

MALVERN WELLS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** duly convened and held in The Committee Room, Malvern Wells Village Hall, Wells Road **on Wednesday 17th January, 2013** commencing at 7.30pm.

Attendance: Councillor N Johnson (Chairman)
Cllrs K Wagstaff, M Victory, B Knibb, A Hull, Mrs A Bradshaw & Mrs H Burrage

In Attendance: Mr D M Taverner (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer)
Mr A Newman (Prospective Parish Council Member candidate)

1 Apologies noted: None

2 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests for the meeting and any changes to be notified to the Registers of Interests and Gifts & Hospitality:

A dispensation had been granted by the monitoring officer at Malvern Hills District Council to allow Members to participate in the debate, *under agenda item 10*, relating to the setting of the 2013/14 precept and the related Council Tax Rate at Band D. As well as repealing the legislation relating to the former Code of Conduct, the Localism Act 2011 also repealed the general dispensation permitting any councillor with an interest to take part in meetings relating to setting their Council's precept. Therefore Parish Councillors living in the parish must, as council tax payers, declare a pecuniary interest in the item and would not have been able to discuss or vote on the precept, unless such a dispensation had been granted.

A general dispensation was also granted to Members to allow them to participate in the debate, *under agenda item 5* relating to the consideration of the applications received for the Parish Council vacancy which had been declared. As residents in the Parish all the applicants were personally known to Members to some degree and the dispensation would enable Members to take part in the debate and vote on the choice of the candidate to be co-opted to the Parish Council.

3 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on **18th October, 2012**, having been previously circulated, were accepted and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of that meeting.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

New play area facilities

The Clerk reported that he and the Chairman had met with Mr Steve Bound, the Director of Malvern Hills Conservators, to follow up on the request for the release of conservators land for the construction of a new play area on Peachfield Road common. The matter had been referred by the Director to the February meeting of the Conservators Land Management Committee and an update report would be presented to a subsequent meeting of the Parish Council.

Gas lamp refurbishment project

A meeting of the Gas lamps working group had been held on 14th January to discuss the progress of the renovation project and to review arrangements for the monitoring and management of the maintenance contract.

The final renovation grant had now been received from the District Council and would be released to the contractor once their final invoices had been processed and the completed lamps had been seen to be working.

5 Consideration of applications for the Parish Council vacancy.

Four applications had been received for the Parish Council vacancy which had been declared. One of the candidates- Mr Andrew Newman - was in attendance at the meeting. Mr Newman introduced himself to the Members of the Committee and highlighted some of reasons for his candidature which built on his interests and work experiences which he had included in his written resume which had previously been circulated to Members.

The Chairman thanked Mr Newman for his informative presentation and advised him that the selection of the successful candidate would be made by the full Council at its meeting which had been scheduled for 23rd January.

6 a) **The Bank Reconciliation statement to 31st December, 2012:** The Clerk presented the figures contained in the previously circulated bank reconciliation which showed that the Council's total cash funds at 31st December, 2012 comprised:

National Westminster PLC

	£
Current Account	100.00
Business Reserve Account	73,825.04
1 year fixed deposit at 3% (Maturity – 26 th July, 2012)	50,000.00

HSBC PLC

Current Account	24.20
6 month fixed deposit at 0.45% Maturity – 30 th April, 2013)	30,000.00

Total Cash held at 31st December, 2012 **£153,949.24**

The level of funds within each of the Council's banks was being monitored to ensure that total cash held, with each bank, was maintained below a level of £85K so as to spread risk and to maximise the protection afforded by Bank of England's deposit guarantee scheme. A further transfer of £35K would be transferred from the National Westminster Business Reserve account to a one month fixed deposit with HSBC PLC following the approval of Council on 23rd January

b) The Quarterly financial Report: The Clerk presented the previously circulated quarterly report showing actual income and expenditure for the period ending 31st December, 2013.

Members noted that the individual budget headings for each of the Council's services were broadly on track with the originally approved budget.

Approval was given for the purchase of a new office printer up to the value of £200 and it was also agreed to give consideration to the purchase of replacement parish notice boards to be sited at the Wyche School, Assarts Road playing field and the Wyche Inn.

Cllr Johnson took Members through each of the Council's proposed budget headings for the 2013/14 financial year. Following discussion it was **unanimously resolved** to **recommend to Council** that **the Parish precept for 2013/14** should be set as **£75,150** which would be an increase of 1.94% over the previous year.

It was also unanimously resolved to recommend to Council that the following additions should be made to the Council's earmarked reserves to provide for future expenditure commitments:-

	£K
Future Cemetery Land purchase	5.0
Future Cemetery Equipment purchases	1.0
Assarts Road Playing Field drainage and new play equipment	2.5
All Saints Ward – new play equipment	15.0
Neighbourhood plan consultancy	5.0
Staff Pension Gratuity	0.2
St Peters Closed Churchyard – Maintenance and possible legal costs	0.5
Future elections costs (2015)	0.5

7 Review of Cemetery Charges

Cllr Burrage presented the report of the Cemetery working group which had met to set and review the cemetery fees and charges for 2013/14. The group had recommended that the existing fees should be increased by 5% across the board, rounded to the nearest £10.

The Clerk circulated a schedule of the proposed new fees together with the details of charges levied by Malvern Ton Council for comparison purposes.

It was **unanimously resolved** that the **revised schedule of fees for 2013/14 should be recommended to Council** for acceptance.

8. Fencing of the Jubilee Fountain Garden and Assarts Road Playing Field

Quotations were being prepared by the contractors who had been approached to replace the fencing to the Jubilee Garden and Assarts Road playing Field. A further report on the estimated costs of these projects would be presented to Council for consideration once the quotations had been considered by the Play and Open spaces working group.

9 Replacement of Parish Council notice boards.

It was agreed that the Play and Open spaces working group should be given delegated authority to review the style and costs of replacement notice boards for siting at on Assarts Road playing field, near to the Wyche School and the Wyche Inn as the existing boards which were situated in those locations were now beyond economic repair.

10 Fruitlands Estate Green – purchase of communal tree

It was agreed that the Play and Open spaces working group should be given delegated authority to consider the purchase of communal tree for siting on the Fruitlands Estate with a view to it being illuminated as part of the 2014 Christmas celebrations.

Chairman-----
Dated 10th April, 2013

N Johnson