

UNADOPTED

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE OPERATIONS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL**

held in the Park View Meeting Room, Community Hub, Victoria Park

Tuesday 17 September 2024 at 6.00 pm

Councillors

Present

D Mead (Chair)
J Green
M Jones (Substitute for S Austin)
J Leibrandt
F Matthews-Jones
D Watkins

Absent

S Austin (apologies)
A Cherry (apologies)
C Bovey (apologies)
J MacLusky (apologies)
S Meager (apologies)

Also in attendance

L Blake - Town Clerk
C Porter – Operations Manager

The meeting started at 6.07pm.

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were **NOTED** from Councillors Sean Austin, Anne Cherry, Caroline Bovey, Julie MacLusky and Simon Meager. Cllr Austin had substituted Cllr Melanie Jones.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

21. 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 Chairman:

- Operations and Planning Committee meeting 17 July 2024.

22. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

The Chair announced that under Standing Order 1a, he would be altering the order of business so that those agenda items requiring a decision before the next scheduled meeting would be considered first.

23. AGENDA ITEM 5 – ADDITIONAL CCTV CAMERA AT VICTORIA PAK

Report OC01/24 was received and accepted.

It was **AGREED** to install an additional CCTV camera at Victoria Park to cover the area inside the entranceway foyer.

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24. AGENDA ITEM 8 – REVIEW OF CHARGES FOR TOWN COUNCIL OPERATIONS SERVICES 2025/26

Report OC04/24 was received, and the Town Clerk explained that setting the level of operational charges was needed to finalise income projections as part of the annual budget process each year.

The Committee discussed each category of operational charges in turn.

Cemetery Charges

Officers explained that they had looked at cemetery charges set by other councils and that the charges in Great Malvern Cemetery are comparatively low. The Operations Manager informed members that costs for maintaining the cemetery are also increasing and committee should carefully consider the need to try and offset these running costs with the income being received.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that an 11% increase be applied to all cemetery charges for the year 2025/26, with resulting figures being rounded down to the nearest pound.

Allotments

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the allotment charge for a 125 square metre plot be increased by £1 to £41 per annum for 2025/26

Sports pitches

Committee discussed the changes in sports pitch usage over the last ten years and officers explained that most teams using Town Council facilities are now junior teams who are charged less than half the amount that a senior team would pay. Income received per annum at just over £1,000 does not even cover the cost of purchasing line marking paint for the pitches, with staff time and costs to run the pavilions being additional.

Members felt that the service that junior teams receive is similar to that of a senior team and that charges should be increased to reflect this.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that a 4.5% increase be applied to all senior sports charges for the year 2025/26, with resulting figures being rounded down to the nearest pound.

It was further **RECOMMENDED** that charges for junior football teams should be increased as follows

Hire of junior football pitch (season) increased from £127 to £200

Hire of changing rooms junior (season) increased from £110 to £190

25. AGENDA ITEM 9 – ASSET REFURBISHMENT / REPLACEMENT BUDGET 2025/26

Report OC05/24 was received and noted.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the following operations projects be included in the Council's budget for 2025/26:

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| NAME OF PROJECT | DETAILS | ANTICIPATED COSTS |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Victoria Park play area | Replace small climbing unit that was removed for safety reasons with a toddler play equipment area adjacent to the café patio. | £20,000 |
| Victoria Park play area | Victoria Park play area was last refurbished in 2009 at a cost of £85,000. Fourteen years later and as a play area which is very well used, plans need to be made for the purchase of new equipment in 2026/27. Given that these costs could be in the region of £150,000, officers feel it would be prudent to begin allocating some funds in this financial year. | £40,000 |
| General | Replacement noticeboards/signage | £4,000 |
| Cemetery | Refurbishment of cemetery lodge – replacement toilet, some carpeting, and general decoration. | £6,000 |
| Total | | £70,000 |

26. **AGENDA ITEM 10 – CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH-ON BUDGET**

Report OC06/24 was received and noted

The Town Clerk explained to committee members that due to a number of factors, the Town Council would be entirely responsible for co-ordinating and managing the Christmas Lights Switch-On this year, with Malvern Hills District Council offering a grant towards costs.

The event will be in a new format in 2024, due to a musical event taking place in Great Malvern Priory and the associated movement of the Christmas arts and crafts market to the following Saturday. Town Council Events Officers have been working hard to create several entertainment / activity centres around the town throughout the day, including the area outside the post office, part of The Priory Grounds, Malvern Library, The Coach House Theatre and an area outside Connells at the bottom of Church Street. The event will culminate with the lights being switched on at 5:30pm.

