

MALVERN WELLS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Malvern Wells Parish Council duly convened and held in The Village Hall, Wells Road, Malvern Wells on **Wednesday 6th November, 2013** commencing at 7.30pm

Present:

Councillors: -

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

In attendance: -

County Cllr Lucy Hodgson
David Taverner - Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

Apologies recorded: -

Cllrs Mrs H Burrage, J Black, and M Victory

81/13

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

82/13

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

83/13

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 25th September, 2013. The minutes of the meeting held on 25th September, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting.

84/13

Matters arising from the minutes

Minute 52/13 (26th June) - Possible purchase of land for provision of a Cemetery:-

In relation to the sale of land at Chestnut Hill, members were advised that the land still remains unsold and although negotiations were continuing with a number of interested parties it was understood that there were some legal difficulties with the sale process. The vendors have no intention to sell the land other than as a single plot. The vendors' agents have already been notified of

the Parish Council's interest. Further contact would be made with the vendor's agents at the end of November to ascertain what progress was being made with the sale.

85/13 Report of the County Councillor – Cllr L Hodgson

County Council Budget Process

The council has published its proposals to deliver its corporate plan and achieve savings of over £30m in the next financial year followed by saving of over £25M for the following year. This whilst still needing to invest in road improvements as well as supporting Adult Services and Children Services to cope with ever increasing demands. The council's total budget in 2014/15 will still be over £300M.

To achieve savings the council will be looking at commissioning services, working with partners to deliver services and also stopping doing certain things that are not their core service or where they have do not have a statutory responsibility to provide such a service.

Examples of areas that will be affected:-

Bus Subsidy, at present the county spends £3M subsidising buses across the county. 88 routes are affected, and the highest amount paid per passenger is £8.24 per route. One route that is at risk is the Worcester, Upton, Malvern route which is subsidised £1.69 per passenger, the usage is one of the highest, supported by a subsidy of £570K. There will shortly be an 8 week public consultation on these proposals starting in November.

Adult Services in Adult Services there is close partnership with public Health and the local Clinical Commissioning groups and more joint working will be done in this area.

Other areas that will be looked at are looking at how Libraries are run and as in Malvern looking at working with partners to help with running costs or other operating models such as community run libraries

These are just a few examples of where the savings will need to be made, to achieve these the council will have to change the way it works and how it operates.

There are going to be a number of Road Shows across the county where officers and members will be available to talk to residents about the budget proposals.

Work to prepare for the start of a major project that will see Malvern's Jobcentre Plus move into the town's library building will begin in mid-November. The layout of the Graham Road building, which is already home to the library, Worcestershire Hub and Registration Service, will be re-designed to accommodate the move bringing together more services in one location. The project, which will fully begin in late November and run until April 2014, will see Jobcentre Plus move into the lower ground floor, sharing space with The Hub, whilst the library will occupy the ground floor. Both the Café and Registration services will remain in the current locations. During the reorganisation the Library, Hub and Registration services will largely operate as normal, however as

the work progresses in phase's customers will notice some temporary changes and temporary disruption to library services, particularly for one week in mid-December and again for one week in March 2014. Everything will be done to keep any disruption to a minimum.

Learning and Disability – Changes to Day Care Services

The initial meetings across South Worcestershire, as part of the consultation process regarding day opportunities for people with learning disabilities have been completed

The new way forward for providing Day Services includes:-

Improved support for people with profound and multiple disabilities and complex needs in specialist resource centres, providing specialist support for older people with a learning disability including those with dementia.

There would be a community-based support programme with drop-in services, offering improved access to employment, training, volunteering opportunities and benefit services

Impact on Malvern is the likelihood of the SEC closing and alternative site being found.

County Council Divisional Fund – grant support was promised by Cllr Hodgson to fund the purchase of new parish grit bins and rock salt for use throughout the Parish

Condition of pavements on the Fruitlands Estate

A report had been sent to the County Council's Highways Team for assessment

86/13 Reports of Committees / Committee Chairmen

(a) Report of the Environment Committee meeting held on 10th October, 2013

Cllr Buchanan presented the report of **the Environment Committee** which had been held on 10th October.

