

MALVERN WELLS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Malvern Wells Parish Council duly convened and held in
The Village Hall, Wells Road on Wednesday, 24th November 2010 commencing at
7.30pm

Present: Councillors K Wagstaff (Chairman)
J Black Mrs A Bradshaw
P Buchanan Mrs H Burrage
Mrs A Cheeseman T Henley
A Hull N Johnson
B J Knibb Mrs C O'Donnell
M Victory

In attendance: D Cllr C Cheeseman, WCCllr S Brown
and Mr D M Taverner (Clerk)

134/10 Declarations of Interest for:-

a) The Meeting: Cllr Buchanan declared an interest in the proposed Closure of St Peter's Churchyard as a member of the PCC & Cllr Mrs Burrage in the same matter as a neighbouring householder and PC representative on the Village Hall Management Board

b) Any Changes to be notified to the Registers of Interests and Gifts & Hospitality: There were none.

135/10 Resignation of a Councillor

Members noted the resignation letter of Kath Boughton with immediate effect, for personal reasons. The Chairman accepted the resignation and members wished Kath well for the future.

The Clerk advised that as the date of the resignation was less than six months from the date of the next Council elections, the vacancy would not need to be advertised until the final nomination date for that election.

136/10 Closure of the Meeting to allow Parishioners Present to speak on any Matter on the agenda

A group of Parishioners were present as representatives of the Kings Road residents group. The Chairman advised the meeting that he was aware that the representatives wished to have the opportunity to comment when agenda item 10 (a) regarding the property at 2 & 2a Kings Road was dealt with.

In order to proceed with the business of the meeting in the most efficient manner possible to the Chairman proposed that closure of the meeting to allow residents sufficient time to speak on the matter be deferred until later in the meeting. This was unanimously supported.

137/10 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meetings of the Parish Council held on 20th October, 2010 having been previously circulated were **approved** and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

138/10 Matters arising from the Minutes

Minute 103/10 – Closure of St Peters Churchyard.

The Clerk advised that correspondence had been received from the Church commissioners which, as well as including details of the covenants appertaining to St Peters Churchyard, also included a definitive plan of the boundary area. The next step in the closure procedure would be for the Parochial Church Council to submit a revised closure application to the Ministry of Justice.

Minute 118/10 – Wells News

The Clerk advised that the final proofs of the December edition of the Wells News had been sent to the printers. Completion of the printing was expected by the end of the first week of December and delivery of the booklets to residents would commence during the second

week of December. Cllr Victory was thanked for the excellent editorial work he had undertaken.

138/10 Report of County Councillor

Cllr Brown reported that he had asked the County Council's Highways department to ensure that all the winter grit bins in the Parish were properly replenished throughout the winter months. The bin requested for Grundy's Lane had not yet been provided and Cllr Brown advised that this would be followed up.

The Parish Council had previously submitted details of the priority areas on which gritting runs and snow clearance should be undertaken and Cllr Brown would be monitoring those areas to ensure that the gritting works were properly being carried out.

In response to complaints about the poor state of some road surfaces in the District Cllr Brown advised that financial resources for this work was limited but asked that he be informed of the details of any urgent works that were needed so that he could follow up as necessary.

The County Council would be required to identify budget savings of £45m over the next four years and it was unfortunately inevitable that this would mean cuts to front line services. The final details of the Government's Grant settlement for the County Council were expected in early December.

139/10 Report of District Councillor

Cllr Cheeseman advised Members that the BT "Race to Infinity" Broadband exchange campaign had been well supported locally. BT Infinity (the brand name for the BT Retail fibre products) is looking to identify the hot-spots where demand for fibre based broadband is greatest so that BT resources could be targeted to areas of highest demand. Residents were thus encouraged to register their interest and details had been placed on the Council notice boards.

Cllr Cheeseman went on to report that recent flooding caused by blocked drains was continuing to cause problems throughout the Parish. The District Council's Flood Alleviation team would be contacting riparian landowners to ensure that all ditches and gulleys were properly maintained.

