

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 3RD JUNE 2024, 7.30 PM
AT WEST MALLING VILLAGE HALL, NORMAN ROAD

Present: Cllr Barkham
Cllr Bridgeland (from 7.36)
Cllr Margetts
Cllr Miles
Cllr Stacpoole
Cllr Smyth
Cllr Stevens (Chair)

Also Present: Borough Councillor Roud (until 9.07)

Minute		Action by	Action	Response
	In the absence of Cllr Dean it was agreed that Cllr Stevens as Vice Chair would chair the meeting.			
24/342	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> - were received from Cllr Dean, Cllr Mann; Cllr Thompson and Borough Councillor Tatton [LGA 1972 s85(1)]			
24/343	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> Cllr Smyth declared an interest at minute number 24/352 (Town Malling Cricket Club) due to family connections with the cricket club. Cllr Smyth remained in the room during this item but played no part in the decision making process. [LA 2011 s31]			
24/344	<u>MINUTES</u> – to approve the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 13 th May [LGA 1972 Sch 12. Para 41(1)] Resolved: following an amendment at 24/284.1 (Christian names deleted from Highways committee membership) the minutes were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.			
24/345	<u>MATTERS ARISING</u>			
	24/289.6 – Lone Workers Policy, Cllr Barkham wished to ensure that the Clerks are happy with the policy and risk assessment.			

	<p>24/284.6 – West Malling Group Practice Patient Participation Group, Cllr Margetts informed members that she had heard back from the Chair of the group and that the next meeting date is confirmed for 17th July.</p> <p>Cllr Stacpoole reported that the new booking system required each individual patient to have their own email address.</p>			
24/346	<u>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u> - none			
24/347	<u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</u> - none			
24/348	<u>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</u>			
	<p>Car parking charges protest – 2nd June - Cllr Barkham asked if there had been any feedback on the protest held in Tonbridge. The Clerk advised that she had not received any feedback to date.</p> <p>Bus services – Cllr Stevens reported on the changes to the number 58 and 70 timetables, including timings and route changes. It was noted that the changes have been brought in with very short notice and no consultation with parishes and that the changes to the timings of the service might affect passenger numbers. To be discussed further at the Highways Committee meeting.</p>			
24/349	<u>POLICING MATTERS</u>			
349.1	<p><u>Police Update</u></p> <p>No report</p>			
349.2	<u>Other Policing Matters</u>			
	<p>Anti-social behaviour – there was a general discussion regarding anti-social behaviour in the town and in particular regarding reports of incidents in Macey's Meadow.</p> <p>It was stressed that residents must be urged to report crimes to the police (by 101 or 999 if an emergency) and to the anti-social behaviour team at TMBC Report anti-social behaviour – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (tmbc.gov.uk)</p>			
24/350	<u>LOCAL PLAN</u>			
	It is was noted that the second stage of the consultation has been delayed due to the calling of the General Election and that it is now expected to be announced in mid-July.			
24/351	<u>ROTARY HOUSE</u>			
	<p>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.</p> <p>No update</p>			
24/352	<u>TOWN MALLING CRICKET CLUB</u>			
	<p>To receive request from the cricket club to install a 'plastic' wicket' to replace an existing non turf wicket. WMPC being consulted as the land owners.</p> <p>Resolved: it was agreed that subject to planning permission being granted, that the club can proceed with the installation of the non turf pitch. However, the club is asked to consider ways in which the installation can be environmentally off-set; the Council would not prescribe how this can be achieved but would ask that the club update the Council on how the it will be addressing environmental issues and off-setting moving forward. The Council to suggest to</p>			

	<p>the club that the 10% net gain figure outlined in the Biodiversity Net Gain planning legislation would be a good threshold for the club to work towards.</p> <p>The Council would ask that efforts be made to keep abreast of improved and more sustainable materials for future installations.</p>			
24/353	<u>MEETINGS WITH DEVELOPERS</u>			
	<p>Members to consider a recommendation from the Planning Committee that WMPC should not, as a matter of policy, meet with developers regarding speculative planning applications when approached to do so, but that once an application is submitted, representatives from WMPC (no fewer than 2) can meet with developers in particular to seek clarification on the detail of the application.</p> <p>Resolved: it was agreed that the recommendation from the Planning Committee be adopted in full as a matter of policy.</p>			
	At this point in the meeting it was agreed that the agenda order be varied.			
24/354	<u>FINANCIAL MATTERS</u>			
354.1	Accounts for payment – totalling £4,618.18 were approved - see attached.			
354.2	Financial Statement – bank reconciliation as at 23 rd May was received – see attached.			
354.3	<p>Annual Internal Audit report – for members to receive and note the contents of the report and agree actions, if any.</p> <p>It was noted that the Annual Internal Audit Report 23/24 had been signed by the auditor; the Clerk took members through the internal control objectives.</p> <p>The written report prepared by the internal auditor was noted. Having considered the contents of the report it was agreed that moving forward the quarterly internal audits which are undertaken by councillors will be diarised/scheduled to ensure that they are completed promptly at the end of each quarter.</p>			
354.4	<p>System of Internal audit control – for members to review the effectiveness of WMPC's system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.</p> <p>Members noted and reviewed the Council's statement of internal control; in addition the Clerk provided a breakdown of control measures undertaken by WMPC. Councillors agreed that the system of internal control was sound.</p> <p>Statement of internal control to be reviewed alongside the updated NALC Financial Regulations at the Document Review Committee/F&GP Committee.</p>			
354.5	<p>Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 – for members to review and approve the statement.</p> <p>Resolved: following review, it was unanimously agreed that the statement be approved. The statement was signed by the Chair and Clerk</p>			
354.6	<p>Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 - for members to review and approve the statements.</p> <p>Resolved: following review, it was unanimously agreed that the statements be approved. The accounting statement was signed by the Chair.</p>			
24/355	<u>MATTERS FOR REPORT</u>			
355.1	Amenities Committee – receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 20th May			

