

## 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 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2015** commencing at 8 pm.

**Present:**

Councillors	Mrs H Burrage (Chairman)	S Freeman
	M Victory	N Johnson
	Mrs C O'Donnell	B Knibb
	Mrs J Smethurst	P Bennett
	N Chatten	J Wagstaff

**Apologies for absence:** Councillors K Wagstaff, S Atwell and J Black  
County Cllr Lucy Hodgson

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

### **27/16**      **Declarations of Interest**

**a) Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests:** Cllrs Burrage, Freeman and Smethurst submitted new declaration of interests forms for onward submission to Malvern Hills District Council.

**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 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2015, and in agenda item 8a - regarding the reimbursement of salary underpayments and administration expenses

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

### **28/16**      **To Consider Requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011):** There were none

### **29/16**      **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2015.**

The text of minute 160/15 was amended, at the beginning of paragraph 7 to read Mr P Vakis-Lowe .....The minutes were then approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting.

### **30/16**      **Matters arising from the minutes** There were none

## **31/16 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 16th April, 2015.

### **Final accounts 2014/15**

Cllr Johnson referred to the previously circulated report showing the final income and expenditure outturn figures for the financial year 2014/15

Members noted that actual expenditure for the year had out turned at some £86.6K representing an underspend of £45.4K against the original 2014/15 expenditure budget.

The Clerk outlined the principal reasons for the underspend which were: - Slippage on play facility projects (£30k), General administration savings (£3.1K), savings on Neighbourhood plan expenditure (£5k) and net savings on planned spending at the parish cemetery (£7.3K).

At £94.9k income for the year was £18.9k less than originally anticipated due to slippage on the receipt of section 106 income for the proposed play area projects (£23.2k), offset by higher than anticipated cemetery and other miscellaneous income in the sum of £4.3K.

The level of the Council's General Reserve at 30th March, 2015 had risen to £28.4K which was broadly in line with the external auditors Recommendation that the level of the general reserve should be maintained at a level around 50% of the Annual Council Tax precept.

The earmarked reserves for potential legal costs in respect of the maintenance responsibility for St Peters Churchyard, and reserve accrued to meet the costs of a contested election had been returned to general reserves. Earmarked Reserves at 31st March, 2015 now totalled some £108.5K

### **Annual review of outdoor contracts**

The clerk advised that he had undertaken a review of the work of Steve Maund (16 hours per week) and Martin Thomas (8 hours per week) on an ongoing basis during the year. Both contractors had again performed their roles exceptionally well.

Cllr Knibb had proposed that the contractors' hourly rates should be increased by 1.5% with effect from 1st April 2015 and this was seconded by Cllr Johnson. This proposal had been **unanimously supported**.

### **Council I.T equipment**

In view of the fact that the Council's existing laptop computer was showing signs of age, it was agreed that a replacement should be purchased. Cllr Knibb proposed that the Clerk be given delegated authority to purchase a new laptop computer up to a value of £500. This was seconded by Cllr Johnson and the proposal was unanimously supported by all members.

It was agreed that the potential for a Wi-Fi connection in the village hall should be investigated and Cllr Burrage agreed to approach the Village Hall management committee to consider whether it would be practicable to work with the Council to ascertain the potential costs of such an exercise.

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

- (b) Cllr Freeman presented the report of the **Gas Lamps Working Group**. Although there had been no formal meeting of the working group since the last Parish council meeting, discussions had taken place with the MHDC Conservation Officer and the Malvern Hills Conservators regarding the outline proposals to install new lamps along the Wells Road. There were likely to be some difficulties to be overcome in getting the appropriate permissions for the works and a further report on these issues would be presented to a future meeting of the working group. The provision of a new electric lantern in Watery Lane was due to be addressed.

