

Eastham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Eastham Parish Council
held in Eastham Memorial Hall at 7.30pm on Tuesday 23 January 2024

Present: Cllr Arnold (Chairman), Cllr Matravers, Cllr B Lewis, Cllr S Ward, Cllr Worsley

In Attendance Clerk , District Councillor A Willmott and 1 member of Public

1. **Apologies** - Cllr Adams - accepted and agreed by all.
2. **Declarations of Interest:**
 - a. Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded to keep their Register of Interests updated.
 - b. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:
 - c. Other Disclosable Interests: As received previously
3. **Dispensations:**
 - a. To consider written requests from Councillors for the Council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011)
 - b. **Dispensations requested** – Dispensations as received. – none received

Meeting Adjourned

The Meeting will be adjourned for Public Question Time:

The time allocated is at the discretion of the Chairman. Residents are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chairman. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council Meeting itself. This period is not part of the formal meeting; brief notes will be appended to the minutes as an aide memoir.

Meeting Resumed

4. **Reports from County Councillor D Chambers and District Councillor L Bruton**, had been received and are included at the end of the minutes. District Councillor A Willmott present at meeting and gave report.
Notes of: The Bridge sustained damage during flooding by a vehicle turning.
Mention of flooding impact at Eastham and along A443, Closure signage and ignoring of signs. How to alleviate problems – to be taken up with WCC and Highways
Applefest mention of traffic issues on the day
5. **Minutes** – Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 28 November 2023 , were agreed by all, Resolved and signed by the Chair Cllr Arnold
6. **Co-option of Cllr** – No applications have been received. Notice of Co-option had been sent to Teme Talk
7. **Finance**
 - a. **Payments to be made**, – C Bunn (LM) £189 & £157.50 ; CALC training by Clerk £36 ; Agreed by all , resolved.
 - b. **Receipts received** - WCC LM Scheme £ 196.87
 - c. **Bank Reconciliation** - 4 Jan 2024, Balance of £18,086.28 ; All Agreed, Resolved - documents signed.
 - d. **Finance report** – Budget report circulated and agreed by all.
 - e. **Laptop** – Agreed to £40 +VAT to be spent on existing Laptop
 - f. **Notice Board** – deferred to next meeting
8. **Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting** – None
9. **Planning**
 - a. Plans received since last meeting – None
 - b. Decisions received since last meeting – M23/01511/FUL – approved - EMVH
 - c. Plans for consideration at the meeting – none received
10. **Road Report – LM update** - Check with LM on any issues
11. **Progress Reports/ updates**
 - a. **Pipers Brook Road/Kerbs** – email received from highways awaiting visit. Potholes have developed and Gravel still

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on Road. To be reported to Highways on Website.

- b. **EMVH – Green Area edging** - Drop kerbs; matting to be followed up by Councillor
- c. **Road Closures/Works** - Severn Trent will be closing road
- d. **Footpath EH611 Closure – notice received 29 Dec 23 for 21 days** - due to footbridge sustaining tree damage. Whole length of footpath is closed.

12. **Reports on any Meeting attended by Clerk or Councillors** - Clerk attended Training and also the Clerks monthly Gathering
13. **Correspondence for Information: as circulated to Councillors** - RSN Weekly Newsletter, RSN Monthly Digest; PPC Survey; Worcestershire CALC; One Network; CALC WCC Natural NetWorks; HSWF&R; LGBC.
14. **Correspondence for discussion**
 - a. Police Charter Contract Review – actions as previously noted – all agreed
 - b. **LGBC Review by 24.03.24** - individuals can give a review
 - c. **HWF&R Service Review by 04.03.24** - individuals can give a review
 - d. **WCC Natural NetWorks** - noted have to be the landowner or in agreement with Landowner
 - e. **Biodiversity** – deferred to next meeting
15. **Councillor’s reports and items for the next agenda** – Progress report for River Flooding & Bridge on next meeting Agenda
16. **Confirm date of next meeting** Tuesday 26 March 2024 at 7.30pm Eastham Village Memorial Hall and future dates for the year 28 May, 30 July, 24 Sept, 26 Nov, 21 Jan 2025, 25 Mar 2025.
17. **Meeting closed at 8.05 pm**

Signed-----

Date

Chairman

Public Question Time – No questions were raised

County Councillor Report, January 2024

1. The County Council, like virtually all other local authorities, is experiencing increasing costs in general and in three expenditure areas in particular. Adult Social Care, Child Care Placements and Home To School Transport are seeing costs escalate, resulting in budget pressures which the Cabinet are addressing as a priority.

