

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 2ND OCTOBER 2023, 7.30 PM
AT WEST MALLING VILLAGE HALL, NORMAN ROAD

Present: Mrs Trudy Dean (Chair)
Mrs Camilla Bridgeland
Ms Izzy Jones
Mr Keith Mann
Ms Sara Margetts
Mrs Lorna Miles
Mrs Yvonne Smyth
Ms Min Stacpoole
Mr Peter Stevens

Minute		Action by	Action	Response
23/539	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Ms Gwyneth Barkham; Borough Cllr. Tatton and Borough Cllr. Roud.			
23/540	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Mrs Dean declared an interest at 23/555.2 as she is the Chair of Malling Action Partnership.			
23/541	MINUTES - the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4 th September and the extraordinary meeting held on 11 th September were approved and signed.			
23/542	MATTERS ARISING - none			
542.1	23/478.1 – Leybourne Woods – the Clerk confirmed that Leybourne Parish Council had been successful in their Community Ownership Fund bid and had secured the sum of £120,000 towards the purchase of Leybourne Woods.			
542.2	23/481.1 – Joiners Arms – the Clerk updated members on correspondence received from Environmental Protection and Licensing Departments at TMBC regarding excessive noise and the potential requirement for them to have a pavement Licence.			
23/543	CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS External Audit 2022/23- Mrs Dean informed members that the completion of audit certificate had not yet been received from the external auditor, Mazars. The statutory deadline for displaying the completion of audit notice is 30 th September and therefore the deadline has passed.			

	Advice had been sought from KALC and WMPC's internal auditor. It was agreed that any next steps to be taken should be delegated to the Clerk (RFO). <i>Subsequent to the meeting, the completion of audit certificate was received in the office on 11th October. Public notice displayed on 11th October.</i>			
23/544	<u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</u> - none			
23/545	<u>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</u>			
545.1	Postal service - Mr Stevens reported that he had noticed a decrease in the number of postal deliveries over the last few weeks. To be monitored and Ms Margetts to attempt to make enquiries.	SM		
545.2	Macey's Meadow Apple Fest – Ms Margetts updated members on the event held on 30 th September and was pleased to announce that £862.80 was raised. Some instances of anti-social behaviour were noted.			
545.3	WMPC litter pick – following a question from Mrs Bridgeland it was noted that the litter pick is to take place on Saturday 28 th October. To be publicised.			
545.4	Churchyard – Mrs Smyth reported that there is a dip / pothole in the Churchyard which caused a gentleman to fall. General discussion regarding if this is a PROW. To be reported on the KCC portal and for Churchyard lighting to be discussed at Highways.	SM	√	
23/546	<u>POLICING MATTERS</u>			
546.1	<u>Police Update</u> – the September police report was received and noted. No questions.			
546.2	<u>Other Policing Matters</u> Ongoing issues with anti-social behaviour were discussed. Clerk to request that PC Whitehead attend a parish council meeting. Clerk to action	Clerk	√	
23/547	<u>LOCAL PLAN</u>			
	It was noted that the joint parish Green Belt petition has been submitted to TMBC and that in due course it will be presented to the Mayor.			
23/548	<u>ROTARY HOUSE</u>			
	It was agreed that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (purchase of land) it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and asked to withdraw in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.			
548.1	Asset of Community Value – it was noted that the full moratorium period ends 5 March 2024 – this being 6 months from the date that the owner advised of his intention to sell.			
548.2	Community Ownership Fund – it was noted that an Expression Of Interest form was submitted on 19 th September. Should the Council be advised that they can proceed to bid, the bid window closes on 11 th October, it was therefore agreed that an extraordinary meeting be held on Monday 9 th October to finalise any bid.			
548.3	Legal representation – it was agreed that moving forward the Council should instruct Gullands Solicitors. It was noted that we have used Gullands before on other matters and that we sought advice from Gullands when looking to purchase the site from KCC.			
548.4	Rotary House working group – the following councillors have expressed an interest in being consulted on Rotary House matters; Mrs Dean, Ms Jones; Mr Mann; Ms Margetts; Mrs Smyth			