Several complaints of excessive noise emanating from a recent motoring event at the Three Counties showground (TCS) had been received. Nick Vincent, the Chairman of TCS had sent a letter of apology to the Parish Council for the disturbance which had been caused.

The District Council had suffered a 7.25% cut to its government grant for each of the next four financial years but still hoped to contain any cuts to front line services to a minimum. The potential payment of grant for the Gas lamps renovation funding has been included in the District Council's draft money plan, but final details of this were still under review.

139/10 Gas Lamp Maintenance agreement

Further meetings regarding the potential refurbishment of the lamps had been held with the District Council (MHDC) and funding negotiations were continuing.

Cllr Burrage reported that she and Cllr Knibb had attended an excellent presentation given by Transition Malvern Hills and a live demonstration of a refurbished lamp using the new technology had been very impressive.

With negotiations concerning funding matters continuing, MHDC had arranged further meetings to which representatives from West Malvern, Malvern Town Council, and Malvern Wells Parish Council would be invited.

Quotations for the costs of the refurbished lamps were now being drawn up by Sight Designs Ltd based on the specifications which had been provided. When these figures were to hand they would need to be fed into the Parish Council's costs projections which would form the basis for its grant submission to MHDC.

Cllr Burrage reiterated that the maintenance agreement between the Parish and District Councils had been in force for in excess of twenty years and that any offer would have to be made on terms that were beneficial to the Parish Council once final details of the quotations for the refurbishment works were to hand. Further work would need to be undertaken to review the financial implications for the Council once the updated quotations were to hand. Cllr Burrage was thanked for the detailed work which she had undertaken on the financial projections to date.

The Gas lamps negotiating team would be meeting again with MHDC to discuss funding arrangements for the renovation and ongoing maintenance of the lamps. The provision of accurate quotations from the contractors was clearly essential. The negotiating team's mandate was based on the resolution that had been passed at the previous Council meeting which had stated that the ongoing maintenance costs of the lamps to the PC should be no greater than those included in the current precept.

The Gas Lamps working group would make a further report back to Council on the outcome of the negotiations with MHDC prior to the consideration of the 2011/12 budget and subsequent precept submission.

140/10 Planning Matters

At this point in the meeting the Chairman proposed that Standing Orders be suspended to allow parishioners present to speak on the following matter on the agenda. This was unanimously supported.

(a) 2 and 2a -Kings Road

Representatives from the Kings Road residents group expressed their strong objections to the response that had been received from to the District Council's Planning Enforcement team regarding the use of the property by the college.

It was apparent that there had been a clear change of use of the property since its original planning application had been approved, the District Council's Enforcement officer had given the following response to the Parish Council's strong letter of objection to the current use of the property:

When considering the merits of a planning application the Council has to look at the Development Plan Policies of the area and whether in this case the present use falls outside policy guidelines. It also has to consider any harm that may be caused to local amenity.

To assess the suitability of a development the Council refers to the Development Plan which in this case comprises the Worcestershire County Structure Plan and the Malvern Hills District Local Plan. Of particular relevance is Policy DS3 of the local plan.

In this case the present use is not considered to be harmful to the character of the area or harmful to neighbouring amenities and as such the Local Planning Authority do not consider it expedient to pursue formal enforcement action at this time.

Several Members spoke to voice their strong concerns about the lack of effective planning enforcement action in this case. The Clerk was asked to write to the Head of Planning at the District Council to formally register these concerns.

The Chairman thanked those residents who had who had contributed to the debate and assured them that their comments would be conveyed to the District Council's officers for their attention.

With the agreement of the meeting, the Chairman deferred the main Council meeting to allow for a meeting of the Planning Committee.

(b) Planning application received from MHDC for comment

10/01379/HOU Proposed new vehicular access and single storey rear extension 109 A Wells Road

Members carefully considered this application and whilst they registered no objection to the construction of the extension concerns were expressed about the location of the proposed new vehicular access which was felt to be inappropriately located.

