

# MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 2023 at 7.30 pm in Mathon Parish Hall

**Present:-** Cllr C Green, Cllr P Davies. Cllr M Malsbury, Cllr K Perkins, Cllr C Green

**In attendance:** Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Mr D Baldwin (Malvern Hills Trust). Ward Cllr Helen Heathfield

3 members of the public attended the meeting

**Election of Chairman** – Cllr S Harte was elected Chairman. Proposed by Cllr C Green and seconded by Cllr P Davies. The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office & Code of Conduct.

As this meeting followed Council elections held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023, all Councillors present signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office & Code of Conduct

**Apologies for absence :** Cllr N Walker, Mr Chris Rouse (Malvern Hills Trust)

**Election of Vice-Chairman** – Cllr C Green was elected Vice-Chairman. Proposed by Cllr M Malsbury and seconded by Cllr S Harte

**DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPI) or other DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS falling within the terms of para 12(4)(b) of the Code of Conduct – No Declarations made.**

**Written Requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) - No requests had been received by the Clerk relating to any items on the present Agenda**

**The Chairman adjourned the Meeting for Public Question Time/Participation.**

### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

- (a) **Public questions** – none
- (b) **PCSO/Police** – Nick Ashby from West Mercia Police had e-mailed the Clerk to say “Nothing to report” for Mathon, but there had been a few shed break-ins in Colwall.
- (c) **Herefordshire Ward Councillor** - the newly elected Ward Cllr for Hope End – Cllr Helen Heathfield - reported that a new Leader of the Council had yet to be appointed at a meeting to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> May. She would have more to report at the next PC Meeting in July.
- (d) **Malvern Hills Trust** - Mr Chris Rouse had phoned the Clerk with some points re MHT. Mr David Baldwin reported to the meeting. A Board Meeting had been held on 11<sup>th</sup> May. The Trust was putting through a Private Members Bill to alter the governance of the Trust to a more modern representation. The present Acts of Parliament dated back to the 1800’s which very much restrained the Trust’s ability to move forward with new plans. The Trust had appointed a specialist firm of solicitors to get the Bill through. Recent Boundary Commission changes to Wards/Parishes in the Malvern area were causing problems for the Trust, as it was still controlled by the Conservators Acts of Parliament (as previously mentioned). Local MP Harriett Baldwin was helping the Trust to navigate a way through, and the Trust was waiting for legal advice. Anti-social behaviour at Castlemoreton Common continued to be a nuisance for the Trust and local residents. Both MHT and Police patrols have been increased. Mr Baldwin also outlined the wide range of responsibilities undertaken by the 18 staff employed by the Trust.

## **The Chairman re-opened the Meeting**

### **23/23 FOOTPATHS**

Cllr K Perkins reported that she had been in touch with Herefordshire Council re Footpaths MA5 and MA 12. The Clerk reported that the P3 support Scheme relating to footpaths had yet to be allocated to either Balfour Beatty or Herefordshire Council

### **24/23 STANDING ORDERS**

The Council noted the Standing Orders 2018 (adopted in July 2018)

### **25/23 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Council agreed to adopt the updated LGA Model Code of Conduct 2020 as requested by Herefordshire Council. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr C Green.

### **26/23 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Council noted the Financial Regulations 2019 (adopted in July 2020)

### **27/23 RISK ASSESSMENT**

The Council noted the Risk Assessment schedule prepared by the Clerk (which had been circulated to Cllrs). Included in this scheduler was insurance cover due for renewal at the end of May 2023.

### **28/23 ANNUAL INSURANCE REVIEW**

The Council agreed to the renewal quote of £468.95 received by the Clerk from Gallagher (3<sup>rd</sup> year of a three year agreement). Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr C Green.

### **29/23 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

- (a) Parish Council Member – Mathon Parish Hall Committee. Cllr S Harte was proposed by Cllr C Green and seconded by Cllr M Malsbury.
- (b) Mathon Parish Council representative on the Malvern Hills Trust – Mr David Baldwin was appointed at the Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 for a further extension (at the request of the Malvern Hills Trust) to run from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019 to November 2023.

