

## 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 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2016** commencing at 7.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillors S Freeman (Chairman), B Knibb, Mrs J Smethurst, N Johnson, K Wagstaff, J Black, M Victory

**Apologies for absence:** S Atwell, Mrs C O'Donnell, Mrs H Burrage, J Wagstaff, N Chatten, P Bennett

**In attendance:** David Taverner (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer)  
County Councillor Mrs L Hodgson

### **135/16 Declarations of Interest**

Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests (ROI) up to date. The Clerk advised that Cllr P Bennett had now completed his ROI update form which had been sent to the District Council.

- (a) **To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature:** The Clerk declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 7 regarding the approval of a payment in his name.

The Clerk also declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 17 – the confidential report of the Staffing Committee which had been held on 18<sup>th</sup> February.

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

**136/16 To Consider Requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011):** There were none.

### **137/16 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2016**

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 had been previously circulated. The minutes were **unanimously approved** as a correct record of that meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

### **138/16 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February**

(a) **ref Minute 125/16 (b) Purchase of Chairman's Regalia**  
Cllr Freeman advised that he had now made further contact with the company which would be manufacturing the regalia item. Some embellishments to the regalia art work and the alignment of the surrounding wording were now being worked on. The costs would be contained within the £500 budget allocation originally approved.

**(b) Ref minute 126/16(d) Parish boundary signage.**

Cllr Bennett had previously agreed to ascertain the costs of new Parish boundary signage and he had agreed to report back on this issue to a future meeting of the Council once further information was to hand.

It was agreed that the costs of any new signage that was eventually purchased should be kept to a reasonable level. It was suggested that an approach should be made to the Three Counties Showground with a view to them sponsoring some appropriate signage within the Parish.

**139/16**

**Reports from Council Committees and working groups**

**(a) Planning Committee -16<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

The Clerk presented the previously circulated report of the **Planning Committee** meeting which had been held on **16th March, 2016**.

It was noted with concern that the meeting had become non quorate halfway through its business after Cllr Bennett had left the meeting. As a result, the committee's recommendations, which had been made by the Committee in response to the following two planning applications, needed the approval of the full Council.

16 00269 FUL -**8 The Crescent** -Extension at rear to form dining room, extension to garage, alterations to roof to form larger en-suite with dormers at rear. The Planning Committee had recommended that the Council should raise no objections to this application and this recommendation was **unanimously approved**.

Cllr Victory suggested that, the intrinsic design and grouping of buildings in The Crescent would benefit from the additional protection that could be afforded by the inclusion of the buildings onto the listing of designated heritage assets maintained by the District Council.

Heritage assets included on the local list are not subject to any additional planning controls in connection with any alteration or demolition. However, where a planning application is needed, then the inclusion of such assets on this local list would be a "material consideration" and the local architectural and heritage significance would be taken into account when making a decision on any development proposals. Members **unanimously agreed** to refer Cllr Victory's proposal to the next meeting of the Parish Council's planning committee for consideration.

16 00345 HOU -**20 Green Lane** -Installation of external wall insulation to all elevations of the property in a neutral colour (white, cream, grey). The Planning Committee had recommended that the Council should raise no objections to this application and this recommendation was **unanimously approved**.

Members voiced their disquiet that the Planning Committee meeting had become non-quorate as a member of the Committee had left the meeting early without proffering any explanation for the reasons behind their departure. It was suggested that the clerk should discuss this matter with the Chairman of the Planning Committee with a view to the prevention of similar difficulties in the future.

**(b) Gas lamps working group**

There had been no meeting of the group since the last Council meeting. Cllr Freeman again outlined the new national requirement for individual meters to be attached to any new gas lamp installation. As these meters would need to be housed in individual enclosed units there could be issues with gaining conservation officer approval for the installation of the equipment if such work was undertaken.

**(c) Events Working group**

The Working Group was next due to meet 10<sup>th</sup> May and would be reviewing arrangements for the organisation of the summer fête. There were also plans to tie in the celebrations of the Queens 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with the Village Hall "Big Lunch" community event which is scheduled to take place on 12<sup>th</sup> June

**(d) Play and Open Spaces Working Group.** The Clerk advised that some liaison work with Malvern Hills District Council's legal team still needed to be completed with regard to the removal of the restrictive legal covenants relating to the Scout Hut Site at Assarts Road.

