

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF  
MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL  
held remotely via Zoom on  
Wednesday 26 August 2020 at 6.00 pm**

**Councillors**

Present

N Morton (Chairman)  
L Lambeth (Vice Chairman)  
C Hooper  
N Houghton  
J Leibrandt  
L Lowton  
N Mills  
J O'Donnell  
J Satterthwaite  
P Smith  
S Taylor  
P Tuthill  
D Watkins

Apologies

C Bovey  
S Charles  
R McLaverty-Head  
C Palmer

Absent

P Mewton

**In attendance**

Linda Blake – Town Clerk  
Louise Wall – Minute Clerk

One member of the public

Following some technical difficulties with Zoom, the Chairman ensured that all could hear the proceedings and be heard. The meeting then started at 6.13pm.

**215. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs Bovey, Charles, McLaverty-Head and Palmer were **NOTED**.

**216. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**217. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the following meeting be approved and adopted as a correct record of the proceedings, to be signed by the Mayor in due course:

- Full Council meeting 5 August 2020.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no Public Participation.

**218. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported that he had received a response from Sarah Rouse, Leader of Malvern Hills District Council regarding the removal of the fountain in Malvern Link and he was pleased that there finally seemed to be some action taking place. He thanked the district councillors who had been involved with this.

**219. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

Hayslan Fields

The Town Clerk has written to Malvern St James regarding the future protection of this land and is awaiting a response.

Letter to Paul Robinson

A chasing letter to Paul Robinson was sent after the last meeting and a reply has recently been received albeit in the form of an email from Hannah Davies/Rachael Benson in the Highways Department. This should have been emailed some months ago, but the response has now been received and has in the first instance been sent to Councillor Hooper.

Operations Committee – 2 September

The Town Clerk drew members' attention to next week's Operations and Planning Committee meeting which will have items relating to development at Elgar Avenue and the Government white paper on planning. All Councillors are welcome to attend, as is the case of all committee meetings, but cannot vote unless they are an official substitute for a committee member.

Basketball Courts

Groundworks have now been completed and the fencing is due to be installed next week. Unfortunately the quarantine travel rules put in place by the government are now affecting Belgium where the Flex Court installer is based. This means that the next stage of the project will therefore be delayed until these rules are relaxed.

**220. REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE**

County Councillors

**Cllr Paul Tuthill** reported that following two judicial reviews regarding the Police and Crime Commissioner taking over the Fire Authority, there would now be a third review once the Home Office has looked at the case following next year's elections.

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting had discussed changes to GP arrangements in light of the recent pandemic, as well as the Acute Hospitals and Health and Wellbeing. He will forward the report to the Town Clerk for distribution to Councillors.

Cllr Tuthill had requested more signage to be erected on the pavements near the tip, and this had helped ease the traffic flow on entry and exit.

District Councillors

**Cllr Neville Mills** has been working with District Councillor Kaleem Aksar regarding the road works on Lower Howsell Road to make sure residents are informed of the upcoming road closures, which will provisionally be 21 October to 3 November.

**221. TOWN COUNCIL WARD REPORTS/REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

**Cllr Josephine Leibrandt** had attended a meeting of the Friends of Priory Park and discussions were continuing regarding restoring the pond, supporting wildlife and changes to the play area. It had also been noted that there was a problem with rats near the pond due to the bread left on the ground.

**Cllr Clive Hooper** reported that he had attended two CALC meetings. At the first, Sue Baxter had reported that the white paper out in September will be on devolution of local bodies which may have implications for parish and town councils. The other meeting was the Malvern Hills Area AGM at which a new chairman was elected. Discussion was held on the government white paper on the future of planning and possible streamlining, which had shown that there could be a loss of local councils' influence in the planning process and Cllr Hooper thought this was something that should be monitored. The CALC offices are now in the process of being moved to Hanley Swan.

**222. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

There were no members' questions.

**223. AUDIT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL01/20 was received and accepted.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of Audit Committee were not at the meeting and so the recommendations were presented by the Chairman of Full Council.

- i. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Internal Audit report 2019/20.
- ii. It was **RESOLVED** that a satisfactory review of the systems of Internal Control had been completed during 2019/20.

**224. YEAR END ACCOUNTS 2019/20**

Report CL02/20 was received and accepted.

The Chairman thanked the Town Clerk and Internal Auditor for their work in bringing the year end accounts and internal audit to a conclusion.

The Town Clerk presented the Year End Accounts and reported that there was a surplus against budget in 2019/20 of £28,314. The Council's finances were in a healthy position at Year End and all variances had been fully explained in the summary on pages 8-10 of the accounts.

Members noted that point 4.5 showed the first receipt of Community Infrastructure Levy funding which related to the development near Brook Farm Estate. This money can be used for the benefit of the residents near to that development but it can also be used on a project for the good of the wider community.

A question was asked about the level of reserves required at year end and the Town Clerk confirmed that the recommendation for 25% of the next year's precept to be held in reserves at year end relates to the need for cash flow to support the Council through three months of the financial year before the first half of the precept is received in June.

Cllr Smith reiterated the Chairman's thanks to the Town Clerk.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept and adopt the Year End Accounts for 2019/20.

**225. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2019/20**

Report CL03/20 was received and accepted.

Each of the recommendations was then taken separately as follows:

- i. Council **CONSIDERED** and **APPROVED** Section 1 of the AGAR – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 and **ENSURED** it was signed and dated by the Chairman and Town Clerk.
- ii. Council **CONSIDERED** and **APPROVED** Section 2 of the AGAR – Accounting Statements 2019/20, **APPROVED** the Accounting Statements by resolution and **ENSURED** they are signed and dated by the Chairman.
- iii. Council **NOTED** the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20 as page 3 of the AGAR.
- iv. Council **AGREED** that the fully completed AGAR for 2019/20 should then be submitted with the appropriate supporting information to the external auditor.

**226. REQUEST FOR SUPPORT WITH RENT**

Report CL04/20 was received and accepted.

A full and frank discussion followed on how the Town Council could support tenants in a manner that is fair and consistent.

The Town Clerk explained that if rent relief was granted, it would be on the basis that it was not paid back to the Town Council.

It was agreed that it would be useful to have more financial information available before making a decision and therefore any decision would be deferred.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to defer this item to a later meeting and for the Town Clerk to request further financial information from the Goldsmiths, including clarification of the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the business and any relief received and rates paid.

**227. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting of Full Council would be Wednesday 14 October 2020 at 6.00 pm, to be held remotely via Zoom.

The meeting finished at 7.25 pm.

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(Chairman)