

MALVERN WELLS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** duly convened and held in the **Village Hall Wells Road on Thursday 14th July, 2016** commencing at **7.30 pm.**

Attendance: Councillors N Johnson(Chairman) N Chatten, S Freeman, K Wagstaff, M Victory

In Attendance: Mr D M Taverner (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer)

1 Apologies for absence Mrs H Burrage, Mrs J Smethurst, B Knibb,

2 Declarations of Interest

a) Register of Interests: No changes were necessary to the schedule of Members interests which had been previously lodged with the District Council.

b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the Agenda and their nature: There were none.

c) To Consider Written Requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) No such requests had been received.

3 Approval of minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14th April, 2016

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14th April, 2016, having been previously circulated, were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of that meeting.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were none.

5 a) The Bank Reconciliation statement to 30th June, 2016: The Clerk presented the figures contained in the previously circulated bank reconciliation which showed that the Council's total cash funds at 30th June, 2016 comprised:

National Westminster PLC

	£
Current Account	190.00
Business Reserve Account	77,132.27
1 month fixed deposit at 0.04%	50,000.00
(less) unrepresented cheques	(44,409.99)

HSBC PLC

Current Account	25,122.23
3 month fixed deposit Maturity 27 th May	25,164.43
3 month fixed deposit Maturity 31 st August	30,392.85

Total cash at 30th June, 2015 **£163,591.79**

The level of funds within each of the Council's banks was continuing to be monitored to ensure that total cash held, with each bank, was maintained below a level of £75K, as far as possible, so as to spread counterparty risk during each month. Surplus funds were invested at the most favourable rates offered by the Council's bankers. A sum of £25K would be moved from the National Westminster Bank to Lloyds PLC as an opening balance on the Council's electronic banking facility.

Members were given sight of the Council's bank statements as at 30th June, 2016 for verification purposes and the account balances were agreed to the bank reconciliation statement which had been prepared.

b) 2015/16 June quarter Budget monitoring report. The Clerk presented the previously circulated report showing actual income and expenditure for the period ending 30th June, 2016. All of the Council's budgets were broadly on track with the originally profiled estimates and there were no significant variances worthy of comment.

6. Review of Financial Regulations and Standing orders.

The Clerk advised that he had prepared changes and updates to the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.

It was agreed to circulate the amended papers to all Members of the Council for their consideration - with a view to the revised documents being adopted by Council at its meeting on 27th July, 2016. The revised Standing orders contained a recommendation to Council for the reduction of the Planning Committee quorum for that Committee to 6 members.

It was also agreed to recommend to Council that a protocol for the management of council correspondence should be prepared by the Communications working group at its next meeting.

7 Pensions Auto enrolment

The law on workplace pensions has changed. Under the Pensions Act 2008, every employer in the UK must put certain staff into a pension scheme and contribute towards it. This is called 'automatic enrolment' Any staff who are:-

- aged between 22 up to State Pension Age
- **and** earn over £10,000 per year, or £833 per month or, £192 per week

must be put into a pension scheme and the employer and employee must both pay into it.

This will thus mean that the Council's Clerk will be required to join a pension scheme which complies with the 2008 Acts

The National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) is a pension scheme provider that has been set up by the government and must accept all employers that apply to use it for automatic enrolment. They do not have a set-up charge. Council will be recommended to join the NEST scheme in order to discharge its obligations under the Pensions Act.

The Council will need to commence its monthly payment contributions on 1st August and the level of those contributions will be: -

Before *05/04/2018	2% (including 1% staff contribution)	1%
*06/04/2018 - 05/04/2019	5% (including 3% staff contribution)	2%
*06/04/2019 onwards	8% (including 5% staff contribution)	3%

Based on the clerk's current salary the Council's contribution in year one will be 1% of the clerk's gross salary which equates to £14.31 per month in the current financial year. The Clerk thus will also contribute a further £14.31 as a direct deduction from his gross salary. This will be dealt with by the council's payroll

provider who will make the necessary deductions from the clerk's salary in the same way in which PAYE and national Insurance deductions are currently made. The resultant payments into the NEST scheme will be made by direct debit from the Council's bank.

The total cost to the Council in 2016/17 is estimated to be some £114, which can be contained within the existing approved budget.

The council's outdoor contractors are self-employed and are not affected by these arrangements.

8 New gas lamps project

Cllr Freeman advised that further work had been undertaken on the new gas lamps project, with Malvern Hills AONB providing invaluable assistance in putting together a bid for funding from the heritage lottery scheme. The indicative capital costs of the scheme were currently estimated to be in the range of £60k to £80k

The Council will be expected to contribute at least 5% of this sum in either providing cash or volunteer time to support the project. Any financial contribution by the council would be met from reserves and there will be no direct call on the Parish precept as a result.

In order to qualify for Grant funding, the Council will need to provide evidence of public consultation on the project and, to this end, a survey form will be included in the summer edition of the wells news seeking the support of parishioners for the scheme.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35 pm

Chairman-----
Dated 13th October, 2016

N Johnson