



If you have any questions etc that you wish to ask regarding this meeting please contact the Clerk on 01622 832305 or email clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk.

TO ALL MEMBERS OF MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Dear Councillor

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND the Annual Parish Council meeting of Marden Parish Council to be held on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 7.30pm at The Allens, Albion Road, Marden, Kent.

Alison Hooker (Mrs)
Clerk to Marden Parish Council

AGENDA

Prior to the meeting all Cllrs completed and signed the Declaration of Office which had been witnessed and signed by the Clerk.

The current Vice-Chairman, Cllr Andy Turner, will take the chair for the first item on the agenda. Following this item, the newly elected Chairman will take the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

001/24 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The newly elected Chairman to sign the Declaration of Office of Chairman and witnessed by the Proper Officer.

002/24 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

003/24 PRESENT

Cllrs to inform the Clerk by 5.00pm on the day of the meeting if they will be taking part in the meeting.

004/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence.

Cllrs to inform the Clerk by 5.00pm on the day of the meeting if they will not be taking part in the meeting.

005/24 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Registers of Interest

Cllrs to complete new register of interest forms.

Declaration of Interest

Granting of Dispensation

006/24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To receive and accept as a true record the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th April 2024.

[Full Council Minutes & Agendas - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](https://www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)

007/24 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members of the public to make themselves known to the meeting as to whether they wish to raise any issue under this item.

The meeting to be adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

Members of the public will be given the opportunity to raise any issue under this item.

EXTERNAL REPORTS

County Councillor Report
Borough Councillors Report
Police Report
Community Warden

The meeting to be reconvened to discuss item 008/24 onwards.

008/24 CLERK'S REPORT

To receive and note the Clerk's report.

009/24 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES

Cllrs to be appointed to the following Committees and Sub-Committees

Committees

Amenities

Finance

Planning

Sub-Committees

Cemetery

Human Resources

Open Spaces

010/24 APPOINTMENT OF SUB-GROUPS AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllrs to be appointed to the following Sub-Groups and Outside Bodies

Sub-Groups

Allotments

Byelaws

Communications

Emergency Planning

Environment

Play Scheme

Village Events

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Outside Bodies

Community Engagement Forum

KALC Area Committee (Maidstone)

Maidstone Borough Council Cluster Group

Marden Dementia Group

Memorial Hall

Patient Participation Group

Public Transport & Highways

011/24 PARISH COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

Terms of Reference

To receive and note final document which was discussed at previous Full Council meeting.

Parish Assets

To receive and agree the list of parish assets at 31st March 2024.

Dates of Parish Council Meetings for 2024/2025

To receive and note the proposed dates for Parish Council meetings in 2024/2025.

012/24 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

To resolve that Marden Parish Council continues to meet the criteria of the General Power of Competence.

013/24 PARISH MATTERS**Reports from MBC and KCC****Police Update/Report from Police Forum**Crime Figures

Crime Figures can be found at: [Marden and Yalding | Your area | Kent Police | Kent Police](#)

Other Police Issues**Communication**Newsletter**Marden Flooding****Cemetery**Exclusive Right of Burial Certificates**Allotments**

Email received from Redrow

Marden Parish Council – Co-option

To note that MPC is able to co-option for the two vacancies left following the uncontested election.

014/24 COMMITTEE REPORTS**Amenities Committee**

To note the draft Minutes of Amenities Committee meeting held on 23rd April had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

[Amenities Minutes and Agendas - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

Planning Committee

To note the draft Minutes of Planning Committee meetings held on 16th and 30th April had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

[Planning Committee Minutes/Agenda - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

Finance Committee

To note the draft Minutes of Finance Committee meeting held on 30th April 2024 had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

[Finance Committee Minutes/Agendas - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars attended

Those in attendance to update the meeting on the following:

Parking/Traffic Meeting – 15th April 2024

Dementia Group AGM – 18th April 2024

Marden Primary Academy Community Consultation – 25th April 2024

NALC Climate Webinar – 26th April 2024

Marden Primary Academy – 2nd May 2024

Community Forum Meeting – 2nd May 2024

Elections – 2nd May 2024

Changing Rooms meeting – 7th May 2024

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

Emergency Planning Training – 21st May 2024

80th Anniversary D-Day Beacon Lighting – 6th June 2024

NALC Climate Change webinar – 26th June 2024

MPC Meetings to be arranged:

Meeting with Kent Highways following meeting held on 15th April and 2nd May

Byelaws Sub-Group

Assets of Community Value Sub-Group

Cemetery Sub-Group

015/24 CORRESPONDENCE

Marden Parish Church Magazine

KALC Newsletter – April edition

016/24 FINANCE**(A) Bank Statements:**

The Clerk to provide details at the meeting.

(B) Accounts 2023/2024:**(B)(i) Statement of Internal Control**

Cllrs to receive and agree statement previously circulated to Cllrs. Document to be signed by the Chairman and RFO.

(B)(ii) Internal Auditor Report

Cllrs to receive and note the end of year Final Report received from the Internal Auditor.

(B)(iii) Bank Reconciliation/Balance Sheet 31st March 2024

Cllrs to receive and accept the end of year bank reconciliation at 31st March 2024 signed at the Finance Committee on 30th April 2024.

Cllrs to receive and agree the end of year Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2024 - to be signed at the meeting.

(B)(iv) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/2024**(B)(iv)(a) Section 1 – Annual Government Statement 2023/2024**

The Clerk to read out the following statements to Cllrs:

- (1) We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements;
- (2) We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness;
- (3) We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances;
- (4) We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations;
- (5) We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required;
- (6) We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems;
- (7) We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audits;
- (8) We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements;
- (9) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole management trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. *Not appropriate to Marden PC as not a sole managing trustee of a local trust(s).*

The Chairman and Clerk (RFO) to sign and record minute number.

(B)(iv)(b) Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/2024

The Clerk had completed Section 2 with figures from 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 accounts and circulated to Cllrs (also discussed at Finance Committee meeting). Cllrs to confirm statements and the Chairman and Clerk (RFO) to sign and record minute number.

(C) Other Papers for External Auditor**AGAR documentation:**

To receive and note the additional documents to be sent to the External Auditor.

Internal Auditor certificate

To receive and note the Internal Auditor's year-end AGAR certificate.

(D) Donation Request

Cllrs to consider request received from Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre.

(E) Payments for Approval**Electronic Payments**

Invoices due to payment to be submitted to the meeting.

017/24 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT**Highways****Highways Improvement Plan****Other Highways Issues****Public Transport**

Tuesday 30th April 2024

Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden

01622 832305 / 07376 287981

clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk / www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Local electors and the press are entitled to listen to Parish Council Meetings but not to take part. An opportunity to speak will be given at the beginning of Council Business in line with MPC's Public Participation Policy [Microsoft Word - Public Participation Policy March 2024 \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](http://mardenkent-pc.gov.uk).

The whole of the meeting can be recorded, except where there are confidential or exempt items. If any member of the public has an objection to being filmed, please make yourself known to the Chairman or Parish Clerk before the start of the meeting [Microsoft Word - Filming and Recording of Meetings March 2024 \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](http://mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)

ITEM 006/24 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting



MINUTES OF THE FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9TH APRIL 2024 AT THE ALLENS, ALBION ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

143/24 PRESENT

Cllrs Adam, Besant, Boswell, Newton, Rabot, Robertson, Tippen and Turner. The Deputy Clerk, Borough Councillor Russell and one member of the public were also in attendance.

144/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Gibson and Summersgill along with the Clerk gave their apologies.
Cllr Stevens not in attendance.

In the absence of the Clerk the Deputy Clerk took the minutes.

145/24 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

Changes to Register of Interest

There were no changes to Cllrs Registers of Interest.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

146/24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2024 had previously been circulated and were agreed and signed as a true record.

147/24 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Borough Cllr Russell would report at External Reports but the member of the public did not wish to speak on any item.

The meeting was adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

Member of the public did not want to raise any issue.

Cllr Adam arrived at 19.34.

EXTERNAL REPORTS

County Councillor Report

Not in attendance.

Borough Councillors Report

Borough Councillor Claudine Russell updated the meeting regarding the changes to rubbish collections.

Community Warden Report

The Community Warden had provided a very interesting and comprehensive report for Cllrs prior to the meeting. It was agreed that this should be forwarded to County Cllr Parfitt-Reid.

The meeting was reconvened to discuss item 148/24 onwards.

148/24 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk had presented the report prior to the meeting which provided information on staff leave; no response had been received from Southern Water; further to previous correspondence a key had been provided to Golding Homes for the storage and all confidential files had been removed from The Allens; Confirmation received from Marden Scouts that MPC could use the Scout HQ for play scheme this year (further details will be made available to the Amenities Committee); continue to chase Golding Homes regarding CCTV; Internal Auditor had visited on 20th March and the end of year closure was due to take place shortly. The Internal Auditor had agreed to undertake the audit for 2024/25 remotely. A list of Sub-Group/Working Group meetings was provided and dates for these would be arranged following the elections.

149/24 PARISH MATTERS

Reports from MBC and KCC

No reports had been received. Both Borough and County Cllrs had provided reports for the APM held on 2nd April.

Police Update/Report from Police Forum

Crime Figures can be found at: [Marden and Yalding | Your area | Kent Police | Kent Police](#)
Cllr Rabot reported that the figures are down about 20% for Marden. There have been reports of anti social behaviour of electric bikes frequenting the area and residents should report to 101 or the live chat on Kent Police website.

Communication

Newsletter

Next newsletter was due to be published late June 2024.

Marden Flooding

Despite the amount of rain, Cllr Tippen reported no flooding issues.

Cemetery

Exclusive Right of Burial Certificates

There were no certificates to sign.

Allotments

No decision had received on the recent planning application.

Local Council Award Scheme – Quality Gold Level

The Clerk had circulated the final document to be submitted for reaccreditation. Cllrs confirmed, by resolution, that all documentation and information was in place for all three levels of the award scheme. The application would be submitted to NALC on the Clerk's return.

Terms of Reference

Cllr Tippen suggested the possible change of wording to the Terms of Reference for Council and Committees Decision Making regarding the years of service for Chairman of Parish Council or Committee in paragraph (3) to read “shall be restricted to three years...” “unless the Council unanimously agrees otherwise”. Cllrs voted 5 to 3 in favour of making the change to the wording. Cllr Boswell recommended a change of wording with regard to the amount of Cllrs on the Environmental Group. It was suggested that a minimum of 3 Cllrs and a maximum of 6 which was agreed by all in attendance.

150/24 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

Cllrs noted the draft Minutes of Amenities Committee meeting held on 27th February 2024 (no meeting was held in March). The next meeting will be on 23rd April 2024. Site Meetings will be held on Friday 12th and Saturday 13th April.

Planning Committee

Cllrs noted the Minutes of Planning Committee meeting held on 19th March and draft Minutes of 26th March.

These had previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website. The next meeting will be on 16th April 2024.

Finance Committee

There was no Finance Committee meeting held in February. The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be 30th April to accept end of year accounts.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars attended

14th March – Community Forum. Cllr Tippen had attended and updated Cllrs.

15th March – Events Sub-Group: Notes had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

16th March- Village Litter pick.

19th March – SLCC AGM: The Clerk had attended the AGM but there was nothing significant to report.

19th March – Carbon Literacy Training. Cllr Rabot will circulate notes.

20th March – Internal Audit: The Internal Auditor had visited the office and undertook the audit up to 29th February. The Clerk would prepare the end of year accounts and submit for the final audit to be undertaken.

25th March – Nominations for Elections open (closing date 5th April at 4.00pm) - noted

26th March – Marden Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Turner reported they reviewed the comments from MBC and the Plan does not need to be taken to full referendum but might need to take to examination. There should not be anything too controversial in the amendments but it might require amended definitions.

26th March – Carbon Literacy Training (continuation of workshop held on 19th March).

28th March – Memorial Hall AGM and Committee meeting: Cllrs Newton and Tippen attended and reported to the meeting: Cllr Newton, as representative of Marden Theatre Group, was elected Chairman. A report would be given to the Amenities Committee.

28th March – PPG Meeting. Cllr Tippen had attended and updated Cllrs.

