

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

**held in the Council Chamber, Belle Vue Terrace, Malvern  
on Wednesday 14 February 2024, at 6.00 pm**

**Councillors**

Present

C Hooper (Chair)  
S Austin  
M Birks  
A Cherry  
I Dawson  
C Fletcher  
J Green (from 6.05pm)  
N Houghton  
J Leibrandt (from 6.21pm)  
L Lowton (from 6.05pm)  
J MacLusky  
D Mead  
K Newbigging  
D Watkins

**Absent**

C Bovey (apologies)  
M Jones (apologies)  
F Matthews-Jones (apologies)  
R McLaverty-Head (apologies)  
S Meager (apologies)

**Also in attendance**

L Blake – Town Clerk  
L Wall – Minute Clerk  
Olha Kraievska, MHDC  
Elaine Fraser, Community Builder MHDC  
Members of the public  
Cllr John Raine, MHDC  
Cllr Fran Victory, MHDC

*The Mayor handed round a short document to members of the Council that he thought may be of interest to them during a later item.*

**119. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were **NOTED** from Councillors C Bovey, M Jones, F Matthews-Jones, R McLaverty-Head and S Meager, and for lateness from Cllr J Leibrandt.

**120. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Agenda item 15 Community Engagement Consultation – Cllr Hooper is a past Chair and current Vice-President of Malvern Civic Society.

**121. 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 13 December 2023.

*Cllrs Jude Green and Lou Lowton joined the meeting at 6.05pm.*

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mrs Harris spoke regarding planning application M/22/01823/FUL Land at Guarlford Road in Chase Ward on behalf of Malvern Environment Protection Group, comprising up to 120 households in the local area. The group is concerned that despite the application being live for over a year, two consultation periods and the Town Council being a statutory consultee, no comments have

been made on the application by the Town Council. The group felt the district council planning department could not be expected to make the correct decision regarding this application if the Town Council did not comment in support of the adopted neighbourhood plan.

The group also felt that the proposed development did not meet the criteria for new residential development, being in open countryside and beyond the development boundary.

Mrs Harris questioned why the Town Council had decided to make no comment and urged councillors to reconsider and finally make a comment on this application in line with the neighbourhood plan.

**122. PRESENTATION BY OLHA KRAIEVSKA AND OTHERS ON PROPOSAL/ REQUEST TO TWIN WITH KOROSTEN COMMUNITY IN THE UKRAINE**

Olha Kraievskaya came to Malvern with other families fleeing the war in Ukraine and now works at Malvern Hills District Council in support of the Ukrainian community in Malvern. She attended the meeting to talk about the possibility of twinning between Malvern and Korosten.

Korosten has a population of around 72,500, made up of 43 villages and the administrative hub of the town of Korosten. It is still suffering from the attack by Russia, but they are working hard to restore life as they knew it, despite 304 targets having been partially or completely destroyed. It has a unique cultural heritage and history spanning more than 1,300 years. Mining, food and furniture manufacturing are all industries developing in the area.

Korosten has established partnerships with towns in Moldova, Lithuania, America and Poland. The Mayor of Korosten would now like to establish close friendly ties with Malvern, and hold joint cultural and sports events, cultural exchanges, work experience and joint projects such as exhibitions, providing new opportunities for small and medium sized enterprises.

The Ukrainian community in Malvern is very grateful for the support shown so far, all have found work and there are two students at Worcester University. In total, 300 Ukrainians live here and more continue to seek sanctuary as the war enters another year. Olha then presented a short video to the meeting showing the various aspects of Korosten. The Mayor thanked Olha Kraievskaya for her presentation and it was noted that a report on the matter of twinning would be brought to a future council meeting.

