

Malmesbury Town Council

Minutes of the **Full Council Meeting**

Held in Malmesbury Town Hall on Tuesday 21st June 2022 at 7.00pm.

Mayors Announcements

Cllr Power expressed thanks to everyone who was involved in the organisation of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee events, they had been a great success.

Twenty four occasions have been attended by the Mayor to date and the Police On-Street Briefing will be organised shortly.

Present; Cllrs K Power, G Grant, P Exton, W Jones, S D'Arcy, C Ritchie, C Doody, R Hastings, P Smith & F Smith

Also present: Claire Mann (Town Clerk)

FC/22/81 To receive declarations of interest

Cllr Power declared that she has a pecuniary interest in a property at Park Road

FC/22/82 To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Cllrs Sanderson, Vandelli & Whatton

FC/22/83 To receive public questions on items of business included on the agenda

None received.

FC/22/84 To receive and adopt the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 10th May

The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.

FC/22/85 To receive and note the minutes of the Planning & Environment meeting held on the 25th May

The minutes were received and noted.

FC/22/86 To receive and note the minutes of the Policy & Resources meeting held on the 3rd May

The minutes were received and noted.

FC/22/87 To receive and note the minutes of the Community & Town Promotion meeting held on the 3rd May

The minutes were received and noted.

Cllr Ritchie arrived

- FC/22/88 To appoint Cllr Hastings to Committees (requested TH&F & Burial)**
- It was resolved to appoint Cllr Hastings to TH&F and Burial Committees.
- FC/22/89 To receive a Community Governance Review update following meeting with St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council on the 14th June**
- Following discussion, members resolved to note the content of the statement (appendix 1), endorse the direction of travel suggested in the statement, continue dialogue with St Paul Malmesbury PC and to formally communicate the statement to Cllrs Blair-Pilling & O'Neil.
- FC/22/90 To consider proposed scheme from City Dressing and, if approved, to determine planting budget**
- Cllr Ritchie noted that planting was already included in the proposal. Members agreed with the scheme from City Dressing but requested a plan to aid visualisation. Concerns were raised about potential vandalism and Cllr Ritchie will seek advice from City Dressing.
- FC/22/91 To consider & note the Internal Audit Report for 2021/22**
- The reported was noted by Councillors.
- FC/22/92 To approve the Annual Governance Statement of the AGAR 2021/22**
- The Annual Governance Statement was read by members, approved and signed by the Mayor & Town Clerk.
- FC/22/93 To approve the Accounts Statements of the AGAR 2021/22**
- Members noted the Accounts Statement and it was resolved to approve and sign by the Mayor & Town Clerk.
- FC/22/94 To receive updates from representatives of Malmesbury Town Council on the following organisations**
- Wiltshire Association of Local Councils & Society of Local Council Clerks** – The Clerk noted that at a recent SLCC Training Event that covered the South West, the Malmesbury Area Board was mentioned as one of the best functioning area boards in the region!
- Malmesbury Conservation Group** – Not in attendance
- Malmesbury Town Team** – Cllr Ritchie reported that the Witch Trial event is progressing well, the Town Guide has been produced and the Guided Walks are picking up momentum
- Malmesbury and District Twinning Association** – Cllr Doody reported that the trip to Gien will take place at the end of July and that the Neibull trip is in preparation
- Operational Flood Group** – It was agreed that clarity was required as to representation of this group.
- Community Area Transport Group/Local Highways and Footpaths Improvements Group** – The update had been covered during minute reference FC/22/85
- Local Youth Network Management Group** – Not in attendance
- Movies at Malmesbury** – Cllr D'Arcy reported that the office are looking into faster broadband options to enable quicker downloading of films.
- Bus Service Improvement** – Cllr Doody reported that an improved service is anticipated and that further funding should become available in the Autumn

Health & Well Being Forum – Cllr Power Doody stated that this is an excellent forum which strives to engage older members of the Community.

Malmesbury Climate Action Network (inc Malmesbury Against Plastic) – Not in attendance

FC/22/95 To receive an update from Wiltshire Councillor, Gavin Grant

Councillor Grant reported the following;

Changes to Car Parking Charges

The Consultation has closed on the various changes to car parking arrangements in Wiltshire Council owned car parks including the three in Malmesbury, namely:

Increasing the hourly rate by 10p

Bringing in new charges for Sundays

New charges for Blue Badge holders using car parks

The Cabinet Member has said that over 500 replies were received but gave no details at today's Cabinet meeting as to the views expressed. He has committed to publishing the results of this consultation and his decision on the above proposals in mid-July.

Meanwhile another Malmesbury specific consultation is underway to see a further rise in our car parks. It is important that we oppose this

A paper was presented at today's Cabinet setting out proposals for the £1m year previously undefined Wiltshire Council Town Centre Recovery Fund

The Leader of the Council presented this item at today's Cabinet meeting and responded to a series of questions and proposals from me These included:

- A commitment to working with our Explore Malmesbury App
- Acknowledging the power of the Town Team model
- Restoring the Market Towns Forum
- Continuing to press the Government for action on empty bank building and exploring potential powers that may be included in the Levelling Up Bill to act should the banks refuse to do so.

I also took the opportunity to speak directly with Victoria Moloney to get commitments to moving forward the various items on the Malmesbury Town Centre Action Plan.

Unfortunately, Wiltshire Council's failure to win Government funding for our bus service has been followed by a rejection to the Levelling Up Fund. Hopefully it will be more successful with a £250,000 bid to the Safer Streets Fund. If so, that could be helpful in supporting part of the costs of our CCTV project.

Area Board

I have been elected as Chair of the Malmesbury Area Board and appointed to Chair both the Local Youth Network and our Community Safety Forum as well as taking on the brief for Community Resilience. The latter is an extension of the previous economic recovery brief.

