Malvern Hills Trust

Ordinary Meeting of the Board

Thursday 20 January 2022 7.00pm

The Council Chamber,
Malvern Hills District Council,
Avenue Road, WR14 3AF

Ordinary Meeting of the Board

Council Chamber, Avenue Road, WR14 3AF
Thursday 20 January 2022 7pm
Due to the high numbers of Covid-19 cases, a pre-meeting workshop will be streamed live on YouTube: https://bit.ly/3dbH2AW on Tuesday 18 January 2022 at 18.30. This is to enable trustees to conduct any preliminary discussions and to raise any questions they may have on items on the agenda. Items marked * are for information only and will be discussed at the workshop and not at the meeting.

If you plan to attend please read the notice at the foot of the agenda.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Chair's Announcements
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Public Comments
5. *Any issues arising from the Brewin Dolphin Investment report
6. To confirm the Minutes of the Board meetings held on 11 November 2021
   Pages 1 - 10
7. Matters arising from the previous Board meetings not otherwise on the agenda
8. Committee appointments
   To appoint Paul Clayburn to Land Management Committee
9. **Land Management Committee**
   9.1 To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held 02.12.2021
   Pages 11 - 16
   9.2 Chair of Committee - updates and questions
   9.3 Board to adopt the minutes
10. **Staffing Committee**
    10.1 To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held 07.12.2021
    Pages 17 - 23
    10.2 Chair of Committee - updates and questions
    10.3 Board to adopt the minutes and the resolution set out below
    Agenda item 9 Abusive, Persistent or Vexatious Complainants Policy
    To adopt the revised policy
    Agenda item 10 Bullying and Harassment Policy
    To adopt the revised policy
    Agenda item 14 Estate Supervisor post
    To extend the duration of the temporary Estate Supervisor post for 6 months to 21 September 2022.
11. **Finance Resources and Administration Committee**
    11.1 To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held 09.12.2021
    Pages 24 - 30
    11.2 Chair of Committee - updates and questions
    11.3 Board to adopt the minutes
12. To approve the budget and set the levy for 2022/23
    Paper B Page 31 & budget pages 1- 6

13. Appoint replacement nominated contact — Paper C Page 32
14. Conduct of Trust business whilst Covid 19 infections remain high — Paper D page 33 – 35
15. *Update on notice served under The Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016 — Verbal update
16. Repairs to bridge Hancocks Lane – authorization of unbudgeted expenditure (no details available to date)
17. To agree response to letter from Charity Commission dated 5 January 2022
18. *Information

15.1	Malvern Spa Association	Verbal update
15.2	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	Minutes herewith
15.3	Wildlife Panel	No meeting
15.4	Recreation Advisory Panel	Page 36
15.5	4 Cs	Pages 37 - 40
15.6	Management Report	Pages 41 - 43

17. Urgent business
18. Date of next meeting
19. 10 March 2022
20. Confidential business

Resolution to exclude the public for discussion of item 21 on the agenda on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the exempt or confidential nature of the business to be transacted (Personnel matter).

CONFIDENTIAL

21. Secretary to the Board's hours — Paper E

Please take a lateral flow test prior to the meeting and do not attend if it shows a positive result.

If you or anyone in your household/bubble has experienced any Covid symptoms in the last 7 days, please do NOT attend this meeting. Delta & Omicron variant symptoms are commonly runny nose, sore throat, headache, fatigue and sneezing and not necessarily a cough, fever or loss of sense of taste or smell.

There are currently very high numbers of Covid cases and it is clear that notwithstanding vaccination, people can still catch the virus. Each venue is risk assessed by the Trust and is allocated a maximum capacity so that a minimum distance can be maintained between attendees. Once the capacity for the venue has been reached, in order to keep attendees safe, no further people will be admitted. If you attend the meeting you must wear a face mask unless medically exempt.

Anyone (other than trustees) who wishes to attend must apply in writing to cindy@malvernhills.org.uk (or write to Mrs L Parish at the Trust's office), giving their name, E-mail address and contact number. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Cindy will confirm whether there is a place available.

If you turn up at the meeting without pre-booking you risk not being admitted.

11 November 2021

Malvern Hills Trust

Annual Meeting of the Board
Council Chamber, Avenue Road, WR14 3AF
Thursday 11 November 2021 7pm

Present: Mr C Atkins, Mr R Bartholomew, Dr S Braim, Dr E Chowns, Mr D Core, Dr G Crisp, Mr M Davies (Chair), Mr M Dyde, Mr D Fellows, Mr R Fowler, Mrs L Hodgson, Mrs C Palmer, Dr T Parsons, Mr C Penn, Prof J Raine, Mrs G Rees, Mr C Rouse, Ms H Stace, Mr D Watkins.

In attendance: CEO, Secretary to the Board, Conservation Manager, Finance and Administration Manager, Community and Conservation Officer (CCO), 5 members of the public.

Mr Davies welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Election of Chair**
   There was one nomination and Mr Davies was appointed unopposed.

2. **Election of Vice-Chair**
   There was one nomination and Mrs Palmer was appointed unopposed.

3. **Apologies for absence**
   Mr D Baldwin, Mrs H I'Anson, Mr J Michael, Mr T Yapp.

4. **Chair's report for 2020/21**
   See schedule 1.

5. **Chair's announcements**
   - Mr Davies thanked Gwyneth Rees, who was stepping down as a trustee from 30 November 2021, for her wise, respectful and positive contribution to the Trust.
   - Trustees were reminded to send in their responses to the Governance Toolkit.
   - Workshop: Revised Business Plan (by Zoom) 18 November 2021 7pm.
   - Workshop: Governance Toolkit (by Zoom) 25 November 2021 7pm.
   - Land Management Committee 2 December, United Reform Church, Malvern Link.
   - The postponed Staffing Committee meeting would take place on Tuesday 7 December at Colwall Village Hall.
   - Finance Administration and Resources Committee 9 December, United Reform Church, Malvern Link.
   - Mr Davies thanked Sarah Rouse who had also resigned as a trustee for her work for the Trust.
   - Mr Davies apologised for a faulty link to the information about this meeting on the Trust's website.

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6. **Declarations of interest**
   Mr Rouse – He had rights of common over Trust land.
   Mr Penn noted that Mr Rouse had made a remark about the Trust's policy on trail hunting at a West Malvern Parish Council meeting which he considered to be misleading and indicated Mr Rouse's personal opposition to Trust policy. He felt that Mr Rouse should stand down any comment on the matter on the agenda. Mr Rouse said that the Trust could not tell other landowners what to do.

7. **Public Comments**
   (See Schedule 2).

8. **Appointment of committees**
   A table of the Chairs' and Vice-Chairs' recommendations for Committee membership had been circulated prior to the meeting.
   Mr Fowler asked about the process for committee selection and whether it accorded with Standing Orders. Mr Davies conceded that the Chairs and Vice Chairs had not consulted the skills register or attendance record on this occasion and he apologised that that had not been done. Mr Fowler proposed that the documents should be circulated and the list should be recreated.
   Points made included:
   - At this stage in the life of the Board, trustees were familiar with the skills and interests of Board members.
   - There was a lack of gender balance on Governance Committee.
   - The Secretary to the Board confirmed that the proposed appointees to Finance Administration and Resources and Land Management Committees were all in accordance with the individual trustees' choices.
   - The Skills Register and attendance records were available to trustees on request.
   - There was a process for committee selection and there should be a record of the comparison of the skills available with the skills that were required.
   - The best person for the job should be selected.
   - Could the proposals for committee membership be circulated prior to the meeting?

