

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

**held in the Community Hub Meeting Room, Victoria Park
on Wednesday 29 October 2025 at 6pm**

Councillors

I Dawson (Chair)
C Fletcher
Ronan McLaverty-Head
C Hooper

Absent

M Jones (Apologies)
K Newbigging (Apologies)
L Lowton (Apologies)

Also in attendance

Linda Blake - Town Clerk
Julia Winkworth – Minute Clerk
M Birks – Mayor of Malvern
Cllr D Watkins

The meeting commenced at 6.03pm.

Please note that these minutes have been published prior to the Chair of Policy and Resources viewing them.

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were **NOTED** from Cllrs Mel Jones, Karen Newbigging and Lou Lowton.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

32. 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 these were signed by the Chair:

- Policy and Resources Committee meeting 8 October 2025

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

33. APPOINTMENT OF NEW MEMBER TO JOIN GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Report PR01/25 was received and accepted.

Due to the number of members present, it was **AGREED** that volunteers to join the grants sub-committee would be sought by email and that any volunteers should join the sub-committee.

34. FUNDING FOR ADDITIONAL LIGHTING AT VICTORIA PARK

Report PR02/25 was received and accepted.

Committee **AGREED** an additional budget of £850.00 for the installation of the path lights in Victoria Park.

35. BUDGET DISCUSSION DOCUMENT 2026/27

Report PR03/25 was received and discussed.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the discussion document.

Cllr Birks asked for the committee to note the staffing committee, item 6 contingency of £60,000. The Town Clerk explained this was a figure recommended by the staffing committee to cover unknown costs such as benchmarking increases and possible staff rewards and this would go to Full Council for discussion. At approx. 6.25pm the Chair requested moving this to a private session and the recording was stopped.

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.

At 6.30pm the recording recommenced and the budget discussion in public session continued with the following suggestions put forward:

1. It was **AGREED** that the level of inflation to be included in the budget should be as follows:
 - Business Rates for 26/7 - 7.5%
 - Fuel for 26/7 - 2%
 - Utilities for 26/7 – Water 10% Electricity & Gas 8%
 - Contracts – increase in line with inflation
 - Cost of Living increase - 3.5%

It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk would look into whether any of the Council's sites other than Victoria Park would be suitable for solar power.

2. The following were **NOTED**
 - Victoria Park Play Area – Legacy Grant funding of up to £100,000 has been awarded
 - Sale of Land – no special amount yet known
 - Skatepark – being funded by Section 106 funding with timescale dependent on planning
3. It was **AGREED** that the grants budget for 2026/27 would be set as follows:
 - Large Grants – £5,000 (same as current year)

- Small Grants – £18,000 (same as current year)
 - CAB – £19,000 (three-year agreement)
4. It was **AGREED** that the events listed in Section 4 would be increased by inflation with a sealing of £53,000, noting that there should be an additional amount of £1,500 put towards Malvern in Bloom.
5. It was **NOTED** that income from the Community Hub was a little lower than expected.

The Café - the initial estimate when looked at budgeting for the building hasn't been achieved but the rental for the café will increase each year.

Rental of the room, evening bookings is very busy, during the day is not as expected and weekends during the day also the same.

6. Already discussed earlier in the meeting.
7. Committee members felt that the budget contingency fund should remain at £20,000 for 2026/27.
8. It was **NOTED** that the Public Works Loan Board repayments will stay the same at £22,475.76 for 2026/27.
9. Other – Website – funding would be appreciated to create a more dynamic and future proof website. It would be beneficial to start afresh, along with a '.gov' website. Use for questionnaires, bookings, payments etc. It was **AGREED** to add the website as a strategic aim within the budget.

36. **REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Report PR04/25 was received and accepted.

A further report was received from Cllr Lowton relating to the Ombudsman version that includes a handy self-assessment at the end of the document which may be useful to check that the Town Council have all elements within the complaints policy.

The Town Clerk noted that there isn't a time noted after a time where a claim has ceases, no kind of timeout. For example, the complainant could have a reply, but they leave it open, no reply so does that mean they can return at a later point.

The Mayor has been in a similar position and has initiated her own cut off point in this situation.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Council complaints procedure would include the following clause:

'the Town Council aim to acknowledge within 10 days and our aim would be to respond to your complaint within 20 days and **aim to** offer a resolution within 6 weeks and if not possible to do so within this timescale, we offer the following date. Failure to respond within six weeks will be met with the assumption that this complaint is closed'

If they reply, you would then go to stage 2 of the complaint.

37. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was **AGREED** that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 26 November 2025 at 6pm.

The meeting finished at 7.32pm.

.....(Chair)

DRAFT