

# Malvern Wells Parish Council

**Minutes of Council Meeting** held on **Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024** at Malvern Wells Village Hall.

**Present:**

- a) Cllrs. P. Stanier [PS], J. Baker [JEB], C. Gates [CG], R. Price [RP], C O'Donnell [CO], J. Black [JB], P. Merrified [PM] left at 8.05pm.
- b) **Absent:** none notified.
- c) **In attendance** - Dr K Howe (Clerk), one member of public (MOP).

**Public Participation:** No matters raised.

**1. Apologies for absence.**

- a) Council **noted** apologies received from Cllrs. C. Wild and J. Gallagher.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

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

**3. Minutes of previous council meeting**

- a) CO proposed, JEB seconded, council **approved** the minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Chair signed in meeting.
- b) PM proposed, CO seconded, council **approved** the minutes of the confidential session Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Chair signed in meeting.

**4. Matters Arising:**

- a) Chair reluctantly accepted PM's resignation in meeting. PM advised council must use a Gas safe registered contractor for all actions and investigations. Council **noted** PM will offer informal professional advice on gas lamp contracts and maintenance and would welcome this. Chair thanked PM for his time.

**5. District and County Councillor reports**

- a) No report, neither in attendance.

**6. Co-option of Members**

- a) Chair reluctantly **noted** now seven vacancies. PS will produce flyer with help for distribution via. Wells News. CO proposed, RP seconded, council unanimously **agreed** cost previously notified. JEB suggested looking at Kempsey PC co-option flyer.

**7. Finance**

- a) Council **noted** Clerk / WCALC advice on Section One AGAR return.
- b) Council **noted** amended period for public rights notified.
- c) JEB proposed, CG seconded, council **approved** July payments. Council **noted** invoices signed by JEB and RP in F& G meeting:

Inv. date	Supplier	Inv. no.	Total
<b>Approved</b>			
10.7.24	A. Dobbins – June accounts	10/7	£100.00
30.6.24	MWVH hire 1.4 to 30.6.24	PC036	£93.00
27.6.24	Kendall Wadley payroll March to June 2024	71093	£573.60
02.7.24	Trevor Brooke – cemetery soil removal	40398	£240.00
22.7.24	British Gas – gas lamps	1800054421	1,540.66
14.5.24	Worcs CALC – Training	9569 amendment	£6.00
23.7.24	M. Thomas - cemetery	141	£383.86
25.7.24	S. Maund July	July 2024	£1,344
<b>Noted</b>			
5.7.24	Microsoft monthly	G050809485	£12.36
19.7.24	Hugo Fox – website	7086	£35.99
8.7.24	EON- cemetery electricity	K12F7C4EB5-0043	£28.37
16.7.24	Water Plus – cemetery	06335808	£24.22
4.7.24	H3G – Clerk mobile	Notification	£15.68
30.7.24	Salary, NI, LGPC	Payroll	£4,717.72

- d) CO proposed, JB seconded, council **approved** bank reconciliation to 2.7.24 and current account statement. Council **noted** signed by JEB as internal controller.

Bank account	Main current account
Balance per bank statement at 03/07/2024	51,470.33
<b>TOTAL NET BANK BALANCES AT 03/07/2024</b>	<b>51,470.33</b>
Opening balance	19,615.66
Total receipts	64,884.74
Total payments	-33,030.07
Total transfers	
<b>Closing balance per cash book (must equal net bank balances above)</b>	<b>51,470.33</b>

- e) CG proposed, JB seconded, council **approved** budget comparison to 2.7.24.
- f) Council considered new Financial Regulations as recommended by F&G committee. JEB explained thorough review undertaken. JB proposed, CO seconded, council unanimously resolved to **adopt** new policy.
- g) Council considered draft Internal Controls policy as recommended by F&G committee. JEB will act as Internal Control to ensure compliance with Financial Regulations. Council agreed helpful if Internal Auditor would undertake mid-year review as advised by Clerk. Clerk to request. JEB proposed, CG seconded, council unanimously agreed to **adopt** new policy.
- h) JEB explained requirement for council to hold 3-6 months in general reserves but not hold excessive amounts unless earmarked project use identified. Council considered draft Reserves Policy, as recommended by F&G committee. JB proposed, CO seconded, council agreed to **adopt** new policy.
- i) Chair requested move to confidential session. Council **agreed** to consider recommendation by F&G committee on ongoing use of reserves in later item.
- j) JEB explained Nat West reserve accounts require new signatories to access. Council **noted** signatories signed Nat West bank mandate in meeting. Clerk to administer. When approved by Nat West, council can move reserves to agreed accounts with better interest rates. Aware available rates are 4.5%. JB proposed, CO seconded, council **agreed** F&G committee recommend appropriate action for best rates on investment funds.

## 8. Planning

- a) CO proposed, JB seconded, council **agreed** comments on applications:
- **M/24/00809/HP** – Wyndham, Eaton Rd, WR14 4PE – NO OBJECTION.
  - **M/24/00827/HP** – 5 The Crescent, WR14 4JG – NO OBJECTION.
  - **M/24/00964/HP** – Orchid House, 19 St. Wulstans Drive, WR14 4JA – NO OBJECTION.
- b) Council **noted** Planning decisions:
- **M/24/00430/HP** – Braeside Dower, 2 Wyche Rd, WR14 4EF – APPROVED
  - **M/24/00185/FUL** – Mulberry House, 229 Wells Rd, WR14 4HF – APPROVED.