**(e) Communications working group.** Following the recent problems which had occurred with an attack on the security of the parish website it was agreed that the Clerk should contact the original web site developer, Tim Henley, who had offered to quote for the work required to upgrade the website with the latest software release. This work would substantially enhance the security of the site and increase its reliability.

It was expected that the costs of this work would be contained within the Council's existing IT development budget of £300 with any potential costs in excess of this sum to be approved by the Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee.

## **140/16 (a) Financial matters – payment of accounts**

**The following accounts were unanimously approved for payment:**

<b>Chq</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>For:</b>	<b>NET</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>GROSS</b>
			<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
3329	Steve Maund	Outdoor Work March Installation of standpipes in Parish cemetery and jubilee Fountain garden	1,003.20	-	1,003.20
3330	Watren Ltd		2,260.00	452.00	2,712.00
3331	Martin Thomas	Outdoor Work March	191.99	-	191.99
3332	N power County Building	Cemetery electricity	65.55	3.12	68.67
3333	Supplies	Cemetery Materials	85.79	17.16	102.95
3334	Sight Designs Ltd Worcestershire	Gas Lamps Maintenance	82.20	16.44	98.64
3335	CALC	Clerk & Councillor Training	65.00	5.00	70.00
3336	D M Taverner	Administration Expenses	111.63	8.35	119.98
3337	HMRC	PAYE & Nat ins March Qtr	971.44		971.44
s/order	D M Taverner	Clerk's Salary March, 2016	1,521.84	-	1,521.84
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>6,358.64</b>	<b>502.07</b>	<b>6,860.71</b>

## **141/16 Proposed changes Local Bus Services**

Several letters and e-mails had been received from local residents expressing their concerns regarding the proposed curtailment of local bus services. In association with others, the Parish Council had been lobbying both First Bus Ltd and the County Council in an attempt to prevent the proposed diminution of these vital local services.

The Chairman had attended a meeting (organised by County Cllr Tom Wells) of councillors from affected parishes, along with district and county councillors. A joint statement of objection to the proposed cuts had been agreed.

The joint letter, shown in italics below, was sent to First Buses, our MP and Worcester County Council.

The objective was to persuade First Buses to withdraw its planned service cancellations from April 10<sup>th</sup> 2016.

*"The surprise decision to cancel essential bus service at short notice is apparently a 'commercial' decision for First Buses even though the bus services it is withdrawing are close to breaking even. Just an average of two more persons per bus would make the services sustainable. At the same time First Buses are trumpeting their million-pound upgrade to Worcester services - with Wi-Fi and leather seats! It is appalling that they should spend luxury levels of money on some services into Worcester while cancelling essential services for*

*local residents only a few miles away. Have First Buses no heart and no conscience? In Malvern Wells, we don't need leather seats and Wi-Fi, we just need our buses. If First Buses was to invest in the rural bus services to provide more frequent, regular and reliable buses, timetables and live bus arrival times at the stops, they would find their bus services would be much more used. The poor quality of service we have currently does not entice further users. First Buses' poor quality & infrequent bus services to the rural parishes has become a self-fulfilling strategy conveniently leading to their 'commercial' decision to no longer be bothered with us.*

*But buses MATTER in rural areas. Half of Malvern Wells residents are registered with the Upton Surgery in Tunnel Hill and the rest with practices in Great Malvern. Losing the daytime buses thus significantly affects access to essential healthcare for all age groups. The same bus routes take us out to Worcester and Great Malvern, where many of our young people work. Losing our buses will cut off Malvern Wells residents who can't drive from all the surrounding communities, all-important services and the ability to get to work. Tourists staying in Malvern Wells will be disadvantaged - we have 4 B&Bs, 2 pubs with accommodation and a 4- star hotel. Many tourists come by train to walk and want to use buses to get around - to the Hills, the festivals in Upton and the Showground - Malvern Wells' biggest tourist attraction. Tourists are shocked to discover how poor our bus services are already compared to towns! Without the buses to Upton, Great Malvern and Worcester, Malvern Wells risks becoming an unsustainable community. I've received many phone calls and emails from residents in Malvern Wells who will be severely affected by First Buses' thoughtless decisions.*

### **142/16 County Councillor Report**

#### **Update on the Proposed Changes to Bus Services affecting the Wells Area.**

County Councillor Lucy Hodgson was in attendance at the meeting and, as part of her monthly report, updated Members on the latest position regarding the proposed bus service changes

There had been a briefing at county hall on 23rd March with Representatives of First Bus and Officers of the County Council.