   Although Standing Orders had not been followed, on the proposal of Ms Stace, seconded by Mrs Hodgson it was **RESOLVED** (with two abstentions and 2 votes against) that the following Committee appointments be made:

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Land Management Committee Mr Atkins Mr Baldwin Dr Braim Dr Chowns Mr Fowler Mrs Palmer Mr Parsons Mr Rouse Ms Stace Mr Yapp	**Governance Committee** Mr Atkins Mr Bartholomew Dr Braim Mr Core Dr Crisp Mr Fellows Prof Raine
Finance Administration and Resources Committee Mr Bartholomew Mr Core Mr Davies Mr Dyde Mr Fellows Mrs Hodgson Mr Michael Mr Penn Prof Raine Mr Watkins	**Staffing Committee** Mr Baldwin Mr Davies Mrs I'Anson Mrs C Palmer Mr C Penn Prof Raine Mrs Stace

Appointment of Board members to outside bodies

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to make the following appointments:

4Cs	Mr Davies and Mr Fellows
AONB	Mr Atkins
Recreation Advisory Panel	Messrs Baldwin, Braim, Davies, Dyde
Wildlife Panel	Ms Stace, Messrs Atkins, Fowler, Michael.

9. **To approve the minutes of the Board meetings held on 9 September and 7 October 2021**

On the proposal of Mrs Rees, seconded by Mr Bartholomew, it was **RESOLVED** (with 2 abstentions) to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 9 September and 7 October 2021.[1]

Matters arising

Para 22.6 of the meeting of 9 September: The CEO that Herefordshire Council were considering a single white line along Jubilee Drive and West Malvern Road (not double

[1] The Secretary to the Board confirmed that she had amended the draft minutes of the meeting on 7 October to include Mrs Hodgson's apology for not attending.

yellow as stated). Confidential minutes of 9 September: Dr Parsons repeated his observation that the hedge in Chance Lane had grown over the road.
The Conservation Manager reported that he had been notified by the RPA that payments under the North and Central Hills Countryside Stewardship Scheme would be reinstated for 2019 and 2020 to the amount of £76,000pa (the original agreement was for the sum of £79,000) and this sum would continue to be paid for the remaining 6 years of the Scheme. Restoration of the payments would have knock on effects to other operations.
The Conservation Manager and other staff were congratulated on achieving this outcome.

10. Governance Committee

10.1 On the proposal of Mr Bartholomew, seconded by Mrs Palmer it was **RESOLVED** (with one abstention) by the Committee members present to approve the minutes of the meeting of the meeting on 21 October 2021.

10.2 Updates since the meeting
There were none.

10.3 Adoption of minutes and recommendation
On the proposal of Mr Bartholomew, seconded by Mr Fellows it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt minutes of the meeting of 21 October 2021 and that Standing Order 14.9.2 should be amended to read:
The Chair of the relevant committee invites officers to provide any updates since the meeting and invites questions and comments from trustees on the minutes or the recommendations.

11. Whether MHT should proceed with a s74 Charities Act 2011 application with a view to updating its Governing Acts using a Private Bill and how work connected with obtaining a Private Bill should be funded

Mr Davies reminder trustees that this was not a final decision to proceed with a Private Bill but a preliminary step to gain authorisation from the Charity Commission to expend charity funds on a private bill. Private Bills had to be submitted by November in any given year so this was a timely decision if the Trust was not to be perceived as "kicking the can down the road" for a further year. Trustees had had the opportunity to go through the Working Group Report and ask questions both in the Governance Committee meeting and in 2 workshops.
Points made included:

- Was the charity moving away from charity status to an extra public body or an independent business? Mr Core said the aspect of fundraising needed to be seen in the broader context of all the non-financial benefits that would accrue. There was nothing in the proposals that could not be seen in many other charities, and the changes were to give the Trust more flexibility in addressing future risk. The report was intended to address the trustees' responsibility to demonstrate it had the resources to carry this through and that it was a reasonable way for the Trust to expend its funds.

- Mr Fowler made a number of points:
  - The Board had agreed to accept the Russell report, but this had stated the reconciliation of trustees should take place before implementing the governance changes. Mr Davies said that implementation of the Russell report was in process.
  - He had sent some notes to Mr Core, to which he had not received a response.
  - The reference to using the 3.5 % rate as recommended in the Treasury Green Book was not a correct application as this being used in a different context. The target rate of return for the investments which made up the Land Purchase Fund was 6 – 7 %.

  Mr Core responded that he had received the information from Mr Fowler and some additional comments from Mr Rouse which he had put into the model. Even using 7.5 % as Mr Fowler suggested, it still produced a positive result within 12 years.
- A comparison should be made between using a s 73 Scheme and a Bill.
- The Trust was not in a position to make the choice referred to above as the Charity Commission had made it clear that a s73 Scheme could not be used to make the changes which the Trust had identified as required.
- The Charity Commission had said a s 73 Scheme could not be used to make all the changes which the Trust had identified. Could the controversial aspects of the changes be dropped?
- It the Land Purchase Fund was used, money might not be available if a parcel of land came up for sale.
- The proposition was to ask the Charity Commission to sanction the Trust spending the money on a Private Bill
- The CEO gave a costs estimate for the s 74 application of £5 – 10,000. The application would involve administrative costs plus possibly some external professional fees.

On the proposal of Ms Stace, seconded by Dr Braim it was **RESOLVED** (14 votes in favour with 4 votes against and 1 abstention):
To adopt the Governance Committee's recommendations that

A. On the basis of the Governance Committee Working Group's report, the Board agree that it is expedient in the interests of the charity to proceed with a Parliamentary Bill to make the proposed governance changes (subject to a review as set out in 2 below).
B. Governance Committee Working Group 2 proceed to:
   i. Carry out further work identified in the Report of the CCS Working Group dated January 2020
   ii. Consider any further issues that arose during the process
C. The Officers in conjunction with Working Group 2 carry out any further work required to apply for s74 consent

And

D. The application for s 74 consent should be submitted to the charity commission (provided the estimates for legal costs are within 10% of the figures contained in the report on Costs and Benefits)
E. The cost of funding the work on a Private Bill should be met from a loan from the Land Purchase Fund.
F. To approve expenditure of up to £10,000 to prepare the application.

Mr Fowler and Dr Crisp asked for it to be minute that they had voted against the resolution on the basis that the Board had said that the Russell report would be implemented and this had not yet been done.

12. Fernleigh easement application

The CEO pointed out an error in the paper (page 20) – the easement was 75m long and not 55m as stated on that page.
He confirmed that in this case there was no prescriptive easement.
Points made included:

- In this instance there was no material impact on the "Natural Aspect" as the track was already present.
- What if a future owner was less careful as the present one? What if vehicles were parked on the easement? The CEO pointed out that the extent of and the materials for the easement would be specified in the deed along with the Trust's standard conditions which included a covenant not to park on the easement. The Trust arranged for a warden to call on new property owners and remind them of their obligations.

