

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

**held in the Council Chamber, Belle Vue Terrace, Malvern
on Wednesday 28 February 2024 at 6.00 pm**

Councillors

C Fletcher (Vice-chair)
N Houghton
M Jones (from 6.20pm)
L Lowton (substitute for I Dawson)
R McLaverty-Head
J MacLusky

Absent

I Dawson (apologies)
M Birks (apologies)
K Newbigging (apologies)

Also in attendance

Linda Blake - Town Clerk
Louise Wall – Minute Clerk
Cllr Clive Hooper
Cllr David Watkins

55. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from Cllrs Iain Dawson, Marilyn Birks and Karen Newbigging and for lateness from Cllr Melanie Jones were **NOTED**. Cllr Iain Dawson had substituted Cllr Lou Lowton.

56. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

57. 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 held on 7 February 2024.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

58. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF COMMITTEES

Report PR01/24 was received and accepted.

Committee were asked to consider, review and revise as necessary the Town Council's terms of reference for its three main committees, Operations and Planning Committee, Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.

The Town Clerk informed members that two complaints had been received recently regarding possible ambiguity of the planning section within the Operations and Planning Committee terms of reference.

It was noted that Full Council meetings and Extraordinary Council meetings do not have terms of reference as they are governed by standing orders.

Members then reviewed the three appendices containing the terms of reference for the three main committees.

Cllr Melanie Jones joined the meeting at 6.20 pm.

Operations and Planning Committee (changes are listed or noted in italics)

1. CONSTITUTION

- 1.1. The Committee will consist of nine Councillors appointed by Full Council at the Annual Council Meeting (or another Council meeting should a vacancy occur during the year).

changed to:

The Committee will consist of either nine or ten councillors appointed by Full council at the Annual Council Meeting (or another Council meeting should a vacancy occur during the year).

- 1.2. Committee meetings will be arranged by the Town Clerk with a quorum of five members.

changed to:

Committee meetings will be arranged by the Town Clerk with a quorum as agreed by Full Council.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.16. To consider and comment on any planning matter which affects the Town of Malvern *as appropriate*.

- 2.17. To consider and comment on any application referred for comment to the Town Council by a Local Planning Authority *as appropriate*.

3. FINANCE

- 3.1. To prepare annually a draft budget *for asset renewal and refurbishment projects and vehicle/machinery replacement expenditure* to be agreed by Full Council as part of the budget process.

- 3.2. *Removed.*

4. TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING SYSTEM

- 4.2. The Council is active in participation for all planning application consultations. This is an important part of the representational role of the Town Council.

changed to:

The Council is informed of all planning application consultations and will comment as appropriate.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Section 5 will be a new section within the terms of reference for Operations and Planning Committee.

- 5.1. *“To formulate, monitor, review and update the Council’s environmental policy which all decisions made by Malvern Town Council*

- 5.2. *To ensure environmental policy is current, relevant and reviewed annually.”*

It was agreed that some general formatting and standardisation would be carried as had been done for other policies, including:

- “Operations Committee” to be updated to “Operations and Planning Committee”.
- Reference to Strategic Planning meetings amended to Operations and Planning Committee meetings.

Policy and Resources Committee (changes are listed or noted in italics)

1. CONSTITUTION

- 1.1. The Committee will consist of ten Councillors appointed by Full Council at the Annual Council Meeting (or another Council meeting should a vacancy occur during the year).

changed to:

The Committee will consist of either nine or ten councillors appointed by Full council at the Annual Council Meeting (or another Council meeting should a vacancy occur during the year).

- 1.2. Committee meetings will be arranged by the Town Clerk with a quorum of six members.

changed to:

Committee meetings will be arranged by the Town Clerk with a quorum as agreed by Full Council.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.11. This clause to be removed as it is covered by Operations and Planning Committee terms of reference.

Staffing

Policy and Resources Committee will ensure that the following duties are undertaken as appropriate:

- 2.18. To review annual appraisals which will be completed for all staff members *where appropriate.*

- 2.19. To review the annual appraisal process *as appropriate.*

- 2.20. Remove “pay and” from sentence.

Audit Committee

It was **AGREED** that no amendments were necessary to the Audit Committee terms of reference.

It was **AGREED** that some general formatting and standardisation would be carried as had been done for other policies, if necessary, for the terms of reference for Policy and Resources Committee and Audit Committee.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Full Council adopts the terms of reference for the three main committees as amended and attached to these minutes.

59. REVIEW OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICITY POLICY – COUNCILLOR GUIDELINES

Report PR02/24 was received and accepted.

Members reviewed the Town Council’s Communications and Publicity Policy – Councillor Guidelines and agreed that no amendments were necessary, other than the standardisation of terms used in other policies.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Full Council adopts the Town Council’s Communications and Publicity Policy with standardisation of terms as used in other policies.

60. STAFFING MATTERS

Report PR03/24 was handed out at the meeting and members were asked to consider contractual issues raised by a decision at Full Council on 14 February 2024 to delay the start times of all Town Council evening meetings by half an hour.

Legal advice had been sought from Worcestershire CALC and this confirmed that a change in meeting times would be a change in staff contracts which would need to be done by mutual agreement or by a process of consultation based on a sound business case.

A robust discussion raised the following points:

- A formal consultation should be avoided if at all possible because of the detrimental effect it can have on staff.
- A 6.30 pm start to meetings may make it easier for people to attend – both members of the public and councillors.
- Councillors were aware of meeting start times when they joined the council.
- Staff were the Council's greatest asset and their opinions should be considered.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Full Council reverse the decision made on 14 February to accept the calendar of meetings in light of legal advice. Meeting times would therefore revert to the usual start time of 6 pm.

61. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was **AGREED** that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 27 March 2024 at 6pm.

The meeting finished at 8.10 pm

.....(Chairman)