

## 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 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2014** commencing at 7.30pm

**Present:**

**Councillors:** - Mrs H Burrage (Chairman)  
Mrs A Bradshaw S Atwell  
P Buchanan J Black  
B J Knibb M Victory  
K Wagstaff Mrs C O'Donnell  
S Freeman K A Hurst

**In attendance:** - David Taverner - Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

District Cllr C Cheeseman

**Apologies recorded:** - County Cllr Lucy Hodgson  
Cllr N Johnson

**116/13** **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:** There were none

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

**117/13** **To Consider Requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011):** There were none

**118/13** **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2014.**

Changes to the draft minutes which had been previously circulated were recorded as follows:-

*Attendance list* – amended to reflect the apologies of Cllr Hurst for being unable to attend the meeting

*Minute 111/13* – amended to reflect the fact that the Finance & General Purposes Committee report dated 23rd January was presented by Cllr Mrs A Bradshaw, rather than Cllr Johnson

Minute 115/13 – schedule of payments approved amended to include the following approved payments

cheque	payee		£
	Steve		
3093	Maund	outdoor & cemetery contract works - Dec/ Jan	1,182.46
	Malvern		
3094	Hills AONB	Contribution to Running costs	800.00
	Martin		
3095	Thomas	Cemetery contract works - Dec/ Jan	362.54

The addition of the three payments listed above brought the total payments approved on 29<sup>th</sup> January to a total of £22,850.16

The minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2014, as amended, were then approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting.

### **119/13      Matters arising from the minutes**

**Minute 52/13 (26th June) - Possible purchase of land for provision of a Cemetery:**-In relation to the sale of land at Chestnut Hill, Cllr Freeman advised Members that as far as he was aware the land still remains unsold. It was understood that there were some legal difficulties continuing with the sale process and the vendors' agents remained aware of the Parish Council's interest in the matter. Further contact would be made with the vendors' agents to ascertain what progress was being made with the sale. Attempts were also still being made to identify other parcels of land, within the parish, which might be suitable for use as an extension of the Cemetery.

### **Minute 96/13 (27<sup>th</sup> November) – Fruitlands Estate pavements**

Clr Knibb reported that repair works to worn pavements on the Fruitlands Estate had recently been undertaken and passed on his thanks to County Cllr Hodgson for her assistance in facilitating the project.

### **120 /13 Reports from Council Committees & Working Groups**

(a) Cllr Buchanan presented the report of the **Environment Committee** which had been held on **9<sup>th</sup> January**. The report was **accepted and noted** by the Council.

(b) Cllr P Buchanan presented the report of the **Planning Committee** which had been held on **12<sup>th</sup> February**. The report was **accepted and noted** by the Council.

(c) Cllr S Freeman presented the report of the **Gas Lamps Working Group** which had been held on **11<sup>th</sup> February**.

### The Gas lamps maintenance contract

Cllr Freeman advised that the current maintenance contract was due to run until 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2014 and he was currently undertaking a review of the contract terms and conditions behalf of the Council.

### The Gas Lamps Report & recommendations:

1. The new contract should cover a three year period commencing 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2014.
2. The Clerk should contact the current contractor –Sight Designs Ltd (SDL) to obtain an up to date price list for renewable supplies. The base price lists for these supplies would then be appended as a schedule to the new contract. The contract would be reviewed annually by the Gas lamps working group. Provision would be made for the addition of the prevailing rate of Consumer price rate of inflation (CPI) to the base price schedule of renewable supplies on the Contract's annual anniversary date. Any new supplies required would be added to the schedule at cost price plus an agreed percentage allowance for SDL's on costs.
3. The Clerk was asked to contact SDL to open negotiations, and report back to the Working group, on the revision of the annual maintenance cost of each lamp (currently set at £60 inclusive of VAT) and the SDL hourly maintenance call out rate (currently set as £25 inclusive of VAT)
4. The Parish Council's resolutions, dated 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2013 (*shown in brackets for reference purposes*) should be built into the new contract terms as follows:-
  - (a) provision for the costs of inspection patrols undertaken by SDL which identified problems with the lamps, which could be dealt with instantly, should be allowed as long as prior approval was sought from the Clerk for any such works which would be likely to cost more than £100 per calendar month in aggregate. **(R2)**
  - (b) As part of the annual lamp cleaning routine SDL were also able to clean the lamp posts and trim back vegetation at the base of each lamp, aimed at preventing damage. Council resolved that such work should be undertaken, at a cost of £5 per lamp **(R3)**
  - (c) SDL had pointed out that their monthly inspection patrols had not previously been charged for, and neither had they sought reimbursement for the travel costs involved. A full inspection patrol of the lamps took less than one hour and was undertaken on a monthly basis. Council had resolved **(R4)** that the cost of the monthly patrol costs be approved at an hourly rate of £10 with a travelling allowance of 45 pence per mile, in accordance with the current HMRC mileage payment regulations. Paid visits were to be limited to one per month and the payment for such visits, including travel costs, would not exceed £15 each calendar month

