



New Parish Hall Parish Meeting

Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Meeting of the 23rd January 2025.

Present:

Marden Village Trust – Mrs Paula Barrett & Mr David Tidball

Marden Academy – Mr Stephen Miles & Mr Robert Bartup

Marden Parish Council – Cllr David Bennett (Chair)

Marden Parish Clerk – Mr Richard James

Public – 22 Members of the Public

1. Welcome by the Chair.

Cllr David Bennett welcomed and thanked everyone for their attendance and briefly explained the purpose of the meeting.

2. Receive Apologies.

The Clerk reported he had not received any apologies.

3. Presentation about the New Parish Hall.

The Chair proceeded to go through the New Parish Hall presentation including the design and costings right down to what it would cost a Band D property.

4. Open Question session for the Parishioners.

Q1 – Do the Pre-School pay a reasonable rent.

A1 – This is not really a consideration as they **will not be** in the New Hall.

Q2 – Where will the Pre-School be.

A2 – The Pre-School will have their own facilities within the Academy Grounds.

Q3 – Currently the main hall, community lounge and meeting room is not available during the day because of the Pre-school.

A3 – No, this is not the case, the current main hall is not available in the weekdays because the hall is used by the Academy as defined in the current lease, the community lounge and small meeting room is used by the Pre-school as the only organisation suitable for shared use with the Academy due to National child safeguarding legislation

Q4 – Will the current main hall still be available to rent.

A4 – Yes. The Academy and Marden Village Trust have agreed a new lease which will allow the use of the main Hall by parishioners on the same basis as now.

Q5 – Will the Pre-School need planning permission for its new facilities.

A5 – Yes.

Q6 – Who will be paying for this planning permission, the Academy or the Parish Council.

A6 – Neither. The Pre-School will submit an application, and cover the costs of the planning process.

Q7 – What will the current community rooms be used for.

A7 – They will be converted into a much needed additional classroom for use by the Academy.

Q8 – Will this mean the school will be expanding.

A8 – Yes.

Q9 – A larger Academy will mean that at dropping off and picking up times the traffic which is already bad will be even more of an issue.

A9 – The Academy and the Herefordshire Council Highways will be looking at traffic management plans. The S106 transport payment should also look to help improve the safety within the parish.

Q10 – Will this be paid for by the taxpayer.

A10 – Any agreed traffic scheme improvements will be paid for from S106 money from the building of the new 90 homes.

Q11 – Will the new development provide more parking spaces.

A11 – No, only for their new homeowners.

Q12 – How many carparking spaces will the new parish hall have.

A12 – The new hall will have 4 disabled spaces and 14 other spaces as well as bicycle hoop space.

Q13 – That is not enough parking spaces for the new hall.

A13 – The Parish Council obtained some additional land for parking as part of the Heads of Terms agreement.

Q14 – Could some of the new village green be used for parking.

A14 – No, the Heads of Terms agreement specifies the public open space (village green) requirement.

Q15 – Will you be able to use the Academy carpark as additional parking for the new hall.

A15 – Yes, there will be a path between the Academy and the new parish hall.

Q16 – Will this be pathway be lit.

A16 – Currently there was no provision for this as, Marden is a “Dark Skies Area” but sympathetic low level lighting options could be looked at.

Q17 – Why has the Parish Council not consultation with the community.

A17 – The Parish Council has fully consulted the parish, Marden Village Trust the Academy since 2015.

Q18 – Why has the project cost not been discussed sooner.

A18 – Following the Parish Poll a cross community group was setup to determine the best way forward for the Parish. The review took 15 months. The cost of the hall could only be finally determined following the “design and build” tender process.

Q19 – Is it correct the Parish Council will be funding part of the project via a £500k Public Works Loan at 5+% interest.

A19 – Yes.

Q20 – Has the Parish Council considered asking residents for loans, especially if they are offered at 5% interest.

A20 – No, but it something the Parish Council could explore.

Q21 – Has the current community hall lease been relinquished.

A21 – No, not yet. Under the constitution of Marden Village Trust an extra-ordinary meeting was held and parishioners agreed to support the lease relinquishment provided 4 key assurances were met. One of these, the Parish Council formally acquiring the land or at least obtained a letter of intent from the landowner, has not been met yet. This has been verbally agreed and is likely to be formally confirmed in the near future.

Q22 – Will the new parish hall car park be open to all.

A22 – No, there will liftable bollards at the entrance, in order to stop inappropriate parking.

Q23 – What are the estimated car park building/development costs .

A23 – The current tender process suggests a tarmac cost of £14,700 and pathways £11,000.

Q24 – Can the Parish Council guarantee the final parish hall project price.

A24 – No, but all has been done to fix the final cost. The build cost will be fixed by tendering for a ‘design and build’ contract. There is a contingency.

Q25 – What is the contingency figure for.

A25 – Like any contingency figure it will be used for unforeseen or potential additional items.

5. Close.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and for their continued support of the new parish hall project.

Summary

This meeting, and previous consultation events, demonstrate that there is support for the new hall project throughout the Parish.

Residents now fully understand the project, and the obstacles that have caused previous delays. Several new ideas were put forward that will be looked at.

- Lighting the pathways for safety.
- Look at possible resident loans.