

Minutes of **Malvern Wells Parish Meeting 2011** held on **Wednesday, 20th April 2011** in **The Village Hall, Wells Road** commencing at **7.00 pm**

Attendance: Cllrs K Wagstaff (Chairman), H Burrage, N Johnson, M Victory, A Bradshaw, C O' Donnell, J Black, B Knibb, A Hull

County Councillor: S Brown

District Councillor: C Cheeseman

Elected Conservator: B Wilcock

Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer: David Taverner

Apologies received: Cllrs P Buchanan, T Henley and Mrs A Cheeseman

- 1 **Welcome:** The Chairman, Cllr K Wagstaff, welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th April 2010:** The minutes of the Parish Meeting which had been held on 7th April, 2010 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
- 3 **Matters arising from the minutes:** There were no matters arising from the minutes.
- 4 **Annual Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council:**
The Chairman presented his annual report which looked back over a busy and interesting year in the life of the Parish Council. The highlights of the report included:-
 - The year had marked the retirement of Susan Hughes the Council's long serving Clerk who had retired after 14 years dedicated service to the Council. The Chairman paid tribute to Susan for her sterling service in the post. Susan had been succeeded in the role in October by David Taverner, a former local government accountant.
 - Two Members of the Parish Council had stepped down during the year for personal reasons and the Chairman recorded his sincere thanks to Cllrs Kath Boughton and Tim Henley for all of the work that they had both undertaken on behalf of the Parish.
 - The Chairman reflected on the community events that had taken place during the year which had been organised by the Parish Council. The Parish Fete on St Wulstans Village green in mid September, the service of Remembrance in November and the Christmas Carol Concert had all been very well supported and enjoyed by all who had attended
 - Cllr Wagstaff also drew attention to the bi-annual Wells News publication which remains a popular source of knowledge and information for Parishioners. It was noted that the Council had recently been fortunate in securing the services of a local freelance writer – Lynne Hackles - who has kindly agreed to take over the editorial role in respect of the publication
 - The Chairman also made reference to the gas lamps renovation work that was about to be started in the Parish. The Chairman remarked that he was pleased to report that the efforts of the Council's gas lamps working group had been rewarded with the development of an innovative partnership arrangement with Transitions Malvern which will see all of the lamps refurbished and updated. This arrangement will be grant funded by the District Council and the results of the refurbishment exercise will not only realise substantial annual cost savings to the Parish Council, but it will also result in the lamps providing a much greater standard of illumination whilst achieving a radical reduction in their carbon footprint.

- The Council's Planning Committee, admirably chaired by Cllr Peter Buchanan, and has been busy throughout the year, considering more than 30 applications despite the ongoing economic downturn. The PC has as far as possible sought to ensure that the character of the Malvern Hills AONB and Conservation area is properly protected when considering any planning applications that are brought before them.
- Problems of noise disturbance, parking and littering in and around the locality of Abbey College had been raised by parishioners. Attempts had been made to alleviate any nuisance caused by ongoing liaison work with the local Community policing team and representatives from the college.
- During the severe winter weather the Parish Council had made strenuous efforts to help residents stay mobile. The County Council had supplied new grit bins in certain key areas, and identified priority areas for the County Council's snow clearance and gritting runs to be undertaken. The Council's outdoor workers regularly checked to ensure that the grit levels in the bins were adequately maintained.
- The Chairman thanked County Councillor – Steve Brown and District Councillor Chris Cheeseman for all of the work that they had undertaken on behalf of the Parish during the year.
- The PC had continued to undertake a range of maintenance works to the open spaces throughout the Parish. A new bench at Assarts Road Playing field had been installed and the PC will be looking to extend the range of facilities throughout the Village with the support of any grant funding that it may be able to lever in.
- The Volunteer Parish Footpath Wardens, under the stewardship of Peter Clement, had carried out some invaluable work in conjunction with the County Council on helping to maintain the network of footpaths and bridle ways throughout the Parish
- The maintenance of the Cemetery, the Assarts Road playing field and St Wulstans village Green Village Green had again been undertaken to a very high standard thanks to the work of the outdoor contractors Steve Maund and Martin Thomas.
- In terms of the stewardship of its financial resources the Chairman noted that the Council had been very well served by its Finance and General purposes Committee under the Chairmanship of Nick Johnson. The Council has continued to look for cost savings and efficiencies where it has been able to realise them and this year has been able to set modest rise of 2.5% in the 2011/12 precept – costing a Band D council tax payer only 98 pence more for a full year.

5 **Report from the Local Beat Manager** (PC Steve Smith and CSOs Karen Watson & Helen Carstairs)

PC Smith advised that there had been an increase of 6% in recorded crimes in the parish during the year and presented the following crime statistics:-

	2009/10	2010/11
Burglary from Dwellings	5	4
Assaults	10	11
Vehicle Crimes	17	20
Criminal damage	13	10
Other Crimes	29	35
Total	74	80

Following complaints from residents police officers had recently undertaken vehicle speed checks on both Peachfield Road and Hanley Road. The average vehicle speeds recorded were 34.8mph and 32.91mph respectively- although it was acknowledged that the visibility of the recent police patrols had probably been a contributory factor in achieving a general slowdown in the speed of traffic in the area whilst the enforcement campaign was in progress.