On the proposal of Mrs Palmer, it was **RESOLVED** (with 2 abstentions) that:
The conditions set out in s 7 MHA 1930 having been met and after having considered the impact on the natural aspect of granting the easement, the Board agreed to grant an easement providing vehicular access to Fernleigh subject to the conditions set out in Annex 2 of the paper in consideration of the sum of £20,000.

13. Trail hunting on MHT land

The CEO introduced the paper. The issuing licences for trail hunts was currently suspended. Trail hunting on Trust land was an event, like many other events organised by third parties over the course of a year. Because of the particular risks, the Board had approved a policy setting out the conditions on which trail hunting would be licenced by MHT. The paper set out the breaches of this policy which had occurred over the past 4 years. Monitoring the events was challenging and took up a deal of staff time.
Sometimes the hunt met on land adjoining Trust land and access was lawfully obtained across Trust land across easements or public rights of way.
The following points were made:

- It was evident from the information presented that the hunts had consistently failed to comply with the licence conditions and dealing with the events required significant input from staff.

- Monitoring was clearly quite stressful for the staff.
- If licences were suspended, the Trust would still have to be vigilant, and the hunt would have to be monitored when activities were taking place near to Trust land. The current policy asked hunts to give notice when they were meeting adjacent to Trust land. They would probably not give notice if the issuing of licences was suspended.
- If the hunts ignored the licence conditions they may well also disregard any ban. Hunt activity would still have to be monitored.
- There were effectively only 2 hunts involved. In circumstances where one was adhering to licence conditions and another was not, it would be possible to differentiate. However, the licence conditions would have to be revised in the light of the recent court case where it was found that hunts were being encouraged to use laying a trail as a smoke screen for illegal hunting.
- There was no evidence to believe that issuing licences containing additional restrictions would work
- Was it possible to request a bond? This was not thought to be a practical proposition.
- Thanks were expressed to the staff who had compiled the paper. The paper painted a clear picture of organisations which ignored any conditions on approvals that were given for their activities.
- Hunts were neither observing best practice for trail hunting nor the Trust's conditions for the grant of licences.
- Licences could be suspended until the end of the season to gain a clearer understanding of what other organisations were going to do.

On the proposal of Mrs Stace, seconded by Mr Bartholomew it was **RESOLVED** (with 1 vote against and 2 abstention) to indefinitely suspend the issue of licences for trail hunting on Trust land.

14. Information

14.1 Update on Risk Management Schedule

The CEO said that although there had been good news from the RPA, he did not feel it was appropriate to reduce the risk level until the money had been received.

14.2 Conservation Manager's Report

No further matters to report.

14.3 Malvern Spa Association

The Spa Association had produced Christmas cards and a calendar. They were supporting the Trust with funding to assist with rebalancing the trough at Barnards Green and repairing the pedestal at St Ann's Well.

14.4 AONB Joint Advisory Committee

John Raine had been appointed as Chair and the minutes of the last meeting would be circulated once they had been published.

14.5 Wildlife Panel

No meeting.

14.6 Recreation Advisory Panel
No meeting.

14.7 Management Report
The CEO had no updates.

15. Urgent Business
There was none.

16. Date of next meeting
20 January 2022.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

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Schedule 1

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO BOARD 2021 11 11

The earlier part of the year following the last Annual Meeting was, for Trustees, dominated by the conduct of an inquiry into a number of concerns and by the consequences of that inquiry. The findings of the inquiry report were accepted by the Board and a process put in place to respond to a number of the associated recommendations. That process continues, albeit rather slower than many would have wished.

One of the consequences was election of a new Trustee and we welcomed David Watson on his return to our Board.

Work to support the Modernisation Agenda has centred on producing, at the request of the Board a cost/benefit analysis of the opportunities that would be created by a consolidation and updating of our Governing Acts. That process has created some lively debate focussed largely on the financial factors but the Board's resolutions from March 2020 stands as a measure of the support for the substance of the proposed changes; many of the benefits being less easy to quantify. Nevertheless, the essence of the proposals is to enable the Trust to carry out its statutory duties in an effective and sustainable way in the face of huge financial, regulatory and environmental challenges in an uncertain future.

Meanwhile, our resourceful and hardworking staff have completely revised our Land Management Plan which is the foundation for our conservation work for the next 5 years. The plan is ratified, and work is underway.

Our managers and staff have also kept us on a stable financial footing in spite of the difficulties getting proper and timely payments from our agreed Countryside Stewardship schemes. Those schemes, which are a major source of the income essential to our stewardship of the hills and commons, are a feature of the uncertainty that we face in future.

Once again, the audit told us that our processes and the 2020/21 accounts were well managed and clean and the accounts tell us that that we hold healthy reserves and that the surge in car park income had provided some comfort to help with our careful control in the face of rising costs. Prudent and careful management is a precious commodity for which we continue to be grateful.

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Schedule 2

Statement from Katherine Harris:

(1) I do agree that consolidating the existing Acts of Parliament into one document was a point identified during the passage of what was to become the 1995 Act.
However, I do not agree that what is being proposed by the Governance Committee. To refer to the proposed changes as a consolidation exercise is a misnomer at best and misleading. Consolidation of Acts of Parliament is a technical exercise 'to prevent a complex form of cross referencing' and does not include increased powers or other significant changes.

(2) To say that' those changes were consulted upon in 2019 and found broad approval' is incorrect. Not all changes proposed were consulted upon and as for 'finding broad approval', I cannot agree. There was no verification for the validity of the responses.
The consultation was only in respect of a Section 73 proposal and was not agreeing to a Section 74 application.

Mr Davies responded that the assertion that the 2019 consultation was only in respect of a s73 Scheme was not right. It was the proposed changes that were being consulted on and not the process.

Statement from Robert Baker

My wife and I attended the Governance Committee meeting on 21st October and have read the minutes of that meeting. The minutes suggest that Dr Crisp drew the committee's attention to a decision notice from the Information Commissioner's Office before the committee voted to make a recommendation to the Board to proceed with a Private Bill. This gives a misleading record of the events of the meeting. The vote to make this recommendation to the Board came before Dr Crisp's announcement, not afterwards.

Mr Fowler said he thought sufficient changes could be made under a S73 Scheme and the precept payers should be taken into account.

The decision notice implied that the previously proposed S73 Charity Commission Scheme was still being considered which raises the question why would the Board be considering a Private Bill, with the very significant additional costs involved, at this time?'

Mr Davies responded that he believed that the assertion that the minutes were misleading was unfounded. The minutes were not a verbatim record of the meeting and the sequence of events was as set out in the minutes.

Malvern Hills Trust
Land Management Committee
United Reformed Church Malvern Link

Thursday 2 December 2021 7.00pm

Present: Mr C Atkins, Dr S Braim, Dr E Chowns, Mr M Davies (non-voting), Mr R Fowler, Mrs C Palmer, Dr T Parsons, Mr C Rouse.

In attendance: Conservation Manager, Secretary to the Board, Operations Manager, CEO, 3 members of the public.

Dr Braim welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Election of Chair**
   Dr Braim was appointed unopposed.