2nd April – APM. Cllrs recommended that format be refreshed to draw more residents next year. Cllr Tippen recommended Cllrs read the organisation reports circulated from the Annual Parish Meeting.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

18th April – Dementia Group Meeting

26th April – NALC Climate webinar – Cllr Boswell will be away but will receive notes.

2nd May – Elections. Email had been received from MBC informing MPC that only nine people had completed nomination forms therefore the 2024 election was uncontested.

7th May – Annual Parish Council meeting.

151/24 CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence received.

152/24 FINANCE

Bank Statements:

Revenue Accounts

Nat West: £12,347.91

Unity: £9,802.95

Capital Account:

Santander: £72,206.33

Payments for Approval

Electronic Payments

April salaries had been authorised prior to the meeting.

The following invoices were put before Cllrs:

Stanleys Garage – fuel and miscellaneous: £183.71

Rialtas – annual financial software support: £230.40

Business Stream – public conv. Waste water: £139.86

SLCC – Deputy Clerk Membership: £229.00

Wicksteed – Flymobile: £1,251.65

Castle Water – Public Conv. Water supply: £3.11
 Cloudy IT – monthly IT support: £225.60
 HMRC – April PAYE/NIC: £2,113.37
 Total: £13,151.63

Payments were agreed and the invoices would be on Unity week commencing 15th April. Cllrs Tippen and Turner would authorise and the Clerk would notify them once payments had been uploaded to Unity Bank.

Other

Cllr Turner requested the Clerk look back on the last six months of the Castle Water and Business Stream invoices as the figures show a lot more waste water than incoming water.

153/24 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Highways

Highways Improvement Plan

An email had been received regarding concerns over parking at Church Green which had been circulated to Cllrs. Cllrs discussed and requested assistance from Borough Councillor Claudine Russell. Cllr Tippen also suggested contacting our Kent Police representatives. Cllrs agreed to look at the yellow lines in the village that are faint and put a list to Kent Highways to include Church Green. Cllr Tippen reported that there is a meeting on 15th April regarding parking on Goudhurst Road around school time.

Speed Cameras

Following an email from a resident, Cllr Summersgill had contacted Kent Police in regard to ANPR cameras. The Police may consider providing these but required traditional roadside activity (ie speed watch) within the parish prior to having a camera. The Clerk would review the list of volunteers to start the training process.

Public Transport

South Eastern Grants

The Clerk had contacted South Eastern regarding possible funding to assist Marden in Bloom with work at the front of the booking office. South Eastern had sent details of grants and other information. Cllrs requested more information.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.34pm.

Signed:

Cllr Kate Tippen, Chairman, Marden Parish Council

Date:

01622 832305 / clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

**ITEM 009/24 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND
SUB-COMMITTEES**
**ITEM 010/24 APPOINT OF SUB-GROUPS AND OUTSIDE
BODIES**

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL
COMMITTEE STRUCTURE FROM 7TH MAY 2024

Councillors:	Richard Adam
	Matt Besant
	Anne Boswell
	Theresa Gibson
	Ian Newton
	Adrian Rabot
	Mike Summersgill
	Kate Tippen
	Andy Turner
	Vacancy
	Vacancy

Chairman:
Vice-Chairman:

AMENITIES COMMITTEE (AC)

Cllrs (8)	MPC Chairman:
	MPC Vice-Chairman:

FINANCE COMMITTEE (FC)

Cllrs (6)	MPC Chairman:
	MPC Vice-Chairman:

PLANNING COMMITTEE (PC)

Cllrs (8)	MPC Chairman:
	MPC Vice-Chairman:

SUB-COMMITTEES

CEMETERY (AC)

Cllrs (6)	MPC Chairman:

HUMAN RESOURCES (FC)

Cllrs (5)	MPC Chairman:

OPEN SPACES (AC)

Cllrs (6)	MPC Chairman:

SUB-GROUPS
ALLOTMENTS (AC)

Cllrs	

BYELAWS (AC)

Cllrs (3)	

COMMUNICATIONS (Council)

Cllrs (3)	MPC Chairman:

EMERGENCY PLANNING (Council)

Cllr	

ENVIRONMENT (AC)

Cllrs (6)	

PLAY SCHEME (AC)

Cllrs (3)	MPC Chairman:

VILLAGE EVENTS (AC)

Cllrs (5)	MPC Chairman:

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (PC)

Cllrs	

OUTSIDE BODIES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM

Cllrs	

KALC

Cllrs	

MARDEN DEMENTIA GROUP

Cllr	
------	--

MBC WARD CLUSTER GROUP

Cllr	
------	--

MEMORIAL HALL

Cllr	
------	--

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

Cllrs	

PUBLIC TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

Cllrs	



Terms of Reference for Council and Committees

Adopted by Marden Parish Council on: 12th June 2018
Reviewed on: 13th June 2017 / 12th June 2018 / 11th June 2019
Amended on: 24th March 2020 / 10th May 2022 / 9th May 2023 / 9th April 2024
Review date: March 2025

Office Opening Times:
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Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
Website: www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
Terms of Reference – Council and Committees – July 2023





TERMS OF REFERENCE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

DECISION MAKING

Subject to stipulations **(i)-(ii)** (*below*), and to the observance of decisions of the Council on matters of principle or policy, with the exception of **(a)-(m)** (*below*) **authority shall be delegated to the Council's Amenities, Finance and Planning Committees or Officers.**

The acts and proceedings of a Committee shall:

- (i)** where they are delegated to the Committee, so far as is legally permissible be deemed the acts and proceedings of the Council
- (ii)** as regards other matters be subject to confirmation by the Council and, when confirmed, shall be deemed the acts and proceedings of the Council
- (iii)** in all respects be subject to the provisions of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, except as otherwise determined by Council

(1) Matters to be resolved only by Council

- (a)** issuing the precept
- (b)** borrowing money
- (c)** approving the end of year Accounts and Annual Return
- (d)** incurring capital expenditure over and above the Council's approved budget
- (e)** incurring revenue expenditure which is over and above the Council's approved budget and is in excess of £5,000 per item (unless incurred already under Financial Regulation 3.4)
- (f)** amending Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- (g)** fixing the number of Committees, and the names and number of Members appointed to each Committee
- (h)** determining the functions and constitution of Committees and Sub-Committees
- (i)** fixing the dates of routine meetings of the Council and its Committees
- (j)** filling of Member vacancies occurring on any Committee or Council (if required to do so by law)
- (k)** appointing or nominating persons to fill vacancies on outside bodies
- (l)** confirming the appointment of, and dismissing of, the Parish Clerk, Deputy Clerk and any other person/s employed by the Council.
- (m)** ratifying all Council and Committee Policies and Risk Assessments.

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(2) Officers

The Council may, from time-to-time and by mutual consent, delegate authority to its Proper Officer or other appropriate Officer. *See MPC's Scheme of Delegation.*

(3) Council Chairman & Committee Chairmen

The statutory annual election of a Chairman shall be subject to the following restriction: The length of continuous service of any Chairman of Full Council or the Chairmen of Planning, Finance and Amenities Committees shall be restricted to three years, unless the Council unanimously agrees otherwise. At completion of any three-year term, all Chairmen will stand down for one year and not be eligible for re-election to the post of Chairman until the following annual meeting of the Parish Council and subsequent Committees.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council will be ex-officio on Planning, Amenities and Finance Committees and have voting rights.
The Chairman of the Parish Council will be ex-officio on Sub-Committees.

(4) Committee Chairmen

In liaison with the Parish Clerk, the Committee Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen have the authority to cancel or postpone a meeting owing to lack of business or in an emergency.

(5) Safeguards

- 1** The Council may, at any time without prejudice to executive action taken already, revoke any executive power delegated to a Committee or Officer.
- 2** Matters delegated to Committee may be referred to Full Council at the request (written or verbal) of two Members of the Council **prior** to the resolution of the matter.
- 3** In accordance with Standing Order 7a the Council may, under specified conditions, reverse a Committee (or Council) decision within 6 months.
- 4** See Emergency Committee Terms of Reference for further information in the case of meetings not being able to convene

TERMS OF REFERENCE COMMITTEES

AMENITIES COMMITTEE

The Amenities Committee of Marden Parish Council consists of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council and a minimum of 4/maximum of 6 Cllrs. The appointment of members to this Committee is decided at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

1	Overseeing the management and administration of the Southons Field, Marden Playing Field and other open space.
2	Overseeing the management and administration of Maidstone Road Cemetery
3	Promoting "Marden at Christmas" and other Parish and National events.
4	Promoting Youth facilities in the Parish
5	Promoting the provision of new or expanded leisure and visitor facilities where there is clear need and demand.
6	Marden Memorial Hall representative to be appointed by Full Council. Representative to provide a written or verbal report to Amenities Committee meetings (written report to be provided prior to meeting if not a member of Committee)
7	Making representations to the appropriate authority on matters relating to the provision and maintenance of leisure facilities for residents and visitors.
8	Making representations to the appropriate authorities in respect of tourism strategies for the Borough and County where those strategies have an impact on the management of tourism within the parish.
9	Making representations to the appropriate authority in respect of the provision and maintenance of litter bins, street cleaning, waste recycling and other related initiatives.
10	Overseeing the management and administration of the public conveniences.
11	Making representations to the appropriate authority in relation to the provision and maintenance of all street furniture within the parish.
12	Make representations on Sustainability, Health and Wellbeing issues.
12	If appropriate, recommending to the Full Council revenue or capital expenditure over and above Council's approved budget.
13	To review S106/CIL spending on Marden Open Spaces

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14	To take up any additional tasks assigned to it by the Full Council as appropriate.
15	Appointing sub-committees and/or working groups to undertake any specific project work as necessary. This may include non-elected members.
16	Review Amenities Policies and Risk Assessments periodically
17	See Emergency Committee Terms of Reference for further information in the case of meetings not being able to convene

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Terms of Reference – Council and Committees – July 2023



TERMS OF REFERENCE COMMITTEES

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee of Marden Parish Council consists of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council and a minimum of 2/maximum of 4 Cllrs. The appointment of members to this Committee is decided at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

1	Reviewing and updating the Financial Regulations and ensuring they are observed by the Council.
2	Review and update Financial Risk Assessments regularly
3	Overseeing the financial administration of the Council.
4	Maintaining the Financial planning system including the determination of budgets.
5	Monitoring performance against budgets and taking any necessary action
6	Drafting annual budget and precept before making recommendation to Full Council
7	Monitoring purchasing decisions to ensure a value for money approach to all aspects of Council activity in accordance with Financial Regulations.
8	Receiving and reviewing audit reports and arranging for implementation of any recommendations.
9	Developing, maintaining and monitoring the policy on the management of reserves.
10	Undertaking quarterly internal audit checks on accounts and reconciling accounts.
11	Monitor the work of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to ensure proper accounting records and adequate internal financial controls are in place.
12	Providing advice and guidance to the Chairmen of other Committees and to the Full Council on all aspects of financial management.
13	Following a report from the HR Sub-Committee will review the annual salaries of all employees and make recommendations to Full Council for ratification
14	To take up any additional tasks assigned to it by the Full Council as appropriate.
15	Appointing sub-committees and/or working groups to undertake any specific project work as necessary.

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16	To delegate to the Cemetery Sub-Committee responsibility for items 4 to 9 of the Cemetery Sub-Committee Terms of Reference.
17	Review Financial Policies and Risk Assessments periodically.
18	See Emergency Committee Terms of Reference for further information in the case of meetings not being able to convene.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE COMMITTEES

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Planning Committee of Marden Parish Council consists of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council and a minimum of 4/maximum of 6 Cllrs. The appointment of members to this Committee is decided at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

1	Making representations to the Planning Authority on applications for planning permission.
2	Making representations in respect of appeals against the refusal of planning permission.
3	Making representations in respect of enforcement action or alleged breaches of planning regulations (under confidential item).
4	Making representations regarding street naming.
5	Making representations regarding street trading licences
6	Considering and monitoring any development plans relating to the Parish, Borough and County and making appropriate representations.
7	Making representations to the appropriate Planning Authority in respect of all other planning matters not referred to above.
8	Making representations and attending at the Court proceedings (where necessary) on applications for Justices/Transfer of Justices Licences to the Magistrates when notified of such applications.
9	Making representations to the highway authority in respect of highway matters which are relevant to planning.
10	All other matters which are the responsibility of third party agencies and affect directly the Parish's natural environment, built environment and infrastructure.
11	To take up any additional tasks assigned to it by the Full Council as appropriate.
12	Appointing sub-committees and/or working groups to undertake any specific project work as necessary. This may include non-elected members.
13	Review Planning Policies periodically.
14	See Emergency Committee Terms of Reference for further information in the case of meetings not being able to convene.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE COMMITTEES

EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

(motions carried at the Extra Ordinary Full Council Meeting held on 24th March 2020)

The Emergency Committee of Marden Parish Council will be brought into force to manage High Consequence Infectious Diseases and other emergencies in the event that it is impractical for the Parish Council to conduct its business through face-to-face meetings. It will consist of all 11 Parish Councillors.

