

MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Tuesday 15 March 2016, at 7.00 pm

at the Coach House Theatre, Grange Road, Malvern

Chairman of the Meeting: Councillor J S W l'Anson (Mayor)

Councillors:

Present:

J S W l'Anson (Mayor)
I G Hopwood
S Nichols
J O'Donnell
C Palmer
J Roskams

C T Smith
P Smith
J Thomas
P A Tuthill
R K Yates

In Attendance:

Linda Blake –Town Clerk
Charles Porter – Operations Manager
Mary Piercy – Minute Clerk
Eadwine Brown – Events Co-ordinator

Approx 7 members of the public.

Apologies:

Councillors C A L Bovey and B A Regimbeau.

1. **MAYOR'S INTRODUCTION**

The Mayor, Councillor Julian l'Anson, welcomed everyone to Malvern Town Council's Annual Town Meeting.

2. **MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2015**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 17 March 2015 were approved and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

3. **MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2015/2016**

The Mayor reported that the Town Council (MTC) had enjoyed another successful year with a number of projects and events. He highlighted the following items:

Operations projects

At Rose Bank Gardens, work on a new gateway has been completed to improve and enhance access to the south-west boundary. New brick-built pillars have been

installed and the path leading from the upper level of Rose Bank Gardens to the Hills has been widened and repaired.

At Victoria Park, a damaged wall has been rebuilt and strengthened while Malvern Bowls Club car park has been resurfaced and repairs have been made to fencing at Craeg Lea.

A new John Deere X750 mower and a Mitsubishi L200 pickup truck have been purchased which will allow the Operations Team to be more efficient in their work throughout the town. In response to requests from the public, 5 new litter bins have been purchased and will be positioned at sites throughout Malvern.

Great Malvern Cemetery

Services were held in September in memory of renowned singer, Jenny Lind, 'the Swedish Nightingale', and Henry Ward VC.

The Cemetery also received an Outstanding award in the Heart of England It's Your Neighbourhood category in 2015.

Great Malvern Station Gardens – Restoration of Gas Lamps

The Highly Commended award from the Heritage Railway Association was a ringing endorsement of the restoration work carried out by the Town Council. The gas lamps provide an iconic welcome to the town.

Events

A variety of events are planned for the next 12 months. Some, such as Bands in the Park, are regular favourites while other new events are to be introduced.

Support for Charities and Community Groups

A number of local organisations have benefitted from the Town Council's scheme for Large and Small Grants with over £6,000 awarded. Over £3,000 has been raised to date for the Mayor's charity Childline/NSPCC.

Aims and Objectives 2016/17

The Council will continue to work for the good of the community in supporting charitable causes, hosting community events and formulating a Neighbourhood Plan for Malvern.

4. MY LIFE WITH CHILDLINE/NSPCC

Colin Butler MBE, Chairman of Childline, gave a presentation to the meeting. He had started working for the charity in 1986 as a helpline volunteer and described the charity's origins and how its work had developed over the years in the light of risks posed by increasing mental health issues and new technology, with children increasingly contacting Childline by email and mobile phone.

Child abuse, suicides and self-harm had all increased and Childline's work included counselling, raising public awareness, work in schools (with the aim of visiting every primary school in the UK by 2016) and on-line safety campaigns.

He thanked the Town Council for supporting the charity in its vital work in child protection.

5. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE AND DISCUSSION

Cllr Cynthia Palmer, Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party, outlined the Council's progress in formulating a Neighbourhood Plan for Malvern. A number of working groups had been set up to consider different aspects of the Plan and their conclusions would form the basis of a report to be compiled by Peter Hamilton of Cass Associates, the consultants appointed by the Council to prepare the Plan.

The working groups included Design, Non-designated Heritage Assets, Nature Conservation Assets, Retail Centres, Green Spaces, Youth Provision, Travel and Transport, Business and Employment, and Visitor Economy.

Cllrs Julian Roskams and Jeremy Thomas gave updates on the work of the groups looking at Travel and Transport, Local Green Spaces, and Youth Provision.

Cllr Thomas stressed the importance of an integrated transport system for Malvern. Road congestion was already a major issue and an efficient public transport system, which should include routes to serve the proposed new developments, was essential.

Cllr Roskams explained that the Youth Provision group was analysing the current use of youth facilities and the kind of facilities that young people would like to see in the town. High School sixth forms were conducting surveys to help collect comprehensive feedback.

Cllr Roskams also reported that consultation was taking place regarding the designation of land as protected Local Green Space in order to develop a policy on this.

Cllr Palmer paid tribute to the efforts of Council staff and to the many members of the community who had given their time to contribute to the groups. It was envisaged that the work of the groups would be completed by the end of the month when the consultant would begin to draft the Neighbourhood Plan.

6. EVENTS COORDINATOR – 12 MONTHS IN POST

Eadwine Brown, Malvern Town Council's Events Coordinator, talked about his first year working for the Town Council and plans for events in 2016/17.

The Council would continue to run their regular popular programme of events; charity quiz nights, Bands in the Park, Malvern in Bloom, Outdoor Theatre, the Mayor's Bonanza, Remembrance Sunday/Armistice Day and the Christmas Lights Switch-On.

A demand for more community events and opportunities for partnership working had prompted a variety of ideas for future events. These included a Malvern Heritage Festival on 23 April, a Health and Wellbeing Fair in Rose Bank Gardens on 30 April, a Malvern Outdoor Cinema Season and programme of Alternative Bands in the Park during the summer, an Armed Forces Day Gala in June, a Malvern Independents' Day and a Christmas Charity Concert.

Support in organising and running these events would be welcome.

7. TWINNING AGREEMENTS / COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Graham Dimmock, Chairman of Malvern / Bagnères-de-Bigorre Twinning Association gave a presentation about the new Twinning Initiative with Bagnères-de-Bigorre in France.

He explained that twinning aimed to promote social, cultural and commercial ties to the benefit of both towns. Malvern and Bagnères-de-Bigorre had many similarities, being spa towns with a number of shared interests including hill-walking, wellness centres and various clubs and associations. The Twinning Association had already established firm links with their French counterparts and between a number of organisations in both towns; a school exchange was expected to take place next year. The Twinning project had received publicity in the media and a joint Facebook page was being developed. A public signing of the Twinning agreement is hoped to take place on 30 April in Rosebank Gardens subject to approval by Full Council.

Mr Dimmock thanked the volunteers of the Twinning group for their hard work and the Council for supporting the initiative.

Ian Hopwood, Chairman of the Malvern Community Partnership Group, gave an update on the progress of the Community Partnership with Mariánské Lázně in The Czech Republic.

He explained that the partnership with the Czech spa town, which had been initiated by the Civic Society, was now firmly established. The partnership agreement was signed in 2013 during a most successful visit, and a further visit to the town (to include the Mayor) would take place in May this year to mark the opening of the spa season.

Shared interests included mineral water, scout groups, golf and music; in 2015, the children's Canzona choir from the Chopin Conservatoire had visited Malvern and performed a series of concerts.

It was hoped that visits would take place between the two towns in alternating years and improving transport links were expected to provide easier travel between the two towns.

8. OPEN FORUM

There were no questions.

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Mayor thanked all those who had contributed during the evening and declared the meeting closed.

The meeting finished at 8.25pm.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 March 2017 at 7pm.

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Councillor J S W I'Anson (Mayor)