

Minutes of **Malvern Wells Parish Meeting 2012** held on **Wednesday, 18th April 2012** in **The Village Hall, Wells Road** commencing at **7.00 pm**

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

Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer: David Taverner

Apologies received: Cllr Mrs A Cheeseman, Cllr Mrs H Burrage, District Cllr C Cheeseman, County Cllr S Brown, and Elected Conservator J Tretheway

- 1 Welcome:** The Chairman, Cllr K Wagstaff, welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2 Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 20th April 2011:** The minutes of the Parish Meeting which had been held on 20th April, 2011 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 2011/12:**

The Chairman presented the following review of the Parish Council's activities during the previous year:-

"The last year has seen the Parish Council involved in a diverse range of range of schemes and projects.

Not least of these has seen the implementation of the contract for the refurbishment of the Gas Lamps, with the works now nearing completion.

The Council's contractor has been able to preserve the unique character and appearance of each individual lamp whilst producing a much greater standard of illumination than had previously been the case. Future maintenance costs will also now be radically reduced as a result of the innovative work which has been undertaken. We are now carrying out the work required to enable us to enter into a new gas supply contract which should also bring forth substantial savings in gas consumption costs.

During the year the Council was involved in the detailed consideration of the proposals contained within the South West Worcestershire Development Plan. This draft document contains plans for an additional 4,150 dwellings to be built within Malvern over the next twenty years, and some 20,360 countywide.

In its response the Parish Council has stated its intention to defend the character of the Malvern Hills AONB and the Conservation area and those will be the overriding considerations that will be continue to be given to any formal planning applications that come before us.

The Council's Planning Committee considered more than 40 individual planning applications during the year and was very successful in blocking any applications that were deemed inappropriate. Thanks must go to Cllr Peter Buchanan for the sterling work that he has again undertaken in his role as Chairman of the Council's Planning committee.

We have embarked on the early stages of the development of our local neighbourhood plan which seeks to set out our vision for the future of the parish. The Neighbourhood Plan will become a powerful tool in controlling and shaping the development and growth of the local area. The focus will be on facilitating the involvement of our local community and on partnership working with agencies such as the County and District Councils to promote the enhancement of local facilities and infrastructure.

Two preferred option sites for development have been identified by the planners within the Parish boundary. These include land at Upper Welland Road - a site which is actually within the conservation area! - and land at the former Abbey College playing field, adjoining Rothwell Road.

We have already had representations from companies who are keen to build on these sites and, in conjunction with the development of our own neighbourhood plan, we shall take a pro-active approach to working with developers to ensure that any building which might occur is undertaken in a manner that is sympathetic both to the character of the area and to the Council's over-arching wish to secure improvements within the Parish in general.

As the year has progressed we have continued to undertake a range of works to maintain and enhance open spaces within our area. We have continued to work very closely with the Malvern Hills Conservators and both the District and County Councils in this regard. The year has marked the retirement of the Conservators Director – Ian Rowat – after his 14 years service in the post and we extend our thanks for all his efforts on our behalf and wish him well for the future.

Our two part-time outdoor contractors have continued to maintain the Cemetery, the Assarts Lane playing field and the Village Green to an excellent standard and the volunteer team of assistant parish paths Wardens, led by Peter Clement, have helped to ensure that all of the various footpaths and bridleways within the Parish have been easy to access and regularly maintained.

We are currently looking to enhance children's play facilities by improvements to the existing Assarts Lane playground and we are working to try to identify land on which we may be able to construct a similar facility in the All Saints Ward of the parish.

The Community events that we have promoted during the year have been very successful. Despite the slightly inclement weather the July Summer Fete was well attended and enjoyed by young and old alike. Thanks are due to Cllrs Ann Cheeseman and Nick Johnson for all their efforts in organising the event and to the many residents who kindly helped out by erecting and manning the various stalls and events on the day. Ann is currently recovering from a recent illness and we all wish her well in for a speedy return to full health.

Another highly successful event was the Christmas Carol concert which was held in the Village Hall in December. Our thanks must go to Helen Burrage, Sue Black and the "Wells Singers" for their contribution to this

highly enjoyable evening which also raised funds that were donated to the Malvern Hills Foyer for Homeless Young Adults.

