

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

**held in the Council Chamber, Belle Vue Terrace, Malvern  
on Wednesday 11 October 2023, at 6.00 pm**

**Councillors**

Present

C Hooper (Chair)  
S Austin  
M Birks  
A Cherry  
I Dawson  
C Fletcher  
J Green  
N Houghton (from 6.15pm)  
C Lee  
J Leibrandt  
L Lowton  
J MacLusky (from 6.10pm)  
F Matthews-Jones  
R McLaverty-Head (from 6.05pm)  
D Mead  
S Meager  
D Watkins

**Absent**

C Bovey (apologies)  
M Jones  
K Newbigging (apologies)

**Also in attendance**

L Blake – Town Clerk  
L Wall – Minute Clerk  
Cllr J Raine, MHDC  
Cllr K Hanks, WCC  
  
Beck Baker, Community & Conservation  
Officer, Malvern Hills Trust  
  
Michael Johnson, Footpath Officer for  
Malvern Town  
  
A Member of the Press

**72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were **NOTED** from Councillors Caroline Bovey and Karen Newbigging. Apologies for lateness were **NOTED** from Councillor Nick Houghton.

**73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Agenda item 11 Notice of Motion – Malvern Link Traders Christmas Event 2023: Cllr Freya Matthews-Jones owns a business in Malvern Link. Cllr Matthews-Jones would abstain from voting on this item.

***Cllr McLaverty-Head joined the meeting at 6.05pm***

**74. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Cllr Hooper raised the following points:

Public participation

Addition to end of second paragraph: *The Mayor noted that Cllr Neilsen's report later on the agenda also included reference to speeding traffic and there would be the opportunity for her to respond to the issues raised there.*

Minute 62 Mayor's announcements

Addition to end of first paragraph to now read: The Mayor had visited Windsor Court Care Home to take afternoon tea with the residents *and talk to them and to staff.*

Addition to end of second paragraph to read: He had *also* opened the conference of The Society of Teachers of Speech and Drama, held at the Music School of Malvern College *and he gave a welcoming address.*

With these amendments made, 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 6 September 2023.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

#### **75. INTRODUCTION BY MICHAEL JOHNSON, FOOTPATH WARDEN FOR MALVERN TOWN**

Michael Johnson had come to the meeting to introduce himself to the Town Council in his capacity as footpath warden for Malvern Town, a voluntary role he had now occupied for six months.

##### ***Cllr MacLusky joined the meeting at 6.10pm***

Mr Johnson had become frustrated with finding paths impassable and decided to take action, and now walks along the local footpaths, checking for overgrown shrubbery, fallen trees, damage to fences, gates and stiles. In the first instance he will liaise with landowners over access if this has been blocked and any repairs required. If the landowner refuses to take action, it is then reported to Worcestershire County Council (WCC) who will issue official letters to ensure access is restored.

Councillors asked questions about the responsibilities of landowners and farmers, and whether he was helped by volunteers. Mr Johnson explained that the role is voluntary although supported by WCC by a small boot allowance and some tools. If anyone came across a problem with a footpath they could contact him, and the Town Clerk would pass on his contact details if required.

##### ***Cllr Houghton joined the meeting at 6.15pm***

#### **76. WORK OF THE MALVERN HILLS TRUST – PRESENTATION BY BECK BAKER, COMMUNITY AND CONSERVATION OFFICER**

Beck Baker attended the meeting to introduce herself to any councillors who were unfamiliar with the work of the Malvern Hills Trust which looks after the hills and commons across an area of approximately 3,000 acres and has twenty staff and 29 board members.

Beck Baker has been in her position of Community and Conservation Officer for ten years and has witnessed how the Acts of Parliament that govern the Trust have become less workable. The Trust is hoping to be able to update the Acts via a private bill in 2024, which although costly, is necessary to be able to run the Trust in current times. Malvern Town Council will be consulted as part of the consultation process to have its say over proposals.