**123. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the following engagements that he had attended since the last meeting:

- 16 December – St Matthias charity concert with Hills Singers and Malvern Hills District Brass Band
- 18 December – judging of the wreath themed window displays in Malvern
- 20 December - carol service organised by Worcester News in Worcester Cathedral
- 28 December – charity carol concert organised by the Malvern Festival Chorus
- 18 January – attended a presentation by Cllr Fran Victory on her Icon project
- 25 January – liaison meeting with MHDC
- 26 January – official opening of new Community Action premises in Malvern Link
- 31 January – NALC seminar by Zoom on Levelling Up
- 4 February – St Richard's Hospice charity lunch. The Mayor was pleased to report this event had raised £2244.42

- 9 February – Reception at the Bishop's Palace
- 10 February – performance of Elijah by the Malvern Festival Chorus
- 11 February – Redland Road Scout Hut to welcome in second day of Lunar New Year, organised by the Buddhist Campaign of Relief organisation, based in Taiwan, but with outreach around rest of the world
- 13 February – walkabout led by Rebecca Probert of MHDC along with Cllr Watkins and Cllr Fran Victory looking at signage and state of Barnards Green and Malvern Link.

#### **124. UPDATE ON TOWN COUNCIL OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

The Town Clerk reported as follows:

##### Belle Vue Building

The sale of Belle Vue Building completed on 8 February and the Town Council is now a tenant to the new owners Guthrie Roberts. Work is ongoing to arrange the handover of keys, services, accounts and leases etc.

##### New Community Hub at Victoria Park

Groundworks started at Victoria Park this week. The skateboard ramps have been taken out of use and relocated by the bowling green for the time being, and the site set up with storage and welfare units and secured with Heras fencing.

Officers have been engaging with the local community to make them aware of the works taking place and to inform them of the possible disruption. The Town Clerk asked councillors to direct to her any queries or feedback from park users or members of the public that they received.

##### Skatepark Consultation

Officers have been working on the public consultation for the skatepark. Questionnaires have been designed and will be made available in hard copy or online from Friday. A public consultation event is being held on Tuesday 20 February at The United Reformed Church Hall in Malvern Link from 3pm until 7pm. This will be advertised again on social media and on the Council's website in the coming days.

##### Pump Track at Adam Lee

An application for a certificate of lawful development was submitted before Christmas but planning officers at Malvern Hills District Council have since advised that having reviewed the submission, an application for planning permission would be required as the proposed works would likely be considered engineering works. Therefore, the application for a certificate of lawful development has been withdrawn and preparation of a submission of a full planning application has started.

##### Town Council Vacancy

Christopher Lee resigned as a town councillor in January. A casual vacancy has been advertised and a by-election will be called if ten electors in St Joseph's Ward request it. Otherwise, the Council will be free to fill the vacancy via co-option.

Town Council Grants Scheme

The Town Council Grants Scheme is now open and full details can be found on the Council's website. The Town Clerk reminded councillors that the closing date for applications is Monday 11 March and therefore if they knew of any groups who could be interested, they should be directed to the Council's website.

Mayor's Peaks Challenge

The Mayor's Peaks Challenge walk scheduled for 4 May is now open for bookings via the Council's website. An early bird discount is currently available at £19 per ticket for the long walk.

Operations Update

- A new clamberstack has been installed at Jamaica Crescent as part of the play area refurbishment; the new slide and zip wire will be installed within the next few weeks.
- The zipwire has been moved at Victoria Park to facilitate and increase safety around the works for the new community hub building.
- Works have taken place to prepare the ground for the delivery of the Council's new storage unit at Great Malvern Cemetery the following week.

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

Cllr Fran Victory, Link Ward reported that she has been busy on ward work and will speak on the Icon project when more information has been received from the County Council. She had walked around Barnards Green and Malvern Link the previous day to look at where signage could be improved, such as free parking, footway signs to direct people from the station to the town and on the toilets. She has held some councillor surgeries and other councillors are welcome to attend. Rebecca from MHDC is trying to get funding for a new noticeboard in Malvern Link advertising all the shops.

Cllr David Mead, Barnards Green Ward reported that he had attended a meeting with two officers from Worcestershire County Council regarding the relocation of the nursery in the Sunshine Centre and was making slow progress. Cllr Mead clarified details of occupation at the new houses on the Old Barrack Stores site at the junction of Court Road and St Andrews Road, being that 22 out of the 30 houses could be occupied before road improvements were made.