The report **was noted and accepted** by the Council

(b) Report of the Planning Committee meeting held on 16th October, 2013

Cllr Buchanan presented the report of the Planning Committee which had been held on 16th October. The report **was noted and accepted** by the Council.

(c) Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 24th October, 2013

Cllr Johnson presented the report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee which had been held on 24th October. The report and the recommendations contained therein **were accepted and unanimously approved** by the Council.

87/13 Reports from working groups

Report of the Events working group meeting held on 24th October, 2013

The Clerk presented the report of the events working group meeting which had been held on 4th September.

Remembrance Service Sunday 10th November – all arrangements had now been finalised and the Rev Paul Finch would be conducting the service. The Remembrance wreath would be laid by Cllr Buchannan on behalf of the Parish Council.

Christmas Carol celebration - Friday 13th December

The Wells Singers, will be leading the singing once again. There will be seasonal stories and poems read, together with Christmas Bible readings. This year we will be welcoming Father Edward Crouzet, the new Parish priest of St Wulstans, on his first visit to the Village Hall. There will be a retiring collection in aid of a local charity at the end of the evening.

Volunteers were needed to help decorate the Village Hall for Christmas on Wednesday 11th December between 10am and 3pm.

Summer Fête - 2014 – it was agreed that the events working group should reconsider the date chosen for the 2014 Summer fête at its next meeting and that consideration should also be given to the appointment of a professional fête organiser.

Britain in Bloom - 2014 - it was agreed that the Council should consider an entry into the 2014 competition. The Jubilee Fountain Garden or the Parish Cemetery had been suggested as potential entry sites. Further consideration to the subject would be given at the next meeting of the working group.

88/13 Report of the Clerk on actions undertaken since the previous meeting

(i) Drainage alleviation scheme for Assarts Road Playing field

Following the previous Council meeting the Council's consultants had attended a site meeting at Assarts Road with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Clerk.

BWB had had proposed a staged approach to the resolution of the drainage problems. They were of the view that it was possible that their proposed stage 1 scheme (works to address run off drainage on to the road and pavement) may help conditions on the whole of the field itself. BWB had envisaged that if Stage 1 was successful then any further Stage 2 costs (which would involve laying extensive new drainage pipes to the rest of the field) could be avoided.

The consultants had been asked for a view on how successful the Stage 1 works would be in improving conditions on the whole of the field. Their reply was that it was difficult to be definitive without undertaking further substantial site investigation (SI) works, but they would estimate the probability of an overall

improvement in the drainage of the rest of the field a around at 20-30% . BWB had confirmed that it was not possible to give an unequivocal guarantee to this effect without reference to an extensive amount of additional SI data.

BWB also emphasised that even after any drainage works had been completed there would still be times at which the playing surface would remain very heavy, especially after intense or prolonged periods of heavy rainfall. The soils in the area are heavy clays and this is to be expected. The installation of a Phase 2 herringbone drainage system could improve drainage times (post rainfall events) and return the pitch to usable conditions sooner, but still would not guarantee year round dry playing conditions.

BWB had identified three contractors who had submitted quotations to carry out the suggested Phase1 works set out in the BWB scheme specification.

Following discussion it was **unanimously resolved** that the tender for the Phase 1 scheme from Claines Construction Ltd in the sum of 6,850 should be accepted- with the aim of works starting on site by the end of November

(ii) Update report regarding the potential development of a new play facility on Peachfield Road Common

The Clerk advised that he had been in correspondence with Steve Bound, the Director of Malvern Hills Conservators, who had been broadly supportive of the development of the type of play facilities set out in the indicative design proposals, drawn up by Playdale Ltd, which had previously been presented to the Council.

