



## Marden Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting at 7.30 pm on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025 at  
Marden Community Centre.

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# Minutes

### Present:

*Cllr David Bennett (Chair), Cllr Kate Ryan, Cllr Paula Barrett, Cllr Chris Morgan, Cllr Rod Lees, Cllr Lesley Hayward, Cllr Richard Paske and Cllr Mike Blake.*

### In Attendance:

Richard James (Clerk)  
Sally Postlethwaite (Footpaths Officer)  
4 x Members of the Public.

### 1. To receive Apologies.

**Note** - No apologies were received.

### 2. To receive declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations.

*The Clerk said that all the Councillors who pay Council Tax have to declared an interest in item 6.3 (Budget) & 6.4 (Precept) and asked for a dispensation so they can still speak and vote on these items.*

**Resolution** – *All Councillors declared an interest in items 6.3 (Budget) & 6.4 (Precept) and signed the request for dispensation.*

### 3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 17.12.24.

**Resolution** - The Minutes of 17.12.24, were approved and signed by the Chair.

### 4. Open Session.

(Ward Member)

**Note** - The ward member was not present neither was a written report submitted.

(Public Session)

Q1. – A resident said that at the November meeting, Council said they had 2 contractors shortlisted to build the new hall and in December said they had 1 contractor, which is it, 1 or 2.

A1. – One of the contractors pulled out at the last stage leaving just the one.

Q2. – The resident asked who this contractor was.

A2. – This information was confidential for contract reasons.

Q3. – Is the precept still going to be £80k.

A3. – That was the figure which went out to all residents in the draft budget for consultation and will be discussed later in the agenda.

- Q4. – The resident asked who was going to pay for the HUB equipment.  
 A4. – This is on the agenda for debate later.  
 Q5. – The resident asked why a confidential session on the agenda was there.  
 A5. – There were contractual matters which needs to be discussed.

## 5. Footpaths Officer Report & to Consider actions.

The footpaths officer presented the following report.

*Due to vast amounts of rain, many of the footpaths have flooded and some of the Bridleways have been too muddy to ride along. There have been many reports of fallen trees blocking rights of way. Landowners were contacted and most of the debris has been cleared. Awaiting to hear how we proceed with installing the new stiles as there has been a change in the ordering procedure and a change in the installation process e.g. delivery. One landowner has agreed to install the kissing gates on his land.*

*Possible interest has been shown in the voluntary Footpath Officers Job and the prospective replacement has been invited to the next Council to find out more information. No response yet.*

**To Note** – Council noted the report.

Additional debate took place on the PROW grant, and the Clerk reported that the Herefordshire Council would supply the stiles and kissing gates under this scheme. However, it would either be the responsibility of the landowner, volunteers or the Parish Council fund the installation works.

**Resolution** – Council agreed to purchase metal kissing gates, if the Herefordshire Council cannot supply them.

## 6. Finance Matters.

### 6.1 - Financial Report

**Resolution** – The Council approved the financial report.

### 6.2 - Bank Accounts – 31.12.24

6.2a - Unity Main – December - £4,153.88

6.2b - Unity Reserve – December - £94,920.79

**To Note** – The Council noted the bank statements.

### 6.3 - Approve Draft Budget 2025 -26

**Resolution** – The Council approved a balanced Budget for 2025-26 of £100,025.

### 6.4 - Approve the Precept for 2025/26

**Resolution** – The Council approved the precept for 2025/26 at £80,000.00.

## 7. Payments.

	Payments	Net	Vat	Total
7.1	Clerks Salary – January 24	As per Contract		

7.2	DC Gardening Services – SI-2102	175.00	35.00	210.00
7.3	eUKhost	125.18	25.04	150.22

**Resolution** – Council agreed to pay all the invoices.

#### 8. Payment made under emergency policy and regular payments.

		Payment	Net	Vat	Total
8.1	D/D	BT – Broadband & Phone – January 25	32.11	6.42	38.53
8.2	S/O	HUB Rent – January 25	450.00	0.00	450.00
8.3	S/O	Community Garden – Rent – January 25	15.00	0.00	15.00
8.4	BACS	S Lewis – December Electric	64.09	0.00	64.09

**To Note** – The Council noted the payments made under emergency policy were Approved and the Direct Debit and Standing Order.

#### 9. Planning.

The Clerk reported that a Planning Application had been received today, and comments had to be made and received before our next Parish Council meeting date.

	Application No	Address	Permission Sought
9.1	243262	1 Frankhurst Sutton St Nicholas Herefordshire HR1 3BN	Proposed replacement of the flat roof to the existing 2 storey element at the rear of the dwelling by a hipped roof.

**Resolution** – Council agreed to support this application.

#### 10. Moreton Bridge Closure - Update.

The HRSA submission to the county ecologist has been approved so that element is complete. The temporary works scaffold design has been completed, and it has also been approved by the BBLP temporary works team BBLP continue to chase the EA for approval of the FRAP which is the last approval required prior to us commencing the works. Additional signage for the closure is being put out tomorrow.

