

Minutes of **Malvern Wells Parish Meeting 2013** held on **Wednesday, 24th April 2013** in **The Village Hall, Wells Road** commencing at **7.00 pm**

Attendance: Cllrs K Wagstaff (Chairman), Mrs H Burrage, M Victory Black, B Knibb, A Hull, P Buchanan, k Hurst and S Freeman

Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer: David Taverner

Apologies received: Cllrs Mrs A Bradshaw, N Johnson, S Atwell, Mrs C O' Donnell
County Cllr S Brown, Elected Conservator J Tretheway

- 1 Welcome:** The Chairman, Cllr K Wagstaff, welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2 Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 18th April 2012:** The minutes of the Parish Meeting which had been held on 18th April, 2012 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting.
- 3 Matters arising from the minutes:** There were no matters arising from the minutes.
- 4 Annual Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council**

Cllr Wagstaff presented the following review of the Parish Council's activities during the previous year:-

The last year has been marked by the Parish Council's involvement in a range of issues and projects.

As ever the Council is reliant on its team of elected councillors, volunteers and part time contractors who all play a significant part in the delivery of our services.

Operationally the Council is sub divided into working groups which each have their own specific terms of reference. This approach enables group members to draw on their individual areas of expertise when dealing with matters that come before them and the review which follows will highlight the work of those groups during the past year.

The Gas Lamps working group (*Chairman Cllr Helen Burrage*)

It has been very pleasing to witness the completion of the Gas lamps Renovation project. The working group has worked closely with Sight Designs Ltd who was the contractor responsible for the delivery of the project. A great deal of innovative work has been undertaken to preserve the unique character and appearance of each individual lamp and the refurbished lamps now provide an excellent standard of illumination. Significant cost savings in respect of the lamps maintenance and running costs have also been achieved. 95% of the costs of the project have been grant aided by the District Council.

The completion of the project has helped to safeguard a valuable part of our local heritage assets which were in danger of being lost.

Play and Open Spaces Group (*Chairman Cllr Chris O' Donnell*)

As the year progressed we have continued to undertake a range of works to maintain and enhance open spaces and recreational facilities within the parish.

We are continuing to work closely with the Malvern Hills Conservators with a view to developing a new children's play facility on the Peachfield Road common and we are currently in the process of appointing a

contractor to undertake a scheme to alleviate drainage problems at the Assarts Road playing field to bring the field back into use as a playing field for local school children.

As part of the Queens Diamond Jubilee celebrations we purchased a new bench for the Jubilee fountain Garden and we are now installing new fencing there.

We also intend to refurbish the fencing at the Assarts Road play facility and will be looking to upgrade some of the play equipment there.

Our two part-time outdoor contractors, Steve Maund and Martin Thomas, have continued to maintain the Parish Cemetery, the Assarts Road playing field and St Wulstans Village Green to an excellent standard. The volunteer team of assistant parish paths wardens, very ably led by Peter Clement, have helped to ensure that all of the various footpaths and bridleways within the Parish have continued to be easy to access and have been regularly maintained.

Despite the inclement summer, we all enjoyed the range of events that took place on both the local and national stage – the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee and the Olympic and Paralympics games standing out as highlights

We were fortunate to see the Olympic torch pass through our Parish en route to London, and the events that were staged locally to mark the Jubilee were enjoyed by all those who attended them. I also had the privilege of visiting our two local primary schools to present commemorative Jubilee Mug and Coaster sets that the Parish Council had purchased to mark the occasion

The Parish Council also supported the bring and share Jubilee lunch that took place in the Village Hall in June and was attended by almost 200 parishioners

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 Food Bank

Planning Committee (*Chairman Cllr Peter Buchannan*)

During the year the Council's Planning committee were involved with the consideration of more than 30 individual planning applications and the Committee has been very successful in blocking applications where there have been significant public objections.

It has also been involved in detailed consideration of the proposals contained within the emergent South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP). 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.

The Parish Council has re-affirmed 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 recent outline application for 184 dwellings on a site at the rear of the Moorlands was debated at a public meeting which was attended by more than 250 local residents and more than 60 objections against the scheme were lodged with the District Council. As a result the Parish Council sent a strong letter of objection to the proposed scheme. We intend to continue engaging as widely as possible with all parishioners on such matters.

Once the SWDP has been given final approval we shall be launching a parish wide consultation initiative which will be aimed at the design of a Parish Neighbourhood plan that will aim to support the views of parishioners on future development need.

The Neighbourhood Plan will become a powerful tool in controlling and shaping the development and growth of the local area. The focus will remain to be facilitating the involvement of our local community and the promotion of partnership working with other agencies to promote the enhancement of local service facilities and infrastructure.

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

Finance and General Purposes Committee *(Chairman Nick Johnson)*

The Council remains acutely aware of the need to provide value for the money it receives from the local Council tax payer. Prior to setting the parish precept the committee undertook a detailed review of all of the Council's income and expenditure budgets

In setting the budgets for the year we took measures to absorb the effects of inflation and we made significant savings to the Council's operating costs. This meant that the Parish element of the average council tax has been set as less than £1 per week for the 2013/14 financial year.

On a rather sad note it is unfortunate to note that Ann Cheeseman has been suffering from an illness which has meant that she has had to stand down from her role as a Parish Councillor. On behalf of everyone I would like to thank Ann for all that she has done for the Parish and we all send her our very best wishes for a speedy return to full good health.

Kevin Hurst has joined the ranks of the council recently. Professionally Kevin works as a Director for a company in Cheltenham and has significant managerial and financial experience which will be very useful for the Council to draw upon.

No review of the years activities would be complete without recording thanks for the help and support given by County Councillor Steve Brown and District Councillors Chris Cheeseman and Jill Campbell who have all 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, particularly CSO Helen Carstairs and Karen Watson, whose help has been invaluable when dealing with any issues of concern that has been raised with them.

5 Report from the Local Policing Team (Sergeant Susan Parr and CSO Karen Watson)

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

During 2012/13 there had been 476 recorded police response incidents in the Priory teams area of which 75 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

The comparable figures in 2011/12 were that there had been 413 police response incidents in the area of which some 86 were crime related

Sergeant Parr reported that 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. The policing team were pleased with the results in the Ward and Malvern generally which had encountered a lot less problems when compared to many other areas both in Worcestershire and nationally.

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.

Cllr Wagstaff advised that the almshouses were fully occupied and in a good state of repair.

7 Annual Report from the Malvern Hills District Councillors

Cllr Cheeseman reported that during the past year the Council had undertaken work on a range of issues in the District such as flooding alleviation, work to increase recycling rates and development planning. The council had undertaken a thorough review of its budgets aimed at finding costs savings due to the reduction made in Central government grant funding.

Work was continuing on the South Worcestershire Development plan process and the identification of a five year land supply plan which was needed to assist the Council in their defence of unwelcome speculative planning applications from developers.

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 had tendered his apologies for being unable to attend the meeting but submitted the following written report:-

“ 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

The Recreation Advisory Committee met and were told that the wardens had were again putting up temporary notices warning dog owners that sheep with lambs were our land and that they should keep their animals under control at all times.

The Wildlife Advisory Cttee had 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.”

Approved

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Chairman 30th April, 2014