

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

11 January 2007

The Committee Room, Council House, Malvern

Present:- Mrs. S. Adeney, Mr. M. Cordey, Mr. R. Hall-Jones, Mr. A. Macmillan, Mr. D. Masters, Mr. B. Pilcher, Mr. A. Phillips, Prof. J. Raine, Mrs. P. Raven, Mr. R. Roberts, Mr. C. Rouse, Mr. P. Rumney, Mrs. S. Thetford, Mr. R. Thomas, Mr. J. Tretheway (Chairman), Mr. B. Wilcock, Mr. R. Witcomb.

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Conservation Officer, Financial Consultant (Mrs. C. Gentry).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Mr. A. Myatt, Mr. J. Mills, Mr. S. Try, Mr. W. Watts.

2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS. The Chairman drew members' attention to a confusing article in a recent edition of the Malvern Gazette. A further article would be included in this week's paper making it clear that it referred to the lack of geological information in this area and not the general management of the Malvern Hills. This was **NOTED**.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS. None.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES. On the proposal of Mrs. Thetford, seconded by Mr. Wilcock, it was **AGREED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 9 November 2006 should be **CONFIRMED** and **SIGNED** as a true and correct record.

6. MATTERS ARISING.

6.1 6.3 Old Hills Car Park. In answer to a question, the Director advised that a 4-wheel drive vehicle had caused damage by driving over the mounds. Once the area had dried up sufficiently to enable reinstatement work to be carried out consideration would be given to the planting of shrubs on the mounds. This was **NOTED**.

6.2 11.2.3 British Legion Memorial Garden at Barnards Green. The Director advised that the British Legion thanked the Conservators for taking over the maintenance of the soft landscape and confirmed that the standing memorials were not part of the agreement.

6.3 15.1.1 West of England Quarry. In answer to a query raised, the Conservation Officer advised that he had received a request from a member for costings of removing the grass cuttings from the West of England Quarry. Having discussed this with the Chairman of the Land Management Committee it had been decided to report this to the next meeting of the Committee so that all members would have the information to enable an evaluation of the policy. This was **NOTED**.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

7.1 LAND MANAGEMENT. Mrs. Thetford presented the following report of the meeting held on the 30 November 2006 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Pilcher.

REPORT OF LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 30 November 2006 Manor House, Malvern at 2 p.m.

Present:- Mr. A. Phillips, Mr. B. Pilcher, Mr. R. Roberts, Mr. C. Rouse, Mrs. S. Thetford (Chairman), Mr. J. Tretheway, Mr. J. Webb, Mr. R. Witcomb.

In attendance:- Director, Conservation Officer, Administrative Officer, Mr. B. Wilcock.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Mrs. S. Adeney, Mr. J. Plant, Mr. R. Stockton, Mr. R. Thomas.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN. On the proposal of Mr. Tretheway, seconded by Mr. Witcomb, Mrs. Thetford was **ELECTED** Chairman for the ensuing year.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN. On the proposal of Mr. Pilcher, seconded by Mr. Phillips, Mr. Webb was **ELECTED** Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

4. DATES OF MEETINGS FOR THE YEAR 2007.

1 February	4 p.m.	12 April	2 p.m.
7 June	2 p.m.	2 August	2 p.m.
4 October	2 p.m.	29 November	4 p.m.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

6. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS. None.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 5 OCTOBER 2006. None.

8. PRESENTATION ON THE MANAGEMENT PLAN. The Conservation Officer gave a synopsis of the structure of the new Plan that was in the final stages of drafting and pointed out that this was in addition to rather than replacing the last Plan. It was anticipated that the draft would be e-mailed/posted to members on the 8 December 2006 requesting comments by the 2 January 2007. This would enable the amended Plan to be sent out before the Board Meeting on the 11 January where it would be presented for adoption. The Conservation Officer was congratulated by members on the work he had done.

9. BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2007/08. On the proposal of Mr. Pilcher, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, the budget estimates were **ACCEPTED**. Officers agreed that when replacing equipment used occasionally they would look into leasing as well as buying.