1	That Standing Order 9.b be suspended under Standing Order 10.a.xv for the duration of an emergency to remove the requirement for four clear days written notice of the wording of a motion.
2.	That the Standing Orders be temporarily added to Under Standing Order 26.b as follows:
(i)	A temporary Emergency Committee comprising all Councillors shall be established;
(ii)	The Emergency Committee shall have full delegated powers to temporarily exercise all functions of the Council (including its committees and sub-committees) to the extent permitted by law.
(iii)	For the avoidance of doubt, the Emergency Committee has the power to temporarily:
	<p>(a) Add to, vary, suspend or revoke Standing Orders under Standing Orders 10.a.xv and 26.b;</p> <p>(b) Approve any revisions to or suspension of any part of the Financial Regulations as drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer for consideration under Standing Order 19.a;</p> <p>(c) Amend the Council's policies and procedures (including the Scheme of Delegation) as may be required for the duration of the emergency; and</p> <p>(d) Respond to planning applications and any consultations in the name of the Council or its other committees, as applicable.</p>
3.	That further purpose of Standing Order 3.d, the nature of the emergency and its consequential effects be considered special reasons under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to waive the requirement for meetings of the Emergency Committee to be open to the public.

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4.	That the Standing Orders be temporarily varied under Standing Order 26.b so that the Emergency Committee may operate “virtually”, with meetings called and decisions taken by email correspondence (or other means agreed by the Emergency Committee), without direct public participation but taking account of any representations made to the Council by the public, subject to the meetings being minuted by the Council’s Proper Officer in the normal way.
5.	The Virtual Meetings Policy and Guideline will be added as an addendum to the Standing Orders
6.	That the Emergency Committee should be dissolved after three months unless the Council resolves in accordance with the <u>unamended</u> Standing Orders that a shorter or longer period shall be adopted.

Financial Regulations

7.	That Financial Regulation 18 be temporarily revised for the duration of the emergency so that the Emergency Committee may take the place of the Council, its Finance Committee and Human Resources Sub-Committee as required for each purpose to the extent permitted by law.
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Scheme of Delegation

8.	That the Scheme of Delegation be temporarily amended for the duration of an emergency so that the Emergency Committee may further delegate any functions of the Council (including its committees and sub-committees) to the Chairman, an agreed number of Councillors, the Proper Officer*, the Responsible Financial Officer or any combination thereof, as appropriate, to the extent permitted by law.
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Signed by Cllrs Boswell, Adam and Tippen in the presence of Cllr Newton and the Proper Officer (Alison Hooker) on 24th March 2020.

* *In the absence of the Proper Officer the Deputy Clerk will take on the role.*

TERMS OF REFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEES

HUMAN RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE

Reports to Finance Committee

The Human Resources Sub-Committee of Marden Parish Council is a sub-committee of the Finance Committee and consists of the Chairman of the Parish Council and a minimum of 2/maximum of 4 Cllrs. The appointment of members to this Sub-Committee is decided at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

1	To recruit, retain and develop staff to undertake the work of the council.
2	To review the pay and conditions of employment of the staff and to update these as necessary to comply with the law and with good practice.
3	A report to be provided annually to Finance Committee for the budget setting meeting recommending the pay award for all employees.
4	To determine the staffing levels necessary to efficiently discharge the work required by the council and to review the workloads periodically.
5	To ensure the health and safety of staff employed by providing appropriate working spaces, tools and equipment and to train staff as necessary to safeguard their health and safety at work.
6	To undertake reviews of working practices and procedures of the Council as a whole when so requested and to make recommendations to Full Council.
7	To undertake regular staff appraisals of both employed and self-employed staff
8	To review staff appraisal forms and act on any recommendations.
9	To make proposals to the Finance Committee following agreement of staff appraisal recommendations.
10	To undertake reviews of risk assessments for all employees and volunteers
11	To liaise with the HR Support (Peninsula) on any staffing issues that may arise were additional support is required
12	To take up any additional tasks assigned to it by the Full Council or Finance Committee as appropriate.
13	To ensure the disciplinary procedure/policy and grievance procedure/policy remains up to date following guidance received from Peninsula.

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14	In the event of a disciplinary or grievance matter being raised by an employee to appoint a Councillor/Councillors or the Clerk to investigate and resolve in line with MPC's Disciplinary/Grievance Policies.
15	To review Financial Regulations and Financial Risk Assessment which are relevant to HR matters to ensure up to date and relevant
16	Review HR Policies and Risk Assessments periodically.
17	See Emergency Committee Terms of Reference for further information in the case of meetings not being able to convene

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TERMS OF REFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEES

CEMETERY SUB-COMMITTEE

Reports to Amenities Committee

The Cemetery Sub-Committee of Marden Parish Council is a sub-committee of the Amenities Committee and consists of the Chairman of the Parish Council and a minimum of 2/maximum of 5 Cllrs. The appointment of members to this Sub-Committee is decided at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

1	To review the cemetery rules and regulations at least annually and put before Amenities Committee for ratification.
2	To review and recommend the cemetery fees annually in October and report to Finance Committee for budgeting purposes.
3	To undertake and attend at least two site meetings annually (April and September) and report back to Amenities Committee.
4	To agree memorial/inscription applications if issues arise by the Clerk.
5	To agree burial/interment of ashes if not resident of parish if concerns raised by Clerk.
6	To be responsible for directing the maintenance of the cemetery within a schedule agreed by the Amenities Committee in order to maintain a good standard of appearance in the cemetery.
7	To be responsible for the direction the operation of the cemetery with the use of the Parish Council's rules and regulations to ensure the safety, dignity and ongoing use of the cemetery.
8	To ensure the Clerk has effectively documented procedures in place to take day to day operational decision on the management of the cemetery. All procedures will be referred to the Parish Council for approval if needed to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping records of all burials and interment of ashes and their locations; • To liaise with funeral directors appertaining to all interments; • To meet with the funeral directors on the day of the funeral to confirm details on coffin nameplate with that on the legal documentation; • To receive all documentation and fees from the funeral director at least three days before the funeral and sending relevant documents to the Register of Deaths.
9	To ensure that all gravestones and trees are in a safe condition
10	To delegate small items of work to be undertaken by caretaking staff to the Clerk and/or Deputy Clerk when need arises

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11	To recommend how to spend money within the budget of the cemetery on projects relating to the cemetery and reporting to the Amenities Committee/Finance Committee for ratification
12	No decisions to be made other than those outlined above. All other recommendations will be required to be ratified at the next Amenities Committee or Full Council meeting.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEES

OPEN SPACE SUB-COMMITTEE

Reports to Amenities Committee

The Open Space Sub-Committee of Marden Parish Council is a sub-committee of the Amenities Committee and consists of the Chairman of the Parish Council and a minimum of 2/maximum of 5 Cllrs. The appointment of members to this Sub-Committee is decided at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

1	To review the fees for Southons Field and Playing Field annually in October and report to Finance Committee for budgeting purposes.
2	To review the terms and conditions of Open Space bookings (ie Southons Field and Playing Field) at least annually.
3	To undertake and attend at least two site meetings annually (April and September) and report back to Amenities Committee.
4	To be responsible for directing the maintenance of the Parish Council owned open space within a schedule agreed by the Amenities Committee in order to maintain a good standard of appearance.
5	To ensure that all trees and buildings are in a safe condition.
6	To review mowing contract on a three-year basis (or earlier if required) and take to Amenities Committee/Finance Committee for ratification
7	To determine how to spend money within the budget on projects relating to the open spaces and reporting to the Amenities Committee/Finance Committee for ratification
8	To delegate small items of work to be undertaken by caretaking staff to the Clerk and/or Deputy Clerk when need arises
9	No decisions to be made other than those outlined above. All other recommendations will be required to be ratified at the next Amenities Committee or Full Council meeting.

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OTHER WORKING GROUPS/SUB-GROUPS

COMMUNICATION SUB-GROUP

Reports to Full Council

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The membership of the Communications Sub-Group will be appointed at the Annual Parish Council meeting and will be reviewed annually. The Sub-Group will consist of two Cllrs and the Chairman of the Council. The Deputy Clerk will clerk the meeting

The Sub-Group:

1	Will oversee the Parish Council's communication as set out in the Communication and Newsletter Policies.
2.	Will review all aspects of communications relevant to the Parish Council
3.	Will review the Communication and Newsletter Policies annually or, if required, during the course of the year.
4.	Will not make decisions on behalf of the Parish Council. Any recommendations made by the Sub-Group will be subject to agreement by the Parish Council, or delegated Committee.

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OTHER SUB-COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS/SUB-GROUPS

PLAY SCHEME SUB-GROUP

Reports to Amenities Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The membership of the Play Scheme Sub-Group will be appointed at the Annual Parish Council meeting and will be reviewed annually. The Sub-Group will consist of two Cllrs, the Chairman of the Council, the Clerk and Deputy Clerk. The Clerk will clerk the meeting

The Sub-Group:

1	Will oversee the running of the Summer Play Scheme.
2.	Will review Play Scheme Policies and Risk Assessments annually.
3.	Will recommend location and dates for the Summer Play Scheme to the Amenities Committee
4.	Will recommend staffing to the HR Sub-Committee.
5.	Will recommend expenditure to the Amenities Committee within the agreed budget.
6.	Will assist with the set up and day to day running of the scheme
7.	Will review end of scheme expenditure and refer recommendations to Finance Committee for the next year's budget
8.	Will not make decisions on behalf of the Parish Council. Any recommendations made by the Sub-Group will be subject to agreement by the Amenities Committee or other delegated committee.

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OTHER SUB-COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS/SUB-GROUPS

VILLAGE EVENTS SUB-GROUP

Reports to Amenities Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The membership of the Village Events Sub-Group will be appointed at the Annual Parish Council meeting and will be reviewed annually. The Sub-Group will consist of four Cllrs and the Chairman of the Council. The Deputy Clerk will clerk any meetings

The Sub-Group:

1.	Will consider village events being run by the Parish Council throughout the year
2.	To discuss and consider dates and times of village litter picks.
3.	Will consider dates and times of litter picks.
4.	Consider where litter picking to take place.
5.	Review litter pick risk assessments and policies.
6.	Consider what equipment is required and request additional purchases to Amenities Committee
7.	Discuss Christmas dates and recommend structure and expenditure to Amenities Committee.
8.	Review Christmas risk assessments and policies.
9.	Discuss and make recommendations on ad hoc events within the parish.
10.	To review risk assessments for ad hoc events
11.	Has delegated powers to cancel or postpone any future event organised by Marden Parish Council.
12.	Has delegated powers to cancel any event on Parish Council owned land in the case of extreme weather conditions.
13.	Will, other than items 11 or 12 above, not make decisions on behalf of the Parish Council. Any recommendations made by the Sub-Group will be subject to agreement by the Amenities Committee or delegated committee.

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OTHER SUB-COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS/SUB-GROUPS

ENVIRONMENTAL SUB-GROUP

Reports to Amenities Committee/Full Council

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The membership of the Environment Sub-Group will be appointed at the Annual Parish Council meeting and will be reviewed annually. The Sub-Group will consist minimum of 3/maximum of 6 Cllrs. Notes of the meetings will be taken by a Cllr in attendance. The Administrative Assistant will provide admin support.

Members of the public can be members of the Sub-Group which can be up to 12 members. Members of the public, who are not members of the Sub-Group, are entitled to attend meetings, and contribute, towards recommendations put to the Amenities Committee.

