

Malvern Wells Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting held on **Wednesday 26th June 2024 at 7.30pm** at Malvern Wells Village Hall.

Present:

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

Public Participation:

- Ex. councillor A Pitt (AP) attending advised Malvern Hills Trust (MHT) consultation on bill closes 22nd July. Council **noted** new CEO Deborah Cox invited to attend September council meeting. AP requested minuted MWPC (as other Councils) not had time to publicly debate the proposed MHT Bill within the period of the Consultation Exercise due to short duration of Consultation Period; 22nd May to 17th July / 22nd July for paper and online responses respectively. AP requested councillors submit comments on consultation and invite Wells MHT rep. Rob Berry and Malvern Environmental Protection Group (AP will supply contact) to attend September council meeting. PM commented he was aware public feeling 'running high'. PM proposed, CO seconded, council **resolved** to invite all three to attend September council meeting.
- MOP requested councillors read MHT paper and attend the consultation session.
- AP requested Clerk minute, in his role as MWPC volunteer 'officer' he be insured to download VAS sign data loggers, present data to council and police.

1. Apologies for absence.

- a) Council **noted** apologies received from Cllr. C. Gates and **resolved** to accept.
- b) Council **noted** apologies received from Cllr. 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 noted error p.1 - amended to Malvern Town Council. RP proposed, CO seconded, Council **approved** the minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 29th May 2024. Chair signed amended copy in meeting.

4. Matters Arising:

- a) Chair **noted** need to add new 2024 Cemetery Fees and contacts to noticeboard.

5. District and County Councillor reports

- a) No report, none in attendance.

6. Governance

- a) Council **noted** re-elected Chair [PS] signed Declaration Acceptance of Office in meeting.
- b) Council **agreed** to postpone consideration of new 2024 model Financial Regulations to later meeting.
- c) Council **noted** newly published 2024 Good Councillors guide supplied in meeting pack.
- d) Council **noted** JEB accepted elected role as Chair Finance & Governance Committee.

7. Co-option of Members

- a) Council **noted** six vacancies, four resignations published, no request for election notified by 21st June by returning officer. PS proposed, CO seconded, council unanimously **resolved** to publish via Facebook, website, noticeboards and A5 flyer in All About Malvern magazine. Council **noted** edition deadlines 15th July / 23rd September and printing cost £81 for 500. MOP offered to help PS & PM to produce flyer. PM to bring draft flyer to July council meeting for approval.

8. Finance

- a) Council **noted** the outcome of the internal audit inspection 2023/24, findings and recommendations supplied in meeting pack.
- b) Council **agreed** Chair request to move item to confidential session to receive Clerk and Chair advice on Internal Audit recommendations, consider, and **approve** appropriate actions.
- c) Council checked and **agreed** requirements notified in internal audit report and Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2022/23 have been actioned.
- d) Clerk explained and gained council **confirmation** assertions in Section One AGAR correct for year ending 2023/24. MOP in attendance witnessed.
- e) Clerk explained year end documents supplied in meeting pack:
- Accounts 2023/24
 - Bank reconciliation 2023/24
 - Budget comparison to 31/3/2024
 - VAT reclaim to 31/3/2024
 - Explanation of variances 2023/24
- JB proposed, PM seconded, council unanimously **resolved** to agree financial statements and figures in Section 2 of the AGAR for 2023/24 and **authorised** Chair and Clerk to sign in meeting.
- f) PM proposed, JEB seconded, council **resolved** to set **the** period for public inspection of accounts commencing Monday 1st July and ending Friday 9th August 2024.
- g) JEB proposed, JB seconded, council **authorised** Clerk to forward the completed AGAR to the External Auditor.
- h) Council **noted**, in meeting, JEB and RP checked and signed invoices and payments supplied by Clerk. JEB queried WCALC inv. 9569 £42 (different cost). Clerk to query with WCALC, pay £36 (or £42 if confirmed) on June payments. JEB proposed, CO seconded, council **approved** June payments schedule previously circulated.