First Bus said that as a company there had been a large amount of pressure put on them by the Traffic Commissioners to reach the percentages they had set for buses arriving on time and offering a reliable service. Traffic congestion across the county and particular in Worcester has had a real impact of the levels of service and their reliability. Another issue is that on many routes there is around 40% usage by Senior Citizens.

First told us that following the reduction in Subsidies by the County Council in 2014 they took on a number of services on a commercial basis and this included the route between Upton, Welland, Malvern Wells and Malvern Link. As a company they have done a review of the usage of all of these services and have found that on this particular service it was used by 73 passengers per day which worked out to be 5.2 passengers per journey. As a company they also looked at reducing the numbers of services per day and using smaller buses but found that this did not cover their costs.

They admitted that they had not handled the communications at all well over this and were very apologetic about ceasing the service in April apart from the School service which would continue.

An alternative solution has now been offered using some developer money the county council would be able to run a mini bus with a driver which would run on a clockwise circuit between Upton, Welland, Malvern Wells, Barnards Green, Hanley Swan and back, on show days the route would include the 3 counties show ground. The hope is to trail this for 6 months and would cost approx. £30,000. It would hope that it would run 6 days each week. It is vital that this service is well publicized and well used. After the 6 months there will be a review and the hope is that the service will be carried on based on a community solution.

It has been suggested that part of my divisional fund could be used to help support this.

### **Street Lighting**

Over the last 18 months or so, the County Council have been delivering the Street Lighting initiative across Worcestershire.

The County Council currently spends £2.4 million annually on illuminating street lights and signs. Street lighting also accounts for 19% of the County Council's carbon dioxide emissions and also incurs an additional cost of £12 per tonne, payable to central Government. The Street Lighting Energy Saving Initiative aims to reduce 66% of the street lighting in side streets between the hours of midnight and 6am, (GMT) throughout Worcestershire. The aim is to save £500,000 per year to assist with necessary overall County Council savings. Following a successful trial period in Droitwich Spa, Cabinet decided in February 2014 to expand the initiative throughout Worcestershire.

Worcestershire County Council uses its power under the Highways Act to illuminate highways but it is not a statutory duty, and it can therefore make changes to lighting provision. The aim is to reduce the lighting hours of lightly used highways in both residential and industrial estate roads and lighting is being retained at junctions, bends and other key locations for road safety reasons. The lights affected (on average two out of three) are designed to turn off between the hours of midnight and 6am (Greenwich Meantime).

The newer, more cost effective lighting stock (for example LED lamps) are unaffected by the project. The project will commence in the next few weeks.

### **Update on Syrian Refugees**

The process for allowing Syrian Refugees to come to Worcestershire has started. I am the County Cabinet lead for this. An agreement to proceed has been agreed by all the Districts and the County Council start a procurement process to find a suitable partner who will manage the process which will be funded by central government. It is hoped that this will be completed by June and the first refugees may arrive in the county by the end of the summer. I was able to attend the recent workshop held by Malvern's Welcomes group and I was most interested to hear all that they have been doing to prepare to welcome refugees into this community. It has been agreed that the county will receive 50 refugees over the next 4 years and at present it has not been decided where they will be put.

## **Planning application approved for £4 million Phase 5 of Malvern Hills Science Park**

Technology rich companies will benefit from an additional £4 million investment into Malvern Hills Science Park as planning consent for the next phase has been approved.

Worcestershire County Council's Planning Committee today (22 March 2016) granted planning approval for development of Phase 5 of the Science Park which will partly replace an existing building that is being demolished with a new two storey building.

Development of Phase 5 is possible due to a £4m investment from the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership through the Worcestershire Growth Deal. This investment builds on the success of the Science Park, which is already home to a significant cluster of IT and cyber security companies as well as the National Cyber Skills Centre.

The recently completed 30,000 sq.ft. Phase 4, which was due to £3.5m of investment from Worcestershire County Council alongside £370,000 from Malvern Hills District Council, is now also the new home for current tenants UTC Aerospace Systems. This new building in Phase 5 will now provide 16,000 sq.ft. of floor space which will be available to new companies or existing tenants seeking to grow their businesses.