2. **Election of Vice-Chair**
   Mr Atkins was appointed unopposed.

3. **Apologies for Absence**
   Mr D Baldwin, Ms H Stace, Mr T Yapp, Mr M Gardner.

4. **Declarations of Interest**
   Mr Rouse - grazing rights over MHT land.

5. **Chairman's Communications**
   - Staffing Committee meeting (postponed from 4 November) Tuesday 7 December at Colwall Village Hall
   - FAR Committee meeting on Thursday 9 December at United Reformed Church Malvern Link

6. **Public Comments**
   See schedule

7. **Matters Arising from previous meetings**
   Mountain biking – The CEO said that there would be a further campaign on responsible Mountain Biking. There had been an incident involving a 6 year old child and a group of cyclists on a bridleway near St Ann's Well. Fortunately, the child was not seriously injured.

8. **Newly secured grants for tree and hedge planting**
   The Conservation Manager went through the paper and gave an update on the Urban Tree Challenge Fund - following a check with the utility services maps, two of the planned trees could not be planted because of underground services. There was funding provided within the grant for 3 year's care. The urban trees would be

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protected with guards – ones in locations where damage was not anticipated would have a simple guard, but in other places there would be a more robust framework. Local residents would be informed in advance of the proposals and the trees were to be located where they would not obstruct use of open spaces. He confirmed that cost of future maintenance of newly planted hedges would form part of the general fund budget. Inevitably some of the plants would die and would need to be replaced. A suggestion to plant larger groups of trees on Colwall Lands would be considered.
The work would be carried out during this financial year.

9. **Update on Stewardship agreement** (agenda item 10)
The Conservation Manager said that about £160,000 had been paid to the Trust by the RPA (approx. 95 % of the original sum due), and reasons for this reversal had been received. He was prepared to accept the reasons given for a deduction of £2,000pa but there remained a balance of £1,700 which was not accounted for. He would continue to chase for an explanation.
The consultant who had been engaged was useful (costs to date estimated at around £2,500), but of critical importance was pressure exerted by others on behalf of the Trust. Natural England had substantiated the Trust's position. The combination had caused the RPA to revisit their internal processes.
It had transpired that private landowners were notified of RPA inspections and received follow up reports but owners of common were not and this was a flaw in their system.

10. **To set the Land Management budget for 2022/23** (agenda item 9)
The Conservation Manager went through the paper.
<u>General fund budget</u>
The CEO confirmed that the new foul drainage infrastructure at British Camp should be delivered in the next week.
Dr Chowns asked about the Trust's policy on sourcing equipment which was zero carbon/non-fossil fuel. There was a discussion about moving over to electric powered tools and vehicles. The CEO confirmed that the Trust always looked at these options when replacing equipment. Sustainability had to be weighed against whether the equipment could perform the task required. For example, when wardens' vans were last replaced, the range of suitable electric vehicles was insufficient but it appeared there now was a vehicle on the market with sufficient range. The CEO agreed to draft a policy statement for consideration by the Board setting out the Trust's position on moving to sustainable power sources. The CEO also actively considered "machinery rings" (Where expensive equipment was available for shared use between individuals or organisations).
Mr Fowler asked about saving fuel by cutting down the number of journeys. He asked for the spend on budget items in the current year to date, and the forecast to the year end to be assimilated into the draft budget, if possible in time for the FAR meeting.

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The CEO explained that on many budget items expenditure was not linear over the year but took place during the winter months (for example contractor and tree costs)

DEFRA/Stewardship grants budget

The draft budget was out of date because of the reinstatement of the Central and Northern Hills grant funding.

The Conservation Manager clarified that a one year extension of the HLS Scheme covering Chase End Hill had been agreed (to allow time for more details of the ELM Scheme to be made public), that the rents received for the Castlemorton in-bye land was for part of the year. It had been decided, going forward, to stop transferring a portion of the grant funding to general fund on account of staff time spent administering the scheme.

Mr Rouse asked whether the cost of tree work from the designated tree disease fund should be shown on this budget. He asked about the justification for the fixed asset purchases listed at the foot of the budget. The CEO explained that a trailer was required for getting equipment to site.

There was a discussion about path maintenance. The Conservation Manager explained that the budget item shown for paths and tracks was not the full extent of expenditure on path maintenance, but elements of the work were covered within the staff budget and the tools and materials budget. When doing path works, drainage was always a consideration.

Points made included:

- Whether there had been an assessment of the state of the paths and what work was needed?
- Could a separate sum be allocated for specific path works, with a report back to the committee on what it had been spent on.
- Could the path upgrades be incorporated into the Business Plan?

It was agreed to increase the budget for track and path management by an additional £3,000 and to show this as a separate item on the budget.

On the proposal of Dr Braim, seconded by Mrs Palmer, it was **RESOLVED** with one abstention to approve the draft budget with the addition of a further £3,000 for path works.

11. Project progress update

The CEO gave some updates on the report.

Community Woodland – The planned resurfacing was completed and interpretation boards were in the office awaiting installation. Provision had been made for additional materials to enable some further surfacing work to be undertaken by volunteers.

Donkey Shed – Only one tender had been returned.

British Camp Sewage system – The contractor had started work and the plant was scheduled to be delivered in the next week. If delivery was delayed work would be stopped until after Christmas because of visitor demand over that period.

Warden vehicle – the figure in the budget column was incorrect as the Board had agreed to increase funding to £24,000. The vehicle was due for delivery in the next week.

It was pointed out that there was an interpretation board on the gate at Westminster Bank that needed updating.

Dr Braim asked about the outcomes from a survey of visitor numbers and visitor pressure, which had been commissioned as part of the SWDP (South Worcestershire Development Plan) review. The report had been undertaken by Footprint Ecology. The delay was as a result of waiting for all of the funders to agree the report could be released. It would be distributed once this consent was forthcoming.

It was suggested that it would help if the CEO cross referenced the project progress report to the Land Management Plan, that the "Status" column might be changed to either "on track" or "delayed" and to rationalise the use of the word "expected" in the centre columns particularly in the context of completed projects.

12. Graziers' report

The Conservation Manager reported on behalf of Mr Gardner. Visitor related issues had been relatively low over the autumn although there was a problem on 5 November on the Northern Hills when fireworks were set off next to a livestock enclosure. There had been one motor vehicle collision with stock at Castlemorton. The Southern Hills grazing was going well. The publicity and signs were a big help. It was anticipated that sheep would continue to graze around British Camp until March.

13. Conservation Manager's Report

The winter works programme was progressing well. Contractors had removed about 40 trees with ash dieback from high-risk locations at a cost of around £19,000. The Trust had put up signage to let the public know why the work was being carried out and advising that the Trust was fundraising to tackle ash dieback. The wood was being made available to the public in return for donations. The Tree Safety Survey had been finished and the work put out to tender.

There was currently a great deal of activity by utility companies wishing to carry out work on Trust land

Mr Parsons expressed concern about sycamore growing on the eastern side of the Hills and the management of Park Wood.