The Sub-Group:

1.	will work with the community to produce ideas and strategies that will have positive impacts on the natural environment of the Parish of Marden, and encourage new ways to enhance the sustainability and biodiversity of the Parish, and contribute to the fight against climate change.
2.	will aid in the compliance of the Parish Council with its Environment Policy Aims.
3.	shall have no financial delegated authority. Any financial expenditure requests must be agreed by the Amenities Committee. The Sub-Group may apply for grants outside of the Parish Council under the name of the Parish Council, but the requests must first be approved by the Amenities Committee.
4.	can direct their own scope in terms of which projects or initiatives they wish to consider and review. However, any final recommendations must first be made to the Amenities Committee for a final decision on the action to be taken, and whether the Parish Council wishes to pursue the projects or initiatives.
5.	aims are set out within the Environment Policy of Marden Parish Council.
6.	shall aim to comply with, and promote, and Principles of the Parish Council's Environment Policy.
7.	Members shall be acting voluntarily. Any expenditure for the group for the purposes of stationary shall be made through the Clerk of the Parish Council only. There will be no reimbursements for members of the public, nor members of the Council, unless payments are explicitly authorised by the Clerk/Amenities Committee in advance.

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8.	shall meet as and when required to deal with matters under the scope of this terms of reference with times and locations of the meetings being determined by the Sub-Group members. (It is anticipated that the Sub-Committee should meet on a 2 monthly basis)
9.	will review the Environment Policy and any risk assessment associated with this Sub-Group periodically.
10.	Will not make decisions on behalf of the Parish Council. Any recommendations made by the Sub-Group will be subject to agreement by the Amenities Committee or Full Council.

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MARDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Marden Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) Steering Group will consist of Parish Councillors and members of the public. The Parish Clerk will clerk the meetings.

Marden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:

1.	Will appoint a Chairman from the membership of the Group
2.	No business shall be dealt with unless five members of the Group are present, with at least three of these being Cllrs. If not quorate, any items to be discussed will be deferred until a future meeting.
3.	Will be open to any Cllr or member of the public to attend who may speak or comment on any item.
4.	Members, whether Cllrs or members of the public, will adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct
5.	Meetings will be held on dates determined by the Group.
6.	Will oversee the preparation and any reviews of the Parish's Neighbourhood Plan and to make recommendations to the Full Council.
7.	To recommend to the Finance Committee any budget required for the ongoing work of the MNP.
8.	To recommend to the Finance Committee, as part of the annual budget process, any items which it requires the Finance Committee to consider and approve for the next financial year.
9.	Will encourage residents to take an active part in their community, its activities and its future to ensure the MNP is representative of the community's ambitions.
10.	To arrange consultations and other parish events to ensure a high level of community engagement throughout the planning process.
11.	To produce, monitor and update the MNP project/review timetable.
12.	Will identify sources of funding and resource requirements. All grants and funding will be applied for by the Parish Council who will ringfence the funds for the MNP work.
13.	Will liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the MNP as effective as possible.

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14.	Keep under review the legislative requirements around neighbourhood planning to ensure the MNP meets all requirements.
15.	Agree, subject to ratification of the Full Council, a final submission to Maidstone Borough Council

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ITEM 011/24 - PARISH ASSETS

ASSETS 2023/24

TOTAL ASSETS £ 208,843.21

Assets are defined as land, buildings, vehicles, plant and equipment.

Item	Location	Date acquired	Purchase price/Audit	Date released	Notes
Land					
Playing Field	High Street	1965	donated		
Cemetery	Maidstone Road	1932	compulsory purchased		
Southons Field	Maidstone Road	2008	£ -		purchase price £200,000
Rookery Path (part)	High Street	1965	donated		
Rookery Path (part)	High Street	1965		2006	
Buildings					
Changing Room Building (built 1975)	Playing Field		unknown		
Pavilion & Mower Shed (now used for storage)	Southons Field	2008	£ 2,500.00		
Public Conveniences	Car Park	2010	n/a		long term lease from MBC
Storage Shed	Cemetery	?	unknown		
Mower Garage	Southons Field	2018	£ 1,012.50		
			£ 3,512.50		

Office equipment

* office furniture includes: three desks, three 3-drawer pedestal units, two 2-drawer pedestal units, 2 small lockable cupboards
1 small non-lockable cupboard, 2 large lockable cupboards

Item	Location	Date acquired	Purchase price	Date released	Notes
Shredder	Parish Office	05/12/2010	£ 70.00		
Digital Camera	Parish Office	22/09/2005	£ -	01/04/2021	
Digital Camera dock	Parish Office	22/09/2005	£ -	01/04/2021	
Dell computer and ancilliary equipment	Parish Office	unknown		Dec-07	
BT Cordless Telephone	Parish Office	12/03/2013		Dec-18	
Fireproof 4-drawer safe	Parish Office	09/01/2007	£ 1,091.00		
HP Scanner	Parish Office	unknown		Dec-07	
Office Furniture*	Parish Office	Oct 2010/2013	£ 2,000.00		
Motorola Mobile Phone	Parish Office	2008		Jan-17	
Dell Laptop	Parish Office	May-07		Jun-17	
Office Vacuum Cleaner	Parish Office	Nov-07		Aug-19	
Ricoh Photocopier	Parish Office	leased from KCC		Feb-16	
Ricoh Printer	Parish Office	leased from KCC		Feb-16	
Sharp MFD	Parish Office	leased from KCC	n/a		
Meeting Room Tables x 4	Parish Office	Oct-10	£ 670.00		
Meeting Room Chairs x 10	Parish Office	Oct-10	£ 360.00		
Fridge	Parish Office	Oct-10	£ -	29/09/2021	
Microwave	Parish Office	Oct-10	£ 50.00		
A Frames	Parish Office	Apr-11		Feb-18	
2 x office computer systems	Parish Office	Aug-13	£ 1,190.00		
Flip Charts	Parish Office	2013	£ 150.00		
Fujitsu Laptop	Parish Office	Aug-13	£ 238.00		
Office Chairs x 2	Parish Office	Sep-15	£ 247.50		
Office Mobile (Samsung) - Clerk	Parish Office	Jan-17	£ 99.99		
HP Laptop	Parish Office	Jun-17	£ 333.29		
HP Laptop	Parish Office	Jun-17	£ 333.29		
Computer screen	Parish Office	Feb-18	£ 117.00		
Panasonic office telephone	Parish Office	Dec-18	£ -	Sep-22	
Office Mobile (Huawei) - Deputy Clerk	Parish Office	May-19	£ 109.99		
Computer screen	Parish Office	Jan-20	£ 144.00		
Office trimmer	Parish Office	Jan-20	£ 35.99		
Fridge	Parish Office	29/09/2021	£ 115.83		
HP Laptop (Admin Asst)	Parish Office	21/09/2021	£ 374.99		
Freezer	Parish Office	23/11/2021	£ 20.00		
Cooling units	Parish Office	12/07/2022	£ 98.32		
Intel laptops	Parish Office	24/01/2023	£ 1,179.94		
Samsung Computer Screen	Parish Office	10/05/2023	£ 194.00		
			£ 9,223.13		

Playing Field

Item	Location	Date acquired	Purchase price	Date released	Notes
2 x large bins	Playing Field		£ -	Feb-14	
3 x benches	Playing Field		£ 500.00		
dog-proof fencing	Playing Field	pre 2002	£ 7,600.00		
youth shelter	Playing Field	pre 2002		May-18	
sports wall	Playing Field	pre 2002		Jan-19	
Play equipment	Playing Field	pre 2002		Jun-14	
Play equipment (in total)	Playing Field	2014	£ 37,950.00		
Play equipment (in total)	Napoleon Drive	May-17	£ 31,254.70	Feb-24	(picnic bench removed = £910.30)
New Children's picnic table	Napoleon Drive	Mar-24	£ 1,460.00	Mar-24	
Additional play equipment	Playing Field	Mar-24	£ 1,043.04		
CCTV	Playing Field	30/11/2016	£ 5,270.00		
2 x litter bins	Playing Field	24/08/2017		Feb-14	
youth shelter	Playing Field	01/05/2018	£ 18,196.00		
4 x litter bins	Playing Field	01/02/2019	£ 1,515.92		
1 x litter bin (play area)	Playing Field	01/02/2019	£ 343.98		
sports wall	Playing Field	01/01/2019	£ 8,926.00		
Bench	Playing Field	01/08/2019	£ 998.00		
Rocking Horse	Playing Field	01/02/2020	£ 8,931.82		
2 x litter bins	Playing Field	07/06/2021	£ 813.98		
Outdoor Gym	Playing Field	10/09/2021	£ 14,946.00		
			£ 139,749.44		

Cemetery

Item	Location	Date acquired	Purchase price	Date released	Notes
Circular Bench	Cemetery	2004 approx	£ 1,000.00		
6 x benches	Cemetery		donated		
2 x benches	Cemetery		£ 640.00		
1 x bench	Cemetery	2015	£ 321.00		
Noticeboard	Cemetery	pre 2002		Jun-20	removed as broken
Wrought iron gates and fencing	Cemetery	unknown	£ -		£5,116 valued 2014
1 x bench	Cemetery	Feb-19	donated		
Noticeboard	Cemetery	Jun-20	£ 1,073.98		
			£ 3,034.98		

Southons Field*Community Chest and equipment - games/sports equipment (ie football goals, rounders, balls etc)*

Item	Location	Date acquired	Purchase price	Date released	Notes
Community Chest and equipment*	Southons field	01/12/2009	£ 1,800.00		
Picnic Benches x 4	Southons field	01/10/2010	£ 400.00		
Play/Adventure Trail	Southons field	27/07/2015	£ 9,991.00		
Wooden Litter Bin	Southons field	16/08/2016	£ 510.00		
Aluminium Notice Board	Southons field	09/10/2017	£ 1,465.00		
Picnic Benches x 6	Southons field	03/09/2020	£ 1,403.33		
Additional play trail equipment	Southons field	05/03/2021	£ 4,276.67		
Additional play trail equipment	Southons field	28/05/2021	£ 3,636.67		
Litter bin	Southons field	24/02/2022	£ 434.00		
Beacon	Southons field		£ 662.00		pole and installation donated
Picnic Benches x 2	Southons field	10/05/2023	£ 558.62		
Double entrance gate	Southons field	27/09/2023	£ 1,176.00		
			£ 26,313.29		

Community

Item	Location	Date acquired	Purchase price	Date released	Notes
Memorial Hall Notice board	Memorial Hall	2004	£ 50.00		
Wooden Notice Board	Post Office	unknown		Nov-20	removed as broken
Bench	Church Wall	unknown	unknown		
Bench	Library	unknown	unknown		
Chairman's Board	Parish Office	unknown	unknown		
Village Pump	The Allens	unknown	unknown		
Notice Board	library	Sep-09	£ 1,000.00		
Ladder	Southons Field	Jul-11	£ 100.00		
Notice board	Chainhurst	Apr-13	£ 790.00		
Cycle rack/flower planter	High Street	Sep-09	£ 1,000.00		
Street signs	Morello Path	Dec-10	£ 100.00		
Street signs	Rookery Path	Dec-10	£ 100.00		
Speed Watch equipment	Parish Office	Nov-14	£ 1,970.00		
Swing display boards	Parish Office	Feb-18	£ 123.80		
Play Scheme sports equipment (total)	Southons Field	Jul-18	£ 2,500.00		
Folding Tables	Southons Field	Nov-19	£ 60.73		
Gazebos	Southons Field	2019/2022	£ 1,011.37		
Notice Board at Old Post Office	High Street	30/06/2021	£ 560.08		
Speed Indicator Sign and post	Various	01/09/2021	£ 6,260.00		
Commando sockets on lamp posts	Various	01/12/2021	£ 3,723.72		
Commando sockets on lamp posts	Various	07/12/2022	£ 1,200.00		
			£ 20,549.70		

