Parish Precept	50,141.63	50,141.63	0.00
Total Precept	50,141.63	50,141.63	0.00
Grants and Donations			
Lengthsman Scheme WCC	233.19	310.32	77.13
NDP Grant	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other Grants	0.00	3,700.00	3,700.00
Total Grants and Donations	233.19	4,010.32	3,777.13
Other Receipts			
Bank Interest	83.33	0.00	-83.33
Cemetery	333.33	575.00	241.67
Fete	0.00	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous Receipts	0.00	0.00	0.00
Scout lease	0.00	0.00	0.00
VAT Repayments	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Other Receipts	416.66	575.00	158.34
Total Receipts	50,791.48	54,726.95	3,935.47

l) Council **noted** Q4 2023/24 bank reconciliation (circulated).

Balance per bank statement at
30/04/2024

74,521.05

Uncleared Payments

Date	Customer/Supplier	Reference	Amount
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01/12/2023	Defib Store	PAID	-342.00	
TOTAL				-342.00

**TOTAL NET BANK BALANCES AT
30/04/2024**

Opening_balance	19,615.66
Total receipts	54,726.95
Total payments	-163.56
Total transfers	
Closing balance per cash book (must equal net bank balances above)	74,179.05

- m) Council **noted** Summary budget for 2024-25 (circulated).
n) CO proposed, CG seconded, council **approved** retrospective emergency payments made for April (circulated). Chair requested, Clerk uploaded, 5.5.24, G. Turrell authorised 6.5.24.

Payee	Inv. No / Item	Account	Amount
S Maund	April 2024	Cemetery Labour / Lengthsman	£1401.13
M Thomas	April 2024	Cemetery Labour	£350.84
Clerk	April 2024	Salaries, PAYE, Pension, NI	£2840.47
HMRC	April 2024	Salaries, PAYE, Pension, NI	£670.36

- o) CO proposed, CG seconded, council **considered** and **approved** outstanding April payments - no formal April council meeting. (circulated).

Inv. date	Supplier	Inv. no.	Amount	VAT	Total
27.3.24	MW Village Hall Jan – March 2024	PC035	£224.00	£0.00	£224.00
13.3.24	Worcs CALC – Training J Baker	9375	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00
9.4.24	ROSPA Play safety inspection - Assarts	78085	£142.00	£28.40	£170.40
8.4.24	Easy PC – subscription 2024-25	727	£120.00	£0.00	£120.00
Noted April 2024 Direct Debit payments					
8.4.24	Microsoft monthly	G0424557	£10.30	£2.06	£12.36
19.4.24	Hugo Fox – website monthly	4996	£29.99	£6.00	£35.99
23.4.24	EON	K12F7CEB5001	£30.60	£1.53	£32.13
15.4.24	Lloyds service charge	424221719	£7.00	£0.00	£7.00
2.4.24	Water Plus	0152004172	£13.68	£0.00	£13.68
2.4.24	Water Plus	0703032842	£13.68	£0.00	£13.68

- p) Council **considered**, CO proposed, CG seconded, council **approved** May payments (circulated).

Inv. date	Supplier	Inv. no.	Amount	VAT	Total
26.5.24	Martin Thomas - cemetery	139	£396.24	£0.00	£396.24
22.5.24	Steve Maund	May 2024	£1,490.49	£0.00	£1,490.49
21.5.24	Ann Dobbins – year end / April accounts	May 2024	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00
22.4.24	British Gas – gas lamps	84987	£1,283.86	£256.78	£1,540.66
12.4.24	Zurich – insurance renewal	532523159	£1,815.98	£0.00	£1,815.98
2.4.24	Worcs. CALC membership	9493	£1,100.67	£180.67	£1,281.34