### **30/23 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr C Green and seconded by Cllr P Davies.

### **31/23 MATHON PARISH HALL**

Cllr S Harte reported that new display boards showing old (and some new) photo scenes of Mathon had now been put up in the hall, and were proving very popular. The next meeting of the Committee would be in September.

### **32/23 FINANCE**

The following payment of Accounts as per cheque list signed by the Chairman (attached to the Minutes) was approved. Proposed by Cllr P Davies and seconded by Cllr M Malsbury :-

- (a) D W Taylor - Clerk's Salary - April/May 2023 - (PAYE deducted and including scale increase from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 - £604.30
- (b) Gallagher Insurers – insurance premium 3<sup>rd</sup> year - £468.95
- (c) R G Hadley – Village green/bridge/open space maintenance - £250.00
- (d) HMRC PAYE – Jan/Feb/March 2023 (revised figure) - £171.80 (has been paid)
- (e) Duffy Regan & Co – External Audit for 2022/23 - £60.00

- (f) Consider & Approve Year End Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 - the Accounts as audited by Duffy Regan & Co had been circulated to Cllrs. These were approved. Proposed by Cllr M Malsbury and seconded by Cllr P Davies. (These were signed and dated by the Clerk & Chairman).

**33/23 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL AUDIT RETURN FOR ACCOUNTS TO 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2023**  
**(as an exempt authority)**

- (a) The Council resolved that as the income or expenditure of the Council was less than £25K p/a the Council met the criteria to be considered an “Exempt” Authority and did not have to forward a return to the External Auditors. Proposed by Cllr C Green and seconded by Cllr K Perkins. However, the Certificate of Exemption should be sent to the External Auditors PFK Littlejohn LLP.
- (b) **Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23** (signed by Internal Auditor – Duffy Regan & Co)
- (c) **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement** (signed by Chairman & Clerk)  
Proposed by Cllr C Green and seconded by Cllr P Davies
- (d) **Section 2 – Annual Accounting Statement** (signed by the Chairman & Clerk)  
Proposed by Cllr P Davies and seconded by Cllr M Malsbury

**34/23 GRANTS/DONATIONS**

The Council considered the following grants/donations :-

- (a) PCC Mathon – The Council approved the first half of the 2023/24 grant to Mathon PCC - £700.00. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr K Perkins.

**35/23 ELECTIONS – 4<sup>th</sup> MAY 2023**

The Clerk reminded all Cllrs present of the need to complete a new Register of Interests form and a Return of Expenses form (even if no expenses were incurred) - these to be sent to the Electoral Services Department at Herefordshire Council within 28 days of the election. She had been notified that the estimated re-charge to Mathon PC for the elections (non contested) would be in the region of £120 - £200. As Cllr N Walker was unable to attend the meeting and complete his forms, the Council agreed that these could be signed and witnessed at a later date (but before the next meeting in July). Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr C Green.

**36/23 HIGHWAYS**

- (a) Pot Holes at Harcourt Road. (Ref: FS-Case-496921254 Cllr P Davies reported that these had now been filled in.
- (b) Pot Holes – Rook Row Farm. Cllr C Green reported that potholes had been filled in, but at the time they were full of water, so would soon need refilling.
- (c) Hedge fronting The Badgers – the Clerk reported on the current situation which was now in the hands of Herefordshire Council and Neil James our Locality Steward who will be making a safety assessment/report on the hedge.
- (d) Ditches/Salt Bin – Southend Lane. Herefordshire Council will not provide any more salt bins, and would also have to approve the siting of a salt bin at Southend Lane. It was questionable if there would be enough vehicle movements for the salt to be effective.
- (e) Verge Cutting 2023/24. After some discussion, the Council agreed that two cuts per year would be required for Mathon. The Clerk to contact Highways.
- (f) Any other Highways issues – Chairman and Clerk to liaise re reporting blocked culverts along the road Burford to Ham Green, and at Hackney Cross.

**37/23 CLIFFE ARMS** - Nothing definite to report at the moment.

**38/23 CORRESPONDENCE** – all relevant correspondence had been e-mailed to Cllrs

**39/23 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA** - None raised

**40/23 NEXT MEETING DATE** - Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 7.30 pm in Mathon Parish Hall

..... Chairman

..... Date



