

UNADOPTED

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL**

**in the Park View Meeting Room, Victoria Park Road, Malvern Link
held on Wednesday 9 October 2024 at 6pm**

Councillors

Present

M Birks (Chair)
S Austin
A Cherry
I Dawson
C Fletcher
J Green
C Hooper
N Houghton
J Leibrandt (from 6.10pm)
J MacLusky
F Matthews-Jones
R McLaverty-Head
D Mead
D Watkins

Absent

C Bovey (apologies)
E Green (apologies)
M Jones (apologies)
L Lowton (apologies)
S Meager
K Newbigging (apologies)

Also in attendance

L Blake – Town Clerk
L Wall – Minute Clerk
Member of the Press

73. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

75. 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 Mayor:

- Full Council meeting 4 September 2024.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

Cllr Josephine Leibrandt joined the meeting at 6.10pm

76. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that Dame Harriett Baldwin, MP, had visited the new hub and was very impressed with the building. They discussed the Town Council's response to Malvern Hills Trust's consultation, democratic representation, Malvern College, traffic, poverty, housing, Platform Housing and the cycleway to Worcester.

77. UPDATE ON TOWN COUNCIL OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The Town Clerk reports on Town Council operations and activities as follows:

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Heart of England in Bloom

The Town Clerk congratulated all those involved in the entry for the Heart of England in Bloom competition. A gold award was picked up by Cllr David Mead and Cllr David Watkins on behalf of the town with an impressive 96 marks out of 100 being awarded, up 2 points from last year's result. This was particularly pleasing as a new route had been put in place this year and included new areas such as the community hub and the technology station museum which had not been visited before.

Community Hub Building

Works to fit out the new café are now well underway with the target opening date being 21 October.

A public access trauma kit has been purchased for the community hub. This aims to provide the public with all the essential equipment to help manage bleeding whilst waiting for the paramedics to arrive on scene. Some of the items included are bandages, gauzes, personal protection and tourniquets all suitable for high level trauma.

Room bookings are proving popular with most evenings now booked for the next couple of months albeit that there is still good availability during the day.

Four pieces of outdoor fitness equipment given as part of the building contract have been installed in the area to the east of the building along with a table tennis table.

MHDC / MTC Councillor Get together

Following discussions at the liaison meeting, and a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of MHDC, a Malvern Councillor get together has been organised for Tuesday 29 October at 6pm. This event will be a chance for District and County Councillors to look around our new community hub and for councillors at all three tiers of local government to meet each other and to discuss issues of common interest look. Light refreshments will also be provided.

Operations

Hanging baskets and flags have now been taken down from around the town and Spring bedding has arrived this week.

Fountain Stones

The Malvern Link fountain stones have been moved to their new resting place on the grassed area adjacent to the entrance of Great Malvern Cemetery

Guide Dogs

We were very privileged to receive a visit today from Nessa, the guide dog puppy who was named and sponsored by the Town Council in Summer 2023. She is now 14 months old and will be going on to do her next stage of training after Christmas.

General

A meeting is being held with the Korosten Community in the Ukraine tomorrow to talk about twinning proposals.

78. REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE

A report from Cllr Malcolm Victory had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting, and a report from Cllr Karen Hanks and Cllr Beverley Nielsen would follow.

79. TOWN COUNCIL WARD REPORTS/REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Reports from Cllr Karen Newbigging, MTC representative for Malvern Hills District

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Children and Young People's Partnership, and Cllr Clive Hooper, MTC representative for CALC had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting

Cllr Iain Dawson, MTC representative on Poolbrook Village Hall committee reported that the AGM was to take place soon, although no date had been set, and it was the intention of many trustees to stand down at that point. Therefore, if any councillors were interested in becoming a trustee they should contact Cllr Dawson.

80. **MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

There were no members' questions.

81. **SALE OF LAND AT ELGAR AVENUE**

Report CL01/24 was received and accepted.

The Town Clerk explained that after the Town Council was formed, Malvern Hills District Council transferred land allocated as a statutory allotment area in Elgar Avenue, to the Town Council in December 1998 as part of a transfer of assets.

A community garden had been trialled but later abandoned, and following a council resolution in 2016, an application had been made to remove the statutory allotment provision on the land at Elgar Avenue. Obtaining planning permission for housing had then been investigated but because of constraints on the site, including the development boundary and flood risk, it had been decided to put the matter on hold ahead of the SWDP review.

The land has since been included as a Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) site allocation, and there is a recommendation that it is carried forward for potential allocation in the SWDPR.

Officers were proposing that planning permission be sought in line with information submitted in the SHELAA, and once approved, consideration could then be given by Full Council to the possible sale of the site.

It was **RESOLVED** that Council give delegations to officers to seek planning permission for housing on land owned by the Town Council at Elgar Avenue, ahead of a possible sale of this land. Officers were further delegated to incur fees up to £6,000 in relation to the application.

82. **SECTION 106 FUNDING FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT AT ADAM LEE**

Report CL02/24 was received and accepted.

£20,000 had already been included in the 2023/24 budget for refurbishment of the play area at Adam Lee, but officers proposed to submit an application for £40,000 of Section 106 funding towards the new play equipment, to allow for the provision of a zip wire and wooden climbing frame.

It was **RESOLVED** that officers apply for Section 106 funding of £40,000 towards the refurbishment/enhancement of the play area at Adam Lee.

83. **EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT AND CERTIFICATE 2023/24**

Report CL03/24 was received and noted.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that a clean audit had been given, which was pleasing. The Chair of Audit Committee, Cllr David Watkins, thanked the Town Clerk and welcomed her comments.

84. **OPERATIONS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report CL04/24 was received and accepted.

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The Chair of Operations and Planning Committee, Cllr Davd Mead presented the recommendation from the meeting held on 17 September 2024.

Minute 24 Review of charges for Town Council operations services 2025/26

Great Malvern Cemetery

It was **RESOLVED** to apply an increase of 11% to all cemetery charges for the year 2025/26, with resulting figures being rounded down to the nearest pound.

Allotments

It was **RESOLVED** to increase the charge for a 125 square metre allotment plot by £1 to £41 per annum for 2025/26.

Sports pitches

It was **RESOLVED** to increase all senior sports charges for the year 2025/26 by 4.5%, with the resulting figures being rounded down to the nearest pound.

Operations and Planning Committee had recommended an increase to £200 for the season's hire of a junior football pitch (up from £127) and to £190 for the season's hire of junior changing rooms (up from £110). However, some councillors felt this rise was too much whilst others felt that it was a very small amount per child per season. Following discussion, two amendments fell and therefore Operations and Planning Committee will further discuss this matter at its next meeting.

Minute 25 Asset refurbishment/ replacement budget 2025/26

It was **RESOLVED** to include the following operations projects in the council's budget for 2025/26:

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

85. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 13 November 2024 at 6.00 pm.

The meeting finished at 7.25 pm.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **AGREED** to resolve pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies

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(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.

86. ROSEBANK GARDENS

The Town Clerk updated Council on Rosebank Gardens.

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(Chairman)

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