**(d)** In order to assist with repairs to the control units of the individual lamps the Council had unanimously resolved **(R6)** to authorise the purchase of two of the "click in" control units which had been demonstrated at a previous meeting. These units would be kept in the contractor's workshop for use as required but would remain in the ownership of the Parish Council. The cost of each of these units had been set as £300 each. The Clerk was asked to make satisfactory arrangements to ensure that these units remained clearly under the ownership of the Parish Council.

**(e)** It had been unanimously resolved **(R7)** that , in the interests of securing the most favourable contract terms, for all parties, the Parish Council should seek at least three competitive quotations for the new contract working collectively with both Malvern Town and West Malvern Parish Councils as appropriate.

**5** It was agreed to accept the recommendations of the Gas Lamps Working Group.

Further discussion:

**6.** The Clerk was asked to attempt to identify at least two other suitable contractors, in addition to SDL, who could supply a competitive tender for the Annual maintenance contract and associated works.

**7.** The Clerk to ascertain whether any old gas lamp posts belonging to the Parish council had been taken into store or used by the District or Town Council at the time that the Parish Council had first taken responsibility for the ownership of the lamps.

Potential for the installation of two new gas lamps for the Wells Road

It was noted that there was no gas supply to lamps 27 and 28 on the Wells Road, nor to lamp 32 on Holywell Road. The Clerk was asked to try again to ascertain the potential costs of re-connecting those lamps for which there was no current gas supply

Cllr Black mentioned that there were currently two "redundant" gas lamp poles which could be relocated to fill "gaps" on the Wells Road if the costs of doing so were not excessive.

**8 .**The Clerk was asked to contact SDL for a quotation for the costs of supplying new lamps to any posts that might be relocated.

It was pointed out that liaison might be needed with the MHDC Conservation officer with regard to any listed building consent which might be needed if this was to be undertaken. The Clerk was also asked to investigate whether any grant funding might be available to help with the costs of lamp relocation and reconnection.

9. The Gas Lamps working group would report back to the 26<sup>th</sup> March Council meeting with an update on the progress of the agreement of a new maintenance contract.

(d) The Clerk presented the report of the **Events Working Group** which had been held on **20<sup>th</sup> February**

(i) **Summer Fête – Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September** –an initial task list had been drawn up which would be circulated to those volunteers who had so far offered to help with the planning and organisation of the event.

Further meetings of the working group would be held on a monthly basis and update reports on progress of the event organisation would be presented to each succeeding meeting of the Parish Council.

**(ii) Britain in Bloom Competition 2014**

A copy of the entry form had been received from the Heart of England event coordinator - Jenny Redfern. The Clerk was asked to obtain further details with a view to the submission of an entry into the event for either the Parish Cemetery or the Jubilee Fountain Garden.