### **32/16 Chairman's Communications**

- (a) The Chairman gave details of the local election results which had seen Mrs C O'Donnell and Mrs Jill Campbell elected as District Councillors for the Wells Ward.
- (b) The recording of Council meetings was now permitted under *The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014*. The Council's protocol would be such that anyone wishing to record a meeting, or any part of it, should first notify the Chairman of that meeting of their intention to do so. The clerk advised that he would be recording all meetings for the purpose of minute preparation.
- (c) The Chairman announced the outline details of the review of the terms of reference of the various Council working groups and advised that further details would be outlined as part of the report of the staffing committee report to be presented later during the meeting.

**33/16 (i) Confirmation of the schedule of payments agreed at the Annual Parish Meeting** The Council confirmed approval of the following schedule of payments which had been originally approved at the Annual Parish Meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2015:-

<b>Chq</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>For:</b>	<b>NET £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>GROSS £</b>
3221	County Building supplies	Cemetery Materials	82.24	16.45	98.69
3222	Newsquest Media group	Special EGM meeting notice	84.00	16.80	100.80
3223	Physio Control Uk	Defibrillator purchase	650.00	130.00	780.00
3224	G Herbert Banks	Holywell park valuation	275.00	55.00	330.00
3225	British Gas Trading Ltd	Gas lamps supply	1,283.88	256.78	1,540.66
3226	HMRC	PAYE & Nat insurance	987.80	-	987.80
3227	Malvern Wells Village Hall	room Hire	86.00	-	86.00
3228	Collette accountancy ltd	Payroll work	191.67	38.33	230.00
3229	n power	Cemetery electricity	44.44	2.22	46.66
3230	Playsafety ltd	Playground inspection	74.00	14.80	88.80
3231	Worcestershire CALC	subscription 2015	707.77	112.52	820.29
3232	Steve Maund	outdoor work April	683.04	-	683.04
3233	Steve Maund	cemetery materials	16.30	-	16.30
3234	David Taverner	admin expenses March/ April	426.26	28.27	454.53
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>5,592.40</b>	<b>671.17</b>	<b>6,263.57</b>

**33/16 (ii) Approval of schedule of payments for 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2015**  
The following accounts were approved for payment:-

<b>Chq</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>For:</b>	<b>NET £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>GROSS £</b>
3235	Martin Thomas	Outdoor Work April	294.53	-	294.53
3236	David Taverner	Salary underpayment April	65.87	-	65.87
3237	David Taverner	Salary underpayment May	65.87	-	65.87
3238	David Taverner	Admin expenses - April/May Additional Premium for War Memorial	134.32	19.67	153.99
3239	AON Insurance	addition	27.33	-	27.33
3240	Worcestershire CALC	Audit Training Event	35.00	-	35.00
3241	Yvonne Scriven	Internal Audit Fee	100.00	-	100.00
3242	Sight Designs ltd	Gas lamps Maintenance	129.60	25.92	155.52
3243	1st Malvern Scout Group	Community Grant	250.00	-	250.00
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>1,102.52</b>	<b>45.59</b>	<b>1,148.11</b>

### **33/16 (iii) Approval of the 2014/15 final accounts and the 2014/15 Annual Audit return and Governance Statement**

The Clerk advised that the draft final accounts for 2014/15 had been successfully audited by Yvonne Scriven - the Council's appointed internal auditor- and circulated a copy of the final audit letter which had been received. There were no issues to report.

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

	£k <b>Balance at 31st March 2015</b>
St Wulstans Green - maintenance	14.0
Future Cemetery land purchase	25.0
Future Cemetery Equipment purchase	2.0
Assarts road play equipment	15.0
All Saints Ward play equipment	15.0
Community Development Reserve	30.0
Future Election costs	1.5
Neighbour Hood plan consultancy	5.0
Staff Pension Gratuity (1996 LGA regulations)	1.0
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves at 31st March, 2015</b>	<b>108.5</b>

Council then **unanimously resolved** to adopt the 2014/15 final accounts and associated statements. It was also **unanimously resolved** that the Chairman should sign the **2014/15 governance statement** on behalf of the Council and that the 2014/15 final accounts papers, bank reconciliation and **Annual Audit Return** should be approved for submission to the appointed external auditors Grant Thornton UK LLP. The external audit date for the Council had been set as 8<sup>th</sup> June.

