

UNADOPTED

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING OF MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL

held in the Council Chamber, Malvern Hills District Council, Avenue Road
on Thursday 6 October 2022, at 6.00 pm

Councillors

Present

N Houghton (Chairman)
K Aksar
C Hooper
L Lambeth
J Leibrandt
F Matthews-Jones
R McLaverty-Head
C Palmer
D Watkins
J Wilkinson

Absent

J Ashington-Carter
C Bovey (apologies)
C Fletcher (apologies)
L Lowton
D Mead (apologies)
N Mills (apologies)
J O'Donnell (apologies)
J Satterthwaite (apologies)
P Smith (apologies)
A Stitt (apologies)

Also, in attendance

L Blake – Town Clerk
L Wall – Minute Clerk
C Porter – Operations Manager
One member of the public

81. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from Councillors Caroline Bovey, Clive Fletcher, David Mead, Neville Mills, James O'Donnell, Jack Satterthwaite, Peter Smith and Aiden Stitt were **NOTED**.

82. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

83. 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:

- Full Council meeting 7 September 2022.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Ron Harris, a resident of Summerfield Road, expressed his concerns over speeding traffic in the Summerfield Road area, which had seen an increase in recent years, partly because extra traffic lights now installed on the Worcester Road meant that the area had become a cut through for traffic travelling to Lower Howsell, Leigh Sinton and beyond. Residents would like to see all traffic slowed down considerably to ensure the safety of local children and residents and in particular support the idea of making Summerfield Road/Queen Elizabeth Road a non-through road as it was previously.

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84. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Many mayoral engagements had been cancelled or postponed because of the death of Queen Elizabeth II, however the Mayor had attended the unveiling of the new Jenny Lind sculpture in Rosebank Gardens, which was also attended by the Deputy Mayor and representatives of the Jenny Lind Society.

The Mayor reminded members that his charity quiz was taking place on Friday 14 October and tickets had been selling well but there were still some available. All profits from the quiz would go towards the Mayor's Charity, Guide Dogs.

Members were also informed that charity calendars for 2023 were now on sale and examples were available at the meeting. The calendars cost £10 from the office, or £12 including postage and come in two formats - wall and desk calendar. QinetiQ had agreed to sponsor some of the printing costs and again, all profits would go towards Guide Dogs.

85. UPDATE ON TOWN COUNCIL OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The Town Clerk gave an update on the following items:

Volunteers – the Town Clerk thanked everyone who had already volunteered to man road closure barriers for Remembrance and to help with the Christmas Lights Switch-on event. Further help is required with Father Christmas' grotto, and any volunteers should contact Lyndsey in the office.

The Mayor's Quiz – the Town Clerk asked members for donations of raffle prizes for the Mayor's quiz. Eighteen teams have registered so far.

Heart of England in Bloom - Councillors David Watkins and Clive Hooper picked up a Gold Award on behalf of the Town Council at the awards ceremony held on 22 September. Malvern scored a fantastic 93 out of a possible one hundred points and the Town Clerk thanked everyone who had helped with the entry: Town Council staff, bloom volunteers and those from partnership organisations. It is a real community effort which involves more than just floral displays.

SWDPR - subject to the approval of Worcester City, Malvern Hills and Wychavon councils, a six-week consultation on the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review is due to take place from 1 November until 12 December. Parish and Town Councils will be invited to a remote briefing on 20 October and details will be passed on as soon as they are available.

Michaels Crescent Play Area - works to refurbish this play area as agreed in the project budget for this year will commence in the next couple of weeks.

Mill Lane - it is now over three years since the Town Council agreed to take ownership of land off Mill Lane / Charlock Road. After a number of emails failed to result in any progress a letter was sent to the Interim Divisional Managing Director, Partnerships Midlands who replied that the South Midlands office was now closed and the development had been taken on by the West Midlands region. The new project team has completed a review and identified the works required to bring open spaces up to the expected standard of quality for the Town Council and the residents, including an action plan to remediate and complete the open space

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ground maintenance works to enable the land to be transferred to Malvern Town Council. These works will start on Monday 17 October.

Victoria Park - works to level the site of the former pavilion have now been completed with the area seeded to grass whilst we await future developments

86. **REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE**

It was noted that Cllr Natalie McVey had sent her apologies.

