

Marden Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 9th October 2023 at 7.30pm at the Marden Community Centre.

Present:

Cllr David Bennett (Chair), Cllr Kate Ryan, Cllr Chris Morgan, Cllr Richard Paske, Cllr Mike Blake & Cllr Lesley Hayward.

In Attendance:

Richard James (Clerk) and 2 members of the Public.

1. **To receive Apologies.** – Cllr Paula Barrett. & Cllr Rod Lees.
2. **To receive declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations.**

Noted – *There were no declarations of interest or written requests for dispensations.*

3. **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 19th September 23.**

Resolution – *The minutes of the meeting held on 19.09.23 were adopted as a true record and then signed by the Chair.*

4. **Open Session.**

Ward Member – Cllr Peter Hamblin.

Noted – *It was noted that Cllr Peter Hamblin (Ward Member) was not present, nor any written report had been sent to the Parish Council. There were several important topics the Parish Council wanted to discuss with the ward member. The Clerk was asked to contact the Ward Member and ask that if he is unable to attend future meetings that a written report would be sent.*

Public Session.

A member of the public asked the following questions.

Q1. - Will the Budget / Precept be raised if the Community Project goes ahead.

A1. - Potentially, yes, but it depends on the progression of the Community Facilities Project particularly with the current high inflation and interest rates.

Q2. - Why is the Community Project being discussed in confidential session.

A2. - Because the Council will be discussing potential contracts.

Q3. - Why is the Council going to pay an extra £2k.

A3. - The Council has not agreed anything yet but will be discussed in the closed session.

Q4. - Could the actual / budget statements be published, at least quarterly.

A4. - This will be discussed by the next Finance Advisory Working Group and be reported back.

Q5. - What are the present charges to use the Community HUB.

A5. - There is No charge for the present user of the HUB as they are all Local Community Groups or community support groups.

Q6. - Why was Freedom of Information (FOI) requests mention in the previous minutes.

A6. - Because resident should be fully aware of the time it takes for the clerk to answer FOI requests and the associated cost.

5. Footpaths Officer Report & to consider actions.

The chair had spoken with the footpaths officer and presently the PROW were in good standing apart from one PROW which was blocked by a wooden fence.

Resolution – The clerk is to inform the Herefordshire Council PROW inspector to get this matter resolved.

6. Finance Matters.

- 6.1 - Financial Report
- 6.2 - Accounts
- 6.3 - Draft Budget
- 6.4 - Banking Update

(6.1) – The Financial report was discussed.

(6.2) – The Accounts were presented to the council and brief discussion took place.

(6.3) – The draft budget

(6.4) – All the new Unity Bank Accounts had been opened.

Resolution – (6.1) & (6.2) – The Finance report and Accounts were presented to the council Marden Links HUB had cash in hand by way of a donation of £438.00 as well as £406.99 in reserves. (6.3) – There are no change to the budget from the previous month. (6.4) – Bank update was noted.

7. Payments.

	Payments	Net	Vat	Total
7.1	Clerks Salary –September 23	As per Contract		
7.2	HMRC – Tax September 23	132.60	0.00	132.60
7.3	S Lewis – Electric September	20.54	0.00	20.54
7.4	PIP Printing	280.31	0.00	280.31
7.5	DC Gardening Services –September 23	275.00	55.00	330.00

Resolution – All the Payments were approved for payment.

8. Payments made under emergency policy and regular payments.

	Payment	Net	Vat	Total
D/D	BT – Broadband & Phone – Unity Bank	31.87	6.38	38.25
S/O	HUB Rent - October 23	450.00	0.00	450.00
S/O	Community Garden – Rent – October 23	15.00	0.00	15.00
D/D	O2 Mobile Phone - September 23	12.90	2.58	15.48
D/D	Unity Bank Service Charge – September 23	12.13	0.00	12.13
	Income Received			
	Precept			27,750.00

Resolution – The payments made under emergency policy were Approved and the Direct Debit and Standing Order payments were noted.

9. Planning

	Application No	Address	Permission Sought
9.1	P232863/PA7	Drakeley Farm Marden Hereford HR1 3ES,	Application for prior notification for 2no. water analysis steel shipping containers for the improvement of water quality within the existing reservoir, which is then used within the strawberry production

Resolution – This was for information.

	Application No	Address	Permission Sought
9.2	P232825/FH	Sutton Lakes House Sutton St Nicholas Herefordshire HR1 3NS	Proposed 4 bay carport, with ancillary accommodation within the roof.

Resolution –

9.3 Planning Enforcement

- a) Pikestye Farm. – *Heritage Report issued*
- b) Small Ashes. – *Environmental follow-up results awaited*
- c) Ashgrove Croft – timescale for completion of planning conditions
- d) Oakridge

Resolution – *There had been no updates with regards to items (a), (b), and (c), with regards to item (d) this was not an enforcement issue and the parish council apologies if this seemed to be the case and caused the household undue stress. A concern had been raised relating to possible breach in planning, the clerk could not find any record on the Herefordshire Council website so posted the enquiry on to the planning department. There was no breach in planning as planning had been approved prior to the records going on the Herefordshire Councils planning portal.*

10. Reports.

- 10.1 – Community Facilities Working Group
 - 10.1.1 Events subgroup upcoming activities
 - 10.1.2 Community Facilities project update
- 10.2 – Marden Links
 - 10.2.1 – Hub activity update
 - 10.2.2 – Repair Café Update
 - 10.2.3 – Community Garden Update
 - 10.2.4 – Environmental & Sustainability update
 - 10.2.5 – Volunteer event plan
- 10.3 – Neighbourhood Development Plan Review Working Group
- 10.4 – Financial Advisory Working Group

(10.1.1) – There are several community events organised which included a Quiz Night on the 14.10.23
– Race Night on the 18.11.23 – Christmas Cracker Event on the 22.12.23.