	and Ms Stacpoole			
23/549	<u>WEST MALLING PUBLIC CONVENIENCES</u>			
549.1	Legal representation for the purchase of King Street toilets – members were in receipt of an estimate from Gullands Solicitors in the sum of £1750 - £2,500 plus VAT and disbursements. It was agreed to accept this quote.			
549.2	Potential new toilet block in TMBC High Street car park – members were in receipt of updated costs for pods (costs from Changing Places / RISE) – noted.			
23/550	<u>WEST MALLING GATEWAY SCHEME</u>			
	Recommendation from the F&GP Committee that the sum of £1621.00 be taken from reserves to fund the KCC installation of a heritage gate on St Leonards Street. Proposed by Ms Margetts and seconded by Mrs Dean. Agreed.			
23/551	<u>REMEMBRANCE DAY / ARMISTICE DAY</u>			
	Steward arrangements were discussed – to be finalised.			
23/552	<u>PUBLICATION SCHEME</u>			
	Members were in receipt of the draft Publication Scheme document. Recommendation from the F&GP Committee that the draft Publication Scheme be adopted. Agreed.			
23/553	<u>CIVILITY PLEDGE</u>			
	Recommendation from the F&GP Committee that WMPC sign up to the Civility and Respect Project. Agreed. Civility and Respect Project (nalc.gov.uk) Dignity at work policy to be drafted for consideration at the next F&GP Committee.			
23/554	<u>CHAMBER OF COMMERCE / CHRISTMAS LIGHTS</u>			
554.1	Christmas Lights Festival - it was noted that the festival is to take place on Sunday 3 rd December and that volunteers are required to assist with the running of the day.			
554.2	Christmas window display competition – this is to be judged on Friday 1 st December by Ms Barkham, Ms Jones and Ms Margetts.			
554.3	Chamber of Commerce subscription – it was noted that subscription fees are to be re-introduced in the sum of £100.00. WMPC has £50.00 in the current budget. It was agreed that WMPC would continue to be a member of the Chamber of Commerce and that an additional £50 would be taken from reserves. Clerk to ask the Secretary of the Chamber what members will receive for the £100 subscription / how will subscriptions be spent and for accounts to be made available.	Clerk	√	
23/555	<u>APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES</u>			
555.1	West Malling Group Practice Patient Participation Group – Ms Stacpoole agreed to represent WMPC at their meetings.			
555.2	Malling Action Partnership – Mrs Bridgeland and Mr Mann volunteered to represent WMPC			

	on the board of the Malling Action Partnership.			
23/556	<u>F&GP COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP</u>			
	Recommendation from the F&GP Committee that the committee look to co-opt an additional 2 (maximum) members to ensure the work of the committee can be completed. Mrs Bridgeland and Mr Mann agreed to join the committee.			
23/557	<u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING ON 23RD SEPTEMBER</u>			
	The following are to be considered at a meeting of the F&GP Committee: establishment of advisory committees; standing orders / limitation on the term of office Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act and how to ensure that these are taken onto account when decisions are made. Council priorities – to be discussed at a future date.			
23/558	<u>OFFICE MATTERS</u>			
558.1	The Clout Rental Agreement – it was noted that suggested amendments had been sent to the trustees and that the Clerk was awaiting a reply.			
23/559	<u>FINANCIAL MATTERS</u>			
559.1	Accounts for payment - totalling £10,959.22 were approved - see attached.			
559.2	It was noted that payments in the sum of £1359.92 were authorised at the extraordinary meeting on 11 th September and that payments in the sum of £784.84 were authorised at the F&GP Committee meeting on 18 th September.			
559.3	Financial Statement – bank reconciliation as at 27 th September was received – see attached.			
559.4	Quarterly Internal Audits – Ms Stacpoole volunteered to undertake the quarterly internal audits alongside Mr Stevens. 9.30pm - at this point in the meeting, Standing Orders were suspended to allow the meeting to continue past 9.30 (this being 2 hours after the meeting had begun).			
23/560	<u>MATTERS FOR REPORT</u>			
560.1	Amenities Committee – receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 11 th September. There were no questions.			
560.2	F&GP Committee – Mrs Dean provided a verbal report of the meeting held on 18 th September. There were no questions.			
560.3	Planning Committee – Mr Mann provided a verbal report of the meeting held on 29 th September			
560.4	Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Group – notes from the meeting were received and noted. Carbon footprint figures for 22/23 were noted. There were no questions.			
560.5	Broadwater Action Group – no report			