14. Operations Managers Report

The Operations' Manager reported on the work which had been carried out by the field staff, in accordance with the Land Management Plan. Quarry safety fencing had been erected at Earnslaw and the field staff were also involved in hedge planting, the removal of some dangerous and fallen trees and trees affected by ash dieback. A programme of ivy removal had been undertaken to facilitate the tree safety inspection. Some path maintenance had been undertaken including improving and maintaining drains.

Dealing with litter and fly tipping took 2 – 3 man-days per week.

He said that the enthusiasm and dedication of the Field Staff team was a pleasure to see.
The Conservation Manager and Operations Manager answered questions about grass cutting and the management of Park Wood. The management was being carried out in accordance with the Land Management Plan.
Mr Fowler said he hoped the Operations' Manager would be introducing some productivity improvements within the field staff team.
The CEO confirmed that, over the summer, probably half the field staff time was taken up with grass cutting.

15. Urgent business

There was none.

16. Date of next meeting

14 April 2022 (plus possible outdoor visits)

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

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Schedule

Mr Robert Baker

I would like to comment on the huge difference in budget available to the Land Management Committee compared with that of Governance.

At the last Board meeting the Conservation Manager received some applause for his efforts in obtaining a promise of £73,000 from RPA which appeared to have been hard won over a period of time. Yet the Governance Committee, having spent £114,000 to date to no avail, are preparing to borrow up to another £423,000 from the land acquisition fund.

At the same meeting Mr Rouse told the Board that land would be coming up which presumably would be of interest to the Trust. This didn't seem to be noted by the Chair and no discussion followed.

I imagine that the land acquisition fund exists to fulfil that purpose ie to purchase land. Therefore if suitable land comes up then this fund should be available to finance it.

I hope that the Chair of this Committee will raise this at the next Board meeting if not sooner.

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Malvern Hills Trust

Staffing Committee

Colwall Parish Hall

Tuesday December 7 2021, 7.00 pm

Present: Mr M Davies, Mrs H I'Anson, Mrs C Palmer (Chair), Mr C Penn, Prof Raine, Ms H Stace.

In attendance: CEO, Secretary to the Board, Mr R Fowler, Mr T Parsons.

Mrs Palmer welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Appointment of Chair**
   This meeting had been postponed from 4 November. As the committee was re-appointed at the Board meeting on 11 November, it was necessary to deal with the appointment of a chair and vice-chair of the committee as the first item on the agenda. It was **AGREED** to suspend Standing Orders. Prof Raine proposed that Mrs Palmer should be appointed as chair of the committee and this was seconded by Mr Davies. There were no other nominations and Mrs Palmer was appointed unopposed.

2. **Appointment of Vice-Chair**
   Mrs Palmer nominated Prof Raine to be vice-chair of the committee and this was seconded by Mr Penn. There were no other nominations and Prof Raine was appointed unopposed.

3. **Apologies for absence**
   Mr D Baldwin.

4. **Chair's announcements**
   There would be an item of urgent business. This would be dealt with in the confidential part of the meeting.

5. **Declaration of interests**
   There were none.

6. **Public Comments**
   There were none.

7. **Matters arising from previous meeting not otherwise on agenda**
   The CEO reported that since July, the Operations Manager and a warden had been recruited. The field staff member who had been recruited on a temporary contract had resigned as he was offered a permanent post elsewhere. It had been decided not to recruit to replace him as there were only a few months of the term of the temporary post left to run.

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8. **Update on Health and Safety Issues**
   The CEO went through his written report. There had been no further incidents since the report was written.
   The points arising from Mr Tompkins' visit were being actioned. The advice given in relation to the throw line at Gullet Quarry was that it should be checked daily. When visits to the quarry were less frequent in the winter months, Mr Tompkins had recommended removing the throw line altogether. The CEO clarified that the reference in the report to marking car park bays was in relation to the Manor House car park. A new system was being trialled to enable staff to report any health and safety concerns as well as "near misses".
   The CEO had updated the Covid risk assessments in the light of the deteriorating situation.

9. **Review of Abusive, Persistent or Vexatious Complainants Policy**
   The CEO said that the draft policy had been prepared following consideration of similar policies used by other organisations. The policy included behaviour directed at trustees (recognising that they were volunteers)
   Amendments were proposed:
   - Page 1, paragraph 3 before the bullets amend to read: Unacceptable behaviour may include (but is not limited to)
   - Page 4, under the heading "Ceasing all contact with a complainant" - make clear that this was not an exclusive list.

   It was agreed that the document was intended as guidance and needed to be drafted in a way that allowed for flexibility of response.
   On the proposal of Mr Davies, seconded by Mrs I'Anson it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend that the revised policy be approved by the Board subject to the points set out above.

10. **Review of Bullying and Harassment Policy**
    On the proposal of Prof Raine, seconded by Mr Penn it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend that the revised policy be approved by the Board.

11. **Urgent Business**
    To be dealt with in confidential session.

12. **Date of next meeting**
    7 April 2022.

13. **Confidential business**
    On the proposal of Ms Stace seconded by Mr Penn it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to exclude the public for discussion of items 11 and 14 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the exempt or confidential nature of the business to be transacted (personnel matters).

CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes released

14. **Estate Supervisor post**

On the proposal of Prof Raine, seconded by Ms Stace it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend to the Board that duration of the temporary Estate Supervisor post be extended by a further 6 months to 21 September 2022.

15. **Benchmarking**

A benchmarking exercise for all staff salaries (except the CEO) was undertaken in 2018/19. The CEO had intended to repeat this exercise in 2023/24. As a result of changing circumstances, including erosion of differentials because of increases in the minimum wage, increases in National Insurance, increases in inflation and more competition in the employment market affecting recruitment and retention, he felt this should be brought forward to the next financial year, to be undertaken once the increases in the Local Government pay scales were known.

The cost would be about £2,000 - £2,500.

Mrs Palmer suggested including a further benchmarking exercise in year 5 of the Business Plan.

On the proposal of Ms Stace, seconded by Mrs Palmer it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend to the Board that the budget for 2022/23 should include the sum of £2,500 in order to carry out a benchmarking exercise during the next financial year.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm

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Abusive, persistent or vexatious complainants

Introduction

Dealing with a complaint is usually a straightforward process but in a very small minority of cases people can pursue their complaints in a way which can either impede the investigation of their complaint, has an unacceptable impact on staff members or creates significant resource issues for the Trust.

MHT is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly, comprehensively, and in a timely manner. Everyone who contacts MHT has a right to be heard, understood and respected and MHT recognises that people may have difficulty expressing themselves when anxious or upset, and make allowances for this. MHT will not normally limit the contact which complainants have with staff.

However MHT has a duty to its employees and volunteers (collectively referred to as staff in this policy) and does not expect them to tolerate unacceptable behaviour. ~~This may include~~

~~Using abusive or foul language~~

~~Any form of personal abuse, intimidating or threatening behaviour~~

~~Sending multiple emails, making multiple calls or visits.~~

MHT will take action to protect staff from such behaviour, and to protect the resources and reputation of the organisation. If someone behaves in this way the Trust will follow this policy.

The issues – identifying inappropriate behaviour

Raising legitimate queries should not lead to a complainant being labelled vexatious. Likewise, if a complainant is unhappy about the outcome of a complaint and seeks to challenge it, that should not necessarily lead to him/her being labelled as unreasonably persistent.

