

Malvern Wells Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting held on **Wednesday 25th October 2023 at 7.30pm** at Malvern Wells Village Hall.

Present:

- a) Cllrs. P. Stanier (Chair), J. Black [JB], S. Freeman [SF], R. Price [RP], C. Gates [CG], M. Birks [MB], A. Pitt [AP], C O'Donnell [CO], G. Lowe [GL], P. Merrifield [PM].
- b) **Absent:** none notified.
- c) **In Attendance** - Dr K Howe (Locum Clerk), Cllr. J. Gallagher (District Councillor), 6 Members of public (MOP's).

Public Participation:

- MOP introduced himself / advised on speed reduction measures and potential funding available. He is keen to support setting up MWPC Speed Signage Working Group.

1. Apologies for absence:

- a) GT notified – late arrival. Later notified tested positive Covid unable to attend – council **accepted** apology.

2. Declarations of Interest

- a) None further notified.

3. Minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 27th September 2023. CG proposed, JB seconded, Council unanimously **resolved**. Chair signed in meeting.

4. Matters Arising from above:

- a) None notified.

5. Councillor Co-option

- a) Council **noted** two new councillors accepted co-option invitation.
- b) GM and PM welcomed by Chair and council. Both **signed** Declaration of Acceptance of Office in meeting.

6. Malvern Hills Trust presentation

- a) Council **received** MHT candidate's presentations:
 - Robert Berry presented conservation ethic of candidature.
 - John Stock presented land management ethic of candidature.
- b) Council **noted** Q&A responses from both candidates. Council **noted** CEO Duncan Berry will be pleased to attend November council meeting before he formally departs MHT.

7. Finance

- a) Council **received** report from Chair of Finance & Governance (F&G) Committee following meeting held on 25.10.23 (minutes to be supplied at November meeting). F&G Chair alerted council to committee concerns on current signatories to reserve accounts and taking urgent action to obtain control by current signatories. F&G members attending training on Investment of Funds and following will make recommendations to council November meeting.
- b) Council **noted** F&G Committee September meeting minutes circulated.
- c) Council considered, CG proposed, MB seconded council **approved** amended F&G Committee Terms of Reference.
- d) Council **noted** F&G committee had considered. MB will revise draft Grant application policy to include clear criteria – who can apply / when / how / evidence use of grant. MB will bring to council for consideration / approval at November meeting.
- e) JB proposed, CG seconded, council **resolved** to change primary contact and business address on Lloyd's bank account to Interim Clerk and MWPC registered PO Box.

- f) CG and PS **signed** Lloyd's bank change primary contact and business address form. AP to take form to GT to co-sign and supply to Interim Clerk. Interim Clerk to hand in revised mandate to Lloyd's bank in person following receipt.
- g) Council **noted** BT broadband refund of £965.47 received in Lloyds current account following Village Hall contract cancellation.
- h) Council **noted** Lloyd's current acc. bank reconciliation closing balance £25,959.67.
- i) Council **noted** updated budget report to 13.10.23.
- j) MB proposed, JB seconded, Council **approved** October payments as notified.

8. Staffing

Interim Clerk left meeting during item. Council **noted** update on permanent Clerk recruitment from Chair of Staffing:

- a) 5 candidates shortlisted will be interviewed 31st October by Staffing Committee.
- b) Linda Blake will support administration of interviews and recruitment of new permanent Clerk as approved by council at September meeting.
- c) Staffing Committee 'preferred' candidate to be recommended to November council meeting and requested to attend for council to meet. Council will be asked to consider 'preferred' candidate and approve contract details if appointment agreed.

9. Training

CG proposed, PM seconded, council unanimously **approved** costs incurred by Chair / Clerk's delegated authority:

- a) Interim Clerk Hugo Fox website training – 17th October – no cost - included in Gold package.
- b) Interim Clerk – Scribe Internal Audit training – 19th October – free webinar.
- c) F&G committee attendance WALC seminar - Investment of Funds (£30 per participant) attending - Interim Clerk, MB, SF.
- d) AONB Webinar 28th November Interim Clerk and AP have accepted invitation. No cost.

10. Planning

a) JB proposed, AP seconded, council **resolved** agreed comments on the following applications. Interim Clerk to upload to Planning portal.

- **M/23/01406/HP** - Thornton, 131 Wells Road, Malvern, WR14 4PD.

NO OBJECTION with comments - this looked more like a NEW application rather than re-submission.

No objection based on:

Evidence submitted - it will not be visible from road / public realm.

If approved - suggest requires 'no reflective glass'.

Conservation and environmental issues be fully investigated.

- **M/23/01348/HP** - Mulberry House, 229 Wells Road, Malvern, WR14 4HF

NO OBJECTION with comments - If on-site inspection the case officer is satisfied the large structure does not unduly affect the amenity of the neighbour.

