

UNADOPTED

MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL

held in the Council Chamber, Malvern Hills District Council, Avenue Road
on Wednesday 13 April 2022, at 6.00 pm

Councillors

Present

N Houghton (Chairman)
C Hooper (Vice Chairman)
J Ashington-Carter
C Fletcher
J Leibrandt
L Lowton
R McLaverty-Head
D Mead
C Palmer
P Smith
A Stitt
S Taylor
P Tuthill (from 6.10pm)

Absent

C Bovey
L Lambeth (apologies)
N Mills (apologies)
N Morton
J O'Donnell
J Satterthwaite
D Watkins (apologies)

Also in attendance

L Blake – Town Clerk
L Wall – Minute Clerk
Cllr Beverley Nielsen, WCC
Cllr Natalie McVey, WCC
Cllr John Raine, MHDC

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllrs Lynne Lambeth, Neville Mills and David Watkins were **NOTED**.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. 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, and they were signed by the Mayor:

- Full Council meeting 15 March 2022.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

Cllr Paul Tuthill joined the meeting at 6.10 pm.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that he was pleased to see signs of improvement in normal daily life following the pandemic and he had been able to attend some events within the town:

- The unveiling of a new recycling bin outside Dyson Perrins. This is the first of what is hoped to be many, if successful, in a joint initiative where the bins will be supplied by the Town Council and emptied by the District Council.
- The Annual Town Meeting had been held at The Coach House Theatre on 23 March. As usual, it was not well attended by the public and consequently had been brief in duration.
- A joint civic service had been held with Cllr Palmer as Chairman of the District Council. This has been well attended by local dignitaries and had received good feedback for getting the right balance of a formal but friendly service.

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- Members were reminded that the Mayor's Peaks Challenge would take place on 30 April; sponsors will cover the cost of t-shirts, medals and rosettes whilst the Town Council will fund first aid support and transport to the starting point. The Mayor asked members to share this event where possible to raise awareness.
- The Mayor had attended a liaison meeting at the District Council along with the Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk. This meeting is held regularly to keep the lines of communication open between the two councils.

5. **UPDATE ON TOWN COUNCIL OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

The Town Clerk updated the meeting on the following items:

Land at Mill Lane

It is hoped that the transfer of land may happen after an upcoming meeting with the Senior Development Manager of Countryside Properties.

Bike racks

Permission has recently been granted for the installation of two bike racks for the area outside Hollands Opticians on Graham Road and these will be installed by Worcestershire County Council in the next week.

Cllr Hooper raised a query relating to public participation in the previous Full Council meeting. Following a presentation on the future of Malvern Hills College, Cllr Beverley Nielsen had asked if the Town Council would consider donating a sum of money and Cllr Hooper asked if there were any plans to put this on a future agenda.

- The Town Clerk responded that a specific proposal would need to be made to Council, to include an indication of the amount of money required and its exact purpose.

6. **REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

Karen Hanks, County Councillor could not attend the meeting but had sent a written report which had been distributed to all Councillors that afternoon.

Beverley Nielsen, County Councillor Malvern Langland Division, District Councillor Priory Ward updated members that news was awaited on funding from the district and county councils for Malvern Hills College, and that because she was also a councillor for both councils she had now resigned from her post as director of the board and had been replaced by Virginia McKay and Gemma Wiseman. A report had been commissioned from Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) whilst a decision on any funding from the two councils was expected to be received in May. The Bransford Trust had now confirmed that they would be willing to lend funds to the group directly.

Cllr Nielsen continued to pursue various highways issues such as bollards at the crossing point of Worcester Road beyond the carpet shop, the clearing of drains at St Ann's Road, replacement of railings at Moorlands Road, and replacement of slabs with tarmac for the pavement on Worcester Road between the bus stop and the carpet shop.

Cllr Nielsen had attended MHDC's presentation on plans for the development of the five town centres, and a copy of the plans was available to councillors if required. The plans were focussed on footfall and visitors to the town rather than traffic problems and Cllr Nielsen suggested that the Town and District Councils should reach a general consensus for an approach to combat these problems within Great Malvern.

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Natalie McVey County Councillor Malvern Trinity Division, District Council West Malvern reported that West Malvern Road was now finally open after many months of closure and disruption, not least to bus travel. The new Highways Liaison Officer was proving to be very responsive, which was encouraging.

Cllr McVey sits on a task and finish group at WCC which is looking at ways of helping young people whose mental health had been affected by the Covid pandemic with the aim being to stop health deteriorating further.