Noted May 2024 Direct Debit payments					
30.4.24	Water Plus	0152004172	£14.83	£0.00	£14.83
30.4.24	Water Plus	0703032842	£14.83	£0.00	£14.83
7.5.24	Microsoft monthly	G045903805	£10.30	£2.06	£12.36
7.5.24	Microsoft monthly	G)457272	£51.74	£12.94	£64.68
20.5.24	Hugo Fox – website monthly	4996	£29.99	£6.00	£35.99
29.5.24	EON	KI2F7CEBS0041	£28.94	£1.45	£30.39
20.5.24	H3G – Clerk mobile phone	100006	£12.54	£3.14	£15.68
20.5.24	Lloyds service charge	426634748	£8.70	£0.00	£8.70
Noted May payments by Clerk Debit card:					
24.5.24	SLCC subscription 2023-24	248155-1	£357.00	£0.00	£357.00
17.5.24	HP – printer cartridges	9058119653	£299.08	59.99	£359.97
20.5.24	Monkey - Stationery	Receipt	£5.99	£0.00	£5.99
20.5.24	WH Smith - Stationery	Receipt	£25.98	£0.00	£25.98
28.5.24	Post office	Receipt	£4.59	£0.00	£4.59

Noted May contract payments:

Payee	Inv. No / Item	Account	Amount
Clerk	May 2024	Salaries, PAYE, Pension, NI	£2748.78
HMRC	May 2024	Salaries, PAYE, Pension, NI	£866.42

- q) RP proposed, CG seconded, council **resolved** to renew Zurich Insurance (2nd year of 3-year agreed term), cost including Premium Tax and VAT, £1,815.98. Renewal date 1.6.24.
- r) Council **noted** MHDC first half year precept payment received 30th April £50,141.63.
- s) Council **noted** West Mecia Police, grant £3,700 received for Traffic Calming Project.
- t) Council **noted** VAT 126 claim October 2023 to March 2024 £8,985.93 produced for submission to HMRC (circulated).

12. Planning

- a) Council **considered**, CG proposed, CO seconded, council **resolved** comments on previously circulated applications:
- M/24/00494/PIP – Land at Chestnut Hill. 4 open market dwellings. **No objection.**
 - M/24/00336/HP – 2 Walton Mews, WR14 4PH. Single storey extension. **No objection.**
 - M/24/00430/HP – Braeside Dower, WR14 4EF. Replace conservatory roof and balcony over. **No objection.**
 - M/24/00579/HP – 2 Yew Tree Lane, WR14 4LJ. Single storey extension. **No objection.**
 - M/24/00185/FUL – Mulberry House, WR14 4HF. Reroofing coach house and conservation windows. **No objection.**
 - M/23/01714/FUL – Gandolfi House, WR14 4HF. Divide property to two dwellings. **No objection.**
- b) Council **noted** Planning decisions circulated:
- **M/23/01785/CU** – 60 Old Wyche Rd, Malvern WR14 4EP. Change of use of existing residential outbuilding to holiday let. APPROVED (circulated).
 - **M/23/01406/HP** – Thornton, WR14 4PD. Extensions and garage. APPROVED (circulated).

13. Projects

- a) Council **noted** information panels now installed at Assarts and Village Green. Added to asset register.

14. Community Events (CEWG)

- a) Council **noted** update from RP & Chair on Community Events Working Group (CEWG).
- b) Council **noted** due to Ian Burrage resignation as Chair of Events WG insufficient capacity to administer Fete ongoing. Chair recognised Ian Burrage's huge input to Fete management over preceding years and thanked him greatly for his time commitment. Council **noted** Cllr. A. Pitt exit-poll consultation on 2024 Fete attendees (fewer than 1/3 Malvern Wells residents). Council noted RP confirmed new CEWG bank account set up – RP is treasurer. Council **noted** additional Fete costs ongoing to tax-payer –

lengthsman and Clerk time. Council noted S. Maund has advised CEWG he is no longer able to participate in Fete parking management. Council **noted** new CEWG Chair Howard Allen has resigned. Ken now new Chair. CEWG notified concern on costs of insurance & VAT. Council **considered**. Council re-affirmed commitment to supporting Fete as community tradition. PS proposed, CG seconded, council **approved** to continue supporting Fete (potentially in excess) of community grant 2024-24 approved in budget if required up to £1,000 additional cost maximum (to be taken from reserve budget).