10. CASTLEMORTON COMMONS PLAN. On the proposal of Mr. Witcomb, seconded by Mr. Pilcher, it was **AGREED** to **ENDORSE** the Plan, subject to it being made clear in the Technical Appendix E2(d) that fencing of the common would continue to be the responsibility of the adjoining landowner.

It was **AGREED** that the three Conservators to sit on the 4Cs Committee until October 2007 would be the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Land Management Committee, Mr. Rouse and Mr. Witcomb.

11. RESTORING THE VIEWS. The Director presented his report which contained an executive summary of the report prepared by consultants, a full copy of which was available on the MHC web site and in the office, and the wish of the Field Staff to carry out the tree work proposed. He reminded members that this project was one of the specific aims in the Forward Strategy and it was anticipated that, if it received approval, the work would commence this winter. The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to permit the Chairman of the St. Ann's Road Residents, Mr. Byram-Wigfield, to speak. Mr. Byram-Wigfield, on behalf of his members, gave his support of the work to be undertaken and expressed his gratitude to the Director. On resumption of the meeting it was proposed by Mr. Tretheway, seconded by Mr. Roberts, and **AGREED** to consent to the work as set out in the report and that officers look into the feasibility of the Field Staff carrying out the work. The Director advised that he had met with officers of Malvern Hills District Council, the Council being owners of the adjacent Rose Bank Gardens, who supported the project.

12. TRIPARTITE MEETING. The report of the meeting held on the 6 November was **NOTED**. The Director advised that he was meeting a blacksmith next week to consider methods of strengthening the barrier at the Gullet.

13. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY. On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Phillips, it was **AGREED** to recommend that Option 3 be acted upon, i.e.

- That a structural engineer be appointed to report on the quarry base and the construction of a suitable collection of any run off.
- Application is made to DEFRA for approval of the work on common land.
- That tenders are requested for carrying out the work.
- Approval by the Board for the capital expenditure of the project.

The Director reported that the last of the grass cuttings had been removed from the Quarry. This was **NOTED**.

14. INFORMATION.

14.1 Severn Trent Water. The Director advised members of the latest situation regarding work currently being undertaken by Severn Trent on Conservators' land as follows:-

Peachfield Road.

Work would not continue on Peachfield Road until after Christmas. Arrangements had been made to clear all the signs and barriers that were on the common. The two metal plates that cross the road would be removed and the road re-surfaced. The loose chippings would be removed from the easement and common. Reinstatement around the perimeter, i.e. top soil and re-seeding, will take place in the spring.

Malvern Common

Severn Trent have had problems with the new pipe which requires cleaning and re-checking. The work would not be done until after Christmas. This means the two pits, one by the reservoir and the one at the bottom by the railway will remain open until the new year.

Hayes Bank Road

This open cut trench would not be started until the new year.

This was **NOTED**.

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Phillips, it was **AGREED** that the remainder of the meeting should be taken in committee as the matter to be discussed was confidential.

The meeting closed at 4.10 p.m.

Arising.

7.1.1 8. Management Plan. In presenting the Management Plan for adoption, the Conservation Officer reiterated that this was in addition to rather than a replacement of the previous Plan and was intended to be a working document which could be changed as new innovations came up. This was **NOTED** and the adoption of the Plan was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**. Mrs. Thetford on behalf of members thanked the Conservation Officer for all his efforts in producing the Plan.

7.1.2 11. Restoring the Views. The Director reported that the Field Staff had started the work. This was **NOTED**.

7.1.3 13. Environment Agency. In answer to Mr. Masters' concerns at the time it had taken for the Board to decide suitable methods of storing grass cuttings, the Conservation Officer reiterated that the matter would be taken to the next Land Management Committee meeting and Mrs. Thetford urged that those members who were concerned came along to the meeting. This was **NOTED**.

7.1.4 15. Taken in committee.

The report, apart from item 15, was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

7.2 **ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES**. Mr. Wilcock presented the following report of the meeting held on the 13 December 2006 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Cordey and including items 7 and 15 taken in committee was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 13 December 2006 Manor House, Malvern at 7 p.m.

