

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL**

**held in the Council Chamber, Belle Vue Terrace, Malvern
on Tuesday 21 February 2023 at 6.00 pm**

Councillors

C Hooper (Chairman)
C Fletcher
A Stitt
J Wilkinson

In attendance

Linda Blake - Town Clerk
Louise Wall – Minute Clerk
Cllr N Houghton - Mayor

Absent

R McLaverty-Head (apologies)
N Mills (apologies)
J Satterthwaite

41. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from Councillors Neville Mills and Ronan McLaverty-Head were **NOTED**.

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

43. 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:

- Policy and Resources Committee meeting 17 January 2023.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

The Chairman announced that he would be altering the order of business so that agenda item 4, 'Community Engagement Strategy' would be considered after item 6, 'Review of Town Council objectives – short and long term'. This was because the short and long term objectives referred to a Community Engagement Strategy, and therefore these should be agreed first.

44. POLICY REVIEW TASK AND FINISH GROUP – ADDITIONAL MEMBER

Report PR02/23 was received and accepted.

It was **AGREED** to refer this to the next meeting of Full Council to open the membership to all councillors.

45. REVIEW OF TOWN COUNCIL OBJECTIVES – SHORT AND LONG TERM

Report PR03/23 was received and accepted.

These had been amended at the last meeting of Policy and Resources Committee and therefore members were asked if there were any further updates they wished to make prior to making a recommendation to Full Council. Members discussed the

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short and long term aims and objectives individually, but other than a minor misprint there were no further amendments made.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the short term and long term aims and objectives as attached at Appendix A to these minutes be forwarded to the next Full Council meeting for approval and adoption.

The Chairman then reverted to the original order of the agenda.

46. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Report PR01/23 was received and noted.

It was noted that although it was an aim and objective of the Town Council, there had not been a formal community engagement strategy, but Appendix A listed the methods of community engagement already used by Town Council officers as part of their day-to-day work. This included the use of social media, regular newsletters, public consultation, council meetings and working groups among others.

If Council wished to approve a policy as a 'Community Engagement Strategy' then it would be necessary also to include methods of engagement to be used by Councillors. The Town Clerk had provided an example community engagement strategy at Appendix B for Councillors to use as a basis. The Chairman asked the Town Clerk to adapt the example strategy for use by the Town Council and it was agreed that this would be circulated to members for comments and ideas to be submitted ahead of approval at the next meeting.

47. **QUARTERLY ACCOUNTS – THIRD QUARTER TO 31 DECEMBER 2022**

PR04/23 was received and accepted and the Town Clerk presented the quarterly accounts for the third quarter of the 2022/23 financial year. Committee received the management accounts.

The third quarter, ending 31 December 2022, showed a deficit balance being taken from General Reserves of £7,574. As there had been a budgeted deficit for the quarter of £26,202, this meant an underspend of £18,628 for the third quarter of the 2022/23 financial year.

Administration costs were under budget for the third quarter by approximately £12,000 and Operational costs were over budget for the third quarter by approximately £9,000, whilst Asset Refurbishment and Renewal was just £431 under budget. The Town Clerk outlined the main variances as detailed in the report and answered questions from members of the committee.

For the year to date there was a surplus balance of £37,502 being placed into reserves, £31,331 ahead of the budgeted year to date surplus of £6,171.

In summary, there is an underspend against budget of £31,331 for the year to date.

The Town Clerk reminded members of the committee that the budget for the financial year 2022/23 was set in December 2021, at which time assumptions were made based on a "best guess" of future events. The delay in the Victoria Park

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project and the increase in staff salaries had impacted actual figures; however all variances were explained.

The Chairman thanked the Town Clerk for preparation of the accounts.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Full Council approves the Quarterly Accounts for the third quarter ending 31 December 2022.

48. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was **AGREED** that the date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 21 March 2023 at 6.00 pm.

The meeting finished at 7.30 pm.

.....(Chairman)

DRAFT

	Short Term Aims and Objectives – 1 April 2023 until 31 March 2024	Plans for future action to be taken
1.	<u>Performance of statutory powers and duties</u>	
a)	to enhance the current good working relationship with Malvern Hills District Council (MHDC), Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and other appropriate bodies to provide efficient and effective services in Malvern.	Regular MHDC liaison meetings MHDC/WCC councillor invitations to Full Council meeting Joint working where possible
b)	to carry out benchmarking to ensure services provided under Council contracts are as efficient as possible.	Regular review of value achieved and securing of price comparisons
c)	to regularly review suppliers and expenditure by supplier to ensure that the Town Council continues to obtain the best value for money on its purchases, this to be carried out by the Policy and Resources Committee.	Report to be taken to P&R meeting, August 2023
2.	<u>Improvement of operational standards</u>	
a)	to encourage the improvement and better maintenance of pavements, highways, footpaths and Public Rights of Way (PROW) within the town through liaison with WCC and MHDC where appropriate and to encourage the public to report any issues to the Town Council so that these can be forwarded to the appropriate County or District Councillor for action to be taken.	Issues reported as appropriate
b)	to review the amenities at Victoria Park and take appropriate action to reduce anti-social behaviour.	New task and finish group has been set up to evaluate and review plans for a new facility at Victoria Park
c)	to ensure that all Town Council operations and practices are carried out in a manner consistent with the needs of Health and Safety, and in accordance with the government guidelines current at that time.	Health and safety policy in place and due to be reviewed Regular staff training
3.	<u>Promotion of Malvern and its events</u>	
a)	to continue to investigate ways of making certain events more cost-effective through increased involvement of volunteers and exploring sponsorship links.	Officers will seek to secure sponsorship for events where possible, particularly those linked to the Mayoral charity