(10.1.2) – Planning permission has yet to be granted for the Community Facilities project but is immanent.

- (10.2.1) – A HUB activity report was given. The HUB café remains well supported and presently is open 2 days a week 2pm – 4pm. Resident have asked if it could be open additional days, sadly the HUB is limited to 2 days a week due to the number of current volunteers it needs to run the sessions. Following a request from residents the HUB is going to move its opening time to 1pm – 3pm to cover lunch and during November and December will be offering soup and bread. The money left from the grant (currently held in reserves) will be used to purchase approved items. The main purchases will be a microwave and an entrance ramp.
- (10.2.2) – The Repair Café has proven to be a total success and remains at maximum capacity given the current volunteers and space it has, it continues to receive donations from satisfied clients, which covers the day to day running cost of the repair café.
The HUB Repair Café is looking to offer other services to the community such as a “Tool Loan Scheme” and a Cycle Repair and spares service.
- (10.2.3) – The Marden Links Working Group’s Community Garden continues to move forward thanks to the hard work of volunteers who are clearing the site. A design has now been approved based on parishioner ideas. This outline design is being costed A huge thanks must go out to Belfour Beatty Living people via our locality Steward for all the help and support they have given to this project. More recently supplying 25 tonnes of top-grade soil for the raised beds. If any member of the parish would like to get involved, please contact the clerk. Likewise, if any resident or business would like to donate or sponsor a raised bed or shed it would be much appreciated. The target completion date for this project is May 2024.
- (10.2.4) – Environmental & Sustainability working group has now been incorporated into the Marden Links working group.
- (10.2.5) – The Parish Council will be holding a volunteer’s event on the 27th November between 6pm – 8pm at the Community Centre. Partners of volunteers are also welcome to attend.
- (10.3) – Neighbourhood Development Plan Review Working Group have not met, as the Herefordshire Local Plan 2021-2041 is currently at a ‘pause and review’ stage. It is anticipated that the public consultation on the draft Local Plan will now take place in March 24. The new Local Plan is likely to have a different settlement hierarchy to that within the current Core Strategy. The aim is for the Herefordshire Council team to meet with all parish councils later in the year to discuss the impacts of any proposed changes on current NDPs.
- (10.4) – Financial Advisory Working Group will be meeting again to finalise the draft budget prior to the November Parish Council meeting.

Resolution – All the reports were noted.

11. Community.

- 11.1 – Remembrance Day Wreath
- 11.2 – Locality Steward
- 11.3 – Sutton Walls meeting 19th October 2023

(11.1) – A short debate took place about the purchase of a Remembrance Day wreath and the amount of a donation to the Royal British Legion. Cllr C Morgan agreed to give a reading again this year as a representative of the Parish Council, and Cllr Bennett will lay the wreath.

(11.2) – The chair has had a drive around the Parish with the locality steward and several issues were highlighted and logged. The Chair reported that the Herefordshire Council were looking at resurfacing Holbatch but the Parish Council might like to consider Burmarsh as a better alternative. This should be added to next month's agenda for discussion.

(11.3) – The council had received a letter from a resident regarding the planned Sutton Walls meeting in October, council agreed to review its stance on this issue after this public meeting. Several councillors indicated that they would be attending this meeting to hear the arguments on both sides.

Resolution – (10.1) *It was approved that the clerk should purchase a wreath and arrange for a donation of £150 to be sent to the local Royal British Legion branch. (10.2) The parish council will continue to campaign for resurfacing throughout the parish. (10.3) – Sutton Wall will be discussed at a future meeting following the attendance of councillors at the public meeting.*

12. Clerk Report.

12.1 – Christmas Tree Update

12.2 – Bench (Bus Stop) Update

12.3 – Correspondence

12.4 – Update of replacement horse sign

(12.1) – It was reported that for this year the parish council would pay for the Christmas tree along with a smaller live tree.

(12.2) – The clerk reported that the bus stop bench had now been fitted in place. The chair reported that he had received positive comments already.

(12.3) – There was no additional correspondence.

(12.4) – The replacement horse sign had now been ordered.

Resolution – (12.1) *The council agreed to purchase of a 16-foot Christmas tree and a smaller potted tree up to the value of £ 400.00. Noted that the Marden Recreation Ground Trust have offered to pay half the cost. (12.2) The bench update was noted. (12.3) Noted. (12.4) Noted.*

To exclude the members Public and Press from this part of the meeting to discuss items of a confidential nature.

13. Marden Community Centre

A brief update to the questions and answers from the previous meeting were discussed. The present position of the Community Centre was explained, and councillors were taken through the contract and additional questions were asked.

Resolution – *It was agreed that the clerk requests answers to the questions raised and subject to satisfactory replies and the approval of planning permission being granted, Council would move to the next stage with all its relevant costs previously agreed as part of the 2021 tender process, fees are unchanged for RIBA stage 4. Subject to appropriate responses, it was agreed that the Clerk*

should pay additional one-off Architects fees associated with work in responding to planning application queries and communications with the developer on the S106 agreement and timing of land transfer.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.50pm.

A blue ink signature is present, but the name and any text below it are completely redacted with a thick black horizontal bar.

Signed:
Chair of the Council

Date: 21st November 2023