Present:- Mr. M. Cordey, Mr. A. Myatt, Mr. R. Roberts, Mr. J. Tretheway, Mr. B. Wilcock (Chairman).

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Financial Assistant, Mrs. S. Thetford.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Mr. M. Angell, Mr. A. Macmillan, Mr. J. Mills, Mr. R. Rumney, Dr. B. Smith.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN. On the proposal of Mr. Tretheway, seconded by Mr. Roberts, Mr. Wilcock was **ELECTED** Chairman for the ensuing year.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN. On the proposal of Mr. Tretheway, seconded by Mr. Roberts, Mr. Cordey was **ELECTED** Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

4. DATES OF MEETINGS 2007. It was **AGREED** that meetings would be held on Thursday evenings at 7.30 p.m. on the following days:-

15 February	26 April
21 June	23 August
18 October	13 December

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Mr. Cordey declared an interest in item 9 as an employee of the Conservators' bankers, Lloyds TSB Bank.

6. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS. None.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 25 OCTOBER 2006.

7.1 Taken in committee.

7.2 " " "

8. BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR 2007/08. In presenting the Financial Consultant's report, the Chairman asked members to amend the first parish under levy charging areas to read 'Malvern Town'. This was noted. Following consideration of the budget estimates it was proposed by Mr. Cordey, seconded by Mr. Roberts and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that:-

(a) A designated fund for election expenses be set up with a £10,000 transfer from the General Fund in 2006/07 and a £4,000 transfer in 2007/08; and

(b) to recommend to the Board that the levy be set at £349,250 for the year 2007/08.

9. REVIEW OF INVESTMENT POLICY. The recommendation of the Financial Consultant that a working party be appointed to review the investment policy and report back to the Committee in April 2007 was **AGREED**. Membership of the working party would consist Mr. Myatt, Mr. Roberts and Mr. Tretheway with the Chairman standing in for any absentee if necessary.

10. HEALTH & SAFETY – RISK ASSESSMENTS. In presenting his report the Director advised that he had been unable to contact the Malvern Hills District Council Safety Officer to ascertain whether it would be possible for him to carry out a *health* check, but would continue trying. This was noted. With regard to the questions posed by the Director, it was felt that:-

(a) If there was a major incident such as a serious injury or death it was felt that the Conservators did comply with current safety standards but it was accepted that there were many hazards on the Hills and Commons which it would not be practicable to erect notices to highlight.

(b) The Director, as the appointed person, was sufficiently competent in health and safety matters to a standard that could reasonably be expected.

(c) The Director was endeavouring to obtain professional support through the local authority officers which if obtained was felt to be sufficient requirement for the organisation.

11. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS. The report on the fire risk assessment required under new regulations was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** to approve the expenditure for the installation of a fire alarm system and emergency lighting totalling £2,665.68 as recommended in the report, but that the existing hand bell alarm should be retained as a backup. The Director was asked to obtain written confirmation from the tenant of St. Ann's Well accepting it was his responsibility to carry out the risk assessment on the cafe and lavatories.

12. REVIEW OF LIMIT FOR LAND ACQUISITION. It was **AGREED** that the financial limit for land acquisition delegated to the Board's Urgent Business Sub-Committee should remain at £40,000 for the ensuing year. Members were reminded that it was a requirement of the Standing Orders that this figure was reviewed annually.

13. ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS. This was **NOTED**.

14. INFORMATION. None.

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, it was **AGREED** that the remainder of the meeting should be taken in committee as the matters to be discussed were confidential.

The meeting closed at 8.12 p.m.

8. URGENT BUSINESS SUB-COMMITTEE. Taken in committee.

9. MALVERN HILLS AONB WORKING PARTY. The Chairman moved that the views of members set out in the report of the Working Party meeting held on the 14 December 2006 be taken into account by the Director when drafting the Memorandum of Understanding. This was seconded by Mr. Wilcock and **AGREED**.

10. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES.

10.1 Malvern Spa Association. Mr. Roberts reported that 40 members had attended the AGM of the Association when Carly Tinkler had been elected President with Rose Garrard, Chairman, and John Harcup, Vice Chairman. The meeting had ended with a talk by Pamela Hurlle on 'Malvern Spa'.