The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to the Clerk for the excellent standard of the work which he had undertaken during the closure of the 2014/15 accounts and noted the very favourable content of the internal auditor's letter. The Chairman's remarks were **unanimously supported** by all members

### **33/16 (iv) Discretionary Rural rates relief application- SPAR Shop, 157 Wells Road**

The Council had received an application for support with Discretionary Rural Rate relief from Mr Alan Rawlings trading as the owner of the former SPAR Shop at 157, Wells Road.

Following discussion Council members were of the view that the business is of benefit to the local community and as such it would be reasonable to grant the

relief in due of the fact that this will be funded in part by the Council Taxpayers of the Parish.

The Parish Council **unanimously resolved** to make a contribution of £405 to the District Council in this regard to support the maximum award of Rural Rate relief for this business.

### **34/16 Summer events update**

- (a) **Summer fete 6<sup>th</sup> September** organisation of the event was progressing well and, in addition to several new stalls and a range of musical entertainment, there would also now be a display of vintage cars. The next meeting of the fete organising group was due to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> June at 8.00pm in the Wells Club.

Cllr O'Donnell would be undertaking further liaison work with the two local primary Schools, prior to the event in the Summer Term, to ensure the widest possible community engagement. Adverts for the event would also be published in the forthcoming edition of the Wells News.

- (b) **Big lunch event Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June** The bring and share community lunch event will be taking place on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June and the council agreed in principal to support incidental costs by way of a community grant. A grant application form had been sent to the event organisers. Councillors expressly asked that the organisers advertise the event more widely over the whole Parish as a condition of the Grant.

### **35/16 Report from the Clerk on actions undertaken since the previous meeting**

- (a) **Assarts road play area – new play equipment**

Quotations for the new equipment which had been selected for purchase by the Play and Open spaces Working Group had now been received from Playdale Ltd and HAGS SMP Ltd in the sums of £25,452.60 and £25,983.00 respectively. A meeting with a third potential supplier, Wicksteed Ltd, had been arranged for the 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

It was **unanimously resolved** that the Clerk should be granted delegated authority to act, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, to proceed with placing an order for the equipment with Playdale Ltd if their quotation was the lowest eventually received.

No such order would be placed until the Parish Council had received a firm written commitment from Malvern Hills District Council regarding their agreement to the release of section 106 funding to support the project.

- (b) **Jubilee Fountain update on Christmas illumination scheme** The Clerk had asked Prysman Ltd to supply an electricity connection point at the Jubilee Fountain Garden, to which illuminations could be connected, for the decoration of a cut Christmas tree in a suitable part garden during the Christmas 2015 period. Further quotations would be sought for supply of a living tree for use in future years.

**(c) Peachfield Road Common**

Cllr Freeman advised that the council's latest application to the Land Management committee had not gained the support of the Conservators Board Chairman, or the Board's Director. As a result the application had not been approved for discussion on the latest Management Committee agenda. In view of this stance the chances of the future success of any such application was somewhat unlikely.

The Council would also need to be aware of the legal difficulties which could surround the establishment of any structure on land which it did not actually own.

**(d) Britain in Bloom competition 2015 entry** The Clerk advised that an entry had been made into the RHS Britain in Bloom competition for 2015. The aim would be to enhance the work which had been undertaken in 2014, culminating in the award of "level two improving" recognition. It was hoped that the connection to the Jubilee Spring water supply could now be made as the location of the spring's stop tap had been identified. It was suggested that representatives of the Womens Institute should be approached to see whether they might be interested in helping with the ongoing development and maintenance of the garden.

**(e) Wells news Summer edition** Work on editing the Summer edition had now been completed and quotations for its printing were now being obtained. The aim was to start deliveries of the magazine during late June.

