

**MINUTES OF FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF  
MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL**

**held in the Council Chamber, Belle Vue Terrace, Malvern  
on Wednesday 9 August 2023, at 6.00 pm**

**Councillors**

Present

C Hooper (Chair)  
S Austin  
C Bovey  
A Cherry (until 7.15 pm)  
I Dawson  
C Fletcher  
J Green  
C Lee (from 7.05 pm)  
J Leibrandt  
J MacLusky (from 7.05 pm)  
S Meager (from 7.05 pm)  
D Watkins

**Absent**

N Houghton (apologies)  
M Jones (apologies)  
L Lowton  
F Matthews-Jones (apologies)  
D Mead (apologies)

**Also in attendance**

L Blake – Town Clerk  
L Wall – Minute Clerk

One member of the public

**44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies from Councillors Nick Houghton, Mel Jones, Freya Matthews-Jones and David Mead were **NOTED**.

**45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Colin Mason said he wished to raise various issues regarding the pump track on land at Adam Lee, these being the gateway to the land not being set far enough back from the road for safety purposes, a large area of grass being cut in the middle of the land, annual problems with poor drainage, and a lack of consultation meetings, having been promised five or six.

The Town Clerk explained that the larger area of grass had been mown to illustrate the area of the pump track for a consultation on the land the previous day, drainage would be installed at the south-eastern end of the site in conjunction with providing a wetlands area, and there had only ever been two consultation events proposed – one in February at Poolbrook Hall which had been very well attended and run alongside a paper and online survey, and one the previous day which was the user group consultation.

Mr Mason's comments were noted and the Town Clerk said the issue of the gateway would be investigated.

**46. CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS TO FILL VACANCIES ON MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL**

Report CL01/23 was received and accepted.

The Town Clerk explained that three candidates were unable to attend the meeting but statements would be read out on their behalf.

The vacancies were then taken in order as follows:

Lygon ward – one vacancy

There was one candidate for co-option to Lygon ward. The Town Clerk read out a statement from Dr Karen Newbigging.

After a secret ballot, it was **RESOLVED** to elect Dr Karen Newbigging as councillor representing Lygon ward (unopposed).

St Joseph's ward – one vacancy

There was one candidate for co-option to St Joseph's ward. Christopher Lee addressed the meeting and spoke on his reasons for wanting to stand on the Town Council.

After a secret ballot, it was **RESOLVED** to elect Christopher Lee as councillor representing St Joseph's ward (unopposed).

Pickersleigh ward – one vacancy

There were three candidates standing for co-option in Pickersleigh ward.

Julie MacLusky attended the meeting and addressed members outlining her reasons for wishing to join the council.

Marilyn Birks and Paul Tuthill were not at the meeting but the Town Clerk read out statements from each of them.

Concerns were expressed that Paul Tuthill's resignation the previous year had caused a by-election, that his statement was negative in its tone and some wording regarding a previous mayor was unacceptable.

After a secret ballot, it was **RESOLVED** to elect Marilyn Birks as councillor representing Pickersleigh ward.

Pound Bank ward – one vacancy

There was one candidate for co-option to Pound Bank ward. Anthony Meager (preferred name Simon Meager), addressed the meeting and spoke of his reasons for wanting to become a Town Councillor.

After a secret ballot, it was **RESOLVED** to elect Simon Meager as councillor representing Pound Bank ward (unopposed).

West ward – one vacancy

There was one candidate for co-option to West ward. Ronan McLaverty-Head was not at the meeting and the Town Clerk read out a statement on his behalf.

After a secret ballot, it was **RESOLVED** to elect Ronan McLaverty-Head as councillor representing West ward (unopposed).

Upper Howsell ward – one vacancy

There had been no applications prior to the meeting for the vacancy in Upper Howsell ward. Julie MacLusky and Paul Tuthill had both indicated they would be willing to stand for co-option to Upper Howsell ward if they were unsuccessful in being elected in Pickersleigh ward.

After a secret ballot, it was **RESOLVED** to elect Julie MacLusky as councillor representing Upper Howsell ward.

Councillors Julie MacLusky, Christopher Lee and Anthony (Simon) Meager signed their declarations of acceptance of office and joined the meeting at 7.05 pm.

**47. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported that a collection at the previous Sunday's Bands in the Park event, in aid of his chosen charity St Richard's Hospice, had raised approximately £420.

Other events the Mayor had attended were the opening of Elgar Court care home, the Battle of Evesham re-enactment festival, and a liaison meeting between the district and town councils.

The Mayor had been approached by some residents over the stability of the Bridge of Sighs on the Worcester Road, and this was under review by the district council.

Finally, the Mayor reported that he understood the damaged Victorian post box recently removed from outside the hospital was being repaired and would be put back in position soon.

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

The Town Clerk reported on the following Town Council operations and activities:

**Victoria Park - new council offices, cafe, and community hub building**

The Council's planning application for Victoria Park went live on 17 July and the deadline for comments was 9 August; six comments had been received, two from local residents and four from statutory consultees. No major objections or issues had been raised.

**New pump track at land at Adam Lee**

The user group consultation had taken place on site the previous day and a good group of pump track enthusiasts had made suggestions to be incorporated into the final design. The chosen contractor, Clark and Kent Contractors, would revise the design accordingly and then any planning implications would be considered.

**Heart of England in Bloom**

Results would be announced on 5 October. Comments from the judges during their visit had been encouraging and the operations team had worked hard to make sure that the town looked at its best.