Machinery

Item	Location stored	Date acquired	Purchase price	Date released	Notes
Mower & Tools	Cemetery		£ 1,050.00		
Shredder	Cemetery	Oct-07		May-15	
Trailer	Cemetery	unknown		Oct-17	
Strimmer	Cemetery	May-15		Jul-17	
Atco Mower	Cemetery	23/08/2016	£ 357.50		
Ride on Mower		2008		17/11/2016	sold for £700
Ride on Mower	Southons field	23/08/2016		Mar-22	sold for £1000
Trailer	Southons field	15/11/2016	£ 323.75		
Hedgecutter	Southons field	01/11/2011	£ 320.00		
Generator	Southons field	31/03/2016	£ 575.00		
Trailer	Southons field	06/10/2017	£ 859.92		
Strimmer - Honda UMK 425 E LE	Southons field	06/10/2017	£ 259.00		
Strimmer - Honda UMP 425 LEFT	Southons field	01/07/2019	£ 254.17		
Petrol (push) mower	Southons field	05/06/2020	£ 382.50		
Leafblower	Southons field	05/03/2021	£ 216.67		
Makita drill	Southons field	27/05/2021	£ 212.49		
Atco Mower	Southons field	01/03/2022	£ 950.00		
Atco Quatro Mower (Serial No. 22KA2WBH024040)	Southons field	16/10/2023	£ 699.17		
			£ 6,460.17		

ITEM 011/24 – DATES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS 2024/2025

Schedule of Proposed Parish Council meetings for 2024-2025 Tuesday evenings - all commencing at 7.30 pm

Some meetings may be scheduled to change – please check notice boards and website for details

7 th May	Annual Parish Council Meeting <i>Signing of Declarations Election of Chairman Election of Vice-Chairman Appointment of Committees etc</i>
14 th May	Planning Committee (TBC) <i>Election of Chairman / Vice-Chairman</i>
21 st May	Planning Committee (TBC) <i>Election of Chairman / Vice-Chairman</i>
28 th May	Amenities Committee <i>Election of Chairman / Vice-Chairman</i>
4 th June	Planning Committee
11 th June	Full Council
18 th June	Planning Committee
25 th June	Amenities Committee
2 nd July	Planning Committee
9 th July	Full Council
16 th July	Planning Committee
23 rd July	Amenities Committee
30 th July	Finance Committee – Quarter 1 accounts <i>Election of Chairman / Vice-Chairman</i> TBC
6 th August	Planning Committee
13 th August	Full Council
20 th August	Planning Committee

27 th August	Amenities Committee

3 rd September	Planning Committee
10 th September	Full Council
17 th September	Planning Committee
24 th September	Amenities Committee
1 st October	Planning Committee
8 th October	Full Council
15 th October	Planning Committee
22 nd October	Amenities Committee
29 th October	Finance – Quarter 2 Accounts Draft Budget/Precept meeting
5 th November	Planning Committee
12 th November	Full Council
19 th November	Planning Committee
26 th November	Amenities Committee
3 rd December	Planning Committee
10 th December	Full Council
17 th December	Planning Committee
24 th December	No meeting
31 st December	No meeting
7 th January	Planning Committee
14 th January	Full Council
21 st January	Planning Committee Finance Committee <i>Agreement of Precept/Budget</i>
28 th January	Amenities Committee Extraordinary Full Council <i>Agree Budget/Precept</i>
4 th February	Planning Committee

11 th February	Full Council
18 th February	Planning Committee
25 th February	Amenities Committee
4 th March	Planning Committee
11 th March	Full Council
18 th March	Planning Committee
24 th March	Amenities Committee
1 st April	Annual Parish Meeting (TBC)
8 th April	Full Council
15 th April	Planning Committee
22 nd April	Amenities Committee
29 th April	TBC
6 th May	Planning Committee
13 th May	Annual Parish Council Meeting

Local electors and the press are entitled to listen to Parish Council Meetings but not to take part. An opportunity to speak will be given at the beginning of Council business. The Parish Council acts as a planning consultee, who makes recommendations only. Maidstone Borough Council makes the final decision.



ITEM 012/24 – GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE EXPLANATION

Adopted by Marden Parish Council on:
Reviewed on:
Review date:

Office Opening Times:
Mondays, Tuesdays & Fridays 10am - 12 noon
www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
General Power of Competence Explanation

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

EXPLANATION

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND TO THE POWER

Parish councils are corporate bodies; their powers have accumulated through legislation since 1894. Their powers were constrained to specific and appropriate legislation until 2008 when they could, if eligible, exercise the Power of Well-being 2008 Order made under Section 1(2) of the Local Government Act 2000 for the benefit of their community.

The Localism Act 2011, Chapter 1 of Part 1, Sections 1-8 has provided local authorities with a general power of competence (GPC), a radical new power with wide ranging possibilities. The broader GPC replaces the power of well-being.

The GPC was brought into force by S1.961, The Localism Act 2001 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2012 on 28th March 2012.

WHAT DOES THE POWER ALLOW COUNCILS TO DO?

The power is a central part of this Government's move towards the decentralization of powers down to the lowest practical level of local government. The Explanatory Memorandum to The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 no 965 says that:

“The Government's intention in providing eligible parish councils with the general power of competence is to better enable them to take on their enhanced role and allow them to do the things they have previously been unable to do under their existing powers.”

The Government hopes that this new power will give local councils confidence in the legal capacity to act for their communities. The idea being that councils will use this power to work with others to provide cost-effective services and facilities in new ways to meet the needs of local communities.

The GPC, Localism Act 2011 Sect 1(1) gives local authorities, including eligible local councils, *“the power to do anything that individuals generally may do”* as long as they do not break other laws. It is intended to be a power of first, not last, resort.

The council has to ask itself if an individual is allowed to do it, if the answer is yes then a council is normally permitted to act in the same way.

A council could:

- Lend or invest money
- It could set up a company or co-operative society to trade and engage in commercial activity
- It could run a community shop or post office
- The power is not restricted to use within the parish – it can be used anywhere

RISKS AND RESTRICTIONS LIMITING THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

The GPC is a power; it cannot be used to raise the precept. The council can seek other sources of funding such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), sponsorship, commercial activity and agreements with other authorities. Councils can receive income as a consequence of using the power, they could lend money to support a local activity and earn interest on the loan, they could purchase shares in a struggling local enterprise.

However, to use this power the council must have the support of the local community. While councils are being encouraged to be innovative they should be aware of the risk of:

- Being challenged
- Their trading activities damaging other competing local enterprises
- Damage to the council's reputation and public money if a project goes wrong.

Existing duties remain in place, such as having regard to the likely effect on crime and disorder, biodiversity and the duty to provide allotments.

Existing financial and procedural duties remain in place for regulating governance for example – no delegation to a single Councillor.

Councils must continue to comply with relevant existing legislation – employment law, Health and Safety legislation, equality legislation and duties relating to data protection and freedom of information.

If a council wishes to trade it must set up a company or a co-operative society and abide by company law. The council can charge for services provided under the power.

If the council wishes to invest in a local business which it hopes will support the local economy it should follow Government advice. If it wishes to support a community enterprise, an economic development grant might be a sensible option.

If another authority has a statutory duty to provide a service (eg education) it remains their duty to provide it but the council may assist. The council needs to ask itself whether an individual, private company or community trust could help, if the answer is yes then the council can assist. An appropriate delivery body may need to be set up.

If the action the council wishes to take is also covered by a specific power then any restrictions that apply to the overlapping power remain in place. So if existing legislation requires the council to ask permission before acting, then it must do so. For example, the council asks permission of the Highways Authority before doing work on roadside verges.

HOW DOES THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE RELATE TO SECTION 137 EXPENDITURE?

Monies that can be spent under Section 137, Local Government Act 1972, are limited and have to be budgeted for separately, they are restricted in that they cannot be used to give money to individuals and expenditure must be commensurate with the benefit. Section 137 is a power of last resort. A council that is eligible to use the GPC can no longer use Section 137 as a power for taking action for the benefit of the area or its community except Section 137(3) which permits the council to contribute to UK charities, public sector funds and public appeals remains in place.

The GPC is a very broad ranging power, far wider than any power that has previously been available to town and parish councils, wider than Section 137 and the power of well-being.

HOW TO BECOME ELIGIBLE TO USE THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

The conditions for eligibility are set out in the Statutory Instrument, Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2013. They are:

Resolution

The council must resolve at a meeting that it meets the criteria for eligibility relating to the electoral mandate and relevant training of the clerk. The resolution can be passed at any meeting of the council but a further resolution must be passed at every subsequent “relevant annual meeting” for the council to be able to continue to exercise the power. A “relevant annual meeting” is the annual meeting that takes place in a year of ordinary elections, once every four years.

Electoral Mandate

At the time the resolution is passed, at least two thirds of the members of the council must hold office as a result of being declared elected. This means they should have stood for election, whether at an ordinary or by election, even if unopposed, rather than co-opted or appointed. If two thirds is not a whole number then it must be rounded up. For example, if the total number of Councillors is 8, then two thirds is 5.3, then the number of Councillors that must be elected is 6.

Qualified Clerk

At the time the resolution is passed, the Clerk must hold the certificate in Local Council Administration, the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy, the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Council Administration or the first level of the foundation degree in Community Engagement and Governance (or successor qualifications) award by the University of Gloucestershire. The Clerk must also have completed training in the exercise of this power as part of one of these qualifications or as a separate exercise.

If the council loses its qualified Clerk or has insufficient elected Councillors then it must record its ineligibility at the next “relevant annual meeting” of the council (after the ordinary election). If it has already started an activity it can finish that but not start anything new.

RE: Highwood Green Allotments, Marden

Noah Overton <noah.overton@redrow.co.uk>

Wed 2024-04-24 10:38

To: Alison Hooker <clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk>

Hi Alison,

By way of update Golding Homes have now said they do not want the allotment parking bays. With this in mind we are reviewing our options regarding the spaces.

One suggestion has been if we can get the required consent converting the parking spaces into more allotment land. If we can do this would the Parish take transfer of the additional allotment land?

Kind regards

Noah

Noah Overton
Land Director

Redrow Homes Limited
Redrow House
6-12 Talbot Lane, Ebbsfleet Valley
Kent, DA10 1AZ

Telephone: 01322 422325
Mobile: 07393147331

Extension: 6356



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From: Alison Hooker <clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2024 1:53 PM
To: Noah Overton <noah.overton@redrow.co.uk>
Subject: Re: Highwood Green Allotments, Marden

=====
THIS EMAIL ORIGINATED FROM AN EXTERNAL SOURCE.
CHECK THE EMAIL ADDRESS, AS IT MAY BE SPAM!
=====

Hi Noah

ITEM 013/24 – MPC -CO-OPTION



PARISH COUNCIL OF MARDEN NOTICE OF CO-OPTION VACANCIES

Notice is hereby given that by reason of an uncontested Parish Council election, vacancies have occurred for two Parish Councillors to be co-opted onto the Council.

If you are interested in filling one of these vacancies please contact the Clerk for an application form or download from [Elections - Marden Parish Council Marden, Tonbridge, Kent - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](https://www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk/elections) – closing date for receipt of applications is 5pm Friday 31st May 2024.

To qualify you must be a British, European Union or a qualifying Commonwealth citizen and must be over 18 years of age.

You must also be able to answer yes to one or more of the following:

- Be listed on the current register of Electors; or
- Have lived either in the Parish of Marden, or within three miles of its boundary for at least a year; or
- Have been the owner or tenant of land in the parish of Marden for at least a year; or
- Have had your only, or main place of work, in the parish of Marden for at least a year.

The current Parish Council is in office until the year 2028.

Dated: 2nd May 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alison Hooker'.

Alison Hooker, Clerk to Marden Parish Council
Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden,
Tonbridge, Kent TN12 9JX
Clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
01622 832305

Office Opening Times:
Mondays, Tuesdays & Fridays 10am - 12 noon
Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk



ITEM 014/24 – DRAFT AMENITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL AMENITIES COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 23RD APRIL 2024 HELD AT 7.30PM AT THE ALLENS, ALBION ROAD

141/24 PRESENT

Cllrs Besant, Boswell (in the Chair), Newton, Rabot, Robertson, Tippen and Turner. Cllr Adam and the Deputy Clerk were also in attendance.

142/24 APOLOGIES

Cllr Summersgill gave his apologies for this meeting.

143/24 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Boswell declared an interest in item 147/24 (Southons Field) as a resident backing onto the field; Cllr Tippen and Newton declared an interest in item 154/24 (Memorial Hall) as Trustees of Marden Memorial Hall.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

144/24 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS AMENITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th February 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

145/24 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no members of the public in attendance.