MHDC were looking at ways to alleviate poverty and were working in partnership with the voluntary sector to mitigate against the rise in the cost of living. It had been noted that many people were facing these hardships for the first time.

The Homes for Ukraine Scheme was progressing slowly as the visa process was problematic, however, Malvern had the second highest number of individuals volunteering to host families in the Worcestershire area. MHDC carries out home checks and WCC DBS checks. Anyone wishing to help Ukrainian families can find more information on MHDC's website.

Cllr Cynthia Palmer District Councillor, Priory Ward will attend a meeting at the food bank next week; there are increasing concerns at the rise in numbers of people seeking help as the cost of living rises and the pressure this is putting on the food bank.

The new play equipment at Priory Park will be opening this Friday.

Cllr Houghton asked a question about its accessibility for those with mobility issues. This was answered by Cllr McVey who informed Council that due to the hilly nature of the site, it could not be signed off as fully accessible, but several pieces of equipment have accessible ramps.

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

Cllr Clive Hooper, CALC Representative attended a recent meeting which focussed on the Levelling Up white paper; a summary was available and would be circulated to members of the council.

Cllr Sharon Taylor, Link Ward had attended a Green Space 'Food for Change' community lunch with the Mayor at the United Reformed Church Hall in Malvern Link. Food that would otherwise have been thrown away but is still perfectly good is turned into a tasty meat-free, two-course meal. People are asked to make a donation if they can but are not obliged to pay anything if they cannot.

8. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

None.

Cllr Nielsen left the meeting at 6.40 pm.

9. **DEMOLITION OF VICTORIA PARK PAVILION**

Report CL01/22 was received.

The Town Clerk explained that although Modulek's overall tender included demolition of the old building just prior to the new build, it was now suggested that demolition be carried out earlier, to combat a resurgence in antisocial behaviour at the park, including individuals climbing on the roof and attempting to break into the building.

Demolition would be overseen by Modulek and carried out by a local contractor, chosen in agreement with the Operations Manager.

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It was **RESOLVED** to place an order to demolish the existing pavilion at Victoria Park as soon as possible.

10. **OPERATIONS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL02/22 was received and accepted, and the Chairman of the Operations and Planning Committee, Cllr Cynthia Palmer presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 22 March 2022.

Minute 92 Queen's Green Canopy – Jubilee Celebrations 2022

It was **RESOLVED** that as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project in 2022, two specimen woodland trees would be planted at Yates Hay Road green and open space, and that a plaque would mark this area to outline the project.

11. **AUDIT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL03/22 was received and accepted, and the Chairman of Audit Committee, Cllr Cynthia Palmer, presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 29 March 2022.

There were three recommendations from the meeting and these were voted for together.

Minute 22 Review of the Council's Credit Control Processes and Controls

It was **RESOLVED** that no changes should be made to the Council's current credit control processes and controls as they were satisfactory.

Minute 23 Review of the use of SAGE as an Accounting System

It was **RESOLVED** that the SAGE Accounting System should be used for a further twelve months and then reviewed again.

Minute 24 Review of Payment Terms for Town Council suppliers

It was **RESOLVED** that no changes should be made to the current payment terms for suppliers as it is satisfactory.

12. **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL04/22 was received and accepted and the Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee, Cllr Clive Hooper, presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 30 March 2022.

Minute 49 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Councillors discussed whether a permanent group needed to be set up for this task. It was noted that the review of policies had fallen behind schedule with "catching up" required but some members felt that this was a temporary task after which policies should go directly to Policy and Resources Committee.

An amendment to the recommendation was proposed and agreed as follows:

It was **RECOMMENDED** that a Policy Review Task and Finish Group be set up for a period of six months to clear the backlog of policy reviews. Membership would be drawn from Full Council.

Members then voted on the amended recommendations and

It was **RESOLVED** that a Policy Review Task and Finish Group be set up to review the most overdue policies within the next six months and report back to Policy and Resources Committee. Membership would be drawn from Full Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that members would be:

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- Cllr Aidan Stitt
- Cllr David Mead
- Cllr Jack Ashington-Carter
- Cllr Clive Fletcher
- Cllr Sharon Taylor

Minute 52 Review of Earmarked Reserves

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Earmarked Reserves as summarised in the report including the three suggestions detailed and taking reserves to a level of £330,892 on 31 March 2022.

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 11 May 2022 at 6.00 pm in Malvern Hills District Council Chamber.

The meeting finished at 7.15 pm.

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(Chairman)

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