

# MALVERN WELLS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Malvern Wells Parish Council duly convened and held in The Village Hall, Wells Road, Wells Road, Malvern Wells on Wednesday 31st July 2013 commencing at 7.30pm

**Present:**

**Councillors: -**

Mrs H Burrage (Chairman)	
J Black	Mrs A Bradshaw
P Buchanan	S Freeman
A Hull	N Johnson
B J Knibb	M Victory
K Wagstaff	K Hurst
Mrs C O' Donnell	S Atwell

**In attendance: -**

County Cllr Lucy Hodgson,  
District Cllr C Cheeseman

**Apologies recorded: -** There were none

**53/13 Declarations of Interest**

**a) Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests:** There were none

**b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature:** There were none

**c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature:** There were none.

**54/13 To Consider Written Requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011):** There were none .

**55/13 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2013 :** The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting.

**56/13 Matters arising from the minutes**

Minute 52/13 - Possible purchase of land for provision of a Cemetery:-

In relation to the sale of land at Chestnut Hill, Green lane, Cllr Freeman reported that he had spoken to the vendor's agents. The land remains unsold although negotiations are continuing with a number of interested parties. There is no intention to sell the land other than as a single lot. All interested parties have already been notified of the Parish Council's interest. The land agent had

expressed the view that this could be an incentive for the eventual purchaser knowing that they would have a willing buyer for the surplus land. He did however warn of the possibility that the developer might want to retain the plot to add to a land "bank" to be held for future development. It was suggested that further contact should be made with vendor's agents at the end of September to see what progress was being made with the sale.

### **57/13 Report of the County Councillor – Cllr L Hodgson**

Cllr Hodgson opened her report by thanking the Clerk for attending the divisional meeting which had taken place that day. It had been an informative and interesting meeting - particularly the discussion around what the Town and Parish Councils could do more of in connection with the lengthsman scheme.

The County Council were starting to look at their budget situation for the next financial year and with the reduction of the government funding, and the reduction in grants, the Council is looking to make savings next year in the realm of £27 million. This would mean a review of all of the services that the County Council provides to see whether they could be delivered in a different way.

St Wulstans Nature Reserve had been awarded a green flag for the 5th year running. Alongside this county parks are taking part in the national "love your parks" week where a number of activities have been arranged on the nature reserve.

Worcestershire Library service is taking part again in the national Summer Reading challenge with many events being held in libraries across the county. The theme this year is "Creepy House" and they are handing out garlic smelling stickers. The challenge will run until the end of September.

Superfast Broadband is a step closer across the county with a contract about to be signed to bring superfast broadband to over 90% of homes and businesses in the area and to look at providing solutions for the 10% that cannot be reached by commercial means. Over £8.5 million has been set aside for this project. This has already helped to fund 3 projects covering 14 parishes in looking at providing local solutions to ensure communities can access the web at faster speeds

Work on the Wells Road was taking longer than planned. Cllr Hodgson had spoken to the County Highways team who had given an assurance that the work will be completed by August 7th. The delay had been due to finding particularly hard rock which took much longer to drill through, and also the identification of another 50 metres of old metal piping which needed to be replaced. Cllr Hodgson had asked officers to let her know whether a contract penalty payments clause would be enforced if the work was delayed further.

Cllr Hodgson agreed to meet with Cllrs Knibb and O' Donnell to inspect the poor state of repair of the pavements on the Fruitlands Estate and in Wells Close respectively and also undertook to investigate why the double yellow lines from the junction of Green Lane along the A449 to the Village hall had not been reinstated to their original location following the carriageway resurfacing works.

**58/13 Report of the District Councillor – Cllr C Cheeseman**

Cllr Cheeseman reported that due to further planned reductions in government funding the District Council would also be reviewing their budgets to see where further savings and efficiencies could be made. This was becoming an ever more difficult problem to deal with as the Council's budgets were already severely constrained.

Cllr Cheeseman also advised the meeting that the Malvern Hills Conservators Board were working with ROSPA to try to prevent any further incidents occurring at the Gullet quarry lake where two teenagers had tragically recently drowned.

