



Marden Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting at 7.00 pm on 17th June 2025 at
Marden Community Centre.

Minutes

Present:

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

In Attendance:

Mr Richard James (Clerk)
Cllr Peter Hamblin (Ward Member)
1 x Member of the Public.

1. To receive Apologies.

To Note – *Apologies were received from Cllr Mike Blake and Cllr Paula Barrett,*

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

To Note – *There were no declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations.*

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 18.05.25.

Resolution – *The draft minutes of the 18.05.25 were adopted and duly signed by the Chair.*

4. Open Session.

(Ward Member)

The Ward Member added the following to his ward report.

- Significant progress towards the first phase of the Hereford by-pass – From A49 south (Ross Road) to A465 (Abergavenny Road) - has been achieved, with the start of the procurement process of a contractor to work on the final details of the design and build. They should be identified by the end of the year and work beginning in latter part of 2026.
- Herefordshire Council is one of very few local authorities who will managed to secure a closure of their 2024/25 accounts before the end of June. Despite the continuing financial challenges and increased demand, the council showed a small underspend of £0.5 million in the year. This included successfully achieving £10.9 million of planned savings, prudent use of reserves and rigorous financial management across all areas of the council during the last fiscal year.

To Note – *The Ward Members report can be found on the Parish Council website.*

(Members of Public)

Q1. When is the Marden Village Trust going to sign over the lease.

A1. It has always been agreed that the lease will be signed over once the land is in the ownership of the Parish Council.

Q2. The Marden Village Trust is going to give the £300k towards the new Parish Hall.

A2. Marden Village Trust will be releasing the current leases back to the Herefordshire Council, then Herefordshire Council will then give the Marden Village Trust approximately £300k 12 months after the release. The Trust has committed to use these funds to purchase a management lease on the new hall for 50 years.

Q3. When is all this going to happen.

A3. The land transfer is currently with the solicitors and a precise date cannot be given. With regard to the current lease release, this is down to the Trust.

Q4. What is going to happen about the Pre-school.

A4. The Pre-school is looking at moving into new portable classrooms within the grounds of the school.

Q5. Why would the Parish Council be looking for a bridging loan.

A5. This may be required, as there will be a time shortfall between the New Parish Hall being completed and the Marden Village Trust purchasing the management lease.

Q6. Why is the project going ahead if the Parish Council don't have the money.

A6. The Parish Council are only going as far as their funds allow, if the Public Works Loan is unsuccessful then the project would require a rethink.

Q7. Will there be solar panels on the new hall.

A7. Yes, with battery storage.

5. Footpaths Officer Report & to Consider actions.

The Parish Council is still looking for a new Footpaths Officer following the retirement of Sally. The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council advertise for a replacement.

To Note – *The Council approved to advertise for a replacement Footpaths Officer.*

6. Finance Matters.

6.1 - Financial Summary Report.

6.1a - Bank Rec – May 25

6.1b - Budget Monitoring – May 25

To Note – *Council noted the Bank Rec and the Budget monitoring for May 25.*

6.2 - Bank Accounts – 31.05.25.

6.2a - Unity Main – May - £45,052.84

6.2b - Unity Reserve – May - £64,070.12

To Note – *Council noted the Bank Statements.*

6.3 - HUB Accounts.

To Note – Council noted the HUB accounts, however these accounts don't consider cash held.

7. Payments.

	Payments	Net	Vat	Total
7.1	Clerks Salary – May 25	As per Contract		
7.2	D C Gardening – SI-2205	730.00	146.00	876.00
7.3	Signworx - 8713	252.00	0.00	252.00
7.4	R James – Mr Flag - Union Flag	75.00	15.00	90.00
7.5	Signworx - 8652	86.00	17.20	103.20
7.6	Marden Village Trust – Hall Hire	60.00	0.00	60.00

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 – May 25	35.26	7.05	42.31
8.2	S/O	HUB Rent – May 25	450.00	0.00	450.00
8.3	S/O	Community Garden – Rent – May 25	15.00	0.00	15.00
8.4	BACS	Community Garden Event – Booker	245.19	15.14	260.33
8.5	BACS	W Architecture	2200.00	440.00	2640.00

Resolution – Council agreed all the payments made under emergency policy and regular payments.