If it is clear that a complainant genuinely believes his complaint has merit (even though Trust staff know it is without foundation) then it is not vexatious and should dealt with in accordance with the Trust's complaints' process. There should be a proportionate investigation and if the evidence does not support the complaint, the complainant will then be informed of the outcome.

Abusive, persistent or vexatious behaviour can take many forms and the outline below should not be taken to exclude other forms of behaviour.

Using foul, inappropriate or discriminatory language.

Unreasonable demands or being unreasonably persistent impacts on the ability of staff to do their jobs. It might include requesting responses within an unreasonable timescale; insisting on speaking to or corresponding with a particular member of staff, frequent phone calls, visits, e-mails, or letters; repeatedly changing the substance of the complaint or raising unrelated concerns.

Unreasonable persistence includes continual refusal to accept that a decision has been made in relation to a complaint; insisting that staff answer questions when they have already done so or explained why they will not; persistent refusal to accept explanations about what the Trust can or cannot do; sending e-mails to multiple members of staff, Board members or to external bodies or individuals; or repeatedly trying to revisit a case once the complaints process, has come to an end.

Vexatious complaints are ones without foundation or which are disproportionate, and which may have the effect of overwhelming, victimising, harassing, embarrassing or worrying Trust staff. They may also include complaints made with such high frequency that they become an unnecessary drain on resources.

Handling behaviour as outlined above could place a strain on resources and cause unacceptable stress for staff, who may need support in difficult situations.

The procedures outlined in this document will only be used as a last resort and after all reasonable measures have been taken to try to resolve issues, including use of the complaints procedure.

Dealing with abusive, persistent or vexatious complainants

There is an internal staff policy for dealing with difficult situations arising from the way in which a member of the public is behaving. With phone calls, this may culminate in extreme cases in the member of staff ending the telephone call if the caller is aggressive, offensive or abusive. Staff must be accountable for their actions and are required to log all instances of when calls have been terminated, noting the reason(s) for ending the call. The policy also covers the procedure for dealing with a difficult member of the public visiting the office.

A difficult first contact may be the start of a series of interactions and it is important that staff record the event contemporaneously in as much detail as possible. Staff should always report what has happened to their line manager or, if the conduct is persistent or is serious, to the CEO.

A record should be made and retained of all subsequent communications.

Complainants may not realise that their attitude/behaviour is causing unnecessary distress to others. Where staff consider that a member of the public's actions or behaviour is likely to have a negative effect, the member of the public should politely be informed that their behaviour is not acceptable and the reasons why. If appropriate the request may be given or reinforced by a senior member of staff or the CEO.

Staff must be satisfied before taking any further action under this policy that the complainant's circumstances have been taken into account, including any protected characteristics.

If the actions or behaviour by the individual continues, MHT will take steps to prevent or minimise the negative effects. If a complaint has been dealt with, and the complainant informed of the outcome, the first step may be to inform the complainant that the Trust will enter into no more correspondence on the relevant topic. Wherever appropriate, MHT

will continue with a review of the person's complaint whilst ensuring that action is taken to protect staff and to ensure that they can work effectively.

The CEO will decide if an individual should be classified as an abusive, persistent or vexatious complainant and whether measures need to be implemented pursuant to this policy. The CEO should make a written record of his/her decision, the control measures to be used and the reasons why it has been made. If the CEO does so decide, he/she should notify the Chair.

In the event that the complaint is directed at the CEO, the Secretary to the Board will act in place of the CEO.

The appropriate control measures to be used will vary depending on the circumstances. Examples of some of the control measures (not intended as an exclusive list) which might be authorised by the CEO to restrict future contact from a person are:

- Designating a single method and named point of contact
- Limit the person to making telephone calls on a specified day and time per week;
- Stipulate that MHT will call them at an agreed time instead of them calling MHT;
- Not accept any further telephone calls from the person but in those circumstances keep at least one other form of contact.
- Limit the number of emails which may be sent each week, and designate an email address
- Removing the 'implied licence' to visit the office if they are a continual or abusive visitor
- Require the person to communicate with MHT through a representative or a different representative where it is the representative whose behaviour is causing concern.
- Read and file any future correspondence but acknowledge receipt
- Not respond to further contact in relation to a specific topic.
- Informing the complainant that any further complaints will only be considered if the CEO agrees they warrant investigation.

If the CEO decides it is necessary to block or restrict contact, the complainant should be informed in writing of:

the decision which has been taken

why the decision has been taken,

the duration of the action and

when it will be reviewed.

A restriction on contact should normally be time limited but will be kept under review by the CEO (see below).

If the conduct is extreme MHT may have to consider legal action or if the behaviour constitutes an offence, the police should be notified. MHT need not warn the complainant prior to taking either of these courses of action.

Expiration and limitation of status as an abusive, persistent or vexatious complainant

When individuals have been classified as abusive, persistent or vexatious, the designation will usually be applied for a fixed time period, depending on circumstances. At the end of that period, the designation will be reviewed by the CEO and may be extended or withdrawn if, for example, the person subsequently demonstrates a more reasonable approach.

New Complaints from those designated as an abusive persistent or vexatious claimant

The status of abusive, persistent or vexatious complainant will normally only apply in relation to a specific issue. If a new issue is raised by someone who has been designated under this policy, it will be considered by the CEO in consultation with the Chair of Staffing Committee and investigated if it might have substance. The individual will not be deemed to be abusive, persistent or vexatious in relation to a new topic unless that behaviour is also demonstrated in relation to the new issue.

Ceasing all contact with a complainant

In some circumstances it may be appropriate or necessary for the CEO to authorise cessation of all contact between staff and an individual for a period of time-, such as (but not limited to) ~~in the case of having an issue~~where a matter is being investigated by the police, ~~having taken~~where legal action is being taken, or if there is some form of ongoing investigation by another regulatory body.

Review

The complainant has a right to request a review of any decision reached in accordance with this policy. Review requests must be received within 28 days of the date of the decision. Review requests will be investigated by any 2 committee chairs and the outcome confirmed in writing.

Malvern Hills Trust

Finance Administration and Resources Committee
United Reformed Church, Malvern Link

Thursday 9 December 2021 7.00pm

Present: Mr R Bartholomew, Mr Core (Chair), Mr M Davies, Mr D Fellows, Mrs L Hodgson, Mr J Michael, Mr C Penn, Prof J Raine, Mr D Watkins.

In attendance: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Secretary to the Board, Finance and Administration Manager (FAM), Financial Assistant, Mr R Fowler, Mr T Parsons, Mr C Rouse, 2 members of the public.

Mr Core welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Appointment of Chair**
   Mrs Hodgson took the chair. There was one nomination for Chair of the committee and Mr Core was appointed unopposed.

2. **Appointment of Vice Chair**
   Mr Core took the chair. There was one nomination for Vice-Chair of the committee and Mrs Hodgson was appointed unopposed.

3. **Apologies for absence**
   Mr M Dyde.

4. **Chair's communications**
   - Ian Burrows (Brewin Dolphin) would attend the next Board meeting
   - Pension workshop – would be scheduled for late February or early March 2022

   The CEO said that arrangements for staff were being updated in the light of the Government announcements on Covid 19 precautions.

