

**MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of an Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on**  
**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 at 19.30 at Marden Community Centre**

**Present**

Councillors: David Bennett (in the Chair), Kate Ryan, Rod Lees, Chris Morgan, Mike Blake, Paula Barrett, Richard Paske and Lesley Hayward.

**In attendance**

Clerk Helen Tinson – on behalf of HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils); and 3 members of the public.

**1. Consideration to access HALC Clerk Cover for the meeting:**

**It was RESOLVED:** to access HALC's CiLCA qualified Clerk/RFO Cover for the meeting.

**2. Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Patrick Meredith and Ward Councillor Kema Guthrie**3. Declarations of interest & written dispensation requests:** None.**4. Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023:**

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023.

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve all the minutes as a true and proper record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

**5. Public Participation:**

**5.1 Ward Councillor Report:** there was no report.

**5.2 West Mercia Police and Fire & Rescue Service Report:** there was no report however the Chairman noted:

**5.2.1** Two reports of theft at the Vault had been reported on social media;

**5.2.2** No speed enforcement had been carried out in the area as response to the Community Charter priorities (Jan-March) had not been received. Two councillors reported seeing speed enforcement vans in the area. It was agreed that the Safer Neighbourhood Team would be formally invited to the next meeting.

**5.3 Members of the Public:** there were no representations from members of the public.

**6. Finance:****6.1 Finance Report:**

The Chairman presented a financial report noting:

**6.1.1** The bank account has been reconciled; the balance at 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023 was £117,796.75. Final accounts at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 will be presented to the next meeting.

**6.1.2** Approved reserves: future loan repayment/community facilities work £53,173.52; village green £20,000; donations for community facilities £6798.65; Marden Recreation Ground Trust £2,000; Marden Links £406.96.

## **6.2 Virements:**

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve virement £1069.00 from Lengthsman to Salary; and £400.00 from Training to Salary.

## **6.3 Internal Audit:**

The Chairman confirmed that the auditor has the information for the interim audit to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 and is awaiting the final report. The full internal audit will be carried out at year end.

## **6.4 Asset Register:**

Members considered an updated register, noting the following changes:

**6.4.1** Computer and printer removed (gifted by ex-clerk but not left on conclusion of employment)

**6.4.2** Two hard drives with serial numbers added

**6.4.3** Noticeboards and Bins checked and locations updated.

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve the asset register with one further amendment to remove the wooden chairs that had been gifted but were not suitable and are no longer in the possession of the PC. The Chairman will post the updated asset register onto the website.

## **6.5 Reserve Strategy:**

Members were informed that the Finance Working Group had met in early February to consider the Reserve Strategy/Policy. It was proposed that the policy remains the same; the value of reserves is as presented within the financial report (6.1).

**It was RESOLVED:** to renew the Reserves Strategy without amendment.

## **6.6 Invoices:**

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve the following invoices for payment:

**6.6.1** PIP Printing, N&V March 2023, £280.31

**6.6.2** HALC, Clerk Cover, 21.2.23, £271.34 plus £45.22 VAT

**6.6.3** J. Stephens, Final Salary & Expenses

**6.6.4** DC Gardening, Lengthsman, £360.00 plus £72.00 VAT

**6.6.5** S. Ellison, Electricity Feb Marden Links, £150.16

**6.6.6** DC Gardening, P3 – gates and bridge, £734.50 plus £146.90 VAT

**6.6.7** Marden Village Trust Room Hire, Jan-Mar 23, £60.00

**6.6.8** DC Gardening, Lengthsman, £235.00 plus £47.00 VAT

## 7. Planning:

Members considered the following planning application for consideration by Herefordshire Council:

**7.1 230550: Cressfield Cottage Sutton St Nicholas, HR1 3NS.** Proposed application for variation of condition 2 of planning permission 220581 (Proposed two storey side extension to existing dwelling and change of use of land comprising 0.0018 Ha from agricultural to residential where the footprint of the proposed extension is located)- **To provide additional needed area to the implement store with corresponding additional area at first floor.**

There were no objections raised.

**It was RESOLVED:** to SUPPORT the application.

**7.2 230768: Field 300m west of Burmarsh Village, Burmarsh, Sutton St Nicholas, HR1 3BW.** Prior approval for balanced cut and fill earth moving operation to create an irrigation reservoir. Members noted the application and that comments are not being accepted.