15. Open Spaces (OSWG)

- a) Council **noted** ROSPA Play Safety Report Assarts Playground (circulated). RP (Chair OSWG) advised nothing unsafe notified, no red alert items.
- b) Council **noted** ROSPA Playground Inspection weekly template supplied to S Maund for checks, to supply to Clerk with monthly timesheets from May 2024.
- c) Council **noted** report from RP (Chair Open Spaces Working Group) on Assarts Playground Proposal. Consultation ended two weeks ago. Residents notified want path from road to entrance to allow access for push chairs / wheelchairs. CO advised council MWPC have previously requested but Planning permission denied previous request to install path over green space. RP advised OSWG wish to make planning application for new access path and replacement play installation in September. RP has three quotes for path specification / installation to supply to council.

16. Working Groups

- a) Defibrillators
 - PS will request MB specify supplier, 2 x batteries and pads part nos. urgently required.
- b) Traffic Calming
 - Council **noted** MB update on Traffic Calming project. Meeting on Friday with MHT – hope to agree heritage signs notified.
- c) Gas Lamps

Chair thanked Simon Freeman (SF) for his interest/ attendance to update on behalf of Gas Lamps WG. Council **noted** despite continued attempts of RP/ SF and others, no progress with current contractor. Concern that so many sensors had 'failed' immediately following contractor's annual maintenance visit. Council **noted** huge cost for replacement sensors (contractor notified ONLY available via Braun). SF advised local supplier confirmed alternative parts available. Meeting of GLWG convened to take measurements / confirm parts required. GLWG also have new strategy to recommend to council following meeting convened on 30/5/24:

 - Contract new Gas Safe contractor.
 - Find glazier to replace broken glass.
 - S. Maund / or other contractor to replace batteries (as required in timely manner)
 - S. Maund to keep 'eyes on' lamps with any issues and notify.
 - Intention to get all gas lamps working within a reasonably short period (with least cost to tax-payer).

Council considered RP proposed, PS seconded, Council **approved** recommendations. Council **noted** correspondence from Rock House on Holywell Rd. JB inspected personally - GSLW believe gas lamp not working because contractor disconnected during work.
- d) PROW
 - Council **noted** PS update. Shears will be purchased within budget allocated. PROW WG in consultation with AONB on funding available to replace stiles with accessible gates.

17. Communications

- a) Council **noted** update from Communications Working Group (CWG).
- b) Website - RP reported he had meeting with Hugo Fox on website update. Despite Clerk and RP chasing required update to website – not progressing. RP has also contacted local college website provider as looks good match. Clerk again advised Parish On-line and similar suppliers provide 'ready to go' websites specifically designed for parish councils.
- c) Noticeboards – Council noted during rationalisation of parish notice boards Assart's notice board was removed. Public had registered concern. 'Retired' noticeboard not 'fit for purpose'. Council noted advise from Cllr. A. Pitt on new noticeboard to match needs. CO proposed, RP seconded, Council resolved Clerk to purchase most robust at least cost.

18. Correspondence

- a) Jubilee Gardens - Council **noted** correspondence (circulated) from S. Maund and Ian Burrage. CG will try to find volunteers willing to help manage.

19. Meeting dates

- a) Council **approved** meeting dates notified for new Council year.

20. Next meeting

- a) Council **noted** date of next scheduled Council meeting is **Wednesday 26th June** at Malvern Wells Village Hall 7.30pm.

21. Exclusion of the Public and Press

Chair advised, PS proposed, CG seconded, Council **resolved**:

Under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 members of the public and press are required to leave the meeting due to the confidential nature of the following item.

22 Staffing

- a) Council **noted** PS verbal update on 24th April Staffing Committee meeting. Clerk workload continues to be impacted by legacy and ongoing MWPC issues – previous Clerk/ contractor resignations, councillor resignations, vacancies/ co-options, required changes to bank signatories to access bank accounts, long standing cemetery, governance and legacy issues and new project demands.
- b) Chair advised Staffing Committee recommended Admin Assistant to support Clerk 6 hours p.w. Clerk advised need to focus on financial controls, cemetery admin / burial ground mapping project to limit Clerk working ongoing and comply with legal requirements. CO proposed, RP seconded, council **resolved** recommendations from Staffing Committee as advised.

Meeting closed 9.25pm.

..... **Chair of Council** **Date**