

UNADOPTED

MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

in the Park View Meeting Room, Victoria Park Road, Malvern Link

held on Wednesday 14 May 2025 at 6pm

Councillors

Present

M Birks (Chair)
D Mead
D Watkins
A Cherry
S Austin
K Newbigging
C Bovey
J MacLusky
M Jones
C Hooper
N Wanklin
R McLaverty-Head
E Green
L Lowton
J Green
I Dawson
J Leibrandt (6.01pm)

Absent

C Fletcher (apologies)

Also in attendance

L Blake – Town Clerk
J Winkworth – Minute Clerk
Cllr McSweeny, WCC
Cllr Bennett, WCC (6.10pm)

The Mayor for the 2024/25 council year, Cllr Marilyn Birks, opened the meeting, welcomed the new County Councillors to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

1. APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR

One nomination had been received for the position of Mayor of Malvern Town Council.

Cllr Marilyn Birks read out her nomination statement to the Councillors present at the meeting, prior to voting via a show of hands.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Marilyn Birks be appointed Mayor of Malvern Town Council for 2025/26.

2. MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF OFFICE

The Mayor, Cllr Marilyn Birks, signed the Declaration of Office, witnessed by the Town Clerk.

3. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

Two nominations had been received for the position of Deputy Mayor of Malvern Town Council. It was agreed that the vote should be in the form of a secret ballot following the statements from the nominees.

Two separate secret ballots were held; the first one resulted in a tie, therefore a second ballot took place.

UNADOPTED

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Josie Leibrandt be appointed Deputy Mayor of Malvern Town Council for 2025/26.

The Mayor welcomed Cllr Leibrandt to her new position and thanked Cllr David Mead for all his work over the past year supporting the Mayor as Deputy Mayor.

County Councillor Paul Bennett arrived at 6.10pm.

4. **DEPUTY MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF OFFICE**

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Josie Leibrandt, signed the Declaration of Office, witnessed by the Town Clerk.

5. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from Cllr Clive Fletcher were **NOTED**.

6. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Councillors declared interests relating to agenda items as below:

Cllr Emma Green – Agenda Item 13 – Member of Korosten Malvern Twinning Association Committee

Cllr Sean Austin – Agenda Item 17 - Cllr Houghton's memorial

Cllr Julie MacLuskey – Agenda Item 18 - Member of Malvern Priory Choir

Cllr Caroline Bovey – Agenda Item 18 - On Electoral Role at Malvern Priory

Cllr Clive Hooper – Agenda Item 18 - Member of Priory P.C.C

7. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes from the meeting noted below are approved and adopted as a correct record of the proceedings:

- Full Council meeting 6 May 2025

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

8. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor expressed her thanks to all who took part in the organisation of the Peak's Challenge. It was a huge success, along with the recent VE celebrations that had taken place in Victoria Road Park. There was positive feedback from all who had attended on the day.

The Mayor made a plea to Councillors to come forward and support the Bands in the Park events and Councillor Surgeries taking place weekly on a Sunday afternoon. The Mayor and former Deputy Mayor attended the first event on 11 May and talked to the public, answered questions and handed out many leaflets during the afternoon.

The Mayor provided an update regarding a reply from West Mercia Police following the recent PCSO consultation that was brought to the attention of Full Council in April. There had been no reply at the point of this meeting taking place.

The Mayor informed councillors that she wished to donate a sum of money from her remaining allowance to a community partner to enable the provision of warm spaces, food and safe place for members of the community to attend on a regular basis. A trial project group is being set up to work alongside other community partners on a wider scale. The Mayor had been in contact with Greenspace and they have

UNADOPTED

confirmed that they can offer the provision for two additional meals per month to ensure that a meal is available every week to the people across Malvern and that Community Action would provide transport to the same group too. Initial allowance of £1500-£1800 would hope to provide 5/6 weeks of meals and 5/6 lots of transport on a Friday each week for 6 weeks. Cllr Dawson suggested that this could be beneficial starting during the winter months.

Councillors were in agreement that this was a good use of funds.

9. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

The Town Clerk reported as follows:

Pump Track

The Pump Track was completed Friday 9 May and the council is currently awaiting the ROSPA Inspection report.