**59/13 Planning - Application 13/00806/HOU -102, Woodfarm Road.**

Members carefully considered the plans for the erection of a single storey extension to the side of the property and **raised no objections to them.**

**60/13 Reports of Committees / Committee Chairmen**

**(a) Report of the Environment Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2013**

The Clerk presented the report of the Environment Committee which had been held on 11<sup>th</sup> July and drew attention to the remedial works that had been undertaken to various footpaths and bridleways in the parish by both the volunteer paths wardens and the Parish Lengthsman.

Cllr O'Donnell asked if any action could be taken to cut back the hedgerow in Assarts Road where it was overhanging the pavement. The Clerk replied that the Parish lengthsman would be asked to undertake clearance work where possible. The Clerk was asked to write to those householders whose hedges were obstructing the pavement to remind them of their responsibility for keeping the extent of their hedge lines under control.

**(b) Report of the Planning Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2013**

Cllr Buchannan presented the report of the Planning Committee which had been held on 17<sup>th</sup> July. The report was **noted** and **accepted** by the Council

**(c) Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2013**

Cllr Johnson presented the report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting which had been held on 25<sup>th</sup> July.

It was noted that the recommendations of the Committee regarding the review of standing orders and financial regulations would be considered at a later point on the agenda

The remainder of the Committee's report and the recommendations contained therein were **noted** and **approved** by the Council.

**61/13 Reports from Working groups**

**(a) Report of the Play and Open spaces group meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2013**

The group had met with the Scout Group Chairman and Treasurer to consider the wording of the new Scout Hut lease which was now being finalised by Cllr Freeman.

The Clerk reported that he had given the Scout Hut Treasurer a community grant application form for completion to enable the Scout group to apply for funding of up to £250 to help fund the costs of decorating and refurbishment of the Scout Hut. Cllr Hodgson advised that a similar level of grant could be made available from her Divisional Councillor budget on application.

Cllr Freeman reported that he and Cllr O' Donnell had inspected the hedgerow around the Assarts Road play area and the Scout Hut fence line. Both areas had become quite overgrown. The Clerk replied that regular maintenance work at the site was one of the responsibilities of the Council's open spaces contractor. The contractor would be asked to visit the site again during the next few weeks undertake further such work.

In response to questions from Cllr Freeman the Clerk advised that the Council's two outdoor contractors both had a schedule of works for which they were responsible set out in their annual rolling contracts. The contracts also included specifications for work involving the maintenance of the Parish Cemetery.

The Clerk had met both contractors on 31<sup>st</sup> July to undertake their annual performance reviews. All of their duties had been found to have been undertaken very efficiently and to a high standard.

It was subsequently **agreed** that the clerk should draw together a report on the contractors' performance for consideration by the Finance and General Purposes Committee at its October meeting.

**(b) Report of the Events Working Group meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2013.**

Clr Johnson reported that due to the disappointing response to the request for help with the organisation of the Summer Fête, and the impact of the holiday season on the availability of volunteers, the decision had been taken to cancel this year's event.

It was **agreed** that an early start should be made on the preparation of the organisation of a fête to be held in the summer of 2014. The Clerk was asked list the matter for consideration by the Events Working Group at its next meeting

A review of the terms of reference for the working group would also be undertaken at its next meeting

**62/13 Chairman's Communications**

**(a) Britain in Bloom Competition 2014**

A request had been received that the parish Council should consider participation in the 2014 Britain in Bloom competition.

Britain in Bloom is one of Europe's largest horticultural campaigns. More than 1,100 cities, towns and villages participate each year to show off their achievements in environmental responsibility, community participation and horticultural achievement.

It was **agreed** that the Events Working Group should consider whether the Parish should make an entry into the 2014 competition at its next meeting.

**(b) Length of Council meetings**

Concerns had been raised about the length of Council meetings and the time allocated to debate certain matters.