146/24 DEPUTY CLERK REPORT

The report was submitted to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The shed next to the Southons Field Pavilion has deteriorated and the Caretaker informed that fixing it would not be cost effective. Cllrs viewed it at the Amenities Site Meeting and agreed that it be dismantled next time a skip was booked. The Caretaker's To Do List has been updated. The Clerks had obtained a quote for a triple door noticeboard for the Marden Playing Field and had applied to MBC for a noticeboard grant. Two goal posts had been ordered for Southons Field. One to be put up in the field and the other to be kept in storage. The Clerk had enquired as to whether MPC could be entered into the Kent Men of Trees competition next year. The Kent Men of Trees are unsure if they will run the competition due to lack of volunteers. A toilet roll dispenser had been vandalised in the Men's Public Toilets. The Clerks will order a replacement. Cllrs noted.

147/24 OPEN SPACE

Playing Field

Play Inspection Reports from MPC

The reports for the Playing Field Play Area, Napoleon Drive Play Area, the Sports Wall and the Outdoor Gym Equipment had been received from the Caretaker for MPC. There were no issues to report. Cllrs noted.

Changing Room Consultation Results

The results of the Changing Room Consultation had been circulated to Cllrs. Comments were overwhelmingly supportive and there were lots of suggestions. Cllrs recommended that a Changing Room Sub-Group meet on Tuesday 7th May at 13.00 to discuss next steps. Cllrs requested the Clerk chase the architect.

Memorial Bench Location

Cllrs agreed at the Amenities Site Meeting for a resident to purchase and install a memorial bench to be located near the Napoleon Drive play area. Other Amenities Cllrs agreed for the installation to go ahead.

Southons FieldPlay Trail Inspection Report from MPC

The reports for the Play Trail and Swings had been received from the Caretaker for MPC with no new issues to report. Cllrs noted.

Southons Field Event Dates

The dates of events to be held on Southons Field had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllrs noted.

Other Open SpacePlay Area Signage

The Deputy Clerk had created signage for the play areas and proofs of these had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting for discussion. Cllrs recommended some changes and the Deputy Clerk will amend and order with the Supplier.

Notes of Amenities Site Meetings

The notes of the Amenities Site Meetings had been circulated to all Cllrs. The Deputy Clerk will add the actions to the Caretaker's To Do List. Cllrs noted.

TreesMonthly Tree Inspections

The Caretakers had completed their monthly tree inspections and there were no issues to report. Cllrs noted.

Three Yearly Tree Audit Quotes

The Admin Assistant had received three quotes from separate companies to conduct the Three Yearly Tree Audit of the Parish. These were circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting for discussion. Cllrs discussed and agreed to go with the Contractor that the Parish Council has used before.

148/24 CEMETERYStandpipe Quotes

The Admin Assistant had acquired only one quote for the standpipe work at the Cemetery. Two further quotes had been strived for but no company had responded. This quote was circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting for discussion. Cllrs agreed in principle to go for the first option offered by the Contractor unless Cllr Newton can find a cheaper option by Thursday 2nd May.

Memorial Testing

The Deputy Clerk and Cllr Newton had conducted Memorial Testing at the Cemetery on Monday 8th April and Thursday 11th April. A number of memorials were deemed unsafe. The Deputy Clerk reported that they had sought advice from a local stonemason regarding making these memorials safe whilst the grave owners were contacted. The grave owners will be contacted and requested to let the Office know when they plan to get their memorials anchored. Cllrs requested that a notice goes in the noticeboard warning residents of the action taken by MPC to make memorials safe.

ICCM Journal

The link to the ICCM Journal was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllrs noted.

149/24 ALLOTMENTS

This item is reported at Full Council. There were no further updates on allotments for this meeting.

150/24 PUBLIC TOILETS AND CAR PARK**Public Toilets**

There were no issues to report for this meeting.

Car Park

There were no issues to report for this meeting.

151/24 ENVIRONMENTAL SUB-GROUP**Next Meeting**

The Environment Sub-Group to meet again on 30th April 2024.

Earth Charter

This item was deferred from the last Amenities Committee Meeting in February and the information had been circulated again prior to this meeting to Cllrs. Cllr Boswell gave a brief report to Cllrs on what the Earth Charter is. Cllrs discussed and agreed to endorse the Earth Charter and Cllrs asked for the Environmental Sub-Group to identify how the Parish Council can get involved with the principles.

Engagement with Current/Prospective MP

Whilst Cllrs agreed in principle at the last Amenities Committee Meeting in February, Cllr Boswell had drafted a letter for Cllrs' approval. This had been circulated prior to this meeting. Cllrs asked Cllr Boswell to amend the letter to include other issues (e.g. the lifts at Marden station) and email the draft around for comment.

Climate & Ecology Bill

This item was deferred from the last Amenities Committee Meeting in February and the information had been circulated again prior to this meeting to Cllrs. The bill was discussed and it was agreed to add this in the letter to engage the current/prospective MP.

152/24 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence received for this meeting.

153/24 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

There were no issues to report for this meeting.

154/24 OUTSIDE BODIES REPORTS**Memorial Hall**

The Clerk had circulated a report on the Memorial Hall. The Hall AGM for 2023 was held on 28th March 2024 and the accounts had been received from the auditor and agreed and signed at the meeting. The Committee Meeting was held on the same evening and Ian Newton (as representative of the Marden Theatre Group) was elected Chairman and Alison Hooker as Treasurer. Bridget Harvey, Trustee, has taken responsibility of hall bookings. A local company has been taken on to deal with caretaking duties. The main project at the moment is for the car park to be resurfaced and this would be done in Summer Holidays. The contract Caretaker was progressing through the maintenance schedule. Kate Tippen was thanked for apply for a grant for solar batteries to enable electricity from the solar panels to be stored and used by the Hall. Cllrs noted.

155/24 OUTSTANDING ISSUESOutstanding Issues List

The Deputy Clerk had circulated the newly created Outstanding Issues List. Cllrs noted.

156/24 OTHER AMENITIES ISSUES FOR DECISION**Windsor Meadows Pathway**

Cllrs viewed the area at the Amenities Site Meeting on Saturday 13th April. The Deputy Clerk

had written to the contact at Trinity Estates, the management company for Windsor Meadow with photos of the pathways and a request for work to be undertaken. Cllrs noted.

157/24 INVOICES FOR PAYMENT

The following invoices were submitted for payment:

Kompan – Napoleon Drive Play Area Picnic Table - £1,962.24

Viking – Office supplies/Office chair - £239.86

P&F Cleaning – Public Conveniences Cleaning - £725.00

Castle Water – Cemetery Water Supply - £15.64

Maidstone Borough Council – Changing Room Rates - £354.29

SLCC – VAT Training - £36.00

Pitney Bowes – Postage - £301.06

Total: £3,634.09

All invoices were agreed, Cllrs Adam and Turner would authorise on Unity. Cllrs Adam, Boswell and Tippen signed the cheque for Preparation of Plot at the cemetery.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.00.

Date:

Signed:

Cllr Anne Boswell Chairman, Amenities Committee

Marden Parish Council, Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden, Kent, TN12 9JX

T: 01622 832305 / 07940 241333

E: deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

W: mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

ITEM 014/24 – PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES (Draft minutes of meeting on 30th April will be available to view on the MPC website)



MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE ON 16TH APRIL 2024 IN THE PARISH OFFICE MEETING ROAD, MARDEN MEMORIAL HALL, GOUDHURST ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

240/24 PRESENT:

Cllrs Adam, Besant, Gibson, Newton, Robertson, Tippen and Turner (in the chair) were in attendance. The Clerk was also present.

241/24 APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from Cllr Boswell.

242/24 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th March 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

243/24 CLLR INFORMATION

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

244/24 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

No members of the public were in attendance.

**245/24 PLANNING APPLICATIONS WITHIN MARDEN PARISH
FULL APPLICATIONS**

24/500845/FULL – Reeves Cottage, Battle Lane, Marden

Replace the existing former porch with the erection of a new timber porch.

Cllrs raised no objection.

24/501016/FULL – Manor Farm House, Battle Lane, Marden

Conversion of existing outbuilding with the erection of a single storey linked to outbuildings side extension to form a gym with a sauna and steam room for incidental use of the main dwellinghouse.

Cllrs raised no objection.

24/501018/FULL – Manor Farm House, Battle Lane, Marden

Erection of solar panel array.

No objection as Cllrs agreed this application was in accordance with Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policy BE3 (Sustainable Construction) and NE3 (Landscape Integration). However, Cllrs wish to ensure that the array is set recessed into the ground as shown on drawing no. 4574-12 in order to protect the amenity of the neighbouring property and minimise any impact on the open countryside.

24/501069/FULL – 62 Sovereigns Way, Marden

Erection of new dwelling house and erection single storey rear extension to the host dwelling including erection of 2 cycle sheds.

In principle, Cllrs had no objection to a one-bedroom property on this site. However, the design, as it is proposed as a dwelling, needs to reflect that it is at the end of a row of terrace houses and should not be subservient to the adjoining property which an extension would be. For example, the porch should be designed to match the existing porch, the roof line should match existing roof line and the building should not be set back, it should continue the line of the existing terrace.

Cllrs therefore recommend refusal as it is contrary to Marden Neighbourhood Plan Policy BE1 Local Character). Cllrs wish this to go to Committee if MBC are minded to approve.

24/501295/FULL – Mount Pleasant Farm, Maidstone Road, Marden

Erection of 3 glamping units, comprising 2 cabins and 1 Shepherd Hut, with associated parking and landscaping.

Cllrs raised no objection.

24/500504/FULL - Lodge Farm Goudhurst Road Marden Tonbridge Kent TN12 9NW

Demolition of existing agricultural barn and erection of 1no. chalet bungalow with associated access, landscape and biodiversity enhancements (revised scheme to 20/504096/FULL).

Additional information had been received.

Cllrs noted amendments.

24/500626/FULL - Lodge Farm Goudhurst Road Marden Tonbridge Kent TN12 9NW

Demolition of existing agricultural barn and erection of 2no. Chalet Bungalows, together with associated access, parking, landscaping and biodiversity/footpath enhancements.

Application already decided.

24/500450/FULL - Land Rear Of Albion House Albion Road Marden Tonbridge Kent TN12 9EA

Demolition of existing detached garage and erection of a detached 2no. bedroom dwelling with associated parking and landscaping.

Application already decided.

24/500839/SUB - Oakhurst Stilebridge Lane Marden TN12 9BA

Submission of details pursuant to condition 12 (Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Scheme) of application 19/500271/FULL.

No additional information received.

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT24/500846/LBC – Reeves Cottage, Battle Lane, Marden

Listed Building Consent to replace the existing former porch with the erection of a new timber porch.

Cllrs raised no objection subject to the Conservation Officer's approval.

24/501017/LBC – Manor Farm House, Battle Lane, Marden

Listed Building Consent for the conversion of existing outbuilding with the erection of a single storey linked to outbuildings side extension to form a gym with a sauna and steam room for incidental use of the main dwellinghouse.

Cllrs raised no objection subject to the Conservation Officer's approval.

246/24 PLANNING APPLICATIONS OUTSIDE MARDEN PARISH:

No applications had been received outside of Marden parish.

247/24 MBC DECISIONS & APPEALS

Decisions

24/500251/FULL – Cannon Farm, Thorn Road, Marden

Change of use of former agricultural building to 1no. single dwellinghouse with external alterations, associated curtilage area and parking provision further to Prior Approval:

23/501474/PNQCLA.

MPC: Refused / Following further information raised no objection.

MBC: Refused

24/500316/FULL – Bens Oak, Goudhurst Road, Marden

Erection of a workshop and garage outbuilding, relocation of access and gates, reduce size of summer house, and insertion of glazing to garage door on main dwelling.

MPC: No objection in principle.

MBC: Granted

24/500374/FULL – 5 Challenger Way, Marden

Part conversion of garage to habitable space

MPC: No objection

MBC: Granted

24/500450/FULL – Land Rear of Albion House, Albion Road, Marden

Demolition of existing detached garage and erection of a detached 2no. bedroom dwelling with associated parking and landscaping.