The Council is determined to not only maintain key services but to continue to provide the enhanced services which it has committed to do. It doesn't help when the government fail to maintain council grants in line with inflation and limit the increases that Council Tax can be increased by each year. For example, the Chancellor of the Exchequer can increase national taxes at will, to ensure "a balanced national budget", but local authorities are limited to a 3% rise in Council Tax each year, at a time when inflation has been running at over 10%.

- There is also a 2% increase which is ring fenced for Adult Social Care.

I will keep you updated as the Council prepares its Budget for 2024/25.

2. The County Council has secured £1.1million to help speed up hospital discharges, boost social care provision and prevent avoidable hospital admissions. Local Councils with Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) and identified by NHS England as experiencing challenges with urgent and emergency care, were invited to put forward proposals for access to a £40million government fund. Worcestershire County Council were successful and will use the additional money to buy more services aimed at keeping people out of hospital as well as more packages for care at home
3. A new bursary to aid young people with special education needs or disabilities is being made available by the County Council. The £1,000 Supported Internship Bursary will be for those partaking in the Supported Internship Programme. The fund will aid learners in acquiring work essentials such as PPE, uniforms, IT equipment and travel support.
The Supported Internship Bursary demonstrates the County Council's determination to fostering the growth and development of the county's future workforce and championing employment inclusion.

David Chambers County Councillor, Tenbury Division

Cllr Lesley Bruton (Tenbury Ward)

Malvern Hills District Council Report (January 2024)

Home Upgrade Grant Scheme

Free home improvements are available to residents in Worcestershire.

Worcestershire County Council has received Government funding as part of the drive to save energy and make homes warmer.

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The Home Upgrade Grant scheme (HUGs) is designed to tackle colder homes that do not have mains gas central heating. Homeowners and tenants in Worcestershire could benefit from a variety of measures to help reduce energy bills including internal and external wall insulation, loft and cavity wall insulation, air source heat pumps, solar panels, draught proofing and many more. To qualify, households must not use mains gas to heat their home, and have a gross annual income of less than £31,000 with a current Home Energy Performance certificate (EPC) rating of D to G.

Funding is also available for landlords in the charity and private rented sector.

Those who qualify for the scheme, will undergo a free technical survey to see which improvements would be most suitable and help improve energy efficiency the most.

Worcestershire County Council is working in partnership with local energy charity Act on Energy, along with Redditch Borough Council, Bromsgrove, Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils to deliver this programme.

For more information, including full eligibility, visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/home-upgrade-grant-scheme-hug2

Community Projects

There are four projects on Malvern Hills Crowdfund page that are currently raising funds and need help reaching their target.

- Kyrebrook Daycare Centre in Tenbury is hoping to raise £37k to launch a new friendship and lunch club giving socially isolated people the chance to make new friends and connect with old ones.
- Martley Cricket Club is hoping to raise £118k to create a new Sports and Cricket Pavilion for the Martley Community.
- Maggs Day Centre is hoping to raise £45k to provide outreach workers that will engage with rough sleepers and help them gain accommodation.
- Newtown Sports CP and PAN Disability Football Club is hoping to raise over £2.8k to expand their football club to disabled children within Malvern and the surrounding area.

Visit <https://www.malvernhills.gov.uk/community/connected-communities/crowdfunding> to find out more information. Please share this with residents, donations can be as little as £2.00.

Signage Review

Following on from a signage review commissioned last year, Malvern Hills District Council is working with Worcestershire County Council to improve road and pedestrian signage. A comprehensive programme of works to declutter and improve existing signage is underway with Tenbury area to be completed by January 2025.

Create a Coronation Community Orchard

Local communities could receive up to £10,000 towards the cost of a Coronation Community Orchard through a new tree planting grant.

Between £200 and £10,000 is available to support the creation of community orchards within the district, including costs for trees, protection, fencing and installation. The aim of the fund is for local community orchard creation projects to provide a lasting commemoration of the Coronation year, and to further the King's lifelong work conserving the natural environment.

The Government has provided a total of £2.5m in funding to local governments, through The Coronation Living Heritage Fund (CLHF), which celebrates the coronation of King Charles III and supports tree planting projects across England.

Malvern Hills District Council is inviting applications from groups including schools, residents' associations, community groups, charities, businesses and parish/town councils to create community orchards on private or public land, which provide community access and engagement opportunities.

Please visit www.malvernhills.gov.uk/clhf for further information about the grant, selection criteria and how to apply.

