

# MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> JULY 2025 at 7.30 pm in Mathon Parish Hall

**Present:-** Cllr S Harte, Cllr M Malsbury, Cllr P Davies, Cllr K Perkins

**In attendance:** Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Deborah Fox, CEO of Malvern Hills Trust (MHT), Mr Chris Rouse (MHT)

**Apologies for absence :** Cllr C Green, Cllr M Meir, Mr Dave Baldwin (MHT)

**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) **Malvern Hills Trust** – Deborah Fox CEO of Malvern Hills Trust (MHT) gave an overview of the Trust's situation since she last attended a Mathon PC Meeting in May 2024. She thanked Mathon for its precept support to the Trust which helps to pay for the basic needs of the Trust in looking after 3,000 acres of Trust land and hills. The recent and continuing extremely hot and dry weather has raised the risk of fires, especially with visitors using BBQ's – these are now banned on the hills. The Parliamentary Malvern Hills Bill had its second reading in the House of Lords on 4<sup>th</sup> June. The Bill will then go on to the Select Committee in October 2025. The need for modernisation was recognised, with the present numbers of Trustees being too unwieldy a structure, and with many restrictions as to what MHT can do. As far as the General Power part of the Bill is concerned, this is something that many charities have in their constitution to enable them to deal with any future eventualities. The recommended number of Trustees will be reduced to 12 (from 29) half will be elected and others chosen for the skills and experience they can bring to the Trust. The Trust are running a number of free summer events - Butterflies on the Old Hills (19 July) – Managing the Hills (16<sup>th</sup> August) – Hidden lives of reptiles (24<sup>th</sup> September) Booking details from MHT Office. There are also Project Volunteer opportunities available in addition to conservation work – these cover social media/storytelling – a dog campaign to raise awareness of dog control when near to sheep/cattle etc. grazing on the hills – and a survey of memorial benches on the hills. Further details of these and other projects are on the website. Three drop in sessions will be held during the summer should anyone wish to find out further information about the Bill. These are being held on 31<sup>st</sup> July 6 – 9 pm Castlemoreton Parish Hall - 11<sup>th</sup> August (venue to be confirmed) – 13<sup>th</sup> August 2 – 5 pm Colwall Library. Cllr S Harte questioned whether the proposed numbers of Trustees (12) would be enough. This was endorsed by Mr C Rouse (MHT/Mathon) who felt that 16/17 would be a more workable number. He also was concerned about the lack of information re costings and what the benefits would be.

- (c) **Herefordshire Ward Councillor** - No Report
- (d) **CSO/West Mercia Police** – No crime to report

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

#### **40/25 FOOTPATHS**

- (a) The Clerk had received an e-mail from the Colwall Parish Clerk re the obstruction of a Kissing Gate on footpath CW4 (in Mathon) The gate has been fitted, but cannot be used due to soil accumulation, possibly due to winter flooding. Location: PROW CW4 near to Burfords Farm/road to Mathon. Cllr S Harte to investigate and liaise with Clerk.
- (b) Cllr K Perkins reported two tumbledown stiles in a dangerous state. Grid Ref: 756452. Cllr S Harte to look into this and liaise with the Clerk re speaking to David Armitage re grants for “Miles without Stiles” to replace stiles with kissing gates.

#### **41/25 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr M Malsbury . The Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr P Davies.

#### **42/25 PLANNING**

The following application was considered by the Council :-

App No: 251574  
Site: Lane End Cottage, Mathon, Malvern WR13 5NY  
Proposal: Development of outbuilding into cinema & media space  
Grid Ref: OS 374243,245328  
App Type: Full Householder

The Council considered this application and the Clerk was asked to send the following to Herefordshire Planning:-

*Mathon Parish Council has no objections and supports this application.*

#### **43/25 MATHON PARISH HALL** - nothing to report

#### **44/25 FINANCE**

- (a) New Audit Arrangements - The Clerk reported on new audit arrangements for the present financial year 2025/26. New Assertions were being proposed, mainly covering GDPR requirements and governance. Parish Councils would need to move over to using a dotgov website & e-mail address - ideally by next year end. HALC would be setting up workshops for Clerks in the Autumn.

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

- (b) D W Taylor - Clerk's Salary - June/July 2025 - (PAYE deducted) – £644.32
- (c) Folcra Tech – Annual website hosting & maintenance/Domain Renewal/Annual Domain management & processing fee (2025/26) - £363.59
- (d) Duffy Regan & Co – payroll service April – June 2025 - £30.00
- (e) HMRC – PAYE – April/May/June 2025 - £311.40
- (f) For information – Lloyds Bank Charges – 10 March – 9 May - £12.50

#### **45/25 HIGHWAYS**

The Clerk had managed to get some *updates* from Balfour Beatty as follows :-

- (a) Blocked Culvert along West Malvern Road – (Ref FS Case 595345623) - still very silted up. *Still in the system – planned for drainage technician to attend.*
- (b) South End Lane – verge cutting and blocked ditches. Reported again to Herefordshire Highways. Verge Cutting - Ref: FS Case 655542531. Blocked ditches – Ref FS 658095443 *Photos taken on 05/11/24 – grass has been maintained to a good standard – no action taken*
- (c) Flooding across the road near to Brook House – the Clerk had reported this to Highways Ref: Ref: FS Case 658097597. *Blocked gully – this is still in the system.*
- (d) Water hanging on the road off the B4214 – 3-400 metres from its junction with the B4220.. This has been reported to Highways – Ref FS Case 663288641. - *(Ref to be checked)*
- (e) Blocked culvert - Ham Green to Burford Farm House water running down the road continuously during wet weather. Ref: FS682937800 Nothing to report. *Listed as a drainage repair job – still in the system.*
- (f) Just below Stockton to Mathon Court back drive – hedge needs cutting back. This is understood to be Herefordshire Council’s responsibility. The farmer owns the hedge the other side of the stream. Reported to Highways – Ref FS 682936168. *BB attended on 05/02/25. Reported that no works required as hedges on both sides had been cut and there was no obstruction or safety issue.*
- (g) Chairman to liaise with Clerk re tree cutting on footpath border at Badgers.
- (h) Pothole by triangle outside Lane End Farm – Clerk reported to Highways Ref: FS 724383450 This has now been fixed.
- (i) Clerk has sent in a request to Highways for a warning sign needed re the sharp right hand bend at the end of the drive to Ferny Cottage. Motorists miscalculating the bend are damaging gate posts. Ref: FS 722313783. No action yet.
- (j) Clerk had received an e-mail from Cllr M Meir re the resurfacing works on the B4220. A resident had raised concerns in relation to the condition of the B4220 between Tanhouse Lane and Hollings Hill Farm and was asking if any remedial work would be undertaken beyond the present resurfacing plans whilst in the area. Clerk contacted Herefordshire Council by phone and is awaiting a response.
- (k) Hedge cutting - Cllr S Harte to look into a number of locations where hedges need cutting back

#### **46/25 CLIFFE ARMS**

Nothing to report at the moment

**47/25 CORRESPONDENCE** – all relevant correspondence had been e-mailed to Cllrs

#### **48/25 NEXT MEETING DATE**

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 at 7.30 pm. in Mathon Parish Hall** (to be confirmed)

Future Meeting dates – 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025 – 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026.

..... (Chairman) ..... Date