MPC: No objection in principle

MBC: Granted

24/500586/SUB – Land Rear of Lady Jane Pub (The Taj), Church Green, Marden

Submission of details to discharge conditions 4 - Contamination Risk, 6 - Material Schedule, 7 – Joinery Details, 8 - Boundary Treatments, 9 - Soft and Hard Landscaping, 11 - Ecological Enhancements, 13 - Renewable Energy, 16 - Lighting Plan and 21 - Construction Management Plan, Subject to 23/504966/FULL

MPC: Refused

MBC: Approved Part A condition 4 and Refused Part B conditions 6,7,8,9,11,13,16 and 21

24/500598/LAWPRO – 2 Old Pond Cottages, Howland Road, Marden

Lawful Development Certificate for proposed single storey rear extension.

MPC: No objection

MBC: Granted

24/500626/FULL – Lodge Farm, Goudhurst Road, Marden

Demolition of existing agricultural barn and erection of 2no. Chalet Bungalows, together with associated access, parking, landscaping and biodiversity/footpath enhancements.

MPC: No objection in principle.

MBC: Refused

Decisions outside Marden Parish

No decisions received from MBC.

Appeals

No appeal information received.

248/24 OTHER PLANNING ISSUES:

MBC Planning Committee

The next MBC Planning Committee meeting is on 18th April 2024.

The following applications were due to be heard at the above meeting:

23/504905/FULL: Oakleigh House, Pattenden Lane. It was proposed, and agreed, that Cllr Turner would attend and speak at the MBC meeting and provide wording based on MPC's response.

23/505505/FULL: Horlands Farm, Summerhill Road. This had been called in due to it being a Borough Cllr's application and MPC would not speak, although Cllr Turner would be in attendance.

Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan

The Local Plan Review had been adopted at MBC's Full Council meeting on 20th March 2024 and was available on MBC's website to view.

Maidstone Borough Council Conservation Areas

Guidance and Update had been received from Maidstone Borough Council regarding an overarching Conservation Area Management Plan and training. Cllrs noted content.

249/24 MARDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllrs comments had been returned to MBC and their response would be reported to the relevant meeting.

250/24 INVOICES FOR PAYMENT:

The following invoices for payment were submitted to the meeting:

Alison Hooker – APM Refreshments - £96.76

Graham Carey – contracted grounds maintenance - £356.00

Darren Emptage Stonemasons – memorial plaque - £95.00

Community Heartbeat – new adult pads for Defib - £68.34

Pitney Bowes – postage - £301.06

KALC – Annual Subscription - £2,033.21

Castle Water – Changing Rooms water supply - £6.72

Viking – toilet/office/litter picking supplies - £111.55

ICCM – Annual Subscription - £100.00

M&M Developers – installation of picnic bench (Napoleon Drive) - £1,500.00

TOTAL; £4,664.64

Cllrs agreed invoices and Cllrs Adam and Turner would authorise on Unity. (Pitney Bowes invoice would be authorised at a later date due to bank details not being correct).

The Chairman then read out the following statement:

I PROPOSE THAT PURSUANT TO PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960, THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING BECAUSE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED:

251/24 ENFORCEMENT

New/Reported Alleged Enforcement

One alleged enforcement was reported to the meeting but following the Clerk viewing on website an application had been submitted in 2021 and work had already commenced within the 3 year time period.

The Clerk updated the meeting on further alleged activity reported previously.

MBC Update on Enforcement

No updates from MBC had been received.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.51pm.

Signed:

Date:

Cllr Turner, Chairman, Marden Planning Committee
Marden Parish Council, Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden
01622 832305 / 07376 287981 // www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

ITEM 014/24 – Parking/Traffic Meeting 15042024

Notes of meeting held on Monday 15th April 2024 commencing at 3.15pm outside Marden Primary Academy, Goudhurst Road, Marden

In attendance:

Parish Cllr Kate Tippen and Alison Hooker (Marden Parish Council)
Borough Cllrs Claudine Russell and David Burton
Jeff Kitson (Maidstone Borough Council)
Charlotte Bingham (Kent Police)

Apologies:

County Cllr Lottie Parfitt-Reid
Greg McNicoll (Kent County Council Highways)

Concerns had been raised over several years of the parking/traffic issues in Goudhurst Road especially at school pick up and drop off times.

Marden PC had requested that single yellow lines be placed to the end of the paved area of Goudhurst Road but this had been declined by Kent Highways.

MBC reported that they could take action on vehicles parked on the single yellow lines, school keep clear zig-zags and crossing zig-zags whereas Kent Police could take action on the school keep clear zig-zags and crossing zig-zags.

A lot of parents wait along the pavement on both sides of the school gates and this raised concerns especially if vehicles needed to jump the kerb if a large vehicle/HGV was coming the other way.

Whilst at the meeting an HGV attempted to drive past the school – see photos below where a small white vehicle had to mount the pavement to allow the HGV to pass.



A suggestion was made of extending the yellow zig-zags on the school side of the highway as well as adding additional yellow zig-zags on the opposite side joining the road crossing (see photo below with blue line indicating location) either on both sides of the road crossing or at least opposite the current “Keep Clear” zig-zags.

MPC was asked to take this up with Kent Highways as could then be actioned by MBC and Kent Police.



A Microsoft Teams meeting would be arranged with Kent Highways following today’s meeting.

Photos taken at other times:



June 2021



January 2024



MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2024

1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Marden Parish Council (the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control is in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts and, except for the details of significant internal control issues at section 5, accords with proper practice.

3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council:

The Council has appointed a Chairman who is responsible for the smooth running of meetings and for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful.

The Council reviewed its obligations and objectives and approved budgets for the following year at its Finance meeting during the third quarter. Councillors, at this meeting, agreed the level of precept for the following financial year and this was put before Full Council at an Extraordinary Full Council meeting on 23rd January 2024 for approval.

The Council has appointed a Finance Committee of Members who meet quarterly each year and monitor progress against objectives, financial systems and procedures, budgetary control and carry out regular reviews of financial matters. The minutes of the meetings of the Finance Committee are reported to Full Council and approved at the next Finance Committee Meeting.

The Full Council has met monthly during the financial year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives at each meeting by receiving relevant reports from the Finance Committee and the Parish Clerk.

The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.

Clerk to the Council / Responsible Financial Officer:

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

Payments:

All payments are reported to the Council for approval. Two Cllrs authorise payment for bank transfers with Unity Trust Bank with the Clerk inputting the relevant banking information. Three Members of the Council must authorise every cheque on the Nat West Account. Two signatories are required for release of funds from the Santander Account.

Risk Assessments / Risk Management:

The Council carries out regular risk assessments in respect of actions and regularly reviews its systems and controls and Financial Regulations.

Internal Audit:

The Independent Internal Auditor for Marden Parish Council is RBS Accounting Solutions. Visits were made in October 2023 (Interim report) and in March 2024 (Final report). A report is produced and provided to the Council on the adequacy of its:

- Records
- procedures
- systems
- internal control
- regulations
- risk management
- reviews

The effectiveness of the internal audit is reviewed annually.

External Audit:

The Council's External Auditors, Mazars, submit an annual Certificate of Audit, which is presented to the Council.

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of:

- the Full Council;
- the Finance Committee;
- the Clerk to the Council / Responsible Financial Officer who has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment and managing risks;
- the independent Internal Auditor who reviews the Council's system of internal control;
- Mazars, the Council's external auditors, who make the final check using the Annual Return, a form completed and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Chairman and the Internal Auditor. Mazars issue an annual audit certificate;
- the number of significant issues that are raised during the year.

5. SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL CONTROL ISSUES

Whilst no significant internal control issues were identified during the year the Council strives for the continuous improvement of the system it has adopted for internal control and has addressed all the minor issues and weaknesses raised and reported during the review process.

Signed:

Cllr K Tippen
Chairman
Marden Parish Council

Alison Hooker
Clerk/RFO
Marden Parish Council

Dated:

Dated:

Marden Parish Council

Internal Audit Report 2023-24 (Final update)

Stuart J Pollard

*Director
Auditing Solutions Ltd*

Background

Statute requires all town and parish councils to arrange for an independent Internal Audit (IA) examination of their accounting records and systems of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

This report sets out the work undertaken during our two review visits for the 2023-24 financial year, which took place on 26th October 2023 and 20th March 2024, together with a final remote review undertaken on 23rd April 2024 following closedown of the accounts. We thank the Clerk for her assistance, providing all necessary documentation in either electronic or hard copy format to facilitate our review for the year.

Internal Audit Approach

We have again had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential misrecording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts / AGAR. Our programme of cover is, as usual, designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems remain robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the IA Certificate in the Council's AGAR, which requires independent assurance over several internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

We are again pleased to conclude that, based on the work undertaken this year, the Clerk & Council continue to maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements with no issues identified this year requiring action.

We are again also pleased to acknowledge the quality of records maintained by the Clerk and thank her for her assistance, which has ensured the smooth progress of our review process. We have duly completed and signed the IA Certificate in the year's AGAR, having concluded that, in all significant respects, the control objectives set out in that report were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council and meet regulatory requirements.

We again draw the Clerk's attention to the guidance notes in the preface to the year's AGAR in relation to the documentation that should be displayed on the Council's website together with the need to ensure compliance with the timing requirements for publication of the Notice of Public Rights to examine the Council's documentation for the financial year.

Detailed Report

Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

The Council uses the Rialtas Alpha software to maintain its accounting records with four bank accounts in use. Current and Deposit accounts exist with NatWest with a daily sweep facility between the two to give a nil balance on the Current account, together with Santander and Unity Trust bank accounts, the last now being used for the majority of day-to-day transactions: the NatWest account is still used to pay previously existing direct debit and standing order transactions and occasional cheques.

Our objective here is to ensure that accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. We have: -

- Agreed the opening Alpha software trial balance detail for 2023-24 with that in the 2022-23 Statement of Accounts and certified AGAR;
- Verified that the financial ledger remains in balance at the financial year-end;
- Ensured that the cost and expenditure coding structure remain appropriate for purpose;
- Checked and agreed detail of all transactions, due to their relatively low volume, for the financial year;
- Verified the accuracy of bank reconciliation detail on all accounts at 30th April and September 2023, plus those at 29th February & March 2024; and
- Ensured the accurate disclosure of the combined cash and bank balances in the year's AGAR at Section 2, Box 8.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have been identified in this review area.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has robust corporate governance documentation and processes in place, and that, as far as we may reasonably be expected to ascertain as we do not attend Council or Committee meetings, all meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders (SOs) and no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been or are being considered for implementation.

We have noted previously that Standing Orders (SOs) were reviewed and re-adopted at the December 2019 Council meeting with the Financial Regulations (FRs) also revised and brought into line with the latest (2019) NALC model document, being re-adopted at the May 2023 Council meeting.

We have reviewed Council and Standing Committee minutes, as posted on the Council's website, for the year, excluding those relating to planning issues, to ensure that no actions have been taken or are being considered that might result in unlawful activity or expense being incurred by the Council.

We are also pleased to note that the 2022-23 AGAR was signed-off by the external auditors without recommendation or comment. Additionally, we note that the statutorily required Notice of

Public Rights was also posted on the Council's website advertising availability of the Council's financial records for the year for the requisite 30 working days.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available
- Members are provided with full details of all payments made at meetings as appropriate and that they are formally verifying the supporting invoices accordingly
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed. and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

We have examined a sample of 59 payments made during the year selecting all those non-salary related transactions in the NatWest and Unity Trust accounts in excess of £500 plus a more random sample of every 25th transaction to ensure compliance with the above criteria. Our test sample totals £76,456 equating to 78% by value of non-salary related expenditure in the year to date with all the above criteria met.

We note that the 2022-23 VAT reclaim was submitted and repaid by HMRC in April 2023 and have agreed detail to the underlying Alpha control account. We have also examined and agreed the two VAT reclaims prepared and submitted to HMRC during 2023-24 to the Alpha accounts.

Conclusions

No issues arise in this review area.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

We have examined the Council's current insurance policy schedule with Hiscox, to ensure that appropriate cover is in place, noting that Public and Employer's Liability cover both stand at £10 million, together with Fidelity Guarantee cover at £500,000, all of which we consider more than adequate to meet the present needs of the Council.

We are pleased to note that the Council has again reviewed and re-adopted its Financial Risk Assessment at the February 2024 Finance Committee. We again note the existence of a very comprehensive file of other service delivery specific risk assessments which are also subject to periodic review and re-adoption. We have reviewed the resultant document and consider that it remains appropriate for the Council's present requirements.

