

MALVERN WELLS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Malvern Wells Parish Council duly convened and held in The Village Hall, Wells Road, Malvern Wells on **Wednesday 15th May, 2014** commencing at 7.35pm

Present: Councillors Mrs H Burrage S Freeman
Mrs A Bradshaw M Victory
Mrs C O'Donnell B Knibb
A Hull N Johnson
J Black

Apologies for absence: Councillors K Wagstaff, K Hurst, P Buchanan, S Atwell

In attendance: David Taverner (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer)

24/14 Declarations of Interest

a) Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests: There were none

b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature: The Clerk declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 16 the report of the Staffing Committee held on 5th March, 2014

c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature: There were none

25/14 To Consider Requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011): There were none

26/14 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 26th March, 2014.

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th March, 2014 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting.

27/14 Matters arising from the minutes

Minute 133/13(a) School Crossing Patrol- Wells C of E Primary School

The Clerk advised that following the County Council refusal to provide a crossing patrol at the Wells C of E Primary School Cllr Hurst had agreed to discuss the safety issues surrounding the drop off and collection of school children from vehicles near to the school with the School's Governors at their next meeting.

28/14 Reports from Council Committees & Working Groups

(a) Cllr Johnson presented the previously circulated report of **Finance and General Purposes Committee** which had been held on 17th April, 2014.

Final accounts 2013/14

Cllr Johnson referred to the previously circulated report showing the final income and expenditure outturn figures for the financial year 2013/14

Actual expenditure for the year had out turned at £82.8K against the revised budget of £106.42K.

The main variations contributing to the under spend of £23.6K were caused by:

	£K
Net savings on the gas lamps maintenance and gas consumption budget	(7.5)
Savings on office expenses and administration	(1.6)
Cemetery supplies and maintenance	(2.0)
Fruitlands Xmas illuminations scheme slippage	(2.0)
Assarts Road Drainage scheme slippage	(8.8)
Other variations	(1.7)
Total net expenditure under spend	23.6

Income for the year had totalled £98k which was broadly in line with the overall revised income budget.

The Clerk advised that the draft final accounts for 2013/14 had been successfully audited by Yvonne Scriven - the Council's appointed internal auditor

The Council's total cash reserves had increased to £128.6k as at 31st March, 2014, of which some £100.3k had been earmarked for specific purposes as set out in the table show below.

In accordance with previously agreed Council policy the transfers from the Council's General reserves to Earmarked reserves had now been undertaken at to provide for future years commitments in respect of:-

	£k Balance at 31st March 2014
St Wulstans Green - maintenance	15.0
Future Cemetery land purchase	21.0
Future Cemetery Equipment purchase	1.0
Assarts road drainage scheme	10.0
Assarts road play equipment	10.0
All Saints Ward play equipment	15.0
Community Development Reserve	15.0
Future Election costs	1.0
St peters closed churchyard	6.5
Neighbour Hood plan consultancy	5.0
Staff Pension Gratuity (1996 LGA regulations)	0.8
Total Earmarked Reserves at 31st March, 2014	100.3

The General reserve level at 31st March, 2014 would be £28.3k. The Parish Council's cash holdings had thus risen to approximately £128.6K at the end of the 2013/14 financial year.

The Committee had **unanimously agreed to recommend** to Council that the 2013/14 final accounts and Annual Audit Return should be approved for submission, to the appointed external auditors Grant Thornton LLP.

Fruitlands Green- Xmas illuminations

The Clerk had advised that quotations in had been received for the re-connection of the electricity supply to Fruitlands Green, and for the purchase of a new living tree for planting there, with the intention of the re-introduction of the illumination of a tree at Christmas time.

An electrical contractor from the County Council's street lighting team had completed an inspection of the illuminations connection point on the Green. The existing connection would need be updated and rationalised to comply with current safety standards.

Quotations had been received for the costs of the scheme as follows: -

	£K
Purchase of one "Abies nordmanniana" tree	2.3
Delivery and planting	0.8
Electricity re connection	1.9
Total	5.0

The Clerk informed members that there would be a need to increase the current budget for the Christmas illuminations scheme by approximately £1k to support the existing total scheme budget of £4k. It was agreed **to recommend to**

Council that the budget for the scheme should be increased accordingly.

The report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the recommendations contained therein were **unanimously approved** by the Council.

(b) Cllr Hull presented the previously circulated report of the **Planning Committee held on 16th April**. The report was **noted and accepted** by the Council.

