

UNADOPTED

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE OPERATIONS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL
held remotely via Zoom on
Wednesday 2 September 2020 at 6.00 pm

Participating

Councillors

C Palmer (Acting Chairman)
L Lambeth (Vice Chairman)
J Leibrandt
P Mewton
P Smith
S Taylor
D Watkins

Also in attendance

L Blake - Town Clerk
C Porter – Operations Manager
L Wall - Minute Clerk
Cllr N Morton
Cllr C Hooper
Cllr R McLaverty-Head
Cllr J Satterthwaite
Cllr B Nielsen - MHDC
Marcus Cleaver and Barry Jones - Engage
Malvern
Mark Ramdehal and Laura Marshall -
Rooftop Housing

Absent

C Bovey (apologies)
S Charles (apologies)

The Chairman of Operations and Planning Committee, Cllr Samantha Charles, was unable to attend the meeting due to a work commitment and therefore it was agreed that Cllr Cynthia Palmer would chair the meeting in her absence.

113. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Cllr Sam Charles and Cllr Caroline Bovey were **NOTED**.

114. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

115. 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 Chairman in due course:

- Operations and Planning Committee meeting 1 July 2020.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no Public Participation.

116. PRESENTATION BY ENGAGE MALVERN, LAND AT ELGAR AVENUE

Marcus Cleaver and Barry Jones of EngageMalvern, a South Worcestershire charity, attended the meeting to outline their proposals for the land at Elgar Road, owned by the Town Council. Their vision is to set up a community land trust to build approximately twelve one- and two-bedroomed properties, to Passivhaus

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standard, which would be aimed at the under 35 years of age and over 65 years of age groups.

EngageMalvern want to support these two age groups, with the help of the Town Council, as they are the sector of the local population currently finding it difficult to either get onto the property ladder or to find suitable property when downsizing.

EngageMalvern would set up the trust but would not be involved in the running of it. The Town Council would be involved in the ownership and running of the development and could suggest people who may become trustees.

The trust would seek to build to Passivhaus standards and it is thought that grants would be available for items such as electrical charging points.

It is hoped that provisions such as shared laundry facilities and garden tools would encourage a community feel, and this could be furthered by a community centre built over the culvert in the middle of the site.

Cllr Nielsen expressed her support for this project as it would be driven by local people for local people.

Members then put several questions to Mr Cleaver and Mr Jones about the vision of the charity.

The project would rely on the Town Council gifting the land to EngageMalvern, ensuring it remains as a community asset in perpetuity. Members expressed concerns as to how the development would be funded with no specific funds yet being identified. Barry Jones stated that the identification and agreement of sites comes before any funding. The Town Council would not be expected to fund the building of the houses - this would be financed by various government grants and possibly the private sector and the charity itself feels it is in a good position to apply for money from other sources.

117. PRESENTATION BY ROOFTOP HOUSING, LAND AT ELGAR AVENUE

Mark Ramdehal then addressed the meeting on behalf of Rooftop Housing Association, a registered provider of affordable homes. He confirmed that there is a meeting arranged between Rooftop and EngageMalvern at which they hope to discuss how Rooftop can facilitate EngageMalvern's ideas and help target those who cannot access the housing market in the usual way.

Rooftop have private and government funding in place for such a development and would seek to build to Passivhaus standards as well to avoid fuel poverty for occupiers and would also look at shared rent schemes so that even if the market value is higher, then the homes would still be affordable.

Regarding the ownership of the land, Rooftop suggested they could either put a value on the land or take a long lease, keeping the land in Town Council ownership and could also put restrictions on future sales of the properties, to ensure they are always sold on to those in need.

Rooftop has a readily accessible work force with varying skills that could be put to good use in a project such as this.

Councillors felt that Elgar Avenue would be a good site for affordable housing, but felt that the site should benefit local people as far as possible.

The Chairman thanked the representatives of EngageMalvern and Rooftop Housing for attending the meeting and giving their presentations.

118. TOWNSEND WAY ROUNDABOUT

Report OC01/20 was received and accepted.

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The Town Clerk reminded members that this item had been discussed at a previous meeting in July 2019, when it was decided that the licence would be handed back to Worcestershire County Council. WCC had subsequently stated that for them to take control of the site once again, they would require complete clearance of any vegetation with the site being returned to grass only. It had then been suggested that Malvern Community Woodland may like to take on the planting and maintenance of the roundabout but insurance and funding issues had meant this was not possible.