**121/13 Approval of schedule of account payments**

The following accounts were approved for payment:

<b>Cheque Number</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>NET £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>TOTAL £</b>
3096	STEVE MAUND	CEMETERY MATERIALS	55.24	11.04	66.28
3097	STEVE MAUND	CEMETERY AND OUTDOOR WORK JANUARY AND FEBRUARY INCLUDING BACK PAY ADJUSTMENT	1,040.88		1,040.88
S/ORDER	DAVID TAVERNER	CLERK SALARY FEBRUARY 2014	1,396.77		1,396.77
3098	DAVID TAVERNER	ADMIN EXPENSES FEBRUARY 2014	61.61	1.69	63.30
3099	WORCS COUNTY COUNCIL	AONB CONTRIBUTION (REPLACEMENT FOR CHQ 3094)	800.00	-	800.00
3100	WORCS COUNTY COUNCIL	PARISH GRIT BINS AND ROCK SALT	590.00	-	590.00
3101	HSBC PLC	TRANSFER TO PARISH COUNCIL HSBC CURRENT ACCOUNT 92769379	25,000.00	-	25,000.00

### **122/13 Cemetery matters**

A large tree in the Cemetery had been blown down during the recent storms. Fortunately there had been no damage to any graves or memorials and the tree debris was being cleared by the Cemetery maintenance contractors.

### **123/13 Chairman's communications**

#### **(a) Malvern Wells C of E Primary School – School Crossing Patrol**

Following the traffic speed surveys which had been undertaken along the A449 between the two local primary schools the information received was now being sent to the County Council department responsible for assessment of the school crossing patrol service who would now be asked to undertake a re-assessment of the need for a crossing patrol at the Church of England Primary School. It was brought to the Council's attention that children were regularly seen being dropped off from their own cars with potential risk from other traffic outside the school. Councillors wanted this brought to the attention of the school.

#### **(b) Yellow No Parking markings outside Village Hall**

Following the repainting of double yellow lines outside the Village Hall, in compliance with the local traffic regulation order, representations had been received from local residents to the effect that they were concerned car parking spaces outside the Hall had been unnecessarily restricted.

Following discussion on 29<sup>TH</sup> January 2014 (***minute 113/13***) the Council had resolved that the County Council should consider the potential for the existing markings to be scaled back to allow two extra parking spaces, so long as road safety considerations were not compromised as a result.

In answer, the County Council's Senior Traffic Engineer David Jew advised Cllr Lucy Hodgson on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014 that the shortening of the current double yellow lines would be unwise. In his view the junction with Green Lane/ Grundy's Lane is an unusual layout and visibility from Green Lane is poor. The gradient of Green Lane, at its junction with Wells Road, also increases the concern for road safety. As a result it was agreed that the current yellow line markings outside the Village Hall should be accepted as necessary and retained.

#### **(c) Purchase of defibrillator - Wells C of E Primary School**

The Parish Council had previously resolved, in principle, to provide financial assistance from its community support budget, up to the sum of £250, to assist with the purchase of a defibrillator, which would be located at the Wells C of E Primary School

Further details of quotations for the cost of the equipment and details of who would be trained in its use were awaited and a further report would be made to a future meeting of the Parish Council once the additional information requested had been received.

**(d) Hedging and tree works**

(i) The Chairman had been advised that it was now time for the planned hedging work on the playing field to take place, also the planned removal and replanting of the tree on Fruitlands.

(ii) Cllr Wagstaff was raised concern about the pruning and clearance work on the private hedge and the public verge in Green Lane carried out by the Lengthsman in respect of whether the hedge should have been cut back by the landowner and whether the verge should have been maintained regularly to prevent overgrowth. The Clerk advised that the works had been agreed by the County Council under the Lengthsman Scheme.

**124/13 Report of the Clerk on actions undertaken since the previous meeting**

**(i) Drainage alleviation scheme for Assarts Road Playing field**

The Clerk reported that following the meeting with the Director of BWB Consulting Ltd - Stuart Nelmes – a new summary tender document had now been sent to the contractors who had been invited to submit tenders for the scheme and the return of those revised quotations was now awaited. The County Council's Engineering team had been asked to confirm that no formal permissions or consents were required with regard to the re-use of the existing connection to the Highway drainage system in Assarts lane. A written reply was awaited

**(ii) Update report regarding the potential development of a new play facility on Peachfield Road Common**

It was agreed that Cllr Freeman and the clerk should seek to arrange a meeting with the Director of Malvern Hills Conservators to establish the extent of any possible legal work that might need to be undertaken should the Council be asked to underwrite any legal costs which might need to be undertaken in pursuance of this project. It was intended to present a further paper on the Council's proposed scheme to the Conservators Management Board at its next meeting scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> June.