560.6	Malling Action Partnership – Mrs Dean reported that the contract with Oracle is to be terminated and that a new Facebook page and website is to be set up.		
560.7	School Governors – no report		
560.8	Malling Society – no report		
560.9	Chamber of Commerce / Christmas Lights Committee – see minute number 23/554; minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated.		
560.10	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council: Parish Partnership Panel – draft minutes of the meeting held on 31 st August were received and noted. It was further noted that the next meeting is scheduled for 2 nd November.		
560.11	KALC/NALC/ACRE/CPRE: KALC T&M meeting – no report.		
23/561	<u>MEETING DATES</u> Extraordinary meeting - Monday 9th October - West Malling Village Hall, 7.00pm Amenities – Monday 9 th October – West Malling Village Hall, 7.30pm Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Group – Monday 16 th October at The Clout – 6.45 - tbc Highways – Monday 16 th October at The Clout – 7.30 Planning – Tuesday 24 th October – West Malling Village Hall, 7.30pm		
23/562	<u>REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLOR(S)</u> - no report		
23/563	<u>REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR</u> Cllr. Dean provided the following report following the meeting: 1. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Kent County Council is now looking after more than double the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children than the government considers reasonable for each authority to accommodate. The expected level for Kent is 346. On 27th July the number was 466, rising to 535 on 11th August, and by 8 th September to 777. The Government continues to refuse to make the National dispersal scheme mandatory. The pressure on Kent's services means that children are being placed in unregulated accommodation, and some requests for Kent resident children to come into care are not being dealt with. An extra grant of £9 million from government is for in County provision only. 2. School maintenance In answer to my question regarding the backlog of school repairs generally, the Cabinet member replied that KCC has a projected programme of work identified by regular condition surveys of £218 million over the next ten years. Based on the current level of Government grant, Kent expect to receive only £124 million to meet that demand. It has been agreed that Councillors will receive an annual report on school maintenance from now on. 3. Children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities. KCC has published the Improvement Scheme for KCC services for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities following OFSTED reports over three years of an inadequate service. Details can be found on the KCC website Agenda for the September meeting of the SEND Scrutiny Committee. The Committee is to visit the Malling School provision which is regarded as one of the best in		

