

Chairman of MHDC writes letter to Manchester

The Chairman of Malvern Hills District Council, Councillor Chris O'Donnell, has written to the Mayor of Greater Manchester following the appalling terrorist attack that occurred on Monday 22 May.

In the letter to the recently elected Mayor, Andy Burnham, Councillor O'Donnell writes:

“We are writing to express our deepest sympathies after hearing the devastating news of the recent terror attack at Manchester Arena. “It is inspiring to see the countless acts of bravery and kindness throughout Manchester as they stand together and strong through this difficult time. “We offer our sincere condolences and support, and our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, and the families and friends who have lost loved ones.” Published 24/05/2017

Parking charges to remain frozen

Increasing charges in Malvern Hills District Council's car parks has been ruled out as part of a series of measures to support the local economy. A group of councillors and officers have been reviewing the way car parking operates across the district to ensure it meets the priorities set out in the council's new Car Parking Strategy. These include improving the availability of safe, good quality car parking, improving traffic flow, supporting towns and businesses and ensuring a fair return for Council Taxpayers. The group found there was no case for increasing charges at the current time, meaning visitors to and residents living in Malvern Hills District will continue to pay the lowest parking prices in Worcestershire. A series of recommended changes have been made that will now be put out to a 12-week public consultation, following approval by the council's Executive Committee on 20 June 2017. These include making the Council House car park in Avenue Road a 24 hour pay and display car park, which would increase the number of spaces available in the town centre area. It is also proposed the £1.50 evening charge should begin two hours earlier starting at 4pm and running until 8am the next morning, rather than the current 6pm to midnight, to help support the night-time economy. New Street Car Park in Upton-upon-Severn is in line to become a short stay car park, while the one hour charge in all long stay car parks will be removed. Public parking will no longer be allowed at Brunel House Car Park and charges may be introduced at Malvern Vale Community Centre Car Park to stop unauthorised use. The group has also recommended lobbying Worcestershire County Council for improvements to disabled and coach parking and on-street parking regulations in Great Malvern to make them easier to understand. If approved, it is hoped the changes will help generate an extra £70,000 a year for the council to support efforts to fill a £1.45million gap in its budget by 2021/2022. The findings of the public consultation will be reported back to the Executive Committee later for a final decision.

The consultation runs until 5pm on Monday, 11 September 2017. People can have their say by visiting www.malvern hills.gov.uk/en/public-notices-consultations and following the instructions. Or comments can be emailed to communityservices@malvern hills.gov.uk with 'Parking Order' in the subject heading.

Funding available for enterprising new businesses

Budding entrepreneurs and new businesses are being urged to attend a special clinic that will help them to grow and be successful. Taking place on Thursday 6 July, from 9.30am until 4pm at Malvern Hills Science Park, the session aims to guide businesses through the process of applying for a Start-up and Early Stage Business Grant.

Worcestershire Business Central will be hosting the clinic, in partnership with Malvern Hills District Council and other Worcestershire district councils.

The Enterprising Worcestershire Start-up and Early Stage Business Grant is in place to provide support to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) as they start up and look to grow their business and realise their potential, and is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

Businesses that are eligible for the grant will have access to funding between £1,000 and £5,000, awarded on a match funded basis, to use towards the capital and revenue expenditure required to grow their business.

This means that if a business is looking to spend £2,000 on things like equipment, machinery, fixtures and fittings, website construction, consultancy, logo design or software – they can apply for a grant of £2,000, which would mean they have £4,000 to spend on these things.

David Chambers, Leader of Malvern Hills District Council, said: “The clinic is a brilliant opportunity for new businesses to find out how they can apply for funding that could take them to the next stage in their development. It is also good to have businesses that are looking to grow and create jobs in the area.”

The grant is open to SME businesses and start-up enterprises in Worcestershire that have been trading for less than 36 months prior to the date the application is received.

The enterprise must be trading, or if a start-up intending to trade, and the trade must be 70% business-to-business.

The enterprise must create 36 hours or more employment per week for the applicant.

To book a slot at the clinic telephone 01905 677888 or email info@business-central.co.uk.

Experiment with Science in the Park

A chance to hunt for dinosaurs, use pedal power to generate electricity and take a closer look at sun spots will be some of the activities on offer as part of a free science-themed fun day.

Malvern Science in the Park takes place on Saturday, 1 July between 10.30am and 4.30pm in Priory Park. The event aims to promote the wonders of science, technology, engineering and mathematics through a series of interactive experiments and games.

Activities include the chance to hunt out the prehistoric creatures hiding in the park as part of a special dinosaur trail and the opportunity to have a ride on an energy bike in a bid to power various household appliances.

There will be science-related dance workshops to take part in, stories about the history of medicines, opportunities to blow giant bubbles, launch mini rockets and the chance to get a closer look at sun spots with Worcester Astronomical Society.

Cllr David Chambers, Leader of Malvern Hills District Council and portfolio holder for economic development, said: "There is overwhelming evidence that the earlier a child engages with the wonders of science the better the educational and career outcomes in later life. Malvern is the home of scientific innovation, and we want to support our young people to be part of the inventions and discoveries of tomorrow."

New Councillors in Malvern Hills District Council

David Chambers	Leader of Council (includes economic development portfolio)
Melanie Baker	Deputy Leader of Council Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure
Jeremy Owenson	Portfolio Holder for Policy, Governance and Localism
Bronwen Behan	Portfolio Holder for the Environment
James O'Donnell	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources
David Watkins	Portfolio Holder for Healthier Communities

To see more please visit

<https://www.malvernhills.gov.uk/documents/10558/125552/Executive+portfolio+Holders+A3+2017+JUNE1.pdf/e699dc-d4-59a3-f90c-0c9c-c8fcfe2591b5>

New walking app launched

Exploring the district is now even easier thanks to the launch of a new mobile phone walking app. The MalvernsWalks app contains various routes people can download and follow including the hills and town walks in Malvern, Tenbury Wells and Upton upon Severn. The app is also equipped with GPS tracking so people can see where they are on the route and get information on key landmarks. Malvern Hills District Council's Economic Development team has been working with local developer Mike Brooks to produce the app. Joel Keller, Economic Development Officer for Malvern Hills District Council, said: "People often come into the TIC requesting walking routes in the area and while we have leaflets available the walks can change over time. "The app means people can download the various routes at their own convenience, we can update them as needed and it becomes a much more interactive experience." The app is free to download for both iOS and Android from the Google Play or Apple App stores.

Get connected in Malvern Town

Malvern Hills District Council is now offering free Wi-Fi to all customers at Great Malvern Tourist Information Centre (TIC). Getting connected onto its free Wi-Fi will boost visitor experience, and give instant access to a whole range of fascinating and essential local information day and night. MHDC said: "We are delighted to be able to offer free Wi-Fi to visitors and residents alike at Malvern TIC. This is part of our aim to enhance our offer at the TIC to help customers access the information they need and ultimately to encourage longer stays and increase visitor spend in the area." "We are also using this as an opportunity to see if there is interest and take-up of free public Wi-Fi in Great Malvern town centre." Free Wi-Fi coverage extends outside of the TIC in Great Malvern town centre and onto Belle Vue Island. To get connected select "_Malvern TIC Wi-Fi" on your mobile device and log in. MHDC will monitor the usage of the service and if there is sufficient demand too to extend coverage.