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		Volunteers secured through council/ charities/ local groups
b)	to continue to promote the Town Council's work through the production and distribution of at least three newsletters per year.	Three newsletters issued in 2022/23 Plans to achieve the same in 2023/24
c)	to continue the following annual events as agreed as part of the budget for 2023/24 Health & Wellbeing Fair/Mayor's Peaks Challenge 29 April Bands in the Park programme 7 May - 17 Sep Armed Forces Day 25 June Heart of England in Bloom June/July The Mayor's Bonanza 27 August Armistice Day 11 November Remembrance Sunday 12 November Christmas Festival 25 November Christmas Charity Concert 15 December	Officers are well into the planning stages of events for 2023/24. Reports will be issued to Operations and Planning Committee as required Steering groups will assist in the organisation of Malvern in Bloom and Christmas
4.	<u>Consideration of planning and development matters</u>	
a)	to set up a new Task and Finish Group to review the Neighbourhood Plan, following the SWDP review.	Due to the specialised nature and time constraints relating to this project, it would be beneficial to employ an outside consultant to assist with this project.
b)	To encourage all councillors to participate in training on planning matters to assist all in understanding planning policy and to signpost opportunities for them to undertake this.	Training to be made available for all councillors after the May 2023 elections.
c)	to work with MHDC and community groups to take the lead in establishing a community design group that can be involved in the planning process, engaging the wider community.	No progress on this, potential resource implications
d)	to strongly encourage MHDC to introduce a simplified process to ensure that properties can be placed on a local list to provide protection for appropriate buildings.	Continuation of lobbying of MHDC via liaison group meetings

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e)	to assist in securing the future of Malvern Hills College as a continuing educational and community asset.	Continue to have a Town Council representative at the steering group
5.	<u>Training and accessibility</u>	
a)	to continue an annual appraisal process and allow opportunities for officers to speak to the Policy and Resources Committee as necessary.	This has lapsed since the covid pandemic but new timetable to be implemented after next elections
b)	to continue to update and develop the Member's Handbook, focusing on useful information for new members and a useful synopsis of all the main information points.	Review and update for handbooks to be issued after May 2023 elections
6.	<u>Environmental impact on Town Council operations</u>	
a)	to work to provide recycling bins in suitable locations throughout the town where practical and to encourage use of these recycling bins.	Work in partnership with MHDC to discuss and agree suitable sites for new recycling bins
b)	To purchase 'greener' (electric) vehicles to support the provision of service by Malvern Town Council.	Purchase of new electric vehicle scheduled for April 2023
c)	to consider, and use wherever possible, energy saving and efficient practices in the development of new Town Council buildings and the refurbishment of current buildings.	Annual review of the Town Council's environmental policy due in November 2023
7.	<u>Community Engagement</u>	
a)	to establish a Community Engagement Strategy setting out how Malvern Town Council can better engage with the local community to ensure issues of concern are communicated and addressed.	To be considered and agreed by Full Council

	Long Term Aims and Objectives – 1 April 2022 until 31 March 2027	Identifiable ways of achieving the Council's aims and objectives
1.	<u>Performance of statutory powers and duties</u>	
	The Town Council will:	
a)	maintain and aim to improve, year on year, the delivery of Town Council services.	
b)	commit to the Malvern council taxpayer to provide efficient, effective and best value services for Malvern.	Robust annual budgeting process
c)	continue working with other groups and agencies when determining the future roles and responsibilities of the Town Council within the Malvern area.	
d)	review each of the Town Council policies at least every four years.	Creation of timetable scheduling reviews
2.	<u>Improvement of operational standards</u>	
	The Town Council will:	
a)	ensure all Council-owned and leased land and property are maintained to the highest possible standard.	Management implementation of regular inspections and reports where necessary
b)	ensure the Council maintains its visible presence to the highest possible standard.	Ensure Town Council operatives wear identifiable uniform Management prioritisation of specific sites and areas
c)	work with appropriate local authorities and others to ensure, where possible, that the management of public realm ¹ in Malvern remains in public ownership and is managed to the highest possible standard.	
3.	<u>Promotion of Malvern and its events</u>	

¹ Public realm is any space in the built environment that is free and open to everyone, including streets, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces, and space between and within buildings that is publicly accessible.

	The Town Council will:	
a)	ensure that its role and achievements in Malvern are well promoted by utilising the full range of promotional media.	
b)	raise the profile of Malvern by the development of Malvern Town Council assets/services and other initiatives.	
4.	<u>Consideration of planning and development matters</u>	
	The Town Council will:	
a)	continue to assume a greater role in planning matters and consider and comment on both minor and major planning applications.	Planning consultations listed as a regular item on Operations and Planning Committee meetings agenda
b)	make relevant representations at all stages of the planning process where it is considered appropriate, especially at local planning authority meetings, in line with current council policies and priorities.	To include environmental considerations and policies where appropriate
c)	review the Neighbourhood Plan as required and in line with ongoing reviews of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR).	Employment of neighbourhood plan consultant
d)	review developments in the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) and other government proposals which may relate to planning, and respond as appropriate, in line with current council policies and priorities.	
e)	continue to contribute towards, and where appropriate engage and comment on, local transport policy and services in Malvern, through Worcestershire County Council (WCC).	
f)	utilise important contributions from residents as part of the Neighbourhood Plan and work with partner organisations to address important non land-based issues and develop and action plans accordingly.	