9 Community.

9.1 - Meeting with S&A.

The Chair reported that the meeting with S & A had been very worthwhile, and several topics were discussed. It is intended that they will hold regular meetings to help to alleviate any future issues before they happen. S & A had already informed the Council about night spraying of crops within the Parish.

To Note – This was noted and welcomed by the Parish Council.

9.2 - Unsuitable for large Vehicles Road Sign Urdimarsh Road

The Clerk reported that he had contact the Herefordshire Council's highways department about the installation of Unsuitable for large Vehicles Road Signs at Urdimarsh Road but was still awaiting a response. The Clerk will also bring this up with the Ward Member.

To Note – This was noted by the Council and await a reply from the Herefordshire Council.

9.3 - S106 Funding.

It was reported that the first 25% of S106 monies had already been paid by the developer. However, the Parish Council will have to wait until the end of the project before it can draw down any of these funds. This gives the Parish Council time to look at potential traffic / road improvements within the parish as well as allowing the Recreation Ground Trust to plan the tennis court refurbishment and additions to the play area.

To Note – This was noted by the Council.

9.4 - Drainage Grant

9.5 - PROW Grant

The clerk reported that both these schemes were going ahead again this year, and the Clerk would liaise with the Lengthsman in applying for these grants.

Resolution – Council approved for the Clerk to liaise with the Lengthsman and come back to Council with a potential scheme for Council endorsement, before it is sent to Herefordshire Council.

10. Planning.

	Application No	Address	Permission sought
10.1	251355	10 Orchard Green Marden HR1 3ED	Proposed side extension and internal reconfiguration

Resolution – The Marden Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the following grounds.

- The overall size of the extension being a 74% increase,
- The flat roof would not be in keeping with neighbouring properties.
- Over development of the site.
- No drainage or rainwater scheme.

	Application No	Address	Permission sought
10.2	251063	Willow Cottage Marden Hereford Herefordshire HR1 3HB,	Proposed erection of a replacement self-build dwelling together with ancillary development

Resolution – The Marden Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the following grounds.

- Development in the open Countryside.
- The new development is larger than the existing footprint.
- The removal of established trees and hedging.

	Application No	Address	Permission sought
10.3	251593	Fairview Sutton St Nicholas Hereford HR1 3BU	Proposed erection of an annex associated with Fairview

Resolution – The Marden Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the following grounds.

- Can not see any real planning reason for this annex
- Development in the open Countryside.

	<i>Application No</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Permission sought</i>
10.4	251704	17 Burmarsh Cottages Sutton St Nicholas Hereford HR1 3BW	The extension will extend beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling by 4.2 metres. The maximum height of the extension will be 2.78 metres and the height at the eaves of the extension will be 2.55 metres

Resolution – The Marden Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application on the following grounds.

- Over development of the site.
- The flat roof is not in keeping with neighbouring properties.

	<i>Application No</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Permission sought</i>
10.5	250164	Burling Gate Farm, Marden, HR1 3EU.	

Resolution – The Marden Parish Council neither Support nor Object to this application however they would like to express the following concerns.

- Additional Traffic on already poorly maintained roads.
- Safety concerns over additional traffic.
- Emissions from the Biomass boiler.
- Implication in paragraph 1.1.2 of the planning statement is that the business is growing and has many customers.
- Paragraph 2.1.5 states we do not revisit matters concerning transport and traffic.
- Paragraph 3.3 it states that there will be 2 return trips per day for coming to work and deliveries and 1 lorry load of wood per week for kiln drying. There is no mention of how the fuel for the biomass plant will arrive.
- Concern over a small current business growing significantly and add further pressure to our transport system.
- No restriction or mention of operation business hours.