The Heritage Lottery Funded work of restoring the Clock Tower had now resumed following unexpected problems encountered and the HLF had confirmed that they were happy to finance the increased expenditure of restoring the spring water to The Wyche Spring and West Malvern Tap. The drawings and schedules have now been approved for restoration work on Jubilee Fountain (Malvern Wells), Westminster Bank Spring, Lord Sandy's Spout, Hayslad and Lower Wyche Spout.

In answer to a question, the Director advised that for work on those water features on Conservators' land he would be requiring the architects to provide regular information through the committees to keep members up to date with progress and members of the public through the press.

10.2 Great Malvern Town Centre Partnership. Mr. Roberts advised that the Partnership had not met since the last meeting but there was to be an Open Meeting at The Abbey Hotel on the 18 January 2007 to discuss High Street UK in Gt. Malvern.

10.3 Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. The Director advised that the next meeting of the JAC would be held on the 26 January 2007.

11. URGENT BUSINESS. None.

12. INFORMATION.

12.1 Management Report. The Director presented his report which was **NOTED**.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

11 JANUARY 2007

CHAIRMAN

- At the invitation of the Chairman of Malvern Town Council represented MHC at the Christmas Light switch on.
- Represented MHC at the AGM of the Malvern Spa Association.

DIRECTOR

- Talk to University of the Third Age in Malvern
- Discussion with Three Counties Showground and AONB staff to encourage sponsored walking events to meet at the showground
- Met with representatives from Natural England looking at common land and Crow Act Commons
- Attended Worcestershire Partnership Voluntary Sector meeting in Worcester
- Attended Colwall Parish Council meeting
- Meeting with Country Landowners Association
- Walk on the Hills with Friends of the Malvern Hills (Saturday)
- Attended Community Action lunch time meeting

CONSERVATION OFFICER

- Preparation of the Management Plan.
- Talk for Herefordshire Botanical Society on the Wildlife of the Malvern Hills.
- Talk for Castlemorton Common Association AGM on Livestock on the Common.
- Hosted Open day for the 12 bursary placements for the national environmental bursary scheme, "the LEMUR project".
- Meeting with "Natural England" about the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme on the Hills and Commons.

FIELD STAFF

- TB testing of cattle which was all clear
- Scrub clearing on Perseverance, Pinnacle and Swinyard Hills
- New tractor purchased
- Cleared overhanging branches at The Grove
- Cleared trees at various areas following the storms in early December
- Moved cattle to west side of the Beacon
- **Sheep Numbers at 22/12/06**
 - 147 ewes
 - 50 lambs

6 tups

WARDENS

- o Various meetings with Severn Trent. (Work at Peachfield and Malvern Commons will not be completed until new year.)
- o 2 Conservation Days clearing boggy area on Castlemorton Common and clearing Silver Birch from Pinnacle Hill.
- o Dealt with leaking toilets at British Camp.
- o Final inductions for six Voluntary Site Wardens.
- o Byelaw Incidents:-

Camping	1
Mini Moto	2
Motorbikes	4
Offroad driving by 4 x 4s	3
Unauthorised parking	9
Utilities working without prior permission	2
Unauthorised fishing at Gullet Quarry	3
Unauthorised materials stored	1
Unauthorised plantings	3
Mountain bikers not on bridleways	7
Flytipping	1
Bonfire	1

ADMINISTRATION

- Over the 12 months to November 2006 there were 44,962 visits to the web site.
- 8 Planning applications looked at.

Arising.

12.1.1 Annual Report. Mrs. Thetford congratulated the Director on an excellent Annual Report.

12.1.2 Sheep Numbers. In answer to a question the Conservation Officer reported that 132 lambs had been sold at £26 each and 23 at £28 each.

12.1.3 Parking on the Common. Concern was expressed at cars regularly parking adjacent to easements on the Common along the Guarlford Road. This was noted and the Director advised that one of the areas mentioned would be considered at the next meeting of the Land Management Committee.

The Chairman moved that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as the matters to be discussed were confidential. This was seconded by Mr. Wilcock and **AGREED.**