5. **Declarations of interest**
   A number of the committee members were levy payers – Mr Bartholomew, Mr Core, Mr Fellows, Mr Penn, Prof Raine, Mr Watkins.

6. **Public comments**
   See Schedule.

7. **Matters arising from the meetings 12 August 2021 not otherwise on the agenda**
   Payments from the RPA had now been received for 2019 and 2020 for the Northern and Central Hills Stewardship Scheme. The payment for 2019 was £3,000 less than the original grant offer. For the year 2020, there had been an additional deduction of £1,700 which was being queried.

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The RPA had notified the Trust that the 2021 payment would be delayed.

8. **Management accounts to 31 October 2021**
The FAM went through the paper. Some items had been underspent in order to make savings because of uncertainty over funding the grazing but these underspends could be revisited now the RPA funds had been received.
Prof Raine asked were there lessons to be learnt from the experience with the RPA? The CEO said that the RPA had confirmed they had reversed the changes which had resulted in the deductions. The RPA was using a process for common land which did not require notice of inspections to be given to the landowner nor notice of proposed changes. This remained a vulnerability with all the Countryside Stewardship Schemes. It had been flagged on the Risk Management Schedule. Mr Core hoped that being involved in the trial of the new ELM Scheme should help improve the process in future.

9. **To approve General Fund budget and propose the Levy for the year ending 31st March 2023**
The FAM said that there were three changes proposed to the draft budget which had been circulated.
    - Land Management Committee proposed to add an extra £3,000 to the budget for path work.
    - Staffing Committee had agreed to recommend a salary benchmarking exercise in the next financial year at a cost of £2,500.
    - The rent payable under a farm business tenancy had been renegotiated and would be £800 less than shown on the draft budget.

    She went through the paper and the following issues were discussed:
    <u>Car parking charges:</u>
    - Some committee members felt that increasing the car park charges needed to be justified, given income from parking was over budget for the year to date.
    - The proposed increase in charges would generate approximately £5,000 for the Trust on the basis of the projected figures.[1]
    - The recent trend for car park ticket sales was slightly downwards. It was difficult to predict visitor numbers going forward.
    - The charges needed to be looked at in the context of other similar parking providers.
    - It was better to make small annual increases than make a large change after a few years.
    - If the levy was increased by inflation was it not appropriate to increase parking charges by the same percentage?
    - The car park receipts went to pay the Trust's expenses and all of those expenses would be subject to inflation.

[1] This figure was incorrect. The proposed increase would generate £12,000.

- Most of the car park charges would be paid by non-levy payers.
- If the Trust did not take the opportunity of recovering inflationary costs, the impact carried forward because the income was never clawed back.

Staff salaries

The CEO confirmed that there were no staff paid at a rate below the living wage. Staff salaries were currently fixed by Local Government pay rates. The FAM said the concern was that the gap between what staff were paid and the living wage was being eroded as the living wage increased.

- At staffing committee, there had been a discussion about whether recruitment was becoming difficult as a result of the salaries which the Trust was offering. The committee had agreed to bring forward a benchmarking exercise to the next financial year.
- When the benchmarking exercise was carried out, the Trust would need to respond to it.
- Was the 2.5 % increase in the budget sufficient to accommodate the benchmarking exercise and the as yet unspecified Local Government pay settlement?

Other points

Donkey Shed. The CEO had managed to secure grants towards the cost of the repairs and the net cost to the general fund for the work should be less than that shown in the draft budget. He would revise the figure before the board meeting.
Lower Shed. The original specification had been on the basis of an agricultural building. If it was to be used as a base for the volunteers, the specification would have to be higher, increasing the costs.

The levy

The FAM pointed out that the Trust never got back the income from the years when there had been a below inflation increase in the levy.

- All of the levy paying residents could see the Malvern Hills and enjoyed the benefit. The proposed increase in the levy was less than the price of a cup of coffee. The committee needed to look at the total cost of what people were paying.
- It was important to increase the levy by inflation.
- Over the past few years there had been above inflation increases in the levy, but few complaints had been received about this from approximately 14,000 households who paid the levy.
- There were significant inflationary pressures at present as well as the tree management issues which the Trust was having to address.

On the proposal of Mr Core, seconded by Mrs Hodgson it was **RESOLVED** by 7 votes to 2 to recommend to the Board that:

1. That the levy for 2022/23 is set at £595,300,
2. That car park meter prices be increased to £4.80 per day from 1st April 2022
3. That
    a. Residents' passes be increased to a cost of £6.00 per annum from 1st April 2022

b. Annual pass prices be increased to £41 per annum, plus £16 per annum for a second car at the same address, from 1st April 2022

On the proposal of Mr Core, seconded by Mrs Hodgson it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to recommend to the Board that:

1. That the designated funds budget be approved.
2. That the restricted funds budget be approved (subject to updating the figures re the Donkey Shed).

10. **GDPR – review of data breaches**

There had been none.

11. **Reports:**

11.1 Car park takings

A graph had been included to show how takings had fluctuated over the last 3 years, illustrating that car park income was difficult to predict. The key factors were the effect of the pandemic and the weather. The current trend since August 2021was generally falling car park income. Car park capacity was limited. Some of the car parks were regularly full and this impacted on the Trust's ability to benefit financially from higher visitor numbers and caused problems on the adjoining roads and verges. The CEO confirmed that he had included in the draft business plan a proposal to look at expanding the paid car parking capacity and that the Trust was reasonably effective at enforcing non-payment for parking.

11.2 Review of major projects (including Land Management)

The CEO had received suggestions from the Land Management Committee to amend the format of this report and he would make the changes for the next meeting. Mrs Hodgson suggested recording if a project was ahead of schedule.
Community woodland – there was a small amount still left in the budget for additional work to be carried out.
British Camp sewage system - the costs would be dependent on whether there was a need to break out rock to accommodate the new treatment plant.
Donkey Shed – the work was provisionally booked to start in June.
Warden vehicle – this had been delivered on Monday and a small overspend of £424 had been authorised under the CEO's delegated authority.
There were two new project to be included – grants had been obtained for tree planting in urban areas and for hedge planting in Colwall.

11.3 Fund-raising, legacies and grants group

There had not been a meeting. The group was one member short after the resignation of Ms Rouse. It was agreed Prof Raine should join the group.

11.4 Red flag items off risk schedule

The risk of non-payment of the Stewardship grants had been slightly reduced but no other risks had changed.

11.5 Exercise of delegated expenditure powers

A table had been circulated.

11.6 Manor House refurbishment

This was covered under 11.2.

12. **Urgent business**
There was none.

16 Date and time of next meeting
9 June 2022 7pm

The meeting closed at 8.12pm

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Schedule

Mr Robert Baker:
I would like to comment on the modest budget allocated for land management, considering that this is the primary purpose of the Trust.

At last week's Land Management Committee meeting Mr Parsons raised a concern about the state of many of the footpaths on the hills which required significant repair. Dr Braim agreed. Mrs Palmer queried the progress of the work on the footpaths at the Community Woodland.

Mr Davies suggested that the budget for repair to paths should be increased from £3,000 to £6,000 in recognition of the importance of the work.