New procedures have been brought in relating to Capital Grants. In future Town and Parish Councils will be precluded from applying directly for funding. "Friends of" groups that support assets owned by Town or Parish Councils will still qualify.

This change does not impact the other funding areas of the Youth and Wellbeing grant funds or the Local Footpath and Highways Improvement Group. The latter being the expanded version of CATG.

Cllr Elizabeth (Buff) Threlfall is the new Vice Chair of the Area Board and continues to Chair the LHFIG. Cllr Chuck Berry will represent the Area Board on the Health and Wellbeing Forum. Cllr Martin Smith will lead on walking and cycling routes as well as wider environmental and climate emergency initiatives. The Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Police Inspector responsible for Malmesbury and the relevant Divisional Fire officer were also all in attendance at the Area Board following the Abbey arson attempt

The Community Governance Review (CGR)

Cllr Paul Smith, Cllr Roger Budgen and my Wiltshire Councillor colleague for the Sherston Division and I have walked the area around Daniels Well and Burton Hill at the request of the Electoral Review Committee to see if a sustainable and mutually agreeable compromise proposal can be reached. Cllr Smith will report on this separately on our meeting agenda.

Maltings Wall

Despite protracted delays, work has finally got underway to repair and restore the collapsed wall at The Maltings. This should enable the reopening of the footpath once the work is completed

Anti-Social Behaviour

The arson attempt at Malmesbury Abbey has seen a heightened response from Wiltshire Police. Senior Officers joined a meeting convened by the mayor and myself. That was also attended by one of the Assistant Heads of Malmesbury School, the Chair of P&R and local business representatives who have also suffered ASB.

The Police representatives were left in no doubt of our frustrations at the apparent lack of effective action taken following previous acts of arson, vandalism and intimidation of residents and retailers.

Inspector Brain has committed to developing and implementing a response plan that will include public meetings to reassure residents and collect information, and to work in close liaison with the mayor and myself

Planning Applications

The Planning Appeals at Filands and the cojoined Appeals at Park Road are almost upon us. I have pressed Wiltshire Council to make the most robust defence of these open areas where there are no plans for house building in our current or draft Revised Neighbourhood Plan. Our Mayor, Chair of P&E and Cllr Ritchie are all working very hard to present the best possible case for our town at these Appeals. I am doing whatever I can to support them.

Highways Inspection

At my request, our Senior Highways Engineer has attended his first inspection of issues in our town. I was joined by the Chair of LGFIG, Chairs of P&E and P&R to examine the state of Gloucester Street, Abbey Row and explore the issues of incidents at the Bel Tower Corner, requests for a reduced speed limit on Gloucester Road and the flow of traffic at the Triangle.

A full report on these issues will come to the next LHFIG meeting on 12 July.

Maximising use of Wiltshire Council and other publicly funded buildings

Malmesbury Library is now acting as a Hub meeting area for our Ukrainian guests on alternate Friday afternoons and work is underway to explore it acting as a home to a "Library of Things" as well as the Repair Café.

The library is also now home to a meeting to support those facing living with dementia and their carers. Meanwhile, work is underway to explore the Health Centre providing space for a Men's Shed.

Wiltshire's response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis

I questioned the report made at the most recent Cabinet meeting by the Council Leader on support provided by the Council to those really struggling with the growing Cost of Living Crisis.

While welcoming the initiative, among other areas, I prompted more work to look at supporting those whose heating is by fuel oil and who may not qualify to receive or are facing delays in getting the Government's £150 payment.

It is clear that inflation particularly in food, heating and motoring I and will cause many difficulties for local residents. We should look to do whatever we can to support those residents who are particularly vulnerable.

The meeting closed at 9.06pm

Appendix 1

Electoral Boundary Review

Joint Statement from MTC & SPMWP

At the public meeting of the Electoral Review Committee (ERC) on the 5th June and their subsequent discussion on their present boundary proposal for Malmesbury, it was concluded that although this proposal looked 'good' on paper it clearly did not feel 'good' in practice given the number of adverse comments emanating from the recently concluded public consultation. Consequently there was a need to consider the matter further and as a result the committee endorsed a suggestion that Malmesbury Town Council and St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Councils engage in discussions to investigate if a mutually acceptable solution could be found; this was agreed by representatives of both Councils.

A representative of each Council along with their respective Wiltshire Councillors have met twice to explore whether any areas of common ground exist and to walk the contested areas to fully familiarise themselves with the street layouts and features. It was made clear by the ERC that any boundary proposals coming forward must be based upon immutable local features - roads, rivers footpaths and be a fully agreed proposal supported by both Councils. Therefore in seeking additional time from the Committee to complete the work there needs to be a mutual aspiration that a consensus will be reached and agreed by both the Parish and Town Councils and their respective Wiltshire Council representatives. It was also made clear that if a recommendation was to come forward from this joint work, the Committee would not necessarily be obliged to accept it, similarly if no agreed position could be found, the Committee would make its own recommendation.

The contested areas were, the Garden Centre/Aldi site, the northern part of Burton Hill and the westerly part of the Swindon Road. A number of options to find an agreed position might exist using the features B4042, MALW22, the A429, Arches Lane, and the narrow brook that runs under Arches Lane to the River Avon. There was a reasonable level of confidence within the group that an acceptable position might be found within these landmarks, and another meeting is planned to explore the matter further. Meanwhile, the ERC will be informed that the possibility of consensus exists but that a recommendation may not be forthcoming in time for their next meeting on the 5th July.

Cllr. Paul Smith & Cllr. Gavin Grant for MTC
Cllr. Roger Budgen & Cllr. Martin Smith STMWP

21st June 2022