A soft opening event was planned for Saturday 17 May at 12 Noon where the Mayor would cut the ribbon. Children from the local high school have been invited along to attend and try the track out. It is hoped that in June there will be a fuller opening event hopefully with local resident and cyclist, Evie Richards in attendance.

The entranceway fencing and gateway areas will be completed by the end of the month.

Toddler Play Area – Victoria Road Park

There are two pieces of equipment outstanding from the Toddler Play Area. The fitting is scheduled to be completed by the end of May.

Children's Fitness Equipment

This equipment has been ordered and is due to arrive in the next week, with fitting being completed by the Operations Team shortly thereafter.

Poolbrook Bus Shelters – Arson

Following the recent spate of Arson attacks, only one shelter was owned by Malvern Town Council. The removal of this shelter has taken place, and discussions are ongoing with Malvern Hills Trust who own the land, with regards to a replacement.

Town Council Events

The Mayor's Peaks Challenge was a huge success with many taking on the long walk along with increased numbers taking part in the short walk. The Town Clerk was pleased to report that everyone returned safely on the day.

VE Day Celebrations took place a week later which were very well received.

There have been many charity talks taking place over the last few months in aid of the Mayors charities. These have raised some important funds for HeartStart.

Music in the Park is underway along with the first Councillors Surgery. Again these have been well attended.

The Operations Team have been very busy in keeping our Open Spaces and Parks tidy with continued mowing of grass and strimming of borders and maintaining accessibility for the community. Planting of summer bedding will be taking place in due course with the erection of hanging baskets and planting of troughs planned for early June.

Skatepark

Malvern Town Council are out to tender currently. There have been 4 site visits and the plan is to extend the closing date by a week with presentations taking place in early July.

Reading of Malvern Hills Bill

The Town Clerk has received notification that the second reading of the Malvern Hills Bill will take place on 4 June 2025.

10. REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE

The Mayor was delighted to welcome Cllr Paul Bennett and Cllr Chris McSweeney to the meeting.

Cllr Bennett updated the Town Council on the following areas:

- Devolution – MHDC status
- Working with Town Council to address the issues of Bins and collection of rubbish
- Speeding within residential streets
- Planting of Trees in Pickersleigh (County Council contractor)

Cllr McSweeney, County Councillor for Malvern Link Area, introduced himself to the Town Council and expressed an interest in the Pump Track and other great things that MTC are involved with currently.

Cllr David Mead updated the Town Council on the previous night's meeting of MHDC. Three vacant seats arose on the Malvern Hills Trust which enabled Cllr Mead, Cllr Palmer and Cllr Wilmott to be elected as representatives on the board.

11. TOWN COUNCIL WARD REPORTS/REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Hooper updated the committee on the latest CALC meeting – discussed the future involvement of CALC with NALC and effects of devolution and the roles of Parish/Town Councils.

12. REVIEW OF COMMITTEES/TASK AND FINISH GROUPS AND APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS FOR THE 2025/26 COUNCIL YEAR

Report AC01/25 was received and accepted.

Policy and Resources Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that membership of the Policy and Resources Committee be confirmed at 9 members with membership as follows:

1. Cllr Ian Dawson
2. Cllr Clive Fletcher
3. Cllr Jude Green
4. Cllr Clive Hooper
5. Cllr Melanie Jones
6. Cllr Lou Lowton
7. Cllr Ronan McLaverty-Head
8. Cllr Karen Newbigging
9. Vacant

UNADOPTED

Operations and Planning Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that membership of the Operations and Planning Committee be confirmed at 10 members with membership as follows:

1. Cllr Sean Austin
2. Cllr Caroline Bovey
3. Cllr Anne Cherry
4. Cllr Emma Green
5. Cllr Josephine Leibrandt
6. Cllr Julie MacLusky
7. Cllr David Mead
8. Cllr David Watkins
9. Cllr Nathan Wanklin
10. Vacant

Audit Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that membership of the Audit Committee would be confirmed at 4 members with membership as follows:

1. Cllr David Mead
2. Cllr David Watkins
3. Cllr Anne Cherry
4. Cllr Emma Green

Emergency Decision Making Group

It was **RESOLVED** that membership of the Emergency Decision Making Group would be as follows:

1. Mayor
2. Deputy Mayor
3. Chair of Policy and Resources Committee
4. Vice-Chair of Policy and Resources Committee
5. Chair of Operations and Planning Committee
6. Vice-Chair of Operations and Planning Committee