She also informed the meeting that following nominations submitted for the eleven elected members' seats of the governing board's total of 29 members, many wards had been uncontested. There is one contested seat in Chase ward so an election will take place on 1 November. Priory ward had no nominations and therefore there will be another opportunity to fill this seat. Some wards still had vacancies and if anyone was interested, they still had time to apply.

Beck then answered Councillors' questions regarding current boundaries and the process of getting the Acts changed.

**77. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported that he had attended the following engagements:

Bagnères de Bigorre visit – the Mayor hosted a reception at Elmslie House for the visitors and their four-day visit to Malvern had been very successful and popular.

Help for Heroes Challenge - With the Chairs of Malvern Hills Trust and Malvern Hills District Council, the Mayor had handed out medals to finishers of the walk; the event organisers were hoping to raise in excess of £13,000.

Music in the Park 2023 - the Mayor had attended the final concert when he thanked the band and staff. People attending had enjoyed the music events put on over the summer and had been asked to complete a survey rating each performance they had been to. The survey was also available online with the closing date being Friday 13 October.

Chairs Training - the Mayor attended a recent session and was impressed with the CEO of Warwickshire CALC who led the training.

Heart of England in Bloom – along with the Deputy Mayor, the Mayor attended the awards ceremony where Malvern won gold. The Mayor thanked the community groups and organisations, the operations team, and the Town Clerk for all of their hard work, and Lyndsey Davies in the office for a wonderful portfolio.

Redditch Borough Council Civic Service – this was held at Redditch Central Jamia Masjid-E-Noor, a splendid and imposing purpose-built mosque which often has up to 3,000 attending Friday morning prayers.

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

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

Heart of England in Bloom Awards – Malvern scored a high 94 out of 100 marks, with 10 out of 10 in 4 areas. The report was very favourable and the Town Clerk highlighted the following comments:

- *“A floral delight around every corner especially in the town centre.”*
- *“Signage and sculptures add interest and help to set off the horticultural achievements.”*
- *“The sense of local identity and pride of place come across strongly in the portfolio evidence and this is reinforced by the comments and discussions we have had with local residents throughout the day.”*

There was a special mention for the work of the Malvern Hills Trust, Town Library and Malvern Cube.

Michael Crescent Swing - the new basket swing at Michael Crescent had been installed providing additional play area equipment for individuals across a range of age groups and abilities.

Land at Adam Lee - groundworks to install a stoned area immediately inside the gateway to this site had been completed, ahead of construction of the bike pump track. It would also be the basis for a new car park for users of the pump track when the development had been completed. Works to improve the gateway entrance and access would be undertaken when the pump track works had been completed

Remembrance - people were needed to help as road closure stewards on Remembrance Sunday from about 10:15am until 11:00am. The Town Clerk explained that stewarding involved wearing a hi-vis and helping to facilitate the rolling road closures and although all of the Town Council Operations Team and the

Town Clerk would be working, extra hands were still needed. Councillors were asked to let the Town Clerk know if they would be available to help out.

Cemetery Tour – this had now sold out but as it had proved so popular, it was likely another tour would be put on in the near future. Monies from ticket sales would be given to St Richard's Hospice. U3A had requested a tour for their group on a separate occasion.

Other Operations – the hanging baskets were being taken down from around the town and bedding plants for spring 2024 would soon be planted up. Some bin requests had now been facilitated, in Malvern Link and Malvern Vale.

## 79. **REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE**

Written reports had been submitted by Cllr Beverley Nielsen and Cllr Karen Hanks and circulated to all Town Councillors prior to the meeting.

***Cllr Simon Meager left the room at 6.50pm***

Cllr Austin disputed a point in the report submitted by Cllr Beverley Nielsen that stated meetings held with traders showed a strong level of support for the 2016 MADE report as he had attended some of the meetings and not found that to be the case.