(c) The Clerk presented the previously circulated report of the **Environment Committee held on 10th April** the report was **noted and accepted** by the Council. It was also noted that Peter Clement had decided to stand down as the Parish Paths Warden and the role was now to be assumed by Norman Nimmo Smith.

The Clerk was asked to write to Peter Clement to pass on the Parish Council's thanks for all of his hard work during his time in the role.

(d) The Clerk presented the report of the **Play and Open Spaces Working Group** which had been held on 7th May.

Assarts Road play area

Playdale Ltd had provided an indicative scheme layout for new equipment for the Assarts Road play area which had accompanied quotations for the purchase of:-

- 1 "Rota Bounce"-cost £2,865
- 1 "Gravity Bowl" -cost £1,075
- 1"Jukebox Climbing frame-cost £10,104
- 1"Team Swing" -cost £1,994

The Some 158 Square metres of grass lock safety surfacing would be required at an estimated cost of £5.3K

Delivery and installation charges had been quoted as approximately £5K.

It was intended that the costs would be funded by the release of section 106 funds currently being held by the District Council

The Clerk advised that comparable quotations for the equipment were to be obtained from other suppliers/ manufacturers. Once these quotes were to hand the working group would meet to select the final choice of equipment and make an appropriate recommendation to Council for the approval of a final scheme.

It was also agreed that "Monkey Bars" should be added to the list of equipment to be purchased as these had been requested by many of the children who currently use the existing playground facilities. The estimated costs of this particular piece of equipment had been quoted at around the £200 mark.

Steve Maund had advised that he would be able to move the existing seats and refuse bins in the play area to fit in with the revised scheme as necessary

The Clerk would be approaching the MHDC planning team to see if planning permission would be required for any of the work that was envisaged.

As part of the normal maintenance of the existing equipment, the swing seats would be replaced and the swing stantions would be repainted. This work would be funded from within the existing approved budget.

Once a final scheme had been decided on the relevant quotations and associated documentation would be sent to MHDC to support the council's application for the release of section 106 funding to support the project.

Assarts Road Drainage Scheme

Following the resolution of Council on 26th March, Claines Construction had been appointed as the scheme contractor. They were awaiting the delivery of pipe work from their suppliers. It was anticipated work would start on site on 27th May. The Clerk advised that he would liaise with the contractor to ensure that the timing of the works would not impinge on the planned Wells Primary school sports day which had been scheduled for 13th June.

The planned timetable of works would be posted on local notice boards and a leaflet would be delivered to each property in the vicinity to advise residents of the scope of the work to be undertaken and the planned timescale for the completion of the project.

Summer Fete -7th September

The Clerk advised he was liaising with Nick Johnson regarding the schedule of organisational work required prior to the planned fête on 7th September.

There would be a further meeting of the Events/ Fete working group in June to review progress on the arrangements. Local groups and individuals who had expressed an interest in running a stall at the fête or in helping with the event on the day would be invited to attend the meeting and/or would receive update reports on the proposed plans for the event

It had been suggested that a Children's Fancy Dress competition could be staged as part of the event and contacts at the two local schools were to be consulted on that particular idea. An advertisement regarding the fête would be placed in the forthcoming Wells News, on the Parish Website and on all parish notice boards.

Clr Atwell would be contacting the Scout leaders to ask for the Scouts help on the day with car parking, signage and the erection of tables and stalls.

29/14 Chairman's correspondence

- (a) Letter of thanks received from Chairman of Malvern Hills AONB acknowledging the Parish Council's donation of £800 towards their running costs
- (b) Details received promoting Bring and Share big lunch event on 1st June in the Village hall in support of the Stroke Association.
- (c) Opening ceremony of information point/ book exchange in the former telephone kiosk outside the Village Hall to be performed by Harriett Baldwin MP on Friday 13th June