A draft presentation to the Conservators Board was circulated for members' consideration. Following discussion the Council **unanimously resolved** that the a copy of the presentation report should be submitted to the Malvern Hills Conservators, with copies being sent to the local elected Board Members for their information.

(iii) Assarts Road Play area fencing

Following the resolution of Council on 25th September to accept the quotation for Bow Top Fencing from Paul Stanley Ltd in the sum of £ 9,155.38, an order for the works had been sent to the contractor.

(iv) Fruitlands Green – to consider the reintroduction of Christmas Illuminations

Attempts were being made to source a suitable tree for siting on Fruitlands green with a view to it being decorated with lights during the Christmas season. The Clerk was in the process of contacting local electricians to obtain quotations for the cost of the reconnection of the electricity supply at the site.

(v) **Fruitlands Green – pavements condition survey**

Following the survey which had been undertaken, of the poor condition of the pavements in many parts of the Fruitlands area, County Cllr Hodgson had sent a report to the County Council's Highways team for their assessment with a view to remedial works being carried out.

(vi) **Printing of the Wells News**

Final proofs had now been sent to the printer and the winter edition was due to be ready for delivery to residents by 26th November

(vii) **Section 106 Funding application**

An application for funding had been submitted to the District Council to release funding to support the Assarts Road Drainage Scheme and the purchase of new play equipment

(viii) **Gas lamps maintenance**

The annual maintenance schedule had now been completed and a final invoice for the work had been received from Sight Designs. It was noted that all of the lamps now seemed to be working very efficiently and councillors asked that their congratulations should be passed on to the contractor for all the recent work which had been undertaken to improve the performance of the lanterns.

89/13 Chairman's Communications

(i) **Wells C of E Primary School - crossing patrol**

The clerk was asked to contact the acting head of the school to support action for the appointment of a replacement school crossing patrol.

(ii) **Winter Grit bins**

The clerk advised that three parish bins had been ordered for sites on Holywell Road, the top of Grundy's lane and the top of Assarts lane at its junction with Upper Welland Road

The costs of the bins and the supply of rock salt were being funded by a grant from County Councillor Hodgson's Divisional Funds budget

90/13 Cemetery matters

Work had now been undertaken to plot new grave spaces on the area of the cemetery to be used for interments. Quotations were to be sought for an extension of the water supply to this new area.

A review of the Cemetery fees and charges was to be undertaken by the Cemetery working group at its next meeting

91/13 Financial matters

(i) 2013/14 Interim Audit

The clerk reported that the interim audit of the Council's Accounts for the first half of 2003/14 had been satisfactorily completed by the council's internal auditor – Yvonne Scriven - and there were no matters arising from the Audit.

(ii) 2014/15 Draft budget projections

The Clerk presented a report showing actual income and expenditure for the period ending 30th September, 2013, together with the Council's 5-year money plan projections for the period up to and including 2018/19.

Following detailed consideration of the suggested draft estimates for 2014/15 the Council **unanimously resolved to approve** a total gross expenditure budget for 2014/15 of £108.4K, together with a gross income budget of £118.4K

The Council also **unanimously approved** an increase of 1.99% to the parish precept which would give rise to a precept figure of £78.7K being levied in 2014/15

The true impact of the precept increase on local Council tax payers would not be known until the Council tax base for the year had been calculated by MHDC in late December. Minor rounding adjustments could be necessary to ensure that the precept rise for was limited to the level of 1.99% agreed. A further report on the impact of any changes to the Council Tax base would be presented to the Council at its meeting on 29th January, 2014

The Council also **unanimously resolved** to establish an additional earmarked reserve of £15k, in 2014/15, to support future Community Development initiatives.

(iii) Approval of Council payments and the use of pre-signed cheques

The Clerk drew Members attention to minute 11 of the Finance & General Purposes Committee report dated 24th October. There had been some discrepancies with the cheque numbering shown on the payment schedule which had been agreed by the Council at its meeting on 25th September.

Particular problems had arisen as a result of the fact that two cheques had been used out of sequence although the Council had suffered no financial loss as a consequence.