Ideas aimed at reducing the length of meetings had included:

- The preparation of more written reports to support agenda items
- Limiting the time for presentations by guest speakers and making more efficient use of the meeting schedule
- Limiting the number of non urgent agenda items

- Increased delegation of certain matters to working groups and sub committees
- Ensuring that no planning applications are only dealt with at planning Committee meetings unless they are of a very urgent nature
- Making more efficient use of the Council's meeting schedule and ensuring a planning committee meeting is scheduled for each month of the year

It was **agreed** that members should consider these proposals and come forward with any further suggestions of their own aimed at streamlining the length of future meetings.

### **63/13 Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Funding**

Members considered the content of a previously circulated letter setting out the Parish Council's strategic priorities for public open space provision which the Council had drawn up in accordance with the guidance shown at the following web link:-  
<http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/section106>

It was **agreed** that the letter should be submitted for consideration by the District Council, after increasing the indicative costs of updating works to the Assarts Road Scout Hut to an estimated figure of £30K

Cllr Atwell was thanked for all of his hard work in coordinating the Council's submission.

### **64/13 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

The Clerk presented the previously distributed papers which highlighted suggested changes and updates to the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.

Following discussion, Members **unanimously resolved** that the Council should adopt all of the revisions and updates made as indicated by the highlighting in bold italics on appendices 1 and 2 to these minutes. The appendices can be viewed at the following web link [Malvern Wells PC - Financial Regulations & Standing Orders](#)

65/13

**Report from the Clerk on actions undertaken since the previous meeting**

**(a) Assarts Road Playing Field – Drainage Scheme**

A CCTV survey and inspection report had now been undertaken and had highlighted problems with the drainage pipe work adjoining the Scout Hut and the outlet drain running under Assarts Road. The Council's Consultants, BMB Consulting, would now be drawing up a specification for a suitable repair scheme and would be liaising with the Parish Council on the appointment of a suitable contractor to undertake the work.

The target date for completion of the project was set as 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2013

**(b) Jubilee Garden railings**

The Clerk reported that this project had now been completed.

The work had been undertaken to a very high standard by the contractor responsible for the scheme

**(c) Peachfield road common –potential new play facility**

An illustrative play scheme design had been produced and the plans were displayed for members' information. The Clerk was asked to liaise with the local Conservators board members prior to meeting with the Director of the Conservators for further discussion on the feasibility of the suggested scheme.

**(d) Consultation on the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan for 2014/19**

The Parish Council's draft response to the consultation document had been previously circulated.

It was **agreed** that further emphasis should be built into the section concerning the built environment to include the desire to further extend the number of Listed Buildings in the area, especially in the Wells Parish.

It was also felt that the ANOB should do all that was possible to promote the defence of the existing character of the area, particularly the Malvern Stone built houses, and the protection of all notable buildings within the area of the AONB.

## **66/13 Report of representatives on other bodies.**

There had been no meetings of note since the previous Parish Council meeting.

It was noted that there was still a vacancy for a Parish Council representative to serve on the Village Hall Management Committee

## **67/13 Payment of Accounts**

The following accounts were approved for payment

3024	Steve Maund	Grass cutting first half of the year	1,500.00
3025	Martin Thomas	Cemetery Works June and July	512.45
3026	Paul Stanley Fencing	Jubilee Fountain garden Fence	3,114.67
3027	Worcestershire CALC	Clerks Gathering	10.00
3028	PCC of Malvern Wells & The Wyche	Room hire June	50.00
3029	Malvern Wells Village Hall	Room hire April and May	66.00
3030	David Taverner	Salary & Expenses - July, 2013	1,677.04
3031	Susan Hughes	Salary & Expenses - June Locum Clerk	1,457.24
3032	Sight Designs Ltd	Gas Lamps Maintenance	397.95
3033	Steve Maund	Open spaces & cemetery work - July	915.39

Sight Designs Ltd had submitted two further invoices (numbered 276 and 277) which had contained charges for maintenance works to various gas lamps for the period November 2012 to February, 2013

Some of the charges made appeared to have been duplicated and, in some cases, covered work to lamps which were still covered by the one year guarantee period.

It was agreed that the Contractor should be asked to attend the next meeting of the Gas lamps working group so that the various issues of dispute could be addressed.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10 07 pm.

Approved..... Chairman

Cllr Mrs H Burrage  
Date 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013