Cllr Karen Hanks, WCC

Highways matters: A VAS unit ordered in last year's budget is now ready to be installed and Cllr Hanks will consult with the Highways Liaison officer to identify three or four of the best locations to address concerns from local residents on Lower Howsell Road and Pickersleigh Road about speeding vehicles.

Cllr Hanks has visited Spring Lane North, Lower Howsell Road, Queen Elizabeth Road with highways officers and as a result has ordered a white H-bar at a location on Spring Lane North and a sloped crossing for prams at Queen Elizabeth Road.

Cllr Hanks reminded members that there is a discretionary budget still available for footpaths (last year this was used for a pavement section on Lower Howsell Road).

Malvern Link Traders: Cllr Hanks is again working with this group planning a Christmas Event on 2 December 2022.

She has also agreed to pay for a centre feature in All About Malvern magazines to promote Malvern Link retail and service offerings from her divisional fund, to be circulated in October. A further contribution will be made to distribute a Christmas event leaflet in the Trade Link magazine.

Cllr Hanks mentioned that the traders are also looking to create an ironwork feature at Hampden Corner. It was noted that this area is owned and maintained by Malvern Town Council and any installation would have to be approved appropriately.

Community Fridge: this has been very successful and the benefit to the community extended as the produce, saved from disposal, is also being used by Malvern Green Space at the United Reformed Church Hall to provide free hot lunches in Malvern Link, on a drop in "pay what you can, if you can" basis. Some Malvern Link residents who live alone have especially enjoyed this social event.

Other Divisional Fund use: Cllr Hanks will make a WCC donation to the Christmas Cheer/Festive bags scheme at the Town Council again this year.

Boundary review: Worcestershire County Councillors were briefed over the summer that there will be a boundary review of the County Council Wards. Information will initially come from WCC including electoral forecasts and other electoral data. Meetings will be held with all councillors, officers, and the Town/Parish Councils to assist in deciding how many councillors should be elected. From May 2023 the public will be asked their views on the number of wards and the boundaries. The new wards are effective from County Council Elections in 2025. It was clarified that this review is separate to the local boundary review for District and Town wards already completed.

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Cllr Cynthia Palmer, MHDC

Cllr Palmer noted that the outcome of the recent boundary commission review would mean a change to polling stations as some would now be in different areas. It had also caused some problems with the Malvern Hills Trust, conflicting with their Acts of Parliament.

There is also a new interim director of planning in post at MHDC following the departure of Holly Jones.

Cllr Kaleem Aksar, MHDC

Cllr Aksar reported that the refuse lorry fleet had been changed to run on hydrogenated vegetable oil known as bio diesel in an effort to reduce carbon emissions. He had also attended meetings regarding the Victoria Park Road development, and the Stocks Lane development, where discussions had centred on the impact the development will have on conservation and biodiversity.

87. **TOWN COUNCIL WARD REPORTS/REPRESENTATIONS ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Clive Hooper, Malvern Hills College Task Force Group

At the most recent meeting, held by zoom, it was reported that the two directors of the Malvern Hills Arts and Community College (MHACC) had written to the Warwickshire Colleges Group to make a formal bid for the building. The governing body is due to meet soon and it is hoped that the bid will be considered at that meeting.

Cllr Watkins made a request that Town Council representatives on Outside Bodies should be asked to submit a written report to the next meeting as few reports had been received this year. It was noted that some bodies had not been active recently but this matter would be looked into.

88. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

There were no members' questions.

89. **NOTICE OF MOTION – SUPPORT FOR LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOOD IN SUMMERFIELD ROAD**

Cllr Kaleem Aksar presented his notice of motion to council. He said that concerns had been raised about the safety of children in the area due to the amount of speeding traffic. Options such as a crossing had been considered but it was difficult to find a suitable location. The low traffic neighbourhood scheme had been considered and was supported by residents in general, who had said they would prefer the inconvenience of the road being blocked from vehicular traffic, knowing that this would mean children and residents were much safer and traffic reduced, rather than the current situation. Cllr Aksar presented a petition with the signatures of 80 residents in support of the notice of motion.