Inv. date	Supplier	Inv. no.	Amount	VAT	Total
Approved June payments:					
17.6.24	R. Mullet Internal audit	17/6	£300.00	£0.00	£300.00
17.6.24	A. Dobbins – June account	17/6	£100.00	£0.00	£100.00
18.6.24	Worcs CALC – Training J Baker - Finance	9579	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00
14.5.24	Worcs CALC – Training P Merrified Councillor	9569	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00
1.7.24	Malvern Hills DC – cemetery fortnightly bin	0618864379	£68.51	£0.00	£68.51
22.6.24	M. Thomas - cemetery	140	£561.34	£0.00	£561.34
22.6.24	Steve Maund regular & grass cutting	June 2024	£3,094	£0.00	£3,094
16.2.24	Wel Medical (previously notified) ON HOLD	1274666	£223.50	£46.69	£280.14
31.5.24	MW Fete PAID (by delegated authority 18.6.24)	31.5.24	£3,000	£0.00	£3,000
17.6.24	LGPS – pension backdated (by delegated authority 17.6.24)	LGPS/ Kendall notifications	£2,878.71	£0.00	£2,878.71
Noted June 2024 Direct Debit payments					
5.6.24	Microsoft monthly	G047919886	£10.30	£2.06	£12.36
19.6.24	Hugo Fox – website monthly	6393	£29.99	£6.00	£35.99
6.6.24	EON	K12F7C4EB5-0042	£28.19	£1.41	£29.60
15.6.24	Water Plus	Notification	£15.10	£0.00	£15.10
4.6.24	H3G – Clerk mobile phone monthly	Notification	£12.54	£3.14	£15.68
Noted June payments by Clerk Debit card:					
17.6.24	The Defib Pad – 2 x defib charge packs	1056582	£403.20	£80.64	£483.84

Noted June contract payments:			
Clerk	June 2024	Salaries, PAYE, Pension, NI	£4,654.02

- i) Council **noted** bank reconciliation to 31.5.24 previously circulated.
j) Council **noted** budget comparison to 31.5.24 previously circulated.
k) CO proposed, JB seconded, council unanimously **approved** use of reserves previously circulated.

USE OF RESERVES

USE OF RESERVES	Start of 2023/24	End of year reserves 2024	agreed use	
			2024/25 budget	balance
USE OF RESERVES	2500	2500	2500	0
USE OF RESERVES	2000	2000	2000	0
USE OF RESERVES	20000	10000		10000
USE OF RESERVES	20000	19993	19993	0
USE OF RESERVES	800	800		800
USE OF RESERVES	4000	4000	1000	3000
USE OF RESERVES	3575	3575		3575
USE OF RESERVES	800	800	800	0
USE OF RESERVES	15000	15000		15000
USE OF RESERVES	5000	5000		5000
	73675	63668	26293	37375

Additional reserves

Cemetery equipment purchase	10741	4735		4735	
Cemetery Land purchase	77000	54000	30000	24000	15k mapping, 9k speed gates, 6k defib
Community grants	900	900	800	100	
	87741	59635	30800	28835	

Earmarked Reserves at start of year

	161416	123303		66210
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General reserve

	22670	19622	12500	7122	to support precept
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Total balances	184086	142925		73332
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Council **noted** that in two years nearly £100,000 will have been spent on projects and staff costs.

This is unsustainable and the 2025/26 budget will need to be entirely funded through the precept to avoid depleting reserves still further.

- l) Council **noted** Cllr. J. Baker agreed role as signatory to Lloyds and Nat West accounts. Clerk to work with both banks to amend signatories on accounts.
m) Council **noted** JEB accepted role as new authoriser for online payments once new forms completed and approved by Lloyds and Nat West banks.

9. Planning

- a) JB proposed, PM seconded, council **resolved** NO OBJECTIONS:
- **M/24/00662/FUL** – Three Counties Showground – extension to shower block & refurbishment.
 - **M/24/005555/LB** – Malvern College – create secure lobby entrance / repurpose reception room.
- b) Council **noted** Planning decisions circulated:

- **M/24/00336/HP** – 2 Walton Mews, Hanley Rd, WR14 4PH – extension APPROVED.
- **M/24/2400494PIP** – Land at Chestnut Hill, Green Lane - 4 no. open market dwellings REFUSED.

10. Cemetery

- a) Council **noted** Committee Chair written report from meeting 29th May. PM recommended council has duty of care to offer information to rough sleeper on homeless shelter. Council requested S. Maund monitor, advise committee if pattern develops. Clerk notified urgent contract for removal of excess soil from graves, work to be undertaken next week now ground sufficiently dry. PS proposed, JB seconded, council **approved** cost of £190 & VAT.
- b) Council **noted** PS explanation Cemetery mapping / record digitalisation proposal and quotation circulated to produce up to date admin and public access records. Cemetery Committee currently seeking comparative proposals / quotations. MOP mentioned 'billion graves website'. PM noted quotation supplied was 'reasonable' cost given his knowledge of costs of geo mapping services.
- c) Council **noted** Cemetery Waste Transfer Licence renewed to 2026.