Written reports had been submitted by Cllr Malcolm Victory, Cllr Karen Hanks and Cllr Natalie McVey, and these had been circulated to all town councillors prior to the meeting.

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

Cllr Clive Hooper, Worcestershire CALC representative – there had been a meeting of the CALC Malvern Hills Committee and the CALC Executive Committee.

Cllr Iain Dawson, Poolbrook Village Hall Committee – Cllr Dawson had been unable to attend the last meeting but the committee was currently investigating the repaving of the driveway to the hall, and how it would be funded.

**127. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

None.

**128. DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024/25**

Report CL01/24 was received and accepted.

The Town Clerk explained that certain meetings had to be held at a specific time during the year, such as the year end accounts and agreement of the annual return, but others were movable if required. Full Council had streamlined the calendar previously by agreeing to hold all meetings on a Wednesday.

Cllr Dawson proposed that all meetings in the new calendar should start at 6.30pm rather than 6.00pm.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the calendar of meetings with a start time of 6.30pm.

**129. RESPONSE TO HEREFORD AND WORCESTER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Report CL02/24 was received and noted.

Councillors discussed whether it would be best to submit individual responses or a response from the Council as a whole.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk would submit the following comment:

*“Malvern Town Council urges the fire service to retain its existing provision in Malvern.”*

**130. JENNY LIND SCULPTURE IN ROSE BANK GARDENS**

Report CL03/24 was received and accepted.

Councillors were in favour of the Jenny Lind sculpture being removed from Rose Bank Gardens and relocated in Priory Park, but wished to ensure that all liability was passed onto Malvern Hills District Council when ownership was transferred.

Councillors also felt that it would be sensible to move the sculpture directly from the gardens to Priory Park, rather than store it elsewhere whilst it was awaiting collection.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Jenny Lind sculpture should be removed from its current location in Rose Bank Gardens and moved to Priory Park on a date agreed with Malvern Hills District Council, with ownership and all liability transferred accordingly.

**131. NEW COMMUNITY HUB AT VICTORIA PARK – OPTION TO TAX**

Report CL04/24 was received and accepted.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council make an option to tax for the area of the new community hub building at Victoria Park.

**132. NEW COMMUNITY HUB AT VICTORIA PARK – LOAN FUNDING**

Report CL05/24 was received and accepted.

The report set out an update to the existing resolution regarding loan funding for the new community hub building at Victoria Park, as interest rates had increased since the resolution was made in March 2022.

It was **RESOLVED** to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £310,000 over 25 years as part of the funding for a new community hub building at Victoria Park in Malvern. The annual loan repayments would come to around £22,742. It was also intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 3% which would be the equivalent of £2.05 per year.

**133. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONSULTATION**

Report CL05/24 was received and accepted.

Whilst most councillors agreed it was important to engage with the community, others said previous experience showed that putting it into practice did not always get results.

***Under Standing Order 3(x) it was agreed to extend the meeting by a further 30 minutes.***

There was a robust discussion around the merits and need for more community engagement, after which,

It was **RESOLVED** to set up a Community Engagement Task and Finish Group to consider the responses received to the Town Council's Community Engagement Consultation, to identify any actions that may need to be taken as a result and report back to Full Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Task and Finish Group would have the following members:

- Cllr Marilyn Birks
- Cllr Karen Newbigging
- Cllr Nick Houghton
- Cllr Clive Fletcher
- Cllr Josephine Leibrandt
- Cllr Lou Lowton
- Cllr Jude Green

**134. AUDIT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL06/24 was received and accepted and in the absence of Cllr Caroline Bovey, the Chair of Audit Committee, the Vice-chair Cllr Jude Green presented the recommendation.

Minute 25 Business Continuity Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the draft business continuity plan as attached to the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 31 January 2024.

**135. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL07/24 was received and accepted, and the Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, Cllr Iain Dawson, presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 7 February 2024.

Minute 53 Review of Standing Orders

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Standing Orders as attached to the report.

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

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 6 March 2024 at 6.00 pm.

The meeting finished at 8.25pm

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(Chairman)