**(f) Community access Defibrillators** Agreements had now been reached with the Head of the Wells Primary School for the location of a cabinet and defibrillator at the school and an electrician had been appointed to undertake the work. The Clerk had been successful in obtaining a second defibrillator from the West Midlands Ambulance Service, free of charge, and it was intended that this would be located in a similar externally mounted cabinet at the Wyche Institute.

**(g) Traffic speed A449 Wells Road** The Clerk had written to the Worcestershire Safer Roads Partnership following concerns about the excess of speed of traffic entering Malvern Wells along the A449 on the approach to the Wells Primary School. Vehicle speed monitoring had been undertaken near to this location in both directions and a further update on the situation was awaited.

**(h) New Parish grit bins** Following the request from a local resident it was intended that a new Parish grit bin would be sited at a suitable location in or near to Gordon Terrace later in the year.

**(i) Wells Road amenity land update** The Clerk advised that a borrowing approval of £110k had now been confirmed by the Public Works Loans Board. Although the Councils offer for the land had been rejected it had been left on the table with the vendors for consideration. The land was still being marketed for sale as at the date of the meeting.

### **36/16 Report of District Councillor Mrs C O'Donnell**

"I was delighted to be elected again to the District Council for the Wells Ward & Little Malvern and thank all those who voted for me. I will continue to be a strong voice for our ward on the council.

The first meeting of the new council was held on 19th May 2015  
All elections for leaders and Chairman etc were done on that evening and councillors were allocated on committees and outside bodies.

#### **Elected Members of the Council**

**Chairman of council:** Cllr Barbara Williams, Conservative, Martley Ward

**Deputy Chairman of council:** Cllr John Raine, Green, West Malvern

**Leader of the Council:** Cllr Phillip Grove, Conservative, Tenbury

**Deputy Leader:** Cllr Bronwen Behan, Conservative, Longdon  
The new council's portfolio holders have also been confirmed.

**Cllr Bronwen Behan** has been elected as deputy leader and also portfolio holder for environmental control.

**Cllr Melanie Baker** is portfolio holder for planning and housing

**Cllr Paul Cumming** is responsible for finance, performance management and resources.

**Cllr Rebecca Massey** is portfolio holder for economic development, tourism and leisure, health and wellbeing.

**Cllr David Chambers** is responsible for policy development, HR and customer services.

Council induction programs for most councillors so far have been:

Predetermination & Bias Meeting

Induction - Development Control 1

Induction - Development Control 2

Audit

No other meetings have been held.

#### **Nominate the buildings you love**

Malvern Hills District Council is inviting nominations for its list of locally important buildings and structures. Duncan Rudge, Development Control Manager at Malvern Hills, said: "Many buildings across the district will be important locally because of their architectural, historic or social interest, but we might not know much about them. This is an exciting opportunity for people to research buildings within the Malvern Hills district that they think are important and worthy of inclusion on the list, and that might merit greater protection by being included on the list." Anyone can submit a nomination at [www.malvern hills.gov.uk/heritage-assets](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/heritage-assets)"

### **37/16 Report of County Councillor Mrs Lucy Hodgson**

#### **The appointment of a new County Council chairman**

A new Chairman for Worcestershire County Council has been appointed following the first Council meeting after the General Election. Councillor Ian Hopwood has taken the ceremonial chains and will undertake the role of Chairman for the next 12 months.

Councillor Ian Hopwood is the first chairman of the County Council who represents a Malvern division, that of Langland.



The role of Chairman of the Council is the civic and ceremonial head of the council, chosen by council to be their non-political representative on ceremonial and other occasions and to run council meetings.

The chairman will be attending numerous civil functions, alongside his Council duties, including the Annual Council meeting for Kidderminster Town Council, the Royal Three Counties Show and the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Sealing of The Magna Carta.

### **Foster Care Fortnight 2015**

Worcestershire County Council is getting behind this year's Foster Care Fortnight (1-14 June 2015) by asking people to 'make a connection' with fostering.