Staffing Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that membership of the Staffing Committee would be confirmed at 7 members with membership as follows:

1. Cllr Anne Cherry
2. Cllr Clive Fletcher
3. Cllr Emma Green
4. Cllr Clive Hooper
5. Cllr Josephine Leibrandt
6. Cllr David Mead
7. Cllr Karen Newbigging

Community Engagement Sub Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that membership of the Community Engagement Sub Committee be confirmed at 6 members with membership as follows:

UNADOPTED

1. Cllr Sean Austin
2. Cllr Clive Fletcher
3. Cllr Emma Green
4. Cllr Jude Green
5. Cllr Josephine Leibrandt
6. Cllr Karen Newbigging

Devolution Sub Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that the title of this group would be amended to Devolution Panel and membership would be as follows:

1. Mayor
2. Deputy Mayor
3. Chair of Policy and Resources Committee
4. Vice Chair of Policy and Resources
5. Chair of Operations and Planning Committee
6. Vice Chair of Operations and Planning Committee

Victoria Park Skate Park Focus Group

It was **RESOLVED** that membership of the Victoria Park Skate Park Focus Group be confirmed at 5 members, along with 3 members of the public, with membership as follows:

1. Cllr Anne Cherry
2. Cllr David Mead
3. Cllr Karen Newbigging
4. Town Clerk
5. Operations Manager
6. Three members of the public

Other

It was **RESOLVED** that all other task and finish groups be suspended, although it was noted that these could be set up at any time during the year either by Council or a committee, to carry out a specific task and report back.

Chairpersonship

It was **RESOLVED** that all committees, sub-committees and focus groups will elect a chair and vice-chair at the first meeting of the new council year.

Members were reminded that following a council decision, training for chairs and vice-chairs is mandatory and must be completed as soon as is reasonable. Training is only required once in every council term and therefore all members who wish to be a chair or vice-chair of a committee will need to repeat this even if already undertaken.

13. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Report AC02/25 was received and accepted.

It was **RESOLVED** that the appointment of representatives to outside bodies for 2025/26 be determined as overleaf:

UNADOPTED

Outside Body	Number of representatives required for 2025/26
Malvern Hills Council for Community Action	Cllr Anne Cherry
Malvern Hills CAB Management Committee	Cllr David Mead
Malvern Town Council/Malvern Hills District Council Liaison Group (Mayor and Deputy Mayor)	Cllr Marilyn Birks Cllr Josie Leibrandt
County Association of Local Councils (CALC)	Cllr Clive Hooper for executive committee Cllr Clive Hooper & Cllr David Mead for local area committee
Malvern-Mariánské Lázně Community Partnership (MLCP)	Cllr Caroline Bovey
Malvern-Bagnères de Bigorre Twinning Association (MBTA)	Cllr Caroline Bovey
Korosten Community Twinning Steering Group	Cllr Emma Green Cllr Lou Lowton
Malvern Twinning Steering Group (Mayor and Deputy Mayor)	Cllr Marilyn Birks Cllr Josie Leibrandt
Malvern Hills District Children and Young People's Partnership	Cllr Karen Newbigging Cllr Josie Leibrandt
Rural Market Town Group	Not going forward with this membership
Poolbrook Village Hall	Query over relevance

UNADOPTED

The Town Council was not sure that being part of the Rural Market Town Group was relevant. Therefore, it was **AGREED** to discuss this subscription as part of a later agenda item.

In respect of Poolbrook Village Hall, the Town Council was not sure if this committee existed anymore. Therefore, it was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk would request further information.

Councillor's Paul Bennett and Chris McSweeney left the meeting at 7.13pm.

14. **BANK MANDATE AND PAYMENT SIGNATORIES**

Report AC03/25 was received and accepted.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following signatories for the management of the Town Council's bank account in accordance with legal and operational requirements AND to sign any cheques, direct debit mandates or other payment authorisations if they are required:

1. Cllr Marilyn Birks, Mayor of Malvern
2. Cllr Josie Leibrandt, Deputy Mayor of Malvern
3. Cllr Sean Austin
4. Cllr Anne Cherry
5. Cllr Jude Green

The following ongoing resolutions with respect to its bank accounts were **CONFIRMED**.