Officers felt that if money had to be spent on removal of vegetation, consideration should be given to keeping the roundabout under Town Council control to ensure it is well-maintained.

The committee was therefore now asked to consider the option of the current vegetation being removed, and replanted with low-maintenance grass and perhaps some wild flowers. The licence would remain with the Town Council who would maintain the roundabout.

Members agreed that the roundabout looked unsightly in its current state and the overgrown shrubs were causing limited visibility at the junction, therefore although there would be a small cost each year, it would be appropriate for the Town Council to maintain the roundabout in a well-kept manner for the residents of Malvern.

It was **AGREED** to remove all shrubs from the Townsend Way roundabout, grass over the island and put in some central low-maintenance vegetation and then continue with annual maintenance.

119. **IDENTIFICATION OF SITES AS WILDING AREAS**

Report OC02/20 was received and accepted.

The Town Clerk explained that Cllr Taylor and Cllr Morton had met with the Operations Manager to discuss wilding within the town, an idea first raised by the ecology group as part of the Environmental Panel's work. Four areas had then been identified by the Operations Manager as potential sites for wilding and planting of wild flowers. It was agreed that these would be a good starting point and that further sites could be put forward by councillors, based on each ward.

It was **AGREED** that the four sites listed in the report (Victoria Park [new land area by bowling green], Greenfields Road, Michaels Crescent and Yates Hay) would be left for wilding.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that as part of a larger project to review wilding areas across the town as a whole, Town Council ward councillors would be asked to identify other possible sites not in Town Council ownership but suitable for wilding and a small task and finish group set up to review these.

It was **AGREED** that the following members would form the task and finish group:

- Cllr Taylor, Cllr Morton, Cllr Lambeth, Cllr Leibrandt.

120. **TOWNSEND WAY/BRAMBLE CLOSE GREEN CORRIDOR**

Report OC03/20 was received and accepted.

The Operations Manager explained that this area was last coppiced approximately twelve years ago and since then, work had been carried out but only in small areas at a time. Some of the trees were becoming a problem and were too big for the operations team to manage, and therefore it was going to be more cost-

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effective to cut it all back at one time, and this would require the use of the tree surgeon.

It was **AGREED** that various overhanging trees and foliage in the Townsend Way/Bramble Close green corridor should be cut back, reduced and removed.

121. **SELF MANAGEMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT AT MONKSFIELD LANE ALLOTMENTS**

Report OC04/20 was received and accepted.

It was **NOTED** that the allotment association at Monksfield Lane had successfully self-managed the site for eight years and that they had done an excellent job of developing and running the site, with very little input being required from the Council.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that a new five-year allotment tenancy be approved for the Monksfield Lane allotment site.

122. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Operations Manager presented work programme OC05/20.

He reported that a significant start had been made to the new basketball courts at Victoria Park with the groundworks finished and the fencing underway. However, the court surface was currently delayed as the installers were coming from Belgium where quarantine restrictions meant that they were unable to travel for the time being.

Whilst the lockdown period had caused some delays over the last few weeks, the Operations Manager predicted that everything would be back to normal project-wise by the New Year.

Cllr Watkins the Operations Team for the summer display of bedding plants now in full bloom and for the high standard of Rosebank Gardens.

123. **PLANNING CONSULTATIONS**

Report OC06/20 was received and noted.

There were no planning matters raised by ward members, officers or requested by members of the public.

There were no major planning applications currently being considered.

No planning applications from the weekly planning lists or the planning log attached to the report had been raised.

124. **REVIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANNING WHITE PAPER**

Report OC07/20 was received and accepted.

Members agreed that the task of considering the Government's Planning White Paper "Planning for the Future" was very important as local councillors should be capable of meeting the needs of those they represent. As it would be a big undertaking, the task and finish group would look at the document and return their findings to Full Council.

It was **AGREED** to set up a task and finish group to prepare a response to the consultation "Planning for the Future" with the following councillors as members:

- Cllr C Hooper, Cllr N Morton, Cllr J Satterthwaite, Cllr S Taylor, Cllr P Newton.

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It was further **AGREED** that a budget of £1,000 would be made available for the employment of a consultant, should this be required.

125. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting of Operations and Planning Committee would be Wednesday 7 October 2020 at 6.00pm, to be held remotely via Zoom.

The meeting finished at 7.45 pm.

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(Chairman)

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