	There were no questions.			
355.2	<p>Planning Committee – receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24th May.</p> <p>There were no questions.</p>			
355.3	<p>Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 8th May.</p> <p>There were no questions.</p>			
355.4	<p>Macey’s Meadow Advisory Committee – Cllr Margetts provided a verbal report of the meeting held on 23rd May. It was noted that tree work required following a tree survey had been undertaken, a new kissing gate has been delivered and is to be installed and that the wildflower patch was progressing.</p> <p>Cllr Stacpoole reminded members about the Great Big Green Week event being held in the meadow on Saturday 8th June</p> <p>There were no questions.</p>			
355.5	Broadwater Action Group – no report			
355.6	Malling Action Partnership – no report			
355.7	School Governors – no report			
355.8	Malling Society – no report			
355.9	<p>Chamber of Commerce/Christmas Lights Committee</p> <p>It was noted that the next meeting is scheduled for 18th June.</p> <p>West Malling Card (WM Card) – it was noted that a shop loyalty scheme has been launched. WM Card Support Local</p>			
355.10	<p>Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council:</p> <p>Parish Partnership Panel – members were in receipt of the meeting notes prepared by Cllr Mann for the meeting held on for 30th May.</p>			
355.11	<p>KALC/NALC/ACRE/CPRE:</p> <p>KALC T&M - members noted that the next meeting is scheduled for 11th July. NALC – receipt was noted of the 2024 Good Councillor Guide</p>			
24/356	<p><u>MEETING DATES</u></p> <p>Amenities – Monday 10th June – West Malling Village Hall, 7.30pm Highways – Monday 17th June – The Clout, 7.30 Planning – Tuesday 25th June at West Malling Village Hall, 7.30</p> <p>Retrofit talk – Thursday 13th June at The Clout 6.30 – 8.30 Neighbourhood Plan talk – Thursday 27th June at The Clout – 6.30 (tbc)</p> <p>July Full Council 1st July - West Malling Village Hall, 7.30pm</p>			
24/357	<p><u>REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLOR(S)</u></p> <p>Cllr Roud reported on his attendance at the Housing & Planning Scrutiny Select Committee.</p>			

	<p>Housing – Cllr Roud reported that there are 900 empty properties within the borough with 204 people on the register bidding; concerns raised regarding residents being unable to use or access IT required to complete applications.</p> <p>TPO – the new Tree Enforcement and Tree Preservation Order Protocols were discussed, it was noted that there is a backlog of 59 TPO cases currently.</p> <p>Local Plan - the Duty to Cooperate (DtC) has been completed and a record of engagement kept.</p> <p>Cllr Roud reported on his attendance at the Area 2 Planning Committee and the application for 3 houses to be built on Green Belt (Hadlow).</p>			
	<p>Borough Councillor Roud left the meeting at 9.07 pm</p>			
<p>24/358</p>	<p><u>REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR</u> – no report</p>			
<p>24/359</p>	<p><u>GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT</u></p>			
	<p>It was agreed that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (tenders/legal matters) 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.</p>			
	<p>To receive recommendation from the Amenities Committee that part of the grounds maintenance contract be terminated due to the contractor’s failure to fulfil the terms of the contract. Should members agree termination of the contract, members to then consider the way forward including the funding of these works with another contractor.</p> <p>Members were in receipt of paper ‘agenda item 13 FC 240603’ which had been drafted by the Clerk; this contained the tender specifications, signed contract, communication between the office/contractor and timelines.</p> <p>Resolved: It was unanimously agreed that the contract be terminated with immediate effect due the contractor’s failure to fulfil the terms of the contract. It was further agreed that the contract be offered to another specified contractor and that an estimated figure of £250 would need to be taken from reserves should there be a budget shortfall at the end of the contract period.</p>			
	<p>There being no other business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.16 pm</p> <p>Signed..... Dated.....</p>			

West Malling Parish Council							
<u>Accounts for Payment 3rd June 2024</u>							Cheques to be drawn
Lionel Robbins (cheque 2728) (Ref 2024/55 - internal audit 2023/24. 2.5 hours @£70.00 per hour.)							175.00
Malling Memorial Institute (cheque 2729) (invoice 15/24 room hire for May 10th, 16th, 23rd and 24th)							£ 80.00
Mrs C Christmas (single cheque 2730) (invoice - reimbursement for renewal of LCN Multisite Hosting)							253.00 £ 303.60
							VAT 50.60
(reimbursement for printing for Great Big Green Week)							£ 13.00
June salaries							
Mrs Claire Christmas - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Clerk - net salary for June £2267.52 + reimbursement for fax £1.20, & sundries £9.75)							£2,278.47
Mrs Sarah Howard authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Ass. Clerk - net salary for June £507.92)							£507.92
Mr Nathan Howard authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Litter picking duties for June 10 hours @ £11.44 per hour)							£ 114.40
HMRC - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Deductions from salaries - June)							£942.58
Nest - authorisation to pay pension contributions by Direct Debit for June							
Employer's contributions							£ 87.09
Employee's contributions							£ 116.12
Total							£ 4,618.18