Cllr Matthews-Jones agreed to second the motion in the absence of Cllr Satterthwaite, as she thought this change to road layout could make a vast, positive, difference to people living in the area.

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Members discussed the matter, including alternatives and were in support of the proposal.

Cllr Hanks informed members that WCC did not support chicanes as a method of slowing traffic but she would support the proposal of a low traffic neighbourhood.

It was noted that this would be the first of its kind in Worcestershire but these schemes worked well in other areas of the country and Cllr Aksar felt that in the absence of a County Council policy on LTNs, a bottom up approach could be successful.

It was **RESOLVED** that Malvern Town Council supports the local residents on Summerfield Road, Queen Elizabeth Road and Vandra Close for the implementation of a Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) between Worcester Road and Summerfield Road and will call on Worcestershire County Council to trial making an LTN for the area. This will require the road to be blocked from vehicular traffic where Summerfield Road meets Queen Elizabeth Road.

90. **NOTICE OF MOTION – DEDICATION OF ROSEBANK BUS SHELTER TO QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

Cllr Nick Houghton presented his notice of motion. He proposed that the refurbishment to the bus shelter outside Rosebank Gardens already agreed should be expanded to include dedicated artwork celebrating the reign of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the budget of £15,000 agreed for the initial works would most likely need to be increased to around £17,000 to cover the rise in materials costs over the past two years.

Designs for artwork within any agreed budget would be presented to Full Council for agreement before being commissioned.

- i. It was **RESOLVED** that the existing bus shelter and furniture would be refurbished in a manner sympathetic to a dedication marking the seventy-year reign of Queen Elizabeth II.
- ii. It was **RESOLVED** that a working budget of £8,000 would be allocated to cover both the increase in costs to refurbish the bus shelter and for the design and manufacture of an installation that would respectfully mark the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

91. **NOTICE OF MOTION – MALVERN TOURISM SIGN FOR ROSEBANK GARDENS**

Cllr Nick Houghton presented his notice of motion to the meeting for the installation of a large lettered sign in Rosebank, spelling 'MALVERN' which would be a tourist attraction and encourage visitors to the town. Members were supportive of the idea and discussed location, materials and security. Members also thought that it may cost more than the £3,000 proposed in the notice of motion and it was important that any installation should be long-lasting, of high quality and a design that is sympathetic to the environment of Rosebank Gardens. It was therefore agreed to amend the second part of the resolution to read:

“allocate a working budget of between £3,000 and £5,000.”

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It was **RESOLVED** that Malvern Town Council should support the installation of a “MALVERN” tourism sign in Rosebank Gardens within a working budget of £3,000 to £5,000, with the location in Rosebank Gardens to be agreed by Full Council once a design is created.

92. **AUDIT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL01/22 was received and accepted and the Chairman of Audit Committee, Cllr Cynthia Palmer, presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 6 September 2022.

Minute 14 Identification of any further areas of Internal Audit Work for 2022/23

It was **RESOLVED** to add a review of staff contracts to the work plan for 2022/23.

93. **EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT AND CERTIFICATE 2021/22**

Report CL02/22 was received and noted.

The Town Clerk explained to members that the External Audit Report and Certificate for 2021/22 had given the Town Council a ‘clean’ audit report and has now been advertised on the Town Council’s website as required.

94. **CHRISTMAS LIGHTING CONTRACT**

Report CL03/22 was received and accepted.

The Town Clerk explained that the previous Christmas lights contracted had expired and officers had therefore approached various companies to submit a tender for the erection, maintenance, dismantling and storage of the Town Council’s Christmas lights for the current year and next two years (2022 to 2024).

Three tenders had been received and it was now recommended to appoint company C. Costs were higher than the budgeted amount, partly due to an extra tree now being installed and dressed each year in Malvern Link. It was suggested that the successful company be appointed for three years rather than one to avoid price rises, because the work involved is quite specialised with not many suitable contractors and the tender process is time consuming.

The tender document as sent to the tendering companies was included in the meeting reports for information.

It was **RESOLVED** to award the contract for the erection, maintenance, dismantling and storage of the Town Council’s Christmas lights to Company C for a three-year period.

95. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Thursday 3 November 2022 at 6.00 pm in Malvern Hills District Council Chamber.

The meeting finished at 7.10 pm.

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(Chairman)