As soon as we have any further update on the FRAP I will let you know.

**EA** = Environment Agency

**FRAP** = Flood Risk Activity Permit

**BBLP** = Balfour Beatty

**HRSA** = Habitat Regulations Screening Assessment

**To Note** – Council noted this report.

### 11. New Parish Hall – Update.

The Chair reported that the new hall was moving forward at an ever-increasing rate. Citizen Housing has now appointed a developer to build the 90 dwellings. The Chair and the Clerk had a very encouraging meeting with the new developer S J Roberts, who said they were very keen to keep a good channel of communications open with the Parish Council.

**To Note** – Council noted this report.

### 12. Working Group Reports.

12 - Marden Links

#### a) Hub activity update

Cllr Ryan reported that the HUB is still as popular as ever and the winter warmer is again going down a storm. Residents can come and socialise with likeminded individuals and enjoy a cup of hot homemade soup a roll. Cllr Ryan reported that the HUB requires the following equipment to enhance the facilities. It is hoped that the CCTV will be 50% funded by the landlord. The HUB office light has been on the blink for ages and ages but has now give up the ghost, this will also be discussed with the landlord.

- 2 x infra-red heaters - £34.95 ea.
- External CCTV - £179.00
- New Light fitting & installation HUB office

**Resolution** – Council agreed to pay for this equipment and work to be done.

#### b) Repair Café Update

The repair café continues to work flat out every month and would welcome some additional tools and equipment, listed below.

- Set of files - £29.99
- Shelving for container - £ 150.00
- Ironing board - £33.14 & iron - £19.99.
- Angle poise lamp - £62.30

**Resolution** – Council notes the equipment that the repair café requires and that it will be funded out of the donations received.

#### c) Community Garden

Cllr Ryan reported the Community Garden was coming on, the thanks to the volunteers and the help of S & A Produce. There is going to be another garden volunteer weekend on the 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> February 25, please come and support or even help. There is a big shout out for bricks to build a BBQ for the garden. So, if any residents have some bricks, please contact the Clerk.

- Fencing & Gates - £940.00
- Wheelbarrow - £68.95
- Small water fountain - £24.87
- Pond Liner - £24.99
- BBQ grill - £37.99

**Resolution** – Council agreed to pay for the equipment and the fencing to secure the

*community garden.*

#### 12.2 - Neighbourhood Development Plan Review Working Group

The Chair reported that there had been no meeting as the local plan is being reworked and a revised Regulation 18 consultation was not likely until the end of the year.

**To Note** – Council noted this.

#### 12.3 – Finance & Administration Working Group

The Chair reported that it had not met but there will be meeting before the February Parish Council meeting.

**To Note** – Council noted this.

### 13. Approve Future Council Dates.

18.02.25 – 18.03.25 – 15.04.25 – **20.05.25** – 17.06.25 – 15.07.25 – 19.08.25 – 16.09.25 – 21.10.25 – 18.11.25 – 16.12.25 – **The Marden Community Centre.**  
**20.05.25 - Annual Parish Meeting at 6pm.**

**Resolution** – Council agreed these dates and asked the Clerk to contact the Local Police to see if they could make a presentation at the annual parish meeting on Rural Policing and how it might apply to the Parish of Marden

### 14. Future Agenda Items or Clerk action under delegated authority.

- Future meeting with S & A
- Review the Polly tunnels plan of implementation
- Herefordshire Council Children’s Services update
- Dog Fouling
- Asset Register
- Risk Assessment
- Lengthsman
- Police at the Annual Parish Meeting

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

### 15. New Parish Hall.

The Chair reported that the New Parish Hall was now moving at a pace, with a public meeting being held on the 23.01.25.

The Council’s preferred contractor is revising their quotation as there has been material price increase in the New Year and because no formal agreement has been signed. Early stages are showing a 3% increase of £22k and this is without the potential steel framework increase.

The Chair and The Clerk meet with the developers of the New House Farm site belonging to Citizen Housing for the building of 90 dwellings. This meeting went well, and they said they were hoping to start building in April 2025. They said the total build should take 2½ to 3 years, the work will be in 3 or 4 stages starting at the New House Farm end finishing with the social housing at the New Hall and School end.

There was some concern around the length of time since the project was initially

tendered, some Council were concerned that 6-months was not showing good governance and maybe Council should be looking at retendering.

The Chair said that retendering would have a cost, but as a public body we must demonstrate good governance and value for money for our parishioners. A retender cost could be around £5k or £6k as a rough estimate.

**Resolution** – *Council agreed for the Clerk to asked for an accurate price for retendering and if budgets allowed, to instruct the Architect to retender.*

**16. To consider quote for Council printing.**

**Resolution** – *Council agreed the new quote but suggested that the Clerk liaise with the N&V editor.*

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.50pm.

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature of the Chair of the Council. The signature is written in blue ink and is partially visible above and below the redaction.

Signed:  
Chair of the Council

Date: 18th February 2025