11. Community Events (CEWG)

- a) Council **noted** update from RP & Chair. CEWG now have own bank account and £3,000 approved grant has been paid.
- b) Council **noted** CEWG holding meeting on Monday to confirm stalls.

12. Open Spaces (OSWG)

- a) Council **noted** previously circulated ROSPA Playground Inspection report completed by S. Maund, no new issues or urgent actions required.
- b) Council **noted** RP will bring report and recommendations to September meeting.
- c) Council **noted** new noticeboard ordered for Assarts playpark, delivery 6 weeks. RP proposed, CO seconded, council **approved** cost be covered by Wilcock legacy (see later item Communications).

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

13. Working Groups

- a) Defibrillators
- Council **noted** replacement pads and charge stick units for Primary School and Wyche Institute installed.
 - In public session, ex. councillor A Pitt advised he had located defib mounting bracket and clips in Cemetery Chapel, but post required from JACS at cost of £106 and S. Maund to install. Heartstart will provide cabinet and defib FOC.
 - Council **noted** Chair advice that project on hold until urgent finance and governance matters administered.
- b) Traffic Calming (TCWG)
- Council **agreed** David Hunter-Miller (DHT) update on this item at start of meeting to limit his time.
 - With MWPC agreement DHT is meeting with MHT tomorrow to obtain final approval on new proposals. Advised timescale to enact for Upper Welland is 4 months and bespoke signage 9 months. DHT advised visual road markings 'Dragon's Teeth' be requested on approach to speed limit changes as can't have gates, he will obtain quote. JB proposed new recommendations, JEB seconded, council **resolved** when approval confirmed project enacted. Clerk thanked DHT and TCWG. DHT confirmed he will take lead and advise Clerk accordingly.
- c) Gas Lamps (GLWG)

Council **noted** JB verbal update:

- Lamp no.37 (Rock House) lights on Holywell Rd disconnected by Centrica 18 months ago during work and failed to reconnect no.37 to circuit. Supply pipe has been replaced, lamp still there but adaptor and connector missing. Centrica need to replace it. JB checking previous correspondence with Centrica. Lamp no.37 is manually controlled. Pippa Bourne (resident) offered to be lamp lighter.
- Bulk of lamps electronically driven with sensors. Franklyn Air advised replacement parts difficult to obtain and expensive, leave on permanently as sensors (photocells) not working, but understandably causing public concern and complaints. GLWG do not agree with this advice. Local contractor providing wiring diagram and test set to test each lamp sensor to identify how many sensors required.

Franklyn Air specialise in Suggs (MW don't have Suggs). GLWG looking to split contract between electronics and gas safe contractors.

- Council **noted** vandalism still occurring, ball bearings being shot at glass lamps.

14. Communications (CWG)

- a) Council **noted** RP verbal update:
 - Council emails – RP advised he is now migrating all from webmail to Microsoft. Namesco contract will be discontinued 18th July. All councillors need to exclusively use @malvernwells-pc.gov.uk email.
 - Noticeboards – Council **noted** new Assarts board ordered, 6 weeks delivery, £812.79 (not in 2024/25 budget). Clerk advised of Wilcock legacy correspondence with solicitor approving use for noticeboard. CO proposed, RP seconded, council **approved** bequest pay for noticeboard.
 - Allotments request – RP advised Facebook requests for allotments as residents in Malvern Wells can't go on Malvern Town council waiting list. CO and JB reported council have previously investigated at length and there is no land available in MW parish.
- b) Website - Clerk again advised Parish Online and other 'ready to go' websites. RP proposed, JEB seconded, council **resolved** Clerk to obtain quotes, RP to assess and advise council.

15. Correspondence

- a) Council **noted** legacy £1,000 from estate of the late Mrs Freda Ann Wilcock, approved use agreed under item 14. Council **requested** Clerk write to thank family for bequest.
- b) Council **noted** Clerk's ongoing communication with new CEO Malvern Hills Trust to attend MWPC September council meeting.

16. Next meeting

- a) Council **noted** next Council meeting is **Wednesday 31st July** at Malvern Wells Village Hall 7.30pm.
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17. Confidential Session

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

18. Finance and Governance

- a) Council **noted** Clerk report and PS verbal update on internal audit recommendations. PS proposed, JEB seconded, council **resolved** F&G Committee meet 11th July to agree recommendations and robust controls to notify external auditor and July council meeting.

19. Staffing

- a) Council **noted** PS verbal report (and apologies from Chair Staffing Committee). JB proposed, JEB seconded, council unanimously **approved** recommendations on confidential matter advised and additional staffing to cover ongoing workload and legacy issues.

Meeting closed 10.37pm. Chair thanked councillors for their attendance.

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