

Malvern Wells Parish Council

Minutes of full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 at 7.30pm at Malvern Wells Village Hall.

Present:

- a) Cllrs. C. O'Donnell [CO], D. Preece [DP], J. Black [JB], A. Pitt [AP], P. Stanier [PS], R. Price [RP], C. Gates [CG], S. Freeman [SF].

Absent: None.

In Attendance - Dr K Howe (Locum Clerk), Marilyn Birks [MB], Geoff Turrell [GT].

Public Participation: No requests to speak.

1. Election of chair.

- a) SF nominated, CO seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to elect Cllr. P Stanier as chair for the forthcoming year.

2. Signing of acceptance of office.

- a) New chair Cllr. P. Stanier **signed** Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
b) Newly elected councillors – Cllrs. C O'Donnell, D Preece, J. Black, A Pitt, R Price, C. Gates, S. Freeman **signed** Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms.

3. Election of vice chair.

- a) PM proposed, CO seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to elect Cllr. D. Preece as vice-chair for the forthcoming year.
b) Newly elected vice- chair Cllr. D. Preece **signed** Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

4. Apologies: there were none.

5. Declarations of Interest

- a) **Register of Interests:** there were none.
b) **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:** there were none.
c) **To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature:** there were none.
d) **Written requests for the council to grant a dispensation:** there were none.

6. Minutes

The minutes of the previous council meeting held on **26th April 2023** were proposed by CO, seconded by JDP, Council **resolved** as an accurate record and signed by the chair PS in meeting.

7. Co-option of Members

- a) Council **noted** there are total 13 seats on Malvern Wells Parish Council.
- All Saints Ward - 6 seats – 4 elected uncontested – S. Freeman, D. Preece, R. Price, P. Stanier.
 - St. Peters Ward – 7 seats – 4 elected uncontested – J. Black, C. Gates, C. O'Donnell, A. Pitt.
 - Total of 8 councillors elected – with 5 vacancies.
- b) JB proposed, DP seconded, Council **resolved** to co-opt Marilyn Birks (previous Councillor for Malvern Wells Parish Council 2023).
- c) CO proposed, JB seconded, Council **resolved** to co-opt Geoff Turrell (previous Councillor for Malvern Wells Parish Council 2022-2023).
- d) Council **noted** 3 vacancies remain (2 in St Peters Ward, 1 in All Saints Ward). CG proposed, DP seconded Council **resolved** to advertise 3 vacancies immediately. RP will

produce poster and add to website and Facebook, AP will include adverts on noticeboards at shop, school, garage. Councillors will alert friends and neighbours to vacancies.

Council **noted** eligibility for co-option, as:

(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.

8. Meeting dates

- a) CO proposed, JB seconded, Council **resolved** full Council meeting dates as approved 26th April 2023 Council meeting for new Council year.
- b) Council **noted** all Council meeting bookings with Village Hall booked except 25th October (due to clash with long standing booking). JB proposed, MB seconded, Council **resolved** to seek alternative meeting venue for 26th October – suggested All Saints Church.
- c) Council **noted** informal get together on 31st May at the Wyche, as an opportunity for councillors to share ideas and get to know each other better.

9. General Power of Competence

- a) JB proposed, CO seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to **affirm** eligibility for General Powers of Competence.

10. Governance

- a) DP proposed, JB seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to approve and **adopt** the Standing Orders for Malvern Wells Parish Council.
- b) DP proposed, JB seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to approve and **adopt** the Financial Regulations for Malvern Wells Parish Council.
- c) DP proposed, MB seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to approve and **adopt** the Complaints Policy for Malvern Wells Parish Council.
- d) Council **noted** Register of Interests forms as document circulated. Every Councillor (new and returning) **MUST** complete the form supplied and return to the Monitoring Officer by the end of May.