Foster Care Fortnight is an annual event led by the UK's leading fostering charity, The Fostering Network. There are more than 63,000 children living in Foster Care in the UK, and according to recent figures, an estimated further 8,600 fostering households nationwide are required to meet the demand. In Worcestershire we need to recruit 70 more foster carers by 2017 to meet the growing demand.

Foster Care Fortnight is an ideal opportunity to promote fostering and Worcestershire will be actively doing just this during the campaign. Family members, friends, neighbours or colleagues may foster, have been fostered or work to support children and young people in foster care. We are asking people to "*Think Fostering, Talk Fostering*", simply put, think about it and talk about it to your family, friends and colleagues.

A new website: [worcestershiresfostering.co.uk](http://worcestershiresfostering.co.uk) has recently been launched alongside a dedicated YouTube channel (<http://bit.ly/1B9VTBR>) which will help anyone interested in becoming a foster carers to learn more, with a host of new videos giving valuable insight into fostering.

### **Worcestershire authorities appoint Civica to run shared customer services**

Customer services for three Worcestershire councils will be jointly run by a specialist company as part of a new deal which will save up to £2.6million.

Worcestershire County Council, Malvern Hills District Council and Worcester City Council have signed an 8.5 year agreement with Civica, a market leader in specialist systems and business process outsourcing, to manage their customer contact centres, telephone and email services. They were previously provided by their own staff through the Worcestershire Hub Shared Service (WHSS).

The Worcestershire Hub deals with about 23,000 direct calls, 4,500 switchboard calls, 5,000 online enquires and 6,000 visits in person each month for the three councils through two main offices in Worcester and Malvern, part-time services in Upton and Tenbury and a central call centre.

As a result of the partnership, which began on 1 May, Civica will use its expertise to increase the use of online services by customers through the three councils' websites and to target those most in need of face-to-face help. They will also introduce new processes and use IT to achieve savings and deliver service improvements.

More than 50 staff have been transferred to Civica as part of the agreement.

Civica already delivers revenues and benefits services successfully in South Worcestershire in a separate shared service partnership with Wychavon District Council, Worcester City Council and Malvern Hills District Council.

### **Annual Divisional fund**

Just a reminder that I have another £10,000 divisional fund which is to be spent in the Chase Division please can you let me know of any projects that I may be able to help with."

**38/16 Report of the elected conservator Cllr S Freeman**

In addition to his report highlighting the lack of support for the Council's play scheme. Cllr Freeman gave details of the new induction scheme which had been introduced for new members of the Conservators Board. The next meeting of the board was scheduled to take place in July.

**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."*

**The Clerk left the room during the consideration of this item.**

**39/16** Cllr Helen Burrage presented the tabled report.

**"Report of the Staffing Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2015- Executive Summary & Recommendations to Council from the Annual Performance Review for David Taverner, Clerk to the Council."**

**40/16** After discussion, the following recommendation of the Staffing Committee was **proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed:**

***"That David Taverner's annual pay increment for the year 2015 -16, as set out in his contract of employment, should be authorised to take place as from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 and be backdated to that date."***

**41/16** Members concurred with the Staffing Committee's conclusions. They were pleased overall with the Clerk's performance over the year, understanding of any difficulties being experienced and were strongly supportive of his work. Members found him, as always, willing, helpful and pleasant to work with. They considered that he was very much an asset to the Council.

Members agreed that *'capable persons should be appointed to the chairs of all the Working Groups ... who would then ensure that ALL the groups would function properly and be self-operational and self-clerking.'*

Cllr Burrage would produce a set of Draft 'Terms of Reference & Scope' for the four Working Groups. These documents were to be reviewed by the newly elected Working Group Chairmen and members of all the groups as soon as possible. The finalised versions of the 'Terms of Reference and Scope' for each working group would be presented to the Council at the meeting on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

There being no other business the meeting the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.35pm.

Minutes approved Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2015

Signed .....

Cllr Mrs Helen Burrage- Chairman of the Council