30/14 Approval of the payment of Accounts

The following accounts were approved for payment:-

Cheque Number	Payee	For	Net £	VAT £	Gross £
3112	D M Taverner	Administration & Expenses April	435.24	52.35	487.59
s/ order	D M Taverner	Salary - April	1,396.77	-	1,396.77
3113	Steve Maund	Cemetery & Outdoor work- March / April	919.70	-	919.70
3114	Steve Maund	Cemetery materials	79.15	15.83	94.98
3115	Martin Thomas	Cemetery work- April	280.01	-	280.01
3116	Malvern Wells Village Hall	Room Hire	76.00	-	76.00
3117	Worcestershire CALC	Subscription 2014	652.82	101.37	754.19
3118	N power	Toilets Electricity March Quarter	34.50	1.73	36.23
3119	British Gas	Gas Consumption - Gas lamps March Qtr	1,283.88	256.78	1,540.66
3120	County Building Supplies	Cemetery Materials	69.81	13.96	83.77
3121	Sight Designs	Gas lamps maintenance - April	162.60	32.52	195.12
3122	Arkell and Hurcombe	Cemetery plaque -Whittaker	110.00	22.00	132.00
3123	Playsafety Ltd	Play area inspection	74.00	14.80	88.80
3124	Yvonne Scriven	Internal audit fee	150.00	-	150.00
3125	Citizens Advice Bureau Malvern	Donation to running expenses	1,000.00	-	1,000.00
3126	J Dawson	Cemetery plaque fitting	20.00	-	20.00
3127	HSBC PLC	Transfer to 3 month deposit account to secure more favourable investment rate	25,000.00	-	25,000.00
3128	BWB Consulting Ltd	Release of withheld payment re Assarts Road drainage scheme	230.75	46.15	276.90
3129	Malvern Hills District Council	Discretionary Rate relief Spar Shop	397.41		397.41
3109	Britain in Bloom	Cheque now cancelled	(50.00)	-	(50.00)

31/14 Approval of the 2013/14 final accounts and signing of the Annual Audit Forms and Governance Statement

Cllr Johnson presented the 2013/14 final income and expenditure accounts and bank reconciliation statements which had been previously circulated to Members and drew attention to the presentation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee report of 17th April.

The final accounts report, bank reconciliation statement, and governance statement were duly noted and **unanimously approved** by the Council.

The Clerk reported that the internal audit for 2013/14 had been successfully concluded by the Internal Auditor – Yvonne Scriven.

The Chairman then signed the Annual Audit Return and Governance Statement on behalf of the Council.

The Council's external audit date had been set by the Audit Commission as 9th July, 2014 and the Clerk advised that all the necessary supporting working papers and final accounts returns would now be sent to Grant Thornton LLP – the external auditors appointed by the Audit Commission.

32/14 Actions undertaken by the Clerk since the previous meeting:-

- (a) **Assarts Road Drainage scheme** – contract starting on site on 27th May - project completion expected by 4th June
- (b) **Fruitlands Green illuminations** – electricity connection re established - tree to be planted by mid June
- (c) **Section 106 funding** – copy of quotations for play area to be sought from two other suppliers in addition to Playdale quote. Planners to be asked to advise if planning application is needed before siteing any new equipment. Documentation to be sent to District Council once received.
- (d) **Gas lamps maintenance contract** – Cllr Freeman putting finishing touches to new contract wording prior to obtaining contractors signature before the expiry of current contract on 26th May
- (e) **Britain in Bloom entry** - the Jubilee Fountain garden had been entered into the RHS Britain in Bloom competition. Entry was now free and a meeting had been arranged with Guarlford Nurseries to decide on a planting design for the garden
- (f) **Wells News** - The final proof copy had been delivered to the printer and deliveries were expected to be made during mid June.

It was noted that Lynn Hackles had now resigned as the Wells News editor and thanks were given to Lynne for all the excellent work she had undertaken in the role.

(g) Defibrillator quotes Wells C of E School

Further information from West Mids Ambulance Service (WMAS) & the British Heart Foundation on the planned defibrillator installation had been received

It was anticipated that the equipment could be installed for around the £400-£500 mark.

Cllr Hodgson had already set aside funds in her Divisional funds budget, and the Parish Council has also agreed to lend financial support through its Community grants budget.

33/14 Adoption of Hanley Road/ Rothwell Road telephone kiosk

Following discussion the Council agreed to adopt the Hanley Road/Rothwell Road redundant telephone kiosk from British Telecom with a view to converting it into a local information reference point.

34/14 Report of County Councillor –Cllr L Hodgson

Cllr Hodgson had submitted the following written report

"Highways Issues

Surface Dressing

Worcestershire Highways teams will be heading into Malvern Hills later this week as they continue their £3.5 million programme, which will see around 200 roads around the county improved during the summer.

A number of roads across the Malvern Hills district will be surface dressed over the next few weeks as part of the project – the latest in a line of improvements to the network that's seen more than £50million invested since 2011.

Surface dressing is an effective treatment that involves the spraying on of a coating of bitumen to waterproof roads followed by one or more layers of stone chippings to restore skid resistance.