The Parish Council has been very mindful of the need to ensure that it gives good value for the money it receives from local council tax payers.

This year, as well as absorbing the effects of inflation, we have also made significant savings to the Council operating costs which have helped to ensure that the parish element of the average council tax bill will continue to be less than £1 per week for the 2012/13 financial year.

Following the two Council member vacancies that were declared after the May elections we have now been joined by Simon Freeman and Steve Atwell who have been co-opted to serve on the Council, bringing with them knowledge and skills which will prove to be valuable for the Council to call on.

I must again record my thanks for the help and support given by County Councillor Steve Brown and District Councillors Chris Cheeseman and Jill Campbell who have carried out a great deal of work on behalf of the Parish at their respective local authorities.

The Parish has also maintained its close working relationship with the local policing team whose help has been invaluable when dealing with any issues of concern that has been raised with them.

I close by thanking my team of fellow Councillors for giving so freely of their time and for their continued hard work on behalf of the Parish and, in particular, I would like to thank the individual Committee and working group Chairmen, and our Parish Clerk, for all their continued support."

5 Report from the Local Beat Manager (Sergeant Ian Blanchard and CSO Helen Carstairs)

Sergeant Ian Blanchard and CSO Helen Carstairs presented statistical details of incident and crimes which the priory policing team had been involved with during the year.

During 2011/12 there had been 413 recorded incidents of which 76 were crime related.

The crime figures included:-

21 vehicle crimes

17 thefts

7 dwelling burglaries

5 drug related crimes

6 cases of criminal damage

15 social order incidents

5 other crimes

Crime levels in the area were showing a decline over the medium to long term thanks to the results of the various crime prevention and other policing initiatives which had been undertaken.

Sergeant Blanchard concluded that the policing team were pleased with the

results and Malvern generally had encountered a lot less problems when compared to many other areas both in Worcestershire and nationally.

The officers gave details of a forthcoming Emergency services open day to which all members of the public were to be invited

6 Charity Accounts

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

The previously distributed Statements were noted and accepted . The Charity welcomes requests for small grants and would welcome any donations to help to meet needs.

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.

The Parish Council Trustee, Anne Bradshaw advised that the houses were fully occupied and in a good state of repair.

7 Annual Report from the Malvern Hills District Councillors

Cllr Cheeseman had tendered his apologies for being unable to attend the meeting.

8 Annual Report from the Worcestershire County Councillor

Cllr Brown had tendered his apologies for being unable to attend the Meeting

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

Mr John Tretheway presented had submitted the following written report:-
"Our Director Ian Rowat who has opted for early retirement has now left and we are seeking a replacement.

Land Management Cttee:

- a.** Following a site visit we discussed at length extending the Western Car Park on Malvern Common situated near Pickersleigh Road's junction with King Edward's Road. Cllr Cheesman had asked for this to be an Agenda item for the Board. I have been keen for several years for this Car Park to be extended. I moved accordingly but in the end we decided not to extend the Car park other than to make minor improvements including resiting of the litter bin and filling in a wet area where vehicles had gone onto the Common. The final details to be agreed between officers, Cllr Chessman and myself.
- b.** Following a site visit the Land Management committee decided to recommend to the Administration & Resources Committee that the track to the British Camp toilets should be improved and extended to enable access to the rear of this building where the All Terrain Bike Rescue Unit is based
- c.** The Recreation Advisory Committee met and were told that the wardens had been putting up temporary notices warning dog owners that sheep with lambs

are on our land and that they should keep their animals under control at all times. We were told that the Conservators works with the Kennel Club to highlight the issue of dogs worrying sheep and that currently we are running courses with a local dog trainer to teach dogs to be safe around sheep.

- d.** The Wildlife Advisory Cttee has met. In particular there is evidence of Dormice & dingy Skipper Butterflies. Meadow Pippets are increasing in numbers but sadly there is a decline in the numbers of skylarks. The current work to clear trees from certain areas will provide more habitats for skylarks.
- e.** Trees -the issue of Horse-Chestnut trees being attacked by a type of moth was discussed and it was reported that Blue Tits have apparently learnt to feed on this species of moth"

Approved

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Chairman 24th April, 2013