The decision for Phase 5 was following public consultation sessions held last year which resulted in a planning application being submitted during December 2015. A contractor will now be appointed to develop Phase 5 with the build planned to commence in the Summer and anticipated to take around nine months.

### **Pavement works**

Councillor Wagstaff again drew attention to the very poor state of the pavements running down from the Wells Primary School to Daniels Garage, especially in view of the excellent standard of pavement works which had recently been undertaken adjoining roads nearby.

### **143/16 Report of District Councillor- Mrs C O' Donnell**

Cllr O' Donnell had submitted the following written report: -

#### **Supporting our local Parish to make sure we have a bus service**

First Bus have just announced that services connecting Malvern to Upton will be withdrawn after Easter. Their proposals also mean that Malvern Wells and Hanley Castle would lose all their bus services, cutting them off from essential services in the neighbouring towns. If these changes are allowed to happen, they will worsen the isolation of several communities and impact on the economic wellbeing of all of the towns and villages in this part of the district.

#### **Easter Arts and Food Market returns to Malvern**

The first Arts and Food Market of 2016 will be coming to Great Malvern for an Easter weekend treat. The market takes place along Abbey Road, Malvern on Saturday 26 March, from 10am to 5pm. There will be a wide range of arts, crafts and food on offer from exhibitors including local designer makers, artists and some of the finest artisan food and drink producers in the region. The market will also feature a range of work including ceramics, glass, jewellery, paintings, sculpture, printmaking, textiles and photography. The event, staged by Boffy

Arts Markets and Malvern Hills District Council, is now in its tenth year and is one of the longest running markets of its kind in the area.

### **Local jobs on offer for the upcoming EU Referendum**

Residents are being offered the chance to take an active part in the EU Referendum by helping to man polling stations across the district. Malvern Hills District Council is appealing for people to come forward and act as poll clerks on 23 June 2016 between 7am and 10pm when Britain goes to the polls. Poll clerks will be paid £132 for the day as well as £40 for attending the training session and any mileage costs. The role of a poll clerk includes overseeing the running of polling stations and issuing ballot papers. No previous experience is necessary as training is provided.

### **Matt Box, Policy and Governance Manager at Malvern Hills District**

**Council said:** "Turnout is expected to be above 70 per cent so it will be a busy and exciting day. This is a fantastic opportunity to get involved in an historic moment in Britain's history, whatever the result, as well as meet new people. It would also be a great learning experience."

To apply or for more information, email [elections@malvern hills.gov.uk](mailto:elections@malvern hills.gov.uk) or telephone 01684 862200. A limited number of positions available and applicants must be aged 18 or over. Existing applicants need not reapply.

### **Have your say on sites for travelers in south Worcestershire**

South Worcestershire residents can have their say on a vital issue connected with the newly adopted South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) when a consultation opens on March 14. Residents and other interested parties are being asked for their views on the provision of sites for travelers and travelling show people. The consultation runs for six weeks at [www.swdevelopmentplan.org](http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org) while printed copies of the consultation documents and forms will be available at libraries and council contact centres. There will also be a series of public drop-in sessions when staff will be on hand to answer queries. The SWDP has recently been adopted by Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council and includes policies aimed at boosting the local economy and delivering sustainable development. The three councils have prepared a Development Plan Document setting out proposed locations for pitches for travellers and travelling show people, to be provided over the next five-ten years, as required by national planning policy. Councillor Melanie Baker, who chairs the SWDP Joint Advisory Panel, said: "Providing sites for travellers and travelling show people is vitally important as we work to deliver the South Worcestershire Development Plan, so I would urge people to make their voices heard on this essential issue."

- March 23 – Badsey Memorial Hall (covering the Aldington and Badsey sites)
- 31 March – Bredon Village Hall
- April 5 – Upton Hill Centre, Upton-upon-Severn

**District gets a cleanup for The Queen** Car parts, half a vacuum cleaner and a dirty nappy were among the items plucked from the district's streets as residents, councillors and staff from Malvern Hills District Council joined forces to Clean for the Queen. The specially assembled 'litter hit squad' were amongst the thousands of people nationwide out cleaning their communities over the weekend as part of the national campaign to mark Her Majesty's 90th birthday in April. The team, including council Chairman Cllr Barbara Williams and Cllr



David Watkins, Portfolio Holder for healthier communities, took to the streets on Friday 4 March to tackle rubbish left behind by litter louts on green areas running along Madresfield Road and footpaths around part of Link Ward. In total 20 bags of rubbish were collected. Further litter picks are planned on 21 and 23 March in Pickersleigh, which has been organised by Fortis Living and will involve pupils from Grove and Great Malvern Primary Schools.