PC Smith advised that he would shortly be moving to take up a post with the Worcester policing team and the Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to PC Smith for all of his efforts on behalf of the parish. This was unanimously supported by all of the Council's members

6 **Report from Mr Nick Vincent- Chief Executive Three Counties Showground -**

Mr Vincent presented a comprehensive report on the year's activities that had taken place at the Three Counties Showground.

There had been some disturbances to local residents which had emanated from a recent motor show event. The organisers of the event had apologised for the problems which had been caused and this event would not be repeated in the future.

Mr Vincent informed the meeting that the showground organisation is actually a registered charity working for rural industry, the environment and countryside life.

It is committed to supporting farmers, growers and horticulturists in the region and developing understanding between urban and rural communities. It has a substantial membership, enjoys good relations with media and sponsors, and actively cultivates partnerships with the local and regional business community.

2011 had begun well with the successful CountryTastic event; visitor numbers had increased and that had helped achieve the Society's objectives of improving children's knowledge of the rural and agricultural community. The Malvern Spring Gardening Show had been the best to date; the Three Counties Dog Show has received increased entries, and a new project, The Malvern Caravan Show, is being launched in late September.

Mr Vincent drew attention to the events scheduled for the remainder of the year which included:-

- Spring Gardening Show
- Championship Dog Show

- Three Counties Show
- Malvern Autumn Show
- Malvern Caravan Show
- Malvern Fireworks

The Parish Council was again been invited to send a representative to the regular liaison meetings which would continue to be held throughout the year.

7 Report from Mr David Rolls - MHDC Emergency Planning Officer

Mr. Rolls gave a presentation which outlined the main civil protection duties which are included in the County Wide Civil emergency plan. The main Civil Protection duties fall on the County and District Council's who work in partnership to cover:-

- Risk assessment.
- Business Continuity Management.
- Emergency Planning.
- Maintaining public awareness and arrangements to warn inform and advise the public.
- Provision of advice and assistance to the commercial sector and voluntary organizations.
- Co-operation and information sharing.

These duties are the responsibility of both the County and District Councils under the Civil Contingencies Act and the four principal areas of work in a declared civil emergency are to Assess, Plan, Respond and recover.

Further information on the Worcestershire Emergency Plan be found at the following web link [Emergency Planning](#)

Mr. Rolls agreed d to visit the Council later in the year to help formulate and refine the Parish Council's own emergency plan arrangements.

8 Charity Accounts

a) To Receive the accounts of Great Malvern Relief in Need Charities

The previously distributed Statements were noted and accepted by all. The charity welcomes requests for small grants and equally they would welcome any donations.

b) To Receive a Report from the Parish Council Representatives on Hanley Castle Almshouse & Relief in Need Charities (Cllrs Bradshaw & Wagstaff) : The Statement of Accounts was noted by all present. The Parish Council Trustee, Anne Bradshaw advised that the houses were fully occupied and in a good state of repair.

9 Annual Report from the Malvern Hills District Councillors

Cllr Cheeseman gave an outline report on District Council activity that had taken place through the year

The reduction in the District Council's Central Government Grant Settlement would mean that spending cuts totalling 26.8% over two years would need to be identified against the District Council's current budgets.

Cllr Cheeseman advised that he had been to view the refurbished gas lamps in Rosebank Gardens and had been very impressed with the results of the trial that had been undertaken.

Cllr Cheeseman also reported that negotiations over the letting of the St Anne's Well cafe contract were progressing and that the District Council would shortly be carrying out a review of their car parking charges.

10 Annual Report from the Worcestershire County Councillor

Councillor Steve Brown presented a detailed report on County Council activity during the year.

He explained that funding for Road maintenance works continued to be limited and in common with other Council services budgets would be lower than had been allocated in previous years

Cllr Brown reported that he was aware of issues regarding the winter maintenance of the roads and the lack of provision of gritting in some key areas. He was continuing to press the County Council Officers responsible to ensure that all of the priority gritting areas identified by the Council would be properly considered and maintained before the advent of winter later in the year.

An increased share of the County Council's Highways budget had been allocated for the repair of road pot holes and associated remedial works were due to be undertaken.

Cllr Brown also advised that County Members were due to receive additional funds to target directly in their local areas and he would give more information on this initiative when it was to hand.

11 To Receive the Annual Report from the Elected Malvern Hills Conservator

Mr Brian Wilcock – the elected conservator presented his annual report to the meeting

As a result of the hard winter the Conservators had suffered their share of Pot Holes that have had to be filled and further work, partly due to wear and tear, is needed on the Beacon Track and that leading to St Ann's well.

The work done by Severn Trent on the reservoir, over the common from Peachfield road, made quite a mess to the track but this is due to be reinstated.

As usual the main part of Malvern common will be cut for hay allowing the Skylarks and wild flowers to flourish. This common together with the central hills are now in a stewardship agreement, where DEFRA contribute to their maintenance to agreed environmental standards, thus lessening the burden on the Council Tax payers.

The conservators were endeavouring to improve the facilities at St Ann's Well as but there were ongoing difficulties with the negotiation of the new lease that had yet to be settled.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8 10 pm

Signed Chairman
18th April, 2012