Paperless Bills

More than 9,000 households in the Malvern Hills District already receive their annual Council Tax demand by email but thousands of people are still receiving paper copies, even though going digital (if possible) is a faster and more convenient option.

Those who switch to e-billing will get their bill and other related communication, faster and will also be helping the environment by reducing their carbon footprint. Residents who have opted to be contacted by text or email will receive messages asking them to make the switch. The message will come from Malvern Hills District Council and contain a link people will be asked to click. Once clicked, they will be taken to a page which asks people to confirm they want to sign up from e-billing, asks then for their email address and their Council Tax number. Anyone who has not previously provided the Council with their email or phone number, can still sign up for e-billing by visiting www.malvernhills.gov.uk/council-tax-and-benefits

Rural Business Survey

The Malvern Hills District Council Economy Panel are keen to understand the specific issues and challenges faced by businesses across the rural Lavern Hills district. In order to collate feedback a short online survey has been developed and anyone who considers that they are a rural business is encouraged to complete the survey (deadline 31st January 2024). Please see the link <https://www.malvernhills.gov.uk/about-your-council/public-notice-and-consultations>

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Andrew Willmott

District Councillor Tenbury Ward

Report on Items of Interest 22 January 2024

Flood Defences, Tenbury Wells

Another near miss for the Town. The Environment Agency trundles on and we have a few years of risk for the Town before Scheme completion. A big flood in the meantime and various businesses have announced they will leave or fold - they can no longer get insurance.

The recently announced Government Flood Recovery Framework could give a flood-hit Tenbury business up to £2,500. I have talked to one local business where their recovery sum from the 2007 flood was over one hundred times that. I have written to our MP asking her to lobby for Government backed flood insurance for the premises designated to be covered in the Tenbury Flood Relief Scheme until the Scheme is completed.

Planning. MHDC

MHDC's performance reporting highlights problems in Planning. Starting in May, I asked for data on the Department's productivity, some months later this was confirmed as unavailable. I have asked for a summary of what Planning considers are the problems, I await a reply. The matter of Planning was raised at the last full Council Meeting with no admission of a problem. The next stage in the Flood Relief Scheme is Planning.

Speeding

West Mercia Police have agreed to Operation Snap and the signs are up in the Rochford area and more recently we have added Hanley.

parkrun

We are close to our funding target for the Junior Tenbury Event. I await pledge details from Tenbury Town Band and one of our local businesses to see exactly where we are. The parkrun Ambassador tells me that the necessary team is almost in place. I have started looking at possible routes for the Senior event. Should we overshoot on Junior funding, I will be proposing any excess pledges are put towards the Senior event.

Teme Bridge

Acceptance, now, that the Bridge is no longer fit for purpose, Worcestershire County Council has corrective alternatives, such as a footbridge, "under active review". To add to the four pedestrians hit by traffic on the Bridge, a cyclist has now been hit. All reported to County, we trust they see the urgency in the situation.

Road Works

I continue to investigate the methodology and timing of road works and whether the current balance of disruption and contractor convenience is correct in Worcestershire and Shropshire.

Tenbury Pharmacy

I find that some individuals and groups are taking their trade to other towns, local stakeholders concur. The Tenbury pharmacy is part of the Phoenix Healthcare group, the largest private healthcare group in Europe. I continue to investigate.

One-Stop-Shop

Cleobury Mortimer provide their full range of community services on set days each month so that people seeking help on multiple issues can get help "in the round"; they did a pop-up in Burford using the same format, just across the river. Worth us considering?

Electric Tenbury?

Electric vehicles, we are assured, are the future. We have grid capacity in Tenbury for fast chargers to attract these more affluent drivers. The matter is with Tenbury Town Council.

Neighbourhood Plan

Tenbury Town Council have decided to construct a Neighbourhood Plan covering Tenbury and Burford. This is a long term venture to influence what we want for the neighbourhood to augment the local plans on both sides of the river.

St Michaels College

Empty since 2020 with a landmark, listed, neo-gothic principal building, faced with mounting maintenance costs and a difficult economic climate for boarding schools, the owner has put together a team to develop a new use for the site under new ownership. MHDC, local councillors and groups are being consulted to maximise input on the way forward. Obviously, this site has the potential to re-emerge as an asset to our area.

The Oak, Tenbury

Empty and on the market for some years, falling into disrepair and a site for fly-tipping. I perceive a difficulty in finding a buyer of a small housing development site treated as a whole with the listed building. I have written to MHDC Planning asking for the listed site to be split to allow the two distinct areas each to find a buyer so that the individual parts can be re-purposed to the advantage of the Town.