### 7.3 Planning Enforcement:

Members received an update on the matters concerning planning enforcement:

**7.3.1 Ashgrove Croft:** current application to discharge conditions ref 222739 awaiting determination.

**7.3.2 Small Ashes:** Case Officer on leave, update to be provided upon his return.

**7.3.3 Pikestye Farm:** awaiting update from Conservation Officer. It was agreed to ask HALC to follow up again.

### 7.4 To Note Planning Decisions made by Herefordshire Council:

It was noted:

**7.4.1 222295: Berrington Bower.** The application was considered by Planning Committee and was approved, though a number of conditions were applied. Members wished to note their disappointment.

**7.4.2 230165: Hopesay House.** Approved with conditions requested.

## 8. Working Group Reports:

### 8.1 Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group:

Draft housing targets are still awaited from Herefordshire Council but hoped to be received in the next couple of months. Ward Cllr Guthrie will try to expedite.

### 8.2 New Community Facilities Working Group:

Work is ongoing in terms of exploring funding options. Planning decision is expected imminently.

### **8.3 Marden Links Working Group:**

The hub continues to be busy on Wednesdays and Fridays. They have been open for eight sessions this month with 53 attendees. Hub finances are looking good with potential further grant funding available in 2023/24.

Members considered extending the lease in the current interim location until the new community facility is ready.

**It was RESOLVED:** to extend the current lease for a further 24 months on the existing rent.

The grant application for £1937.00 to set up a Repair Café has been successful. The first session should be held by the end of May to meet the requirements of the grant. It is anticipated this will be a 3-hour session over a Saturday lunchtime. Members considered whether the project should sit with the Marden Links Working Group or the Environmental and Sustainability Working Group and it was agreed that the two groups would meet to discuss collaborative working. The aim is that the Repair Café should be financially self-sufficient within six months. **It was RESOLVED:** to set up the Repair Café within the Hub and for the two working groups to meet to discuss collaborative working. The Chairman will forward details of both Ledbury and Dinedor Repair Cafes to members.

Members considered potential use for the land behind the hub.

**It was RESOLVED:** that the working group would co-ordinate options and report to the Parish Council for decision.

### **8.4 Environmental and Sustainability Working Group:**

Cllr Lees gave a brief report following his meeting with S&A. S&A will carefully consider a format for future engagement and will propose a plan within the next 3-4 weeks. Cllr Lees will report to the Parish Council once the proposal has been received.

S&A reported expenditure of £10,000 on native trees to replace removed hedgerows.

S&A will consider options to address the condition of the roads and will feedback to the Parish Council.

### **8.5 Events and Fundraising Working Group:**

Members considered a proposal of costs for the Coronation celebrations.

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve a budget of up to £1500.00 for the Events and Fundraising Working Group to spend on the coronation event.

## **8.6 Transport Working Group:**

It was agreed to defer until the S106 money in relation to New House Farm becomes available.

## **9. Highways and Footpaths:**

### **9.1 Parish Footpath Officer:**

Members agreed that the Footpaths Officer is doing an excellent job, providing a comprehensive report of all works carried out (summary on CIS). It was noted that the kissing gates have been installed.

### **9.2 Lengthsman and General Maintenance:**

**9.2.1** Members considered the Lengthsman's contract for 2023/2024.

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve the contract for 2023/2024.

**9.2.2** Members were informed that the Locality Steward has agreed to recommence the parish drive-around and would like to do the first before the next BBLP meeting at the end of April. It was suggested that this will be either two councillors, or one councillor and the clerk and that sessions are rotated between councillors.

**9.2.3** Lengthsman 5-year Grant Funding. It was noted that funding has been approved and the contract signed and returned to BBLP.

## **10. Community:**

### **10.1 West Mercia Police Community Charter:**

Members considered the response for the Community Charter April-June 2023.

**It was RESOLVED:** to request action on speeding as the only priority (1, 2 and 3). It was agreed that the Chairman would submit the completed form before 31<sup>st</sup> March.