A revised payment schedule for 25th September, showing the formal alterations to the Council's minutes, was presented to the Council for approval as set out below

Revised Payment Schedule 25th September

3035	Steve Maund	Cemetery & Outdoor work- July	887.49	-	887.49
3036	D M Taverner	Salary and expenses - September	1,753.75	39.66	1,793.41
3037	Exell print	Wells News printing	869.00	-	869.00
3038	PCC of Malvern Wells & Wyche	Room Hire	35.00	-	35.00
3039	Martin Thomas	Cemetery work- July & August	533.35	-	533.35
3040	Adrian Hope	Tree surgery	435.00	87.00	522.00
3041	Grant Thornton LLP	External Audit Fee	400.00	80.00	480.00
3042	Worcestershire CALC	Charles Arnold Baker 9th Edition	56.25		56.25
3043	N power	Toilets Electricity September Quarter	27.00	1.35	28.35
3044	British Gas	Gas Consumption - Gas lamps June Qtr	511.55	102.31	613.86
3045	Steve Maund	Outdoor duties- September	900.98		900.98
3046	Trevor Brooke	Cemetery digger - soil removal	140.00		140.00
3047	County Building Supplies	Cemetery Materials	77.00	15.39	92.39
3048	PCC of Malvern Wells & Wyche	Community Grant -Toddler Group	250.00		250.00
3049	Sight Designs	Gas lamps maintenance	1,372.10	277.42	1,649.52
3050	Drain Jet surveys	CCTV inspection - Assarts Road	590.00	118.00	708.00

In order to regularise future procedure, and to avoid a future repetition of any such problems Council **unanimously resolved:-**

1. that pre-signed cheques should not be used under any circumstances
2. that each payment schedule should also note the reasons for any payments approved which are being held in abeyance and the reason for the temporary suspension of any such payment
3. that the Clerk's annual salary, as calculated by the Council's independent payroll administrator, should be paid in twelve equal instalments, payable on the 23rd day of each month; and a separate monthly payment should be authorised for any expenses incurred by the Clerk as set out in the Clerk's contract of employment

(ii) **Payment of Accounts**

The following accounts were approved for payment:-

Payment Schedule 6th November

Chq No	Payee	For	Net £	VAT £	Gross £
3051	Glasdon Ltd	Richmond's Pitch litter Bin	131.76	26.35	158.11
3052	Steve Maund	Cemetery & Outdoor work- October	860.80	-	860.80
3053	Martin Thomas	Cemetery work- October	292.73	-	292.73
3054	County Building Supplies	Cemetery Materials	19.92	3.99	23.91
3055	Malvern Wells Village Hall	Room Hire	44.00	-	44.00
3056	David Taverner	Clerks Salary - October	1,396.57	-	1,396.57
3057	David Taverner	Administration Expenses - October	373.67	45.20	418.87
3058	British Gas	Gas Consumption - Gas lamps Sept Qtr	511.55	102.31	613.86
3059	Trevor Brooke	Cemetery soil removal VAT only	-	28.00	28.00
3060	BWB Consulting Ltd	Assarts Road Drainage Scheme	1,153.75	230.75	1,384.50
3061	Sight Designs	Gas lamps maintenance	2,584.00	516.80	3,100.80
3062	Arkell and Hurcombe	Remembrance Plaque - Moore	110.00	22.00	132.00
3063	Collett Accountancy Ltd	Payroll processing	170.83	34.17	205.00
3064	HMRC	PAYE & National Insurance Sept Qtr	1,862.18	-	1,862.18
3065	Lynne Hackles	Wells News Honorarium	100.00	-	100.00
3066	Steve Maund	Cemetery Materials	22.32	4.46	26.78

92/13 Date of next meeting

The Clerk gave notice that the date of the next meeting of the Council would take place on Wednesday 27th November, 2013.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9 25pm.

Approved..... Chairman

Cllr Mrs H Burrage

Dated 27th November, 2013