- a. Two from the approved signatories above are required to issue instructions for any changes, modifications or additions to the Council's bank accounts.
- b. The key contact for managing the bank account and allocating user permissions is the Town Clerk
- c. The Town Clerk (or in their absence, the Operations Manager) is fully empowered to act on behalf of the Council to ensure the smooth running of the Council's bank accounts, subject to all previous authorisation permissions being adhered to.
- d. Two from the five members agreed above are required to sign and approve cheques, direct debit mandates and any other payment authorisations as required.
- e. Councillors should note that within the new financial regulations, changes have been made to the way in which online banking payments are checked and approved, and these are no longer approved in person by two agreed Councillor signatories.

15. **PAYMENT OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS, MEMBERSHIP OF ORGANISATIONS**

Report AC04/25 was received and accepted.

The Town Council **RESOLVED** to approve the following subscriptions collectively, with the exception of the Rural Market Town Group – this organisation will be removed from the list of Annual Subscriptions.

UNADOPTED

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Cost 2024/25</u>	<u>Estimated Cost 2025/26</u>
Worcestershire CALC/NALC	£2,749	£2,915
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy	£391	£403
Local Government Employers	£468	£468
Institute of Cemetery Management	£100	£105
Caring for God's Acre	£100	£100
Total	£3,808	£3,991

16. ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS

Report AC05/25 was received and accepted.

It was **RESOLVED** to delegate a review of the following items, with any recommendations to come back to Full Council for ratification:

- a) Review of delegation arrangements to committees, subcommittees, staff and other local authorities – Policy and Resources Committee.
- b) Review of the Terms of Reference for Committees - Policy and Resources Committee.
- c) Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations - Policy and Resources Committee.
- d) Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment – Operations and Planning Committee.
- e) Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks - Policy and Resources Committee.
- f) Review of the Council's Complaints Procedure - Policy and Resources Committee.
- g) Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of obligations under Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation - Policy and Resources Committee.
- h) Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media - Policy and Resources Committee.
- i) Review of the Council's Employment policies and procedures – Staffing Committee.
- j) Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the General Power of Competence – Policy and Resources Committee as part of the Annual Accounts.
- k) Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next meeting of Annual Council. Times already agreed by Full Council.

UNADOPTED

17. **OPERATIONS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report AC06/25 was received and accepted.

The Chair of Operations and Planning Committee, Cllr David Mead, presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 30 April 2025.

Minute 78 Commemoration for Nick Houghton

It was **RESOLVED** that a bronze plaque be placed on the stone plinth adjacent to the MALVERN sign in Rose Bank Gardens as a commemoration to Nick Houghton. The bronze plaque will contain the following wording which has been agreed by the family:

In Memory of Nick Houghton

5 February 1965 – 10 December 2024

Mayor of Malvern 2021 – 2023

Architect of The Malvern Sign

In Rose Bank Gardens

Minute 80 Request for Bench in Victoria Park

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of a new eight-foot anti-vandal Eastgate bench as requested by the dog walkers of Victoria Park.

Minute 81 V J Day Event

Committee **RESOLVED** to purchase and erect a new flagpole within the vicinity of Victoria Park and that an official opening event should be held on 15 August 2025, with refreshments in the Community Room afterwards.

It was further **RESOLVED** to agree a flag raising ceremony to pay tribute to the veterans from World War II, as part of the official opening of the flagpole on 15 August 2025.

Minute 83 Review of Inventory of Land and Assets

It was **RESOLVED** to review and note the inventory of land and assets as presented to Operations and Planning Committee.

18. **REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT – MALVERN PRIORY**

Report AC07/25 was received and accepted.

After discussion and a council vote, the recommendation to consider submitting a letter of support to Great Malvern Priory in respect of future grant applications for their Project Light and Space was not carried forward.

19. **REVIEW OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY GRANT-RECEIVING BODIES MARCH AND SEPTEMBER 2024**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

Under Standing Order 3X, the chair proposed that the meeting be extended until 8.15pm. A vote was taken and the extension agreed.

UNADOPTED

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

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 25 June 2025 at 6.00pm, in the Park View Meeting Room.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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.

21. **ROSE BANK GARDENS UPDATE**

The Town Clerk gave an update on Rose Bank Gardens and Full Council agreed an extension to the tender deadline for interested contractors.

The meeting finished at 8.01pm.

.....(Chairman)