***Cllr Simon Meager rejoined the meeting at 6.55pm***

Cllr Karen Hanks, WCC councillor for Malvern Link Division answered some questions from members arising from her report, regarding funding for signage and 20mph speed limits. Cllr Jude Green noted that traffic queuing to use the refuse and recycling centre was getting to dangerous levels, and Cllr Hanks agreed to look into possible solutions.

Cllr David Mead, MHDC councillor, Barnards Green – Cllr Mead reported that discussions were continuing over the future of the Sunshine Centre and help for its relocation. The development at the site of the former barrack stores at Qinetiq had halted while highways issues were addressed.

## 80. **TOWN COUNCIL WARD REPORTS/REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Iain Dawson, Poolbrook Village Hall Committee – Cllr Dawson had attended his first meeting as representative of Malvern Town Council and had met the Poolbrook Village Hall committee members. The hall had suffered damage following a burst pipe in the summer; works were ongoing to repair damage and one room was now back in use.

Cllr Clive Hooper, CALC – Cllr Hooper had attended a meeting of the Executive Committee, where talks were held regarding a possible merger between NALC, various CALCS and the SLCC; consultations will be held next year.

## 81. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

None.

## 82. **NOTICE OF MOTION – MALVERN LINK TRADERS CHRISTMAS EVENT 2023**

Cllr Watkins read his notice of motion proposing that the Council should support the Malvern Link Traders Christmas event which aimed to engage the local community with free music and craft activities.

It was **RESOLVED** to promote the event on the Malvern Town Council website and its social media.

It was further **RESOLVED** to fly Christmas flags on every other flagpole on Worcester Road, Malvern Link, this being the main area for the event (flags to be provided by Malvern Link Traders). Malvern Town Council Operations Team to erect the flags in late November and take them down after the Christmas period.

**83. REVIEW OF TOWN COUNCIL HARDSHIP FUND**

Report CL01/23 was received and accepted.

The Town Clerk explained that the hardship fund was a discretionary source of financial help available to all Town Council employees experiencing temporary and significant hardship due to an unforeseen financial event.

The fund had been adopted in April 2023 and was due for review.

It was **RESOLVED** to continue the Town Council Hardship Fund for a further twelve months with no amendments being made to the policy.

**84. ELECTION OF A REPRESENTATIVE FOR BAGNÈRES DE BIGORRE TWINNING ASSOCIATION**

Report CL02/23 was received and accepted.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Anne Cherry to the Bagnères de Bigorre Twinning Association.

**85. LIGHTING THE BUZZARDS SCULPTURE AND NORTH MALVERN CLOCK TOWER FOR PANCREATIC CANCER**

Report CL03/23 was received and accepted.

It was **RESOLVED** to light the buzzard sculpture in Rosebank Gardens and the faces of North Malvern Clock Tower purple, to support "Purple Lights for Pancreatic Cancer" during November's pancreatic cancer awareness month.

**86. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL04/23 was received and accepted.

The Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, Cllr Iain Dawson, presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 7 September 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quarterly accounts for the first quarter ending 30 June 2023.

**87. OPERATIONS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL05/23 was received and accepted.

The Chair of Operations and Planning Committee, Cllr David Mead, then presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 13 September 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft rules and regulations for Great Malvern Cemetery as attached to the report.

**88. VICTORIA PARK TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The Town Clerk gave a brief update on the first meeting of the Victoria Park Task and Finish Group, where Cllr David Mead had been elected Chair, and Cllr Anne Cherry elected Vice-chair.

Planning permission was still awaited, but a request for a transport statement had been answered and indications were that all information submitted was in order.

The sale of the building at Belle Vue Terrace was progressing and in the hands of the solicitors but exchange of contracts was yet to take place.

An expression of interest had been submitted to the Community Ownership Fund for funding, and other funding sources would be looked at.

Once confirmation of the sale had been received and planning permission granted, a date would be set for the next meeting of the group.

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

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 8 November 2023 at 6.00 pm.

The meeting finished at 7.25 pm.

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(Chairman)

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