### **Sporting stars and unsung heroes sought**

It is that time of the year again when we begin the hunt is on for sporting stars and the unsung heroes behind their success with the return of the Malvern Hills District Community Sports Awards. Now in their sixth year, the awards take place at Malvern College on 14 July and will recognise coaches, clubs, volunteers and those who play sport.

Nominations are being sought for the 13 categories including Volunteer of the Year and Inclusive Project of the year, with the winners announced on the night in front of more than 200 dignitaries and guests. Malvern Hills District Council is organising the event which is being sponsored by UK Flood Barriers for the third year in a row.

The ceremony will be hosted by BBC Hereford and Worcester drive time presenter Andrew Easton, and produced by Malvern-based AN Event Services. Winners will be automatically shortlisted for the County Sports Awards in November. Last year's event was the biggest ever with a record number of nominations and it is hoped that success can be repeated this time around. To make a nomination online visit [www.malvernhills.gov.uk/sports-awards](http://www.malvernhills.gov.uk/sports-awards). Forms can be requested from Jordan Cotton by emailing [Jordan.cotton@malvernhills.gov.uk](mailto:Jordan.cotton@malvernhills.gov.uk) or call 01684 862372. A limited number of sponsorship opportunities are also available. Email: [sophie.jackson@malvernhills.gov.uk](mailto:sophie.jackson@malvernhills.gov.uk) for more information. Deadline for nominations is Friday, 27 May.

### **144/16 Actions undertaken by the Clerk since the previous meeting.**

#### **(a) Assarts Road – New play equipment**

The Contractors had completed the final parts of the installation of the new equipment which had been purchased. The Section 106 funding for the project had now been received. Payment of the contractors' final invoice would be made once a satisfactory inspection report from RoSPA had been received February.

#### **(b) Community access defibrillators.**

The defibrillator units for the former SPAR shop and the Wyche institute were due to be delivered by 31<sup>st</sup> March. The unit at the shop would honour the memory of the late Cllr Chris Cheeseman and a suitable commemorative plaque had been ordered.

#### **(c) Jubilee Garden and extension of Cemetery Water supply.**

The work to provide new standpipes in the Jubilee Fountain garden and in the new area of the cemetery had now been completed. The costs were in accordance with the quotation which had been approved by the Council on 24<sup>th</sup> February

#### **(d) Electronic banking- Lloyds bank PLC**

The Clerk advised that the final user verification work had now been completed. Arrangements for training users on the operation of the account would be made when further information was to hand.

**145/16 – Chairman’s Communications**

**Former Abbey College Playing Field**

An e-mail had been received from a parishioner expressing their concerns regarding the general untidiness of the former Abbey College Playing Field site off Green Lane/ Hanley Road.

The site had become generally unkempt and overgrown with brambles and weeds and similarly the verge fronting the Hanley Road appears equally unkempt.

It might be possible for the District Council to be asked to serve an ‘amenity’ notice on the owner of any land or building which is in an unreasonably untidy condition and was considered to have an adverse effect on the amenity of the area. This would be done by the service of a notice under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

This notice is used to maintain and improve the quality of the local environment, to assist in tackling dereliction and retaining land in productive use, as well as contributing to the regeneration of an area and responding positively to public concerns, although the enforcement of the provisions contained within such a notice were likely to be highly problematic

**146/16 Reports from representatives on other bodies**

**(a) Village Hall**

The difficulties which had arisen with the Village Hall heating system had now been resolved.

***At this stage of the meeting the Council passed a resolution that the remainder of the meeting should be closed to the public and press under the Local Government Act (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 The reason being the consideration of staff contracts and a report regarding the potential purchase of land which might be commercially sensitive. Publication of the minutes of these items are thus restricted***

There being no other business the meeting the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30pm.

Minutes approved Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April March, 2016

Signed .....  
Chairman of the Council