11. Appointments to Parish Council Committees

- a) PS proposed, DP seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to re-title Finance and General Purposes Committee as Finance and Governance Committee with Terms and References to be drafted at their first meeting. DP proposed, JB seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to **appoint** 4 members – Cllrs. M. Birks, S. Freeman, C. Gates, R. Price - with Chair [PS] and Vice Chair [DP] as ex officio members (bringing membership to 6).
- b) AP proposed, DP seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to **appoint** Cllr. M. Birks as chair to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- c) PS proposed, CO seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to **appoint** 3 members to the Staffing Committee – Cllrs. S. Freeman, C. Gates, J. Black - with Chair [PS] and Vice Chair [DP] as ex officio members bringing membership to 5).
- d) CO proposed, DP seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to **appoint** 3 members to the Appeals Committee – Cllrs. M. Birks, R. Price, G. Turrell - (Council **noted** none of Appeals Committee are appointed to serve on Staffing Committee).

12. Appointments to Working Groups

- a. Council unanimously **resolved** to defer appointment of members to the following working groups to June 28th Council meeting:
 - i. Neighbourhood Development Plan – maximum of 12; up to 6 residents/locals and 6 cllrs.

- ii. Cemetery – 3
- iii. Gas Lamps – 4
- iv. Play and Open Spaces – 6
- v. Public Rights of Way - 3
- vi. Events - 3
- vii. Fete Car Parking – 2

13. Appointments to External Committees

- a) Council unanimously **resolved** to defer appointment of members to represent Council on the following external committees to June 28th Council meeting:
 - i. Malvern Wells Village Hall Management Committee – 1
 - ii. Monitoring Group of the Three Counties Showground – 1
 - iii. CALC Malvern Hills Area Committee – 2
 - iv. Worcestershire CALC Executive Committee – 1
 - v. Wyche Institute Committee – 1

14. Financial Matters

- a) DP proposed, CO seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to **approve** the payment of accounts for 15th May as schedule circulated.
- b) Council **noted** the final March 2023 quarterly budget was not available.
- c) JB proposed, CO seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to **approve** both Chair [PS] and Vice Chair [DP] sign signature final copy of Scouts Hut lease. Council **noted** both councillors referenced signed lease on behalf of MWPC in meeting as lease document circulated.
- d) Council **noted** first Precept payment for 2023-24 of £45,709.60 had been notified as paid into current account on 1st May 2023.
- e) Council **noted** current BHIB Insurance renewal date 1.6.23 with renewal premium quoted as £1,907.54. Council **noted** Locum Clerk requested comparative quote from Zurich Insurance with annual premium quoted as £1,871.81, with 3-year term quoted at **£1,697.24 annual premium**. AP proposed, JB seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to accept Zurich Insurance 3-year term and notify BHIB accordingly. Council **noted** agreed Zurich Insurance Events cover was for up to 500 people attending any event.
- f) Council **noted** Village Hall BT Broadband disconnected by BT on 5th April. Council **noted** and considered Cllr. D. Preece verbal update on broadband provision and Ian Burrage offer for Village Hall trustees to own and manage broadband contract for Village Hall. JB proposed, RP seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to approve Village Hall trustees take out broadband contract and MWPC make £10 per month contribution. Locum Clerk to set up monthly £10 per month contribution to Village Hall trustees.
- g) Council **noted** Locum Clerk verbal report regarding lack of signatories, access to online banking and delayed payment issues impact on producing bank reconciliations and year end completion. Locum Clerk had sought advice from WCALC who recommended Ann Dobbins qualified CilCA Clerk and internal auditor to help complete year end.
 - i) Council **noted** Cllrs. G. Turrell and C. Gates not yet set up as signatories to current account (Sarah Hart in process of enacting).
 - ii) SF proposed, CO seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to appoint Ann Dobbins as consultant at £40 per hour (up to 37 hours work) to support Locum Clerk in completing year end and AGAR.
- h) Council **noted** Locum Clerk verbal report on delay to internal audit. Internal auditor Iain Selkirk can only work via post.
- i) SF proposed, CG seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to approve by delegated authority (on advice of Internal Auditor and Worcester CALC) Locum Clerk request to PKF Littlejohn (External Auditor) for extended submission for MWPC External review to 31st

July 2023 – latest legal date – due to year end and internal audit issues impacting. Council **noted** PKF Littlejohn confirmation of extension approved by email 10.5.23 as document circulated.