- **M23/01378/HP** 11 The Crescent, Malvern Wells

NO OBJECTION with comments:

Dormer window on front elevation appears 'out of keeping' with surrounding elegant line of bungalows overlooking village green. Believe this will set a precedent with significant detrimental impact to 'street scape' / public realm.

Proposed sky lantern appears 'out of keeping' with dark skies initiative - suggest requires automatic blinds to prevent light pollution.

b) Council **noted** MHDC planning decisions:

- **M/23/01006/HP** - The White Cottage, 260 Wells Road, Malvern, WR14 4HD
Single-storey side extension **APPROVED**.

c) Council **noted** Planning Appeal:

- **21/02130/FUL** - Land at (OS 7721 4202) Holywell Road Malvern
Proposed, low energy, new Self Build Two Bedroom House on existing Garden/wooded area, on land adjacent to Benhomle.

11. Communications

a) Notice boards

Council **received** update from Chair Communications Working Group and **noted**:

There are currently 7 noticeboards – onerous / expensive / not ecofriendly to update all.

AP proposed, CO seconded, council **approved**:

- Retain 3 best located noticeboards for legal publication. Councillors will adopt in their area to administer – Village Hall (PS) / Morrison's (AP) / Fruitlands (SF).
- S Maund to select best of surplus notice boards and refurbish – install best at Cemetery and retain one as spare.
- SF has now been supplied with keys for the Village Hall from AP.
- Council questioned does Wyche School noticeboard belongs to school? GL to investigate and report.

b) Website

Council **noted** update from RP for Communications working group:

- Interim Clerk received training on website via Hugo Fox. RP will seek training separately.
- PS proposed, CG seconded, council **resolved** RP to pay update to Namesco domain name using his credit card, obtain invoice to MWPC and claim expense.

Chair formally suspended Standing Orders at 9.30pm council **agreed** meeting to continue due to urgent meeting matters notified to be approved.

Council **noted** CO left meeting at 9.30pm.

12. Parish Assets

Fruitlands bus shelter

- a) Council **noted** MB alerted in need of repair. Interim Clerk confirmed parish asset. SF proposed, PS seconded, council **approved** Clerk delegated authority to S Maund to repair roof and smarten appearance. Costs to be notified.

Defibrillators

a) Council **noted** verbal update from MB and report circulated:

- MB / S Maund survey of 3 defibrillators currently owned by MWPC (replace defib at CofE School/ replace pads & batteries at Wyche Institute & Morrisons). Estimated cost £2,200. JB proposed, CG seconded, council **approved** reported costs.
- Training in partnership with Heartstart – recording good attendance rates. Costs £200 estimated.
- MB will produce Parish Defibrillator map and maintenance system for use by S Maund.

b) Council **noted** MB made application for Dept. of Health defibrillator fund, including new defibrillators for Green Lane & Rothwell Rd. JB proposed, SF seconded, council **approved** application.

c) Fruitlands defibrillator. MB notified ready to install with agreed power source use from Worcs. Council. JB proposed, PM seconded, council **approved** actions / related costs notified.

Visual Advice Speed (VAS) signage

a) Council **noted verbal** update and report circulated from MB:

- JB alerted MWPC have speed data previously collected by Highways. RP proposed, CG seconded, council **resolved** to set up Speed Signage working group comprising MWPC councillors AP, MB, PM and MOP as member. MB to chair.

b) RP proposed, CG seconded, council **approved** delegated authority to MB, MWPC pay for maintenance and re-siting of VAS sign, M. Victory to pay new VAS sign and installation on Green Lane/Wells Rd/ Hanley Road triangle.

Speed signage / White Gates Traffic Calming

- a) Council **noted** MOP report suggesting 3 locations and costs for white gates and speed signs.

- b) CG proposed, JB seconded, council **approved** relevant actions / estimated costs / funding application notified.

13. Gas Lamps

- a) Council **noted** update from Gas Lamps Working Group (GLWG) following meeting held 5/10/23.
- b) Council considered, SF proposed, JB seconded, council **approved** recommendations from GLWG:
- Current Franklyn Air contract expensive but continue for current year.
 - Annual maintenance contractors on site w/c 27/11.
 - S Maund will be trained during this work programme on basic maintenance issues.
 - Cracked lamps will be replaced FOC.
 - GLWG to examine options 2&3 suggested.
 - Gas lamps are listed, how illuminated not specified.
 - MWPC has responsibility for carbon footprint.
 - Consider efficacy of illumination of pavements.
- c) PM accepted, SF proposed, JB seconded, council **approved** his appointment to GLWG.
- d) SF proposed, CG seconded, council **approved** updated Terms of Reference recommended by GLWG.
- e) Council noted and **approved** draft minutes of GLWG held on 5th October.