How the work is done:

Step 1 – A calibrated tanker sprays a thin film of hot, sticky bitumen onto the road surface.

Step 2 – A metered spreader then places hard stone chippings onto the hot bitumen.

Step 3 – These chippings are then lightly rolled and pressed into the bitumen to form an interlocking surface.

The road can then be driven over with care. Any loose chippings on the surface are swept within 24 hours and again after about a week. The road markings are then replaced.

For more information on this year's Surface Dressing Programme please visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk and type in 'Surface Dressing' in the keyword search. The webpage includes answers to questions frequently asked and details on methods of repair employed by Worcestershire Highways teams.

In Malvern roads being surfaced dressed are parts of the Wells Road and the Worcester Road and planned to be done on Friday 17th May 2014

New Web Page Launched for Reporting Highways Issues

Last week a new method of reporting highways issues was launch. It is much more user friendly and allows for more than one issue to be entered. It allows you to mark faults on an interactive map and will automatically send out an email for each issue as well producing a list with a reference number for each area which is

then track able. The best way to see how the site works is to go it and have a go.

Commissioning out of County Services

Worcestershire County Council is to put out to tender many of its Learning and Achievement services currently provided in-house, with a view to a new provider being found and in place by April 2015.

This will include the transfer of many of the existing staff in learning and achievement to a new organisation from next April.

Work has already taken place to find out whether there are organisations who would be interested in providing Worcestershire's learning and achievement services and officers from the County Council have been talking to a number of both large and small organisations who have expressed an interest. Further market engagement work is now being undertaken before the tender opportunity is advertised in June.

Changes to the Operating Structure of the County Council

As part of the saving being made at the County Council there is to be a change in the structure of the Council alongside the way it works. The Council will become more focused on becoming a Commissioning Council and there will be three Strategic Directorates, Adult Services and Health, Children's Services and Business, Environment and Communities and the role of assistant chief executive is going to be removed. There will need to be new working methods introduced as well as a greater emphasis of doing things differently allowing services to be delivered at a more local level. A good example of this is the work done by the library services. A decision on this proposal will be taken at the full council being held today, May 15th.

Creation of a West Mercia Adoption Service

The Adoption services of Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Shropshire are being combined to create one service. This will lead to a more efficient and joined up service which should benefit both those being adopted and adopters.

County Councillor Divisional Fund

The 2014-15 Divisional funds is now up and running. Again there is £10,000 to be spent supporting local events and organisations.

Please contact me if you know of any organisations locally that would like help from this fund.

35/14 Report of District Councillor-Cllr C Cheeseman

Cllr Cheeseman advised the District Council had increased their Council Tax demand by 1.99% for 2014/15. Regarding the SWDP the Planning inspector had now indicated that some 28,700 new homes would need to be built in South Worcestershire. Additional sites were being identified for inclusion in the South Worcestershire Development plan and further consultation on these particular sites would be necessary as part of the overall SWDP process

At this stage of the meeting the Council unanimously passed the

following resolution:-

"That, pursuant to the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press should be excluded from the remainder of the meeting. The reason being the consideration of staff contracts.

36/14 Report of the Staffing Committee held on 5th March, 2014

The Staffing Committee had met on 5th March to consider the Clerk's annual performance review.

The Clerk's job descriptions, contract of employment, calendar of work and performance were subject to a detailed review by members of the Staffing Committee. In addition the Staff Appraisal Forms, completed and rated by the Chairmen of other MWPC Committees and Working Groups with those from the meeting with the Outdoor Contractors were also reviewed by Members of the Staffing Committee.

At the completion of the detailed review, the Clerk's performance was once again considered to have been satisfactory and his annual pay increment was authorised at Council on 26th March 2014.

Members were in agreement that that they were pleased with the Clerk's overall performance since November 2012, they found him helpful and pleasant to work with and considered that he was very much an asset to the Council. Both of his roles as Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer had been carried out well.

Where issues had arisen, these had been promptly and satisfactorily dealt with or were being worked upon in close partnership with Councillors.

The Clerk was commended for his excellent management of the Council's finances and his well written pieces for the Planning Committee and Wells News. The Clerk was also praised his contribution to the successful completion of Gas Lamps Project.

All the Internal Auditors reports had once again been very positive

The Clerk thanked the Council for their support during his surgery and recovery in 2013 and commented that he felt that the Council and he worked well together, to which Members agreed

There being no other business the meeting the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm

Minutes approved Wednesday 25th June, 2014

Signed

Cllr Mrs Helen Burrage- Chairman of the Council