Unfortunately, event running costs have been rising over recent years and this combined with the change of format, has meant that an extra £2,000 is being requested to run this event.

Councillors asked whether these costs could be contained within the overall Town Council budget and if they represented value for money. Officers pointed out the number of people benefitting from the light switch-on event, were the highest of any Town Council event during the year, and therefore expenditure per attendee was low. Officers felt that any overspend would be offset by savings in other areas.

It was **AGREED** to approve an additional £2,000 for the Christmas Lights Switch-On Event on Saturday 23 November 2024.

27. **AGENDA ITEM 12 – POWICK RAF ASSOCIATION – BATTLE OF BRTAIN ANNIVERSARY**

Report OC07/24 was received and accepted.

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Committee **AGREED** to a proposal from the RAF Association Worcester and District Branch that an event to commemorate the 85th anniversary of the Battle of Britain in 1940 would be held as part of the regular Bands in the Park programme on Sunday 14 September 2025.

28. **AGENDA ITEM 15 - PLANNING CONSULTATIONS**

Report OC10/24 was **NOTED**.

There were no planning matters raised.

The Chair announced that committee would now return to the beginning of the agenda and cover any remaining items.

29. **AGENDA ITEM 4 – COMMUNITY HUB WORKS**

The Town Clerk informed the committee that works to fit out the new café within the community hub had started and the new tenant was hoping to open in mid-October. The new café is being called Bilberry Cafe and the opening day would be announced as soon as it is confirmed.

New fitness equipment provided as part of the contract with Modulek had been installed this week, with the table tennis table due to be installed shortly.

New signage for the building was being ordered, including signs to say Malvern Town Council Community Hub on the front of the building and Park View Community Room at the rear.

There had been a steady increase in bookings of the Park View Community Room and the new caretaker who has started work is able to open and lock the building to assist with this.

The first payment for the Town Council's feed in tariff from the PV panels had been received recently and was just over £1,000. Officers also have the ability via an App to track power generation and usage on a daily basis.

Councillors noted the hard work that had been undertaken to facilitate the move into the new building and to get new systems such as community room bookings up and running.

It was suggested that information could be published after a year of occupation to show what savings both financially and in terms of energy efficiency had been made by the move to the new hub.

30. **AGENDA ITEM 6 – BIKE SHELTER AT VICTORIA PARK**

Report OC02/24 was received and accepted.

It was **AGREED** to install a new bike shelter at Victoria Park in a location adjacent to the new Community Hub as outlined in the report,

31. **AGENDA ITEM 7 – EV CHARGING POINT AT VICTORIA PARK**

Report OC03/24 was received and noted.

Officers explained that a request had been received from Malvern Hills Car Club to locate an electric charging point at Victoria Park. The power and infrastructure for this would be provided by an adjacent house, but a car parking space would be needed in the car park adjacent to Pickersleigh Avenue.

The Operations Manager emphasised that all costs and risks would be borne by the car club. There would be no official designation of a parking space, and the car club would only be able to use the space if no other vehicle was parked there.

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It was **AGREED** to allow Malvern Hills Car Club to locate an EV charging point on the car park at Victoria Park, immediately adjacent to Pickersleigh Avenue, for a one year period after which it would be reviewed.

32. AGENDA ITEM 11 – TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

The Town Clerk reported that the Bands in the Park Programme had once again been successful, and that focus was now being turned to Remembrance and Christmas Events for which Councillor volunteers would be sought.

The Chair informed committee that he, along with David Watkins, would be attending the Heart of England in Bloom awards ceremony on Friday 20 September and it was hoped that a good result would be obtained.

33. AGENDA ITEM 13 – WORK PROGRAMME AND OPERATIONS UPDATE

The Operations Manager presented the work programme. Hanging baskets and flags around the town would be taken down in the next couple of weeks and preparations made for the arrival of the spring bedding. The high standard of the hanging baskets this year was noted by committee members.

Council is still awaiting the outcome of the Adam Lee pump track planning application, but it was hoped that this would come before the end of this week.

34. AGENDA ITEM 14 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Report OC09/24 was received and accepted.

There were no environmental matters raised.

35. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was **AGREED** the next meeting of the Operations and Planning Committee would be held on Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 6.00 pm.

The meeting finished at 7.18 pm.

.....(Chairman)