Council **noted** GL left meeting at 10.25pm.

14. Cemetery

- a) Council **noted** Cemetery Committee meeting date still to be agreed.
- b) Council **noted** Cemetery Committee to draft new terms of reference and delegated authority to be approved by Council at future meeting.
- c) Council **noted** Cemetery Committee to appoint a councillor as Committee Chair at their next Committee meeting.
- d) Council **noted** cemetery memorial safety check report (previously circulated). Some red alert items identified. Cemetery Committee to consider at their agreed meeting.
- e) Council **noted** Interim Clerk currently administering burial, ashes plot purchase, burial plot purchase and memorial installations using new documentation supplied by Ann Dobbins.
- f) Council **noted** Martin Thomas correspondence regarding recovery and re-start.

15. Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

- a) Council **received** update from NDPWG Chair AP.
- b) Council **noted** PM will check Invitation to Tender (ITT) for compliance with Gov. contract tendering protocol before circulation. AP proposed, JB seconded, council **resolved** to approve amended ITT for NDP Consultant to produce revised NDP. Chair thanked AP for all his work.
- c) Council **noted** NDP questionnaire survey response.

16. Events

- a) Council **noted** items deferred from September meeting due to weight of business.
- b) Council **noted** update on Carols 2022 & Fete 2023 from Ian & Helen Burrage.
- c) Council **noted** retirement of Helen Burrage from Events sub-committee and thanked her for long-term service.
- d) Council **noted** AP's Fete community survey responses - 40% of visitors to Fete are not Malvern Wells residents. Originally envisaged Fete be run by residents and MWPC pay for it. Council **noted** need to reinvigorate approach / set up team to manage all events including Christmas Carols and Remembrance Parade. JB proposed, SF seconded, council **resolved** that events should be organised by separately constituted community events group (to limit costs impacting paid Clerk time) with Cllr. R Price as Chair of Community Events Working Group. Community Events Group (CEG) to undertake all administration / make payments from own financial resources to reduce administration / enable more responsive payments.
- e) Council noted need to **agree** grant to CEG in 2024/25 budget.

- f) Council **noted** minutes and report of Events Sub Committee with revised costings and accounts for Fete supplied by Ian Burrage.
- g) Council **noted** no new events items notified.
- h) Council **noted** update on arrangements for Remembrance Sunday.
- i) Council **approved** Chair recommendation no requirement for Interim Clerk to attend the Remembrance event. Councillors **agreed** roles:
 - CG and AP to hand deliver letters to residents informing of road closures.
 - Chair will contact Vicar to agree procedure for service.
 - Road closure applied for awaiting Traffic Order – AP to display when received.
 - AP, MB, S Maund - personnel for road closure barriers – all have high vis jackets.
- j) Council **noted** arrangements for Christmas:
 - Tree ordered / lights installation arranged.
- k) Council considered management of Christmas events and **approved**:
 - Carol service will be organised by JB.
 - JB will order Village Hall Christmas Tree - invoice to MWPC, send to Clerk for payment.

17. Forward Plan

- a) Council **noted** MB update on meeting with Community Builder to encourage community cohesion in geographically disparate parish.
- b) Council **noted** to capture new ideas and agree priorities for council aims and objectives to inform 2024-25 plan and budget.

18. Tree Warden Scheme

- a) Council **noted** correspondence from Worcs. County Council:
 - 3 cherry trees on Village Green are dying / need replacing.
 - PM will ask Norman Nimmo-Smith to consider expanding his role from Footpaths Officer to become Malvern Wells Environmental Officer.

19. Correspondence

- a) Council **noted** complaint regarding youth activity on Assarts Playing Field:
 - PM will forward original resident letter to AP.
 - AP keeping 'watching eye' on Assarts playing field to report if required.

20. District and County Councillor reports

Council **noted** John Gallagher verbal report:

- Malvern Hills Rural Fund 50% match funding closing imminently.
- District Council upgraded website should also cover planning matters.
- Benbow Close salt bins – discussed with County Council and visited resident. Confirmed 2 owned by Worc. CC, 3rd bin buried in bank and unkempt. JG will work with Malcolm Victory to move good bin to location of damaged one.

21. Matters for future agendas.

- b) Website upgrade
- c) Fruitlands

22. Next meeting

- a) Council **noted** date of next scheduled Council meeting as **Wednesday 29th November 2023** at Malvern Wells Village Hall 7.30pm.
- b) Council **noted** revised scheduled date of Council meeting as **Monday 22nd January 2024** at Malvern Wells Village Hall 7.30pm.

Meeting closed at 11.10 pm. Chair thanked councillors for their attendance.

Signed Chair of Council Date