We also noted from our examination of risk documentation that, with the approval of Insurers, detailed health and safety inspections in accordance with RoSPA guidelines are undertaken at the Council's play areas fortnightly, also noting that the results of these inspections are reported to members with any necessary appropriate action taken to address issues identified.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this review area warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Budgetary Control and Reserves

We aim in this area of our work to ensure that the Council has appropriate procedures in place to determine its future financial requirements leading to the adoption of an approved budget and formal determination of the amount to be precepted on MBC; that effective arrangements are in place to monitor budgetary performance throughout the financial year and that the Council has identified and retains appropriate reserve funds to meet future spending plans.

We note that, following due deliberation, members agreed the required budget and precept for 2024-25 setting and formally adopting the latter at £182,504 in January 2024.

We are again pleased to note that members are provided with detail of monthly transactions, together with detail of bank balances and budget performance reports based on the Alpha accounting software throughout the course of the year. We have reviewed the year-end outturn with no significant or unexplained / unanticipated variances existing warranting further enquiry or investigation.

We are also pleased to note that, following our previous recommendation, a raft of specific earmarked reserves have been identified and exist in the Alpha accounting software. We have reviewed the level of retained funds at the year-end, assessing their adequacy to meet the Council's ongoing revenue spending requirements. As at 31st March 2024, total reserves have reduced to £93,340 (£103,080 as at 31st March 2023) comprising earmarked reserves totalling £47,255 with the General Reserve standing at £46,090 equating to marginally below 3 months' revenue spending at the 2023-24 level.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area this year warranting formal comment or recommendation, although the General Fund balance is marginally below the generally recognised level of between three and six month's revenue spending: we suggest that the position be kept under scrutiny, although we acknowledge that, should an urgent need arise, part of the earmarked funds could be reverted back to the General Fund.

Review of Income

In addition to the annual precept, the Council receives income from additional service areas, including the cemetery, the annual Christmas Fayre, the Summer Holiday Play Scheme and occasional rental income from the Playing and Southons sports areas, together with occasional grants from the parent Council.

We examined the operative controls over cemetery activities at our first review for the year considering them sound examining documentation relating to the 8 interments taking place to 30th September 2023, agreeing the fees charged to the approved scale of fees and charges, also ensuring that the legally required documentation (Burial and / or Cremation Certificates) was held.

We also examined the income relating to the Summer Holiday Play Scheme checking detail in the spreadsheet register of cash, cheques and bank credit income received and banked with no issues arising, although we noted that, due to the unavailability of appropriate banking facilities to allow deposit of cash and cheques, a few amounts have only recently been able to be deposited in the local Post Office.

We have, at our update visit in March 2024, examined the control records relating to income from “rental” of stalls at the Christmas Fayre: in doing so, we noted a posting error in relation to 7 related transactions, where detail had been coded in error to an expense code. We drew this, together with another coding anomaly, to the Clerk’s attention at our March 2024 visit and are pleased to note that the Clerk made the appropriate coding adjustments prior to the year-end closedown.

We have also examined the detailed nominal income records in the Alpha accounting software for the financial year ensuring that, as far as we are reasonably able to ascertain, no income receivable has been overlooked in the year with that received coded to the appropriate nominal income account, apart from the above identified anomaly.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area warranting formal comment or recommendation currently.

Petty Cash Account

The Council does not operate a formal petty cash scheme: any out-of-pocket expenses incurred by staff are reimbursed on submission of a properly authorised and supported claim form, together with till receipts and / or trader invoices.

Review of Staff Salaries

In examining the Council’s payroll function, we aim to confirm that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the Employee Rights Act 1998 and the requirements of HMRC legislation relating to the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions.

The Clerk uses bespoke Sage payroll software to produce the monthly payroll for the permanent members of staff, together with casual Play Scheme helpers. Consequently: we have:

- Verified the gross salaries paid in September and November 2023 to the five permanent staff members by reference to the approved NJC scales (Clerk, Deputy and Assistant Clerks) and hourly rates for the two “outside” staff: the November 2023 payroll detail was checked at our March 2024 visit, ensuring that the national 2023-24 pay award was implemented appropriately and accurately, together with arrears payable backdated to 1st April 2023;
- Verified that Tax and NIC deductions have been calculated correctly by reference to the monthly payslips as above also ensuring that these deductions have been paid over to HMRC in an accurate and timely manner.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Asset Register / Inventory

The Practitioner’s Guide requires all councils to maintain a record of all assets owned. We are pleased to note that an appropriate asset register remains in place detailing both purchase and estimated replacement costs: also, that a photographic record is being maintained, as previously recommended by us.

The register has been updated to include new additions and any disposals occurring during the financial year, the resultant revised value being accurately transferred to the AGAR at Section 2, Box 9.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have arisen in this area this year.

Investments & Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is investing “surplus funds”, be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis in appropriate banking and investment institutions; that an appropriate Investment Policy is in place; that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on any such investments made, that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records and that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

We are pleased to acknowledge the existence of an appropriate Investment Policy adopted by the Council in April 2021, as required by the statutory guidance on Local Government Investments which came into force on 1st April 2018. We also note Council’s recent agreement to place surplus funds with the CCLA Deposit Fund and will monitor progress in that respect at our next review.

The Council has one residual PWLB loan repayable half-yearly: we have verified the value of the two half-yearly repayments for 2023-24 to the PWLB demand notes as part of our above referenced payment review sample and have also, at this final review obtained a copy of the UK Debt Agency’s notification of the year-end liability, which value we have agreed to the AGAR Section 2, Box 10 disclosure for the financial year.

Conclusions

We are pleased to advise that no issues arise in this area this year.

Statement of Accounts and AGAR

The AGAR now forms the Council's statutory Accounts subject to external audit review and certification. The detail for the AGAR is generated automatically by the Alpha accounting software and we have reviewed and verified the detail disclosed in the year's AGAR accordingly.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area warranting formal comment or recommendation and, based on the satisfactory conclusions drawn from the work undertaken this year, we have duly signed off the IA Certificate in the year's AGAR assigning positive assurances in each relevant area.

Bank Reconciliation 31st March 2024

This reconciliation must include **all** bank and building society accounts and other short term investment accounts. It **must** agree to Box 8 in the column headed "Year ending 31 March 2024" in Section 2 of the Annual Return. It will also agree to Box 7 where the accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments (cash) basis, but not when an income and expenditure basis is used.

Parish Council Name: **MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

Financial year ending 31 March 2024

Prepared by (Name and Role):

Alison Hooker, Clerk & RFO

Date:

	£	£
Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/24:		
Nat West Business Reserve Account	12,443.94	
Unity Trust Current Account	9,802.95	
Santander Business Account (Capital)	72,396.36	
	<hr/>	94,643.25
Petty cash float (if applicable)		-
Less: any un-presented cheques as at 31/3/24 (normally only current account)		
Invoice:		
SSE Energy Supplier	(96.03)	
Pitney Bowes	(15.54)	
Lex Autolease	(199.64)	
Nest Pensions	(701.84)	
Viking Direct	(111.55)	
Kompan Ltd	(1,962.24)	
Business Stream	(139.86)	
Wicksteed Leisure	(1,251.65)	
Stanleys Garage	(183.71)	
	<hr/>	(4,662.06)
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/24		-
		<hr/>
Net balances as at 31/3/24 (Box 8)		<u><u>89,981.19</u></u>

31st March 2023

31st March 2024

Current Assets		
1,001	VAT Control A/c	3,360
20,830	NatWest	11,431
71,735	Santander	72,396
9,515	Unity Bank	6,154
<u>103,080</u>		<u>93,341</u>
103,080	Total Assets	93,341
Represented By		
53,199	General Reserves	46,087
505	EMR - Office equipment	311
5,000	EMR - Station Enhancement	5,000
22,206	EMR - CIL 21/22	22,206
505	EMR - Office equipment	505
2,151	EMR - ISP MPC Funded 22/23	2,151
1,651	EMR - ISP MPC Funded 23/24	1,651
1,651	EMR - ISP MPC Funded 24/25	1,651
2,151	EMR - HIP 22/23	2,151
1,651	EMR - HIP 23/24	1,651
1,651	EMR - HIP 24/25	1,651
3,800	Christmas lighting 22/23	3,800
2,799	EMR - S106	2,799
575	EMR - Street Furniture	575
1,403	EMR - Open Space	(1,030)
1,194	EMR - Bins/NB/Misc	1,194
992	EMR - CIL 22/23	992
<u>103,080</u>		<u>93,341</u>

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31st March 2024 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :
Chairman _____ Date : _____

Signed :
Responsible
Financial
Officer _____ Date : _____

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2024**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2024**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2024.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2023) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2024).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2024**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?		
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

**Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.			
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.			
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.			
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.			
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.			
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.			
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.			
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.			
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.			
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.			
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .			
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .			
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY

ENTER NAME OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

****Note:** If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A <i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies			<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts			<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs			<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments			<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments			<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments			<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets			<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings			<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				<i>The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2023/24

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

Explanation of variances

Name of smaller authority: **MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

County area (local councils and parish meetings only): **KENT**

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all **Blue** highlighted boxes

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);
- **New from 2020/21 onwards:** variances of £100,000 or more require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year;
- a breakdown of approved reserves on the next tab if the total reserves (Box 7) figure is more than twice the annual precept/rates & levies value (Box 2).

	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	99,936	103,080			
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	168,004	175,565	7,561	4.50%	
3 Total Other Receipts	24,887	34,233	9,346	37.55%	Increase in play scheme fees £1,144.00 (due to additional children attending); insurance claim for damage to children's picnic table £910.70 ; decrease in Christmas donations -£247.06 ; Salary repayment due to banking error £3,196.68 ; refunds for electricity supply £533.59 ; decrease in event income due to holding a smaller event for the Coronation in 2023 -£591.47 ; additional grants received for foodbank/cost of living/footpath £4,891.00 ; increase in bank interest £837.95 ; decrease in cemetery income -£2,175.00 ; increase in open space hire fee £162.50 ; increase in Parish Services Scheme grant £248.20 ; S106 income £1,540.00 and decrease in CIL income -£1,104.56
4 Staff Costs	105,538	116,470	10,932	10.36%	Increase in hourly rate (following NALC guidance of 6/11/23) for permanent members of staff; additional play scheme staff members (play scheme staff are employed for two weeks each year) increase in number of staff due to additional children attending.
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	18,238	18,238	0	0.00%	PWL Principal Payment £8,336.10 / PWL Interest £9,901.82
6 All Other Payments	65,971	84,829	18,858	28.59%	Increase: Increase in Office Costs £6,863.32 due to ungrade to IT system with ongoing support, ongoing HR support, additional training, new office alarm system, general increase in subscriptions/inflation increases in utilities etc; increase in Open Spaces maintenance and other costs £3,620.79 including increase in contracted grounds maintenance, repairs to wetpour and installation of play equipment, work to trees, utility costs and public convenience cleaning; Increase in vehicle/machinery costs £978.25 for fuel, servicing and insurance; Increase in miscellaneous items including tarmacking of 2 new footpaths; 2 x grant payments; and other small miscellaneous expenditure of £9,681.41 Decrease: Decrease of -£85.20 for communication/newsletter production; Decrease in village events -£2,200.80 due as only a small event for the coronation was held, a reduction in expenditure for play scheme and Christmas;
7 Balances Carried Forward	103,080	93,341			
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	102,079	89,981			
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	204,622	208,843	4,221	2.06%	Disposal of Children's Picnic Bench: -£910.30 / Purchase of 2 wooden picnic benches £558.62 ; Computer monitor £194.00 ; Double entrance gate on area of Parish Council owned open space £1,176.00 ; Mower £699.17 ; New Children's Picnic Bench £1,460.00 ; Purchase of Flymobile (new piece of play equipment) £1,043.04
10 Total Borrowings	289,038	272,654	-16,384	5.67%	

Difference between Box 7 and Box 8 for 2023/2024 is for VAT reclaim of £3,359.52

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Marden Parish Council

www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

ELIGIBLE APPLICABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			N/A applicable
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

26/10/2023 20/03/2024 23/04/2024

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

S J Pollard for Auditing Solutions Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date

23/04/2024

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

****Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).**