### **10.2 Defibrillator:**

Members considered a request to site a defibrillator at the Vault. Concerns were raised about ongoing maintenance, lack of electrical supply and the value a defibrillator in that location would have in saving lives, and it was agreed that whilst the idea is sound, the practicalities are such that the defibrillator would not be as beneficial as would be needed.

**It was RESOLVED:** not to proceed further.

### **10.3 Noticeboards:**

The Chairman reported an update concerning the location of three noticeboards: the proposal for a noticeboard at Kitten Gate has been missed by BBLP; it was reported that no information has been received in relation to a noticeboard at Tumpy Lake. BBLP have proposed that they consider both together. The

noticeboard at the Amberley Inn is pending a proposal on a suitable revised location from the Parish Council.

**It was RESOLVED:** that Cllr Rod Lees would assess locations for the noticeboard and report to the next meeting.

#### **10.4 Permanent Christmas Tree:**

Members considered a proposal to site a permanent (living) Christmas Tree within the village.

**It was RESOLVED:** that the Chairman would discuss the proposal with the Chairman of MGRT (Marden Recreation Ground Trust) and ask him to propose to the committee for their consideration.

#### **10.5 News and Views:**

Members considered a report summarising costs to the Parish Council from 2021/22 (actual), 2022/23 (calculated), and 2023/34 (proposed). Members agreed that they would like to continue to support the publication and requested three printing quotes, to be brought to full council for decision at the appropriate time.

#### **10.6 Tree Warden:**

Members considered an application for Volunteer Parish Tree Warden.

**It was RESOLVED:** to appoint Andrew Matthews. It was noted that support can be accessed from Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and Herefordshire Tree Warden Network (small subscription fee applies).

### **11. Correspondence:**

Members noted the Clerk Information Sheet, attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

### **12. Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023, 7.30pm, Marden Community Centre.

Cllr Lesley Hayward gave her apologies for absence.

Agenda Items:

**12.1** Consider policy on Transparency and agree action as required

**12.2** Review Outstanding Policies:

**12.2.1** Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure

**12.2.2** Equal Opportunities Procedure

**12.2.3** Health and Safety Policy

**12.2.4** Lone Worker Policy

**12.2.5** Sickness and Absence Policy

**12.2.6** Staff Appraisal Policy

**12.2.7** Privacy Policy

**12.2.8** Personal Data Management Policy

**12.2.9** Subject Access Policy

**12.2.10** Publication Scheme

**A resolution was passed to exclude members of the public from the following confidential matter:**

**13. Employment and Recruitment Status:**

**13.1 Employment:**

Members that the outgoing Clerk has confirmed there are no outstanding expenses.

**It was RESOLVED:** to proceed to settle the outstanding salary payment.

**13.2 Recruitment:**

Members were informed that a current and experienced clerk has submitted an application for the position of Clerk/RFO and interview dates were agreed.

Meeting closed 9.27pm

SIGNED ..... DATE .....

**APPENDIX A: CLERK'S INFORMATION SHEET FOR  
THE MEETING OF MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL ON 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

5.2 West Mercia Police Safer Neighbourhood Team – PS Darren Ball; PCSO Adam Westlake, 07773 052580; PCSO Christina Howard, 07773 052529.

**Get in touch**

 **101** to talk to your local SNT/report a crime

 herefordrn.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

 [www.westmercia.police.uk](http://www.westmercia.police.uk)

 /  @HerefordCops

Only call 999 in an emergency, when a crime is in progress or life is in danger. If you would prefer to report a crime anonymously, please contact West Mercia CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111. For all non emergency reports please call 101. For all other enquiries please email [herefordrn.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:herefordrn.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)

**Crimes in parish reported:** No data available.

Response from SNT regarding Speed Enforcement

*In relation to speed enforcement in the area...the simple answer is that we have done none in the area over the last couple of months. We did not get any response from the PC to our emails that we sent about the community charter priorities for the area.*

*We sent the email at the beginning of December and a reminder on the 19<sup>th</sup> for the priorities to be emailed back to us by the end of December which would cover months January to March. We had no response to the two emails, so Marden are currently down as having no priorities for this quarter.*

*In relation to speed enforcement, we the SNT can no longer take individual reports of speeding from residents/members of the public due to the amount of complaints there are. The complainants are directed to inform the relevant parish council about their concerns and then when we ask the PC for their priorities each quarter, they can decide where they feel they need us to go and carry out speed enforcement.*

*Every quarter, each PC is contacted and asked what their priorities are for the next 3 months and that is then the areas that we concentrate on when we are patrolling those areas. If no response is given to our emails, then no work will be done on those areas outside of our normal patrols/dealing with incidents etc.*

### 7.3 Status of outstanding enforcement issues:

1. Ashgrove Croft there is a current application to discharge conditions ref 222739 awaiting determination,

once that has been done, we can pick any outstanding matters.