	<i>Application No</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Permission sought</i>
10.7	251688	Plots 6, 7 & 8, Land adjacent to Rose Villa Marden Hereford	Proposed non-material amendment to planning permission 182466 (Proposed erection of 3 dwellings with garages) - relocation of garage serving plot 8 to avoid conflict with drainage apparatus.

Resolution – The Marden Parish Council noted that the Herefordshire Council planning were not taking comments on this application.

11. New Parish Hall – Update.

11.1 – Newsletter No 4.

The Chair reported that the latest edition of the New Parish Hall Newsletter was out and will be posted upon the Parish Council website following this meeting.

To Note – Council noted this, and acknowledged this publication was proving very informative.

11.2 - Update

The Chair reported that Citizens Solicitor seems to be holding the legal matters up. However, the project needs to still move forward where the Parish Council are concerned, sadly we have not had a yes or no from the Public Works Loan Board so all the Council can do to secure the quotation, is to sign a letter of intent to a value we currently hold in reserves.

The Chair (Cllr D Bennett) therefore proposed that a letter of intent is sent to the developer to the value of £30k (Thirty Thousand Pounds) and a letter to instruct to the Architect to move forward. This will incur professional fees of £11k (Eleven Thousand Pounds) totalling £41k (Forty-One Thousand Pounds)

This was seconded by the Cllr Chris Morgan.

Resolution – That the Clerk sends a letter of intent to the developer to the value of £30k (Thirty Thousand Pounds) and also a letter instructing the Architect to move forward which will incur professional fees of £11k (Eleven Thousand Pounds) totalling £41k (Forty-One Thousand Pounds) on the understanding that there will be no further funding until the PWL has been approved and the land transfer has taken place.

12 Working Group Reports.

12.1 - Marden Links

a) Hub activity update.

Cllr Ryan reported that they have received a good response from the questionnaire they sent out. The results will be discussed at the next Hub working group meeting.

To Note – This was noted by the Council.

b) Repair Café Update.

Cllr Ryan reported that the repair café has become victim of its own success, they have more repair enquiries than they can handle at times. They would welcome new repairers as this would allow them to fix more. They continue to get donations from satisfied customers.

To Note – This was noted by the Council.

c) Community Garden.

Cllr Ryan reported the Open Garden event which included a BBQ, was very well supported, from residents across the whole Parish. Many residents were amazed at all the hard work done by volunteers and S & A which had turn a waste ground into a truly relaxing community garden.

To Note – This was noted by the Council.

12.2 - Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Chair reported that he had met with a local resident about housing development within the Parish. The Chair report that it was a shame all planning applications could not be based on this idea. While this could be seen as a nice mix of housing, and the layout not all cramped with a very inviting mixed development. unfortunately, this is outside the defined settlement boundary agreed in the current Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Chair said he was going to meet fellow Chair from Ocle Pychard to discuss the present Neighbourhood Plan and the future developments within rural areas as well as funding community building projects.

The Clerk reported that there will be NO funding for new Neighbourhood Development Plans and the Herefordshire Council had said they would not allow any officer time to new plans. The Clerk also reported that the Herefordshire Council will be going out to call for development sites within Herefordshire. The Chair said there were areas in the parish which needed protecting, maybe via a local Community Asset Order.

Resolution – *Council agreed for the Clerk and Ward Councillor to arrange a meeting of members of the Parish Council with a senior planning officer to discuss the potential impact on Marden given current Government Legislation. The aim of the meeting would be to discuss the potential impacts given that Herefordshire Council has already deemed Marden to be unsustainable and look at ways that the Parish Council and HC can work together to move forward.*

12.3 - Finance & Administration Working Group.

The Finance & Administration working group had meet and went thought the accounts and made the following recommendations to put to Council.

- To claim VAT monthly.
- Make the maximum use of the reserves account savings rate.
- For the Council to start to look at a draft budget for 2026/27

To Note – *This was noted by the Council.*

13 Action List.

- Protect Community Assets
- Chase up Unsuitable for Large Vehicle Signs.
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14 Future Agenda Items.

- 20 mph limits
- Transportation Working Group.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.30pm.



Signed:
Chair of the Council
15th July 2025