**(iii) Fruitlands Green – to consider the reintroduction of Christmas Illuminations**

An electrical contractor from the County Council's street lighting team had completed an inspection of the illuminations connection point on Fruitlands Green. The existing connection would need be updated and rationalised to comply with current safety standards. A quotation for the likely costs of this work was now awaited from EON.

Contact had now also been made with suppliers of a suitable living tree to be which would be sited on the Green and work on the planting of that tree was due to be completed by the end of March 2014.

(iv) **Section 106 Funding application**

An application for funding had been submitted to the District Council to release funding to support the Assarts Road Drainage Scheme and the purchase of new play equipment.

District Council officers had asked for supporting quotations for both schemes. Councillors asked the clerk to ensure the District Council understood that the work on the playing field was 'Pitch Enhancement' and NOT repair or maintenance

Once obtained the quotations would be considered by the Play and Open spaces group at their next meeting and details of the selected quotes would then be sent to MHDC to support the release of the section 106 funds currently held by them.

(v) **Press letter re concerns regarding the Examination in Public of the south Worcestershire Development Plan**

The Clerk had previously circulated a letter setting out the council's concerns regarding the ongoing delay in the approval of the South Worcestershire Development Plan. Until the plan is finally put in place communities such as Malvern Wells are effectively at the mercy of developers who could be able to force developments through in inappropriate locations.

The Council **resolved** that the letter should be signed by the Chairman on behalf of the Council and the Clerk should send a copy of the letter to the Malvern Gazette and liaise with the newspaper's editor to see if the content of the letter could be given prominence in a linked article.

Cllr Wagstaff proposed that a copy of the letter should also be sent to the president of Civic Voice – Griff Rees Jones – who had recently been promoting that organisation as the national spearhead for a nationwide movement that campaigns for better planning and protection of the Environment

It was also agreed that the letter should be circulated to all South Worcestershire's Members of Parliament and local District Councillors

Cllr Victory led a discussion on providing the impetus for the construction of new developments to Passivhaus or similar standards. He explained that buildings constructed to such standards save money in the long-term and help to eliminate fuel poverty through reductions to energy consumption. In building new housing stock, there is an opportunity for local authorities to stimulate demand for low carbon technologies, including creating associated local apprenticeships, jobs and training by choosing high energy-efficiency standards.

Cllr Victory's proposal that the Parish Council should resolve to ask the local planning authority to build new housing to the highest possible environmental standards, rather than the minimum set in the current national and local planning frameworks, was debated.



Whilst Councillors were sympathetic to the general principle involved it was felt that there would be difficulties in enforcing such standards under the current planning policy framework. Cllr Victory then agreed to withdraw his proposal with a view to refining it for consideration at a future Council meeting.

**125/13 Report of the County Councillor – Cllr L Hodgson**Cllr Hodgson had tendered her apologies for being unable to attend the meeting but presented the following written report:-

### **New County Council Chief Executive Appointed**

Clare Marchant, currently Assistant Chief Executive and former group programme director with NHS, has been formally confirmed as Worcestershire County Council's new Chief Executive.

Clare joined Worcestershire County Council in 2010 to head up the council's then change programme Better Outcomes Lean Deliver, BOLD. She is a graduate of the University of Hull and after nearly four years at Hovis as a production manager, she joined Deloitte in 1997 and spent six years advising both private and public sector bodies on how to modernise. Her clients included Burberry and DWP. She followed this with a job as Group Programme Director at the NHS where she was responsible for leading delivery of 'Choose and Book' and picture archiving in hospitals, digitising scans which is now used in 100 per cent of hospitals.