**VAS Signs**

The Town Council now had seven vehicle advisory signs in operation within the town under the Lengthsman Scheme. The signs had been purchased by county councillors using their divisional budgets whilst the Town Council Lengthsman managed locations and charging of batteries.

The sign on Guarlford Road had now been converted to solar power, which would help reduce time spent changing batteries. Officers would continue to work with WCC and local county councillors to help add additional locations for these signs and ensure that they were regularly rotated.

***Cllr Anne Cherry left the meeting at 7.15pm***

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

**Cllr Beveley Nielson, WCC Malvern Langland Division and MHDC Great Malvern ward**

- Malvern Hills College – the covenant stating the college could only be used for educational purposes had been removed in the high court. Malvern Hills Arts & Community College hoped to make another offer to purchase the building.

- Priory Park had seen several successful events and festivals recently including the Malvern Food Festival and Malvern Pride. Cllr Nielsen thanked the organisers.
- Cllr Nielsen also thanked the MHDC team for their part in tidying up the town ahead of the judges visit for Malvern in Bloom.
- Cllr Nielsen had written a letter to the Malvern Gazette regarding speeding and after sending two emails had received a response from cabinet member Cllr Mike Rouse. He informed Cllr Nielsen that elected members could request consideration of a zone for a 20mph speed limit via the member portal, with requests subject to a feasibility assessment and engagement with local communities; she indicated that she would do so.

***Cllr Leibrandt left the meeting at 7.25pm***

- Cllr Nielsen reported that she continued to support Malvern Town Football Club in her capacity as a Worcestershire County Councillor as well as supporting the Cube and Great Malvern Primary School. Divisional funding had also been spent on dropped kerbs along Worcester Road.
- Cllr Nielsen had met with Priory Church, and been informed of their Expression of Interest for Heritage Lottery funding for the development project, with an aim of encouraging greater visitor numbers in the church and using the venue for more art exhibitions.
- The Town Centre plan development is ongoing; proposals made in the plans before the district council elections would be taken forward, with a meeting due in mid-August.
- Plans to extend Malvern Theatres would be submitted to planning in the summer of 2024. Funding from the Levelling Up fund could only be used for the theatre.

***Cllr Nielsen left the meeting at 7.31pm***

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

Cllr Austin (Great Malvern ward) reported that the Malvern Pride event in Priory Park had been a huge success, and thanked the operations team for putting the Pride flags up throughout the town.

**51. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

None.

**52. APPOINTMENT OF NEWLY CO-OPTED COUNCILLORS TO COMMITTEES**

Report CL02/23 was received and accepted.

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Simon Meager to Operations and Planning Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to elect the following councillors to Policy and Resources Committee:

- Cllr Julie MacLusky
- Cllr Christopher Lee
- Cllr Ronan McLaverty-Head
- Cllr Marilyn Birks
- Cllr Karen Newbigging

**53. REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR TWINNING VISIT – MALVERN BAGNÈRES DE BIGORRE TWINNING ASSOCIATION**

Report CL03/23 was received and accepted.

The Town Clerk explained that £321 remained out of a total grant of £1000 awarded to the Malvern-Bagnères de Bigorre Twinning Association (MBTA) in 2017. The association now wished to draw down these remaining funds to help fund a trip to Malvern by a group of adults from the twinned town of Bagnères-de-Bigorre.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £321 to the Malvern-Bagnères de Bigorre Twinning Association.

#### **54. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL04/23 was received and accepted.

The Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, Cllr Iain Dawson, then presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 9 August 2023.

There were eight recommendations and these were taken en bloc.

##### **Minute 16 Review to Town Council Grants Scheme**

1. It was **RESOLVED** that no changes be made to the timing of the grants scheme.
2. It was **RESOLVED** that no changes be made to the emergency grants.
3. It was **RESOLVED** that no changes be made to the amounts of the awards.
4. It was **RESOLVED** that no changes be made to the frequency of applications.
5. It was **RESOLVED** that no changes be made to the nature of organisations that could apply to the grants scheme.
6. It was **RESOLVED** that applicants must have a bank account to ensure transparency and accountability.
7. It was **RESOLVED** that some of the boxes within the forms should be made larger to enable more detail to be given by applicants, and that officers would take steps to make the forms fillable offline rather than having to be printed off and filled in by hand.
8. It was **RESOLVED** to allow applications of up to £500 for support of running costs for one year, when special circumstances are demonstrated.

#### **55. INSURANCE CONTRACT**

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the renewal of the Town Council's insurance contract. It had proved difficult to obtain quotations this year, and Policy and Resources Committee had therefore agreed to delegate this to the Town Clerk, Chair and Vice-chair of Policy and Resources Committee. The decision had been made to take on a one-year contract with the cheapest overall combined policy.

The cost of approximately £21,000 would be contained well within the budget for 2023/24 at £37,000.

#### **56. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 6 September 2023 at 6.00 pm.

##### **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **AGREED** to resolve pursuant to **Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960** to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

The newly elected councillors were asked if they had any declarations of interest, but there were none.

**57. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 17 July 2023 were circulated. Councillors were reminded that all information contained within the minutes was confidential until further notice.

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:

- Extraordinary Full Council meeting 17 July 2023.

**58. ROSEBANK GARDENS**

The Town Clerk updated the meeting on the current position of the landslip in Rosebank Gardens.

***Under Standing Order 3(x) it was agreed to extend the meeting by a further 15 minutes.***

Discussion continued until the meeting finished at 8.15 pm.

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(Chairman)