2. Small Ashes- the case officer is on leave this week. An update will be provided upon his return.

3. Pikestye Farm – awaiting update from Conservation officer, being chased.

### 8.3.1 Additional identified items for the Marden Links Parish Hub if not acquired from Grant funds

1. Microwave oven - £76.99

2. Coat rail - £24.90

3. Folding Jigsaw mat - £59.99

4. Flower planters x 2 £32.00 (each)

5. Seat pad cushions x 8 £5.00 (each)

6. Wheelchair ramp - £123.00

TOTAL £388.97

### 9.1 Parish Footpaths Officer: A detailed document has been sent separately but the summary follows:

Ground conditions of the Footpaths vary daily due to the weather so accessibility can be temporary denied due to deep mud and flooding. Luckily these problems solve themselves naturally.

Good news

MR36- Three new Kissing gates and a plank bridge were installed on 09/03/2023.



Outstanding problems

Still 3 stiles need installing. MR7A, MR45 ( Brook Farm to Laystone Bridge) and MR18A.

MR18A. Awaiting arrival of wooden planks so rotten bridge can be replaced.

MR42 complaints about locked metal gate and broken stile are being investigated and PROW completed.

Still some Finger signs that need replacing.

### 9.2.3 Lengthsman:

#### Schedule 1 Breakdown of Grant

Item of Expenditure	Budget (in UK Sterling)
	£94.15 x 22.5 (total C & U roads) = £2118
Hire of Gully Sucker (Mayglothing Waste)	£962.50
Labour charge including traffic management (Stop/Go boards)	£661.50
Disposal of solids (2.5 tonne)	£430.00
Disposal of liquids (2 tonne)	£64.00

### 10.3 Update on outstanding notice boards – response for BBPL

*I have spoken with Fiona Miles, our Licensing Officer in relation to the below.*

*A request for a new notice board at Kitten Gate was received by Fiona but seems to have slipped through the net after returning from AL last summer and sends her sincere apologies for this.*

*She has requested stat plans to review any utilities underground at this location. Once she is in receipt of this, she would like to organise a meeting with a representative of the Parish Council to discuss.*

*Fiona does not have any record of receiving information in relation to Tumpy Lake. Are you able to forward some details for this proposal, please?*

*Fiona will review this information together with the stat plans for Kitten Gate and arrange to review both sites with a representative of the Parish Council*

*The Parish Council needs to propose a replacement location for the board currently at the Amberley Inn.*

### 11. Correspondence – significant items received as follows:

From parishioners –

- Emails - Multiple emails regarding planning application 222295
- Email – Request to consider possible defibrillator at the Vault

From other sources –

- Email – Election updates for Parish Clerks
- Email – Emails to and from lengthsman regarding potential grant work.
- Email - Balfour Beatty – weekly updates from locality steward.
- Email - To/Fm Locality Steward to agree recommencing parish drive rounds.
- Email - Gov.uk re Vehicle Operator Licenses – no local
- Email – Various from HALC re updates on meeting action items
- Email – HC Highways Team re meeting for Footpath Officers on 24<sup>th</sup> March
- Email – Balfour Beatty -= planned road closures – none in Marden
- Email – HC – S106 briefing session update following briefing on 8<sup>th</sup> February. ~New website page for parish searches. Currently Marden does not have any S106 outstanding.
- Email – Balfour Beatty – Gritting and weather updates
- Email To/Fm BBPL / HC to obtain the commissioned report on Laystone Bridge – reply awaited

Email: [parish.clerk@mardenherefordshire-pc.gov.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@mardenherefordshire-pc.gov.uk)

Marden Parish Clerk takes no responsibility for the accuracy of reports submitted for inclusion in this briefing sheet