It was noted that at present there is public parking for two cars on the pavement outside this property. This parking area is well separated from the Wells Road and does not impede pedestrian access along the pavement. There is no other public parking along this stretch of Wells Road. The proposed new access across the pavement would block the public parking spaces in the immediate area.

At the conclusion of the Planning Committee meeting at 9.25 pm the meeting of the Parish Council was reconvened.

141/10 Service of Remembrance review of procedures.

Cllr Burrage reported that the service of remembrance had been very well supported by residents and that the arrangements for the service appeared to have gone well.

Thanks were given to Rev Steve Martin for conducting the service so well and to CSO Helen Carstairs and Karen Watson who had kindly helped with the temporary diversion of traffic.

The Scouts had attended to lead the parade to the war Memorial from the Village Hall. This had added to the occasion and it was suggested that local schools are contacted prior to the 2011 service to enquire whether they would like to take part in the parade and the service.

142/10 Chairman's Communications

The Chairman had received a request for funding support from the Parish Council for a local resident who wished to take up voluntary service overseas. This letter was discussed by members and whilst they were supportive of principal behind the request it was felt that Council funds could not be committed to support ventures that were not of direct benefit to the local community as a whole.

143/10 Reports of Committee Chairmen

- (a) Cllr Black presented the report of the Environment Committee meeting held on 26th October and this report was **accepted** by the Council
- (c) Cllr Johnson presented the report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 27th October and drew attention to the budget review being undertaken in preparation for the determination of the 2011/12 precept. This report was **accepted** by the Council

144/10 Report of representatives on other bodies.

(a) Malvern Wells Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr Burrage drew attention to the Christmas Carol Concert being held on in the Village Hall on Friday 17th December. The event was to be advertised on notice boards throughout the Parish. All were welcome to attend and light refreshments would be provided.

(b) AONB: Joint Advisory Committee – Cllr Black reported that no meeting had taken place since the previous Parish Council Meeting

(c) Malvern Hills CAB - Cllr Johnson reported that a meeting had recently taken place but that he had been unable to attend. An update report on activity at the CAB would be made to a future meeting of the Council.

(d) The Wyche Institute – Cllr Bradshaw reported that no meeting had taken place since the previous Parish Council Meeting

(e) MH District Community Policing Matters – Cllrs Knibb & Buchanan reported that no meeting had taken place since the previous Parish Council Meeting

(f) CPRE- Cllr Mrs Cheeseman drew attention to the report of the CPRE on the housing proposals contained in the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy which included plans for a larger expansion of Worcester into the Malvern Hills District than had been originally anticipated. The CPRE were continuing to press for a reduction in the overall numbers of properties proposed and for a revision of the 'large housing estate' solution in favour of smaller scale developments using more brown field sites.

(g) Three Counties Showground Liaison group- Cllr Mrs Cheeseman reported on the recent noise disturbance that had arisen from a motor rallying event at the Three Counties Showground. A letter of apology from the Nick Vincent – the Chief Executive of the Three Counties Showground (TCS) had been received and steps had been taken by the TCS to ensure there would be no recurrence of the event.

145/10 Cemetery Matters

There Clerk reported that work on the painting of the Cemetery Railings was progressing satisfactorily and various maintenance works within the Cemetery itself were on schedule.

With regard to the proposed closure of St Peters Churchyard the Clerk advised that a plan showing the defined area of land of the Cemetery had been received from the Church Commissioners. Immediately prior to the Council meeting the Clerk had met with Mr D Tarplett, the owner of Knave House, whose property was closest to the entrance into the Cemetery. The question of proper access to the Cemetery would need to be closely addressed prior to the Council taking on any future maintenance responsibility

The plans which had been received from Church Commissioners were in accordance with those recorded on the deeds of Mr Tarplett's property. Ongoing contact would be maintained with Mr Tarplett and neighbouring landowners during any further developments on the application for the proposed closure the Churchyard.

146/101 Financial Matters

a) Payment of Accounts: Members **approved** the payments of accounts as in the presented schedule **(Appendix 1)**.

There being no other business the meeting Closed at 9 40 pm

-----**(Chairman)**
(26th January,2011)