<p>the County.</p> <p>4. Car Parking Charges Consultation Tomorrow, the Borough Council Cabinet are likely to agree consultation on wide ranging car parking charges. New charges are proposed for the currently free parking at Martin Square Larkfield, Bailey bridge Aylesford, and on-street parking in High Street and Swan Street, West Malling.</p> <p>Car Park Charges across the Borough are to be extended to include in the car parks to 8pm and charging on Sundays and Bank Holidays.</p> <p>The West Malling High Street car park has a covenant on it which prohibits parking after 5.30pm but in practice this means charges cannot be applied.</p> <p>The proposals were supported by Conservative and Independent Councillors. I opposed them because of the effect on shops and shoppers, particularly those who need a car because of mobility problems. I asked for an option in the consultation of free parking for the first hour in West Malling's High Street and Swan Street.</p> <p>The Chamber of Commerce made the same request but Mr Boughton has declined, saying the consultation must be carried out first. The Chamber of Commerce together with Martin Square traders are organising a meeting with Matt Boughton, Leader of the Council.</p> <p>I understand Snodland is not included in this consultation because a complete review of all parking in the parish is to be carried out shortly and this will include proposals to apply charges.</p> <p>5. Public Toilets:Leybourne Lakes Country Park The former public toilets in the car park of Leybourne Lakes Country Park have been reopened by TMBC due to demand. The new provision at the new lakeside café has proved inadequate to meet demand, and is open only when the café is open, which is a shorter period than the hours of opening of the Country Park itself.</p> <p>6. West Malling Parish Council has this week received the news that it has 'passed' the first stage of Assessment for Community Ownership Fund Grant, and can now go forward to the final full application stage.</p> <p>7. The link between Leybourne Way and Station Road via Bellingham Way has now been opened. It is expected to reduce congestion levels on A20 London Road.</p>			
<p>There being no other business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.42</p> <p>Signed..... Dated.....</p>			

West Malling Parish Council							
<u>Accounts for Payment 2nd October 2023</u>							Cheques to be drawn
<u>Section 137 donation</u>							
Pauline Fisher (cheque 2619) (expenses, trumpeter, Remembrance Sunday)							£ 85.00
Music @ Malling (cheque 2620) (donation towards 2023 event)							£ 1,000.00
ELM Header Account (cheque 2621) Twitch Inn service charges 1st Nov 23 - 31st Jan 24 (invoice 109691 - estimated costs for water (£17.90) and insurance (£74.32) electricity £99.61)							£ 191.83
Streetlights (cheque 2622) (invoice 13901 phased repair work as per budget)							4560.00 912.00
							VAT
Mr M Carr (cheque 2623) (cost for clearing water meter area at village hall car park)							£ 140.00
Malling Memorial Insititue (cheque 2624) (invoice 24/23 - room hire for 29th September)							£ 40.00
Andy Payne Electrical Contractors Ltd (cheque 2625) (invoice 0765 - supply and fit replacement underfloor heating control panel at Twitch)							120.00 24.00
							VAT
October salaries							
Mrs Claire Christmas - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Clerk - net salary for September £2090.38 + reimbursement for fax £1.20, sundries £5.95)							£2,097.53
Mrs Sarah Howard authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Ass. Clerk - net salary for October £511.17 + reimbursement for pressure sprayer £19.54 & keys £18.00)							£548.71
Mr Nathan Howard authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Litter picking duties for October 10 hours @ £10.42 per hour)							£ 104.20
HMRC - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Deductions from salaries - October)							£943.98
Nest - authorisation to pay pension contributions by Direct Debit for October							
Employer's contributions							£ 82.27
Employee's contributions							£ 109.70
							£ 10,959.22

29 September 2023 (2023-2024)

West Malling Parish Council

Prepared by: SH

Date: 29/09/23

Assistant Clerk

Approved by: CC

Date: 29/09/23

Clerk/RFO

Bank Reconciliation at 27/09/2023

	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023		155,389.12
	ADD		
	Receipts 01/04/2023 - 27/09/2023		149,337.02
			304,726.14
	SUBTRACT		
	Payments 01/04/2023 - 27/09/2023		58,953.72
A	Cash in Hand 27/09/2023		245,772.42
	(per Cash Book)		
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash	30/04/2023	0.00
	Deposit Account	27/09/2023	72,444.53
	Current Account	27/09/2023	174,112.73
			246,557.26
	Less unrepresented payments		784.84
			245,772.42
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
B	Adjusted Bank Balance		245,772.42

A = B Checks out OK

Unpresented cheques:

2616	KCC	£ 594.84	18/09/23
2617	Mr G Purser	£ 150.00	18/09/23
2618	Malling Memorial Institute	£ 40.00	18/09/23