- j) Council **noted** need to appoint additional signatories to make payments on behalf of parish council. MB proposed, JB seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to appoint Cllr. P. Stanier as additional signatory to current account.
- k) Council **noted** Q4 bank reconciliation not available and unanimously **resolved** to defer to June 28th Council meeting.

15. Planning

- a) Council considered and **resolved** to make agreed comments on the following new application:
 - **M/23/00449/HP** - 46 Lower Wyche Road, Malvern, WR14 4ET
Construction of a Summerhouse/Shed at the topmost level of the terraced garden within the curtilage of 46 Lower Wyche Road. AP proposed, RP seconded, Council unanimously **resolved NO OBJECTION** but to echo AONB concerns regarding muted colour of blockwork construction and re-instatement of shrubs to lessen visual impact.
- b) Council **noted** Malvern Hills Planning Decisions:
 - **M/22/01715/FUL** - First Floor Flat, Bernard Lodge, 262 Wells Road, Malvern, WR14 4HD
Replacement window units within existing stone surrounds – APPROVED.
 - **M/22/01609/HP** - 20 Jasmine Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4XD
Two storey rear extension – APPROVED.

16. Staffing Matters

- a) Council **noted** Locum Clerk request WALC assess required SCP for newly combined Clerk role.
- b) SF proposed, CO seconded, Council unanimously **resolved** to appoint Chris Wayman (WALC) as contractor to re-assess new combined Clerk role at cost of £250.

17. Meeting Management

- a) Council working practices – Council unanimously **resolved** to defer item and informally discuss how decisions can be moved more quickly than can be achieved by monthly Council meetings at informal meeting on 31st May and Chair to report to Council meeting on 28th June.

18. NDP Working Group

Council **noted** verbal report from Cllr. Pitt:

- a) Cllr. M. Birks appointed as Chair of NDP.
- b) Strategy for interviewing selected consultant candidates agreed.
- c) NDP working group perceived shortage of input from both wards. Cllr. G. Turrell agreed to join NDP Working Group and MWPC councillors will encourage residents to engage with NDP.

19. Communications

- a) Council received verbal report from Cllr. A. Pitt:
 - Council **noted** MWPC website and Facebook being updated.
 - Council **noted** Newsletter is ongoing item for discussion.
 - Council **noted** artwork and wording for AONB information boards for Assarts and Village Green are being updated before production.
 - Council **noted** 'other' locations for Council meetings will be considered with available broadband access.

- b) Council **noted** Communications need to be a Working Group – item to be included in 28th June Council agenda.

20. Correspondence

- a) Council **noted** email 4.5.23. Gas lamp protection being demolished by lorries. DP is dealing with this item.
- b) Council **noted** email 4.5.23. Gas lamp outside Rock House and the Holy Well on Holywell Road not been working for over a year. Gas Lamp Working Group will investigate this item.
- c) Council **noted** email 27.4.23 via Hugo Fox telegraph pole installation corner of Wells Road and Upper Welland Road. Cllr. A. Pitt is dealing with this matter.
- d) Council **noted** email 24.4.23 via Hugo Fox regarding Malvern Wells School defibrillator. Cllr. M. Birks will deal with this item. MB reported School and Morrisons defibrillators are not registered and need to be maintained. MB will liaise with Locum Clerk using advise from her neighbour contact to administer.

At 9.30 pm Council **resolved** to suspend Standing Orders to deal with additional urgent items.

21. District and County Councillor reports

- a) Council **noted** none attending / no reports supplied.

22. Future Agenda Items

Council **noted** matters reported for future agendas:

- a) Cemetery Committee have not met this year. Locum Clerk to request BGM attend 28th June Council meeting to provide update and book Cemetery Committee meeting.
- b) Assets management – Locum Clerk to request Lengthsman attend 28th June Council meeting to provide verbal report.

23. Next meeting

Council **noted** the date of the next scheduled Council meeting is **Wednesday 28th June 7.30pm.**

Meeting closed 9.45 pm. Chair thanked all councillors for their attendance and contributions.