Since joining Worcestershire County Council, Clare has been pivotal in ensuring we rise to the challenge of change in a way which is driven by the views of residents, communities and businesses, work with partners and delivers savings, protects the most vulnerable and supports investment in the future. Clare will take up her new role on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June.

### **County Budget update**

#### **Bus Services**

Council has agreed that the more time is needed to consider the issue of subsidised bus services following a consultation that attracted 8,500 responses. It was agreed around £1.1 million would remain in the budget.

Proposals were put forward in November 2013 to meet the financial challenge the authority faces due to a reduced levels of Central Government funding. The withdrawal of the £3million of taxpayers' money the authority currently spends on plugging the gap in the commercial network; usually the less popular or less well-used services, was consulted on. The average spend on subsidised services is around £1 per journey (highest subsidy being £8.24 per journey). Around 80 per cent of all journeys on Worcestershire's bus services are provided by commercial operators with no involvement from the County Council.

A number of factors will be considered before any final decision on possible reductions is taken. These will include:

- Evaluating on a service-by-service basis the detailed responses to the consultation
- A thorough review of the existing data on the number of passenger journeys made on the current subsidised network that will take into account journey types, purposes and access to key destinations.
- A review of fares will take place in partnership with commercial operators to establish what contracts would become viable or could operate with a significantly reduced subsidy.

- Continue to explore potential opportunities where, in particular, community transport or commercial operators might provide public transport services.

Any final decision on the amount of subsidy that will be spent and routes supported is not expected until June. Any changes would not be implemented until September.

### **Council Tax Increase**

The council has decided on a 1.9 per cent rise will add at least £19.88 to the average yearly band D bill of £1,453 from April. The end increase will nudge closer to £30 once rises from the police, fire service and district councils are factored in, with confirmation on the final bills due by Tuesday, February 25. The budget includes an extra £4 million towards children's social care, as the numbers of children who need intervention continues to rise. The spending will be paid for from the council tax rise.

It also contains an extra £500,000 into roads maintenance, after the public said it should remain a big priority during widespread public consultations.

However the budget will result in job losses, with at least 600 posts going by 2018, and as many services as possible being handed over to new providers, a move known as commissioning. There are hopes many organisations who take over services will take council staff with them, limiting the impact on the economy. It should also be noted that round £99 million needs to be cut from Council spending by 2018.

### **County Councillor Divisional Fund**

The new council year will see another £10,000 of funding available for the local community. I would urge members of the parish council to look out for suitable organisations and groups that may benefit from funding from this scheme. So far using this year's divisional fund I have had 18 applications all of which have been granted. Of these successful applications 7 have been in the Wells area. I note from your minutes that you are willing to help fund the defibrillator, I also have set aside funding for this but I am still awaiting the detail of what type of machine is to be brought, who will be responsible for it and where it will be located.

### **126/13 Report of District Councillor – Cllr C Cheeseman**

Cllr Cheeseman advised the District Council would be likely to increase their Council Tax demand by 2% for 2014/15.

Details of the latest public hearings in the ongoing public Examination of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) had been confirmed.

The hearings will take place at County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, on March 13 and 14, starting at 10am on both days.

CALA Homes had recently submitted their application for the development of 43 dwellings on the former Abbey college Playing field site. This would be dealt with by the Parish Council at its Planning Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday 16th April

## 127/13 Other reports

### Reports of Representatives on other bodies:

- a) **Malvern Hills CALC** – Cllr Knibb – the next area meeting of CALC had been scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> March. Cllr Knibb and the Clerk would be attending
- b) **Malvern Wells Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC)** Cllr J Black- Cllr Black advised that there had been general discussion on the potential for a new hall and the VHMC would be interested in sharing and being involved with the management of such a facility if any such scheme was to come to fruition.
- c) **Malvern Hills CAB** - Cllr Johnson - there was nothing to report
- d) **The Wyche Institute** – Cllr Mrs Bradshaw -. there was nothing to report
- e) **Community Policing Matters** - Cllr Knibb & Buchanan -there was nothing to report

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm.

Approved..... Chairman

**Cllr Mrs H Burrage**

Dated 26th March, 2014