## 9. Cemetery

- a) Council **noted** Cemetery mapping / digitalisation proposal and quotation received, comparisons sought by Clerk. JB proposed, JEB seconded, council **resolved** Clerk request further advice from WCALC, Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Managers and advise Cemetery Committee. Clerk to send holding email to preferred contractor. Clerk to send email to contractors with final dates for quotes to be received. Council wishes to finalise contract as urgent project, Cemetery Committee to undertake when quotes obtained.

## 10. Community Events (CEWG)

- a) Council **noted** update. Meeting convened next week. Fete on 8<sup>th</sup> September. Posters published. PS will cover tombola and collect items for donation. CO advised on drinks and toy stall. Council **noted** cost of stalls and insurance much higher this year, accessible toilets and increased no. of picnic benches. Costs higher than previously advised. Fete will be longer 12- 4.30pm. RP rounding up additional

parking volunteers. S. Maund putting up signage. CEWG requesting additional £1,000 to cover. RP proposed, JB seconded, council **resolved**.

### 11. Open Spaces (OSWG)

- a) Council **noted** ROSPA Playground Inspection report, no new issues or urgent actions required. PS proposed, CO seconded, council **agreed**.
- b) Council **noted** RP will bring report and recommendations to September meeting for new playpark.
- c) David Hunter-Miller (in attendance) asked about ownership of bus shelter on Welland Rd. If owned by MWPC he has suggestions for refurbishment. Clerk to notify DHM following meeting.

### 12. Working Groups

- a) Defibrillators
  - Council **noted** PS verbal update. Cllr. Birks sought three quotations for refurbishment Rothwell Rd phone box. Two quotes received, only one contractor available. Thorough schedule of work received. Aware needs new glass panels. Ian Burrage could possibly advise on glazier and Defib signage. Council considered quotations and paint colour. CG proposed, CO seconded, council **resolved** to paint red, Clerk to notify contractor selected.
- b) Traffic Calming
  - Council **noted** update from David Hunter-Miller (in attendance). Upper Welland gates ordered. Put in new approval to MHT for larger sign on A449. Proposed single post sign in rural area. MHT want all to be larger signs. DHM meeting MHT next week to ensure signs physically fit. Costs still within budget. WCC confirmed cost for Upper Welland £1,595.80 ex VAT for utility searches, materials, labour and traffic management for the two boundary signs. This excluding cost of white gates. Strap plates wording agreed. JB proposed, JEB seconded, council **approved**.
- c) Gas Lamps
  - JB advised he removed sensor and uncoupled controller for local contractor to replicate. Worcester College advised safe when gas turned gas. Council **noted** GLWG ensure they take no action to potentially invalidate contract or insurance.

### 13. Communications

- a) Council **noted** transfer from Namesco to Microsoft had caused difficulty. RP advised Namesco email accounts now turned off. JB still not online via Microsoft. Chair raised concern that IT changes were happening too fast for many. Clerk emails are trapped in Namesco archive, urgent transfer to Microsoft needed. Staff and councillors need training to use new systems. RP offered short training session at 7pm ahead of September council.
- b) Clerk notified Namesco ongoing contract charges. RP advised renew domain name. RP proposed, CO seconded, council **agreed**.
- c) RP agreed paying 'gold' contract on website has not improved service. Audit identified website not compliant. Clerk taken urgent action. Website is unwieldy, 'training' unhelpful and promised improvements not evidenced. RP proposed, JEB seconded, council **agreed** move to new website provider as Clerk's previous advice.

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At 9.30pm CO proposed, JB seconded, council **approved** Chair request to **suspend** Standing Orders to cover urgent agenda items.

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### 14. Correspondence

- a) Council **noted** request from MHT for council to make statement. Chair felt insufficient time and no unanimity within council to provide corporate statement. Council **agreed** none seen MHT proposal. JEB attended MHT meeting and could not come to clear view herself. Council **agreed** to invite new CEO Deborah Fox and Robert Berry to September council. Clerk reminded of need to raise outstanding insurance claims for gas lamp and VAS sign damaged by MHT contractors.
- b) Clerk advised S. Maund cut Hanley Rd hedges this morning. RP notified WCC portal of public concern during meeting.

### 15. Next meeting

- a) Council **noted** next Council meeting is **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September** at Malvern Wells Village Hall 7.30pm.

- b) Council **noted** JEB apologies for next meeting and consequently all other councillor's presence required for quorate meeting.
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**16. Confidential Session**

- a) PS proposed, CG seconded, council **resolved** exclusion of public and press.

**17. Finance and Governance**

- a) Council **noted** verbal update from JEB on actions taken on internal auditor report and new internal controls instigated.
- b) JEB proposed, CO seconded, council **approved** A. Dobbins accounts contract retained to end financial year.

**18. Staffing**

- a) Council **noted** Chair verbal report. JB proposed, CG seconded, council **agreed** Clerk to offer 6-month / 7 h.p.w. contract, to be invoiced monthly, on agreed terms. Contract 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> March.
- b) PS proposed, CG seconded, council unanimously **agreed** Clerk obtain payroll costs for TinL owed.

Meeting closed 10.02pm. Chair thanked councillors for their attendance.

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