Mr Bridges gave an example of the high costs of recent work done on paths for the Trust. It was suggested that a higher amount should be allocated for this purpose but Mr Davies reminded the committee that the Trust 'does not have bottomless pockets,' and yet this doesn't seem to be a problem when funding the Private Bill.

Surely maintaining the footpaths on the Trust's land is vitally important for public health and safety.

No mention has been made of the land referred to by Mr Rouse at the last board meeting or how it or similar land could be paid for after the land acquisition fund has been raided. The cautious approach to essential expenditure on land management conflicts very noticeably with the free spending approach to governance.

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Malvern Hills Trust
Expenditure 2021/22 - authorised in addition to budget

Date	Item	Board £	CEO £	CEO COVID £	FAR £	Total £	
06 May 2021	British Camp track to loos				6,200	6,200	Parliamentary
Jul-21	New laptop		895			895	JB/Boardroom
Aug-21	RPA advice		2,000			2,000	
						-	
12/08/2021	Warden's pick up - addition to original budget				6,000	6,000	
12/08/2021	Carbon Black (1620 less 595 saved on Kaspersky)				1,025	1,025	
12/08/2021	RPA Additional advice				4,000	4,000	
26/08/2021	Increase to GF tree costs budget	5,000				5,000	
26/08/2021	Ash Dieback designated fund	68,000				68,000	
09/09/2021	VAT reclaim - legal fees	7,740				7,740	£10k max authorised
11/11/2021	Legal fees - S74 preparatory work	10,000				10,000	
30/11/2021	FIPL matched funding		3,000			3,000	
01/12/2021	Extras new Wardens van		424			424	
						-	
	Total at 7th December 2021	**90,740**	**6,319**	**-**	**17,225**	**114,284**	
Annual limits			10,000 (£5,000 single item limit)	8,591 Bal b/f ('emergency period' only) To Sept 21	20,000		

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Paper B
For decision

Ordinary meeting of the Board

General fund budget and levy 2022/23

20th January 2022

The draft general fund budget reviewed by the FAR Committee in December 2021 was approved with 3 amendments:

1. To increase the 'tracks and paths' budget by £3,000 and to show the total budget as a separate line,
2. To add £2,500 to 'other professional fees' budget for the cost of a salary benchmarking exercise and
3. To reduce the land rentals income budget by £800.

An updated draft of the budget is attached. The designated and restricted funds' budgets are unchanged from those sent to the FAR Committee December 2021 meeting.

Recommendations to the Board from FAR

That the Board

1. Approve the following increase in car parking prices from 1 April 2021
    a. Car park meter prices be increased to £4.80 per day
    b. Levy payers' passes be increased to a cost of £6.00 per annum
    c. Annual pass prices be increased to £41 per annum, plus £16 per annum for a second car at the same address
2. Approves the budget for 2022/23 as per the attached
3. Set the levy for 2022/23 at £595,300,

Other recommendations

4. That subject to confirmation of the final position on the CS agreement for Castlemorton the Board approve the designated funds budgets,
5. That the Board approves the restricted fund budget.

Cheryl Gentry
Finance & Administration Manager
14th December 2021

Malvern Hills Trust
General fund budget 2022/23

Forecast for 2021/22 at Nov 21 £		Budget 2022/23 £	Prior year budget £
513,150	4000 - Levy MHDC	538,800	513,150
53,800	4005 - Levy Hereford Council	56,500	53,800
11,100	4010 - WCC annual grant	11,655	11,100
0	4015 - Other grants	5,000	11,000
324,369	4100 - Car park meter takings	311,000	275,000
28,858	4110 - Residents' passes	29,000	25,000
31,371	4120 - Annual passes	32,000	29,000
2,233	4125 - Parking fines	2,000	2,000
1,966	4200 - Donations	3,000	2,000
9,067	4300 - Property rentals	9,100	9,100
7,153	4310 - Land rentals	7,200	8,100
1,070	4320 - Sundry rentals	50	360
0	4330 - Fairs and circuses	750	750
3,100	4340 - Ice Cream concessions	3,000	2,500
5,918	4360 - Wayleaves	5,000	5,000
6,400	4380 - AONB contribution	6,700	6,400
7	4370 - Sales of books, leaflets and maps	250	0
242	4400 - Administration charges levied	100	0
1,030	4410 - Compensation for work on land	1,050	1,030
4,000	4420 - Sundry income	4,080	4,000
50	4425 - Fishing permits	50	50
294	4510 - Bank interest receivable	200	400
1,500	4700 - Profit on disposal of fixed assets	20,000	1,500
1,007,037	**Total income**	**1,046,485**	**961,240**
	Land management expenses		
14,640	5000 - Contract labour	14,200	10,640
3,180	5001 - Tracks and paths	6,000	3,180
4,720	5005 - Drainage works	4,200	5,720
12,560	5010 - Vehicle and equipment expenses	12,900	12,560
8,500	5015 - Field staff vehicles fuel	10,200	8,500
1,850	5025 - Hire of plant and equipment	2,000	1,850
7,160	5030 - Skip hire	7,800	7,160
25,000	5035 - Treework	26,000	20,000
3,700	5040 - Grass cutting	3,900	3,700
9,800	5045 - Purchase of materials	14,000	9,800
1,030	5046 - Purchase of tools under £500	1,000	1,030
1,700	5050 - Protective clothing	1,700	1,700
1,550	5055 - Field consultancies	1,600	1,550
3,200	5060 - Tree safety survey	3,300	3,200
600	5065 - Conservation volunteers	1,100	1,100
510	5070 - Evendine Spring	500	510
2,800	5080 - Gardening	3,000	2,800
250	5085 - Management plan	0	250
102,751	**Total land management expenses**	**113,400**	**95,250**
	Visitor services expenses		
7,545	5200 - Parking meters maintenance and repairs	8,200	7,545
15,100	5210 - Parking meters IT costs and transaction charges	15,000	14,650
1,182	5220 - Parking meters - tickets	1,000	1,000
2,255	5230 - Parking passes printing costs	2,900	2,700
5,000	5240 - Car park repairs	8,000	5,000
86	5250 - Other car park expenses	0	0
5,200	5300 - Wardens' vehicles fuel	6,200	5,200
3,250	5310 - Wardens' vehicle maintenance	3,500	3,250
1,204	5320 - Wardens' uniform and PPE	1,000	1,000
2,000	5330 - Wardens' tools and equipment	2,000	2,000
1,750	5340 - Wardens' mobile phones	1,200	1,750
261	5350 - Wardens other expenses	66	0
44,832	**Total visitor services expenses**	**49,066**	**44,095**
	Communications and public engagement expenses		
1,000	5400 - Leaflets	2,000	4,000
330	5405 - Council tax payers leaflet	400	500
750	5410 - Annual report	750	750
600	5415 - Newsletters	200	600
1,000	5420 - Campaigns	4,000	4,000
1,000	5425 - Signs	4,000	1,000
2,000	5440 - Events programme	2,000	2,000
0	5445 - Exhibitions	1,500	1,500
500	5455 - Other PR expenses	500	500
0	5456 - Annual picnic	250	250
243	5500 - Fundraising expenses	200	200
10,000	5510 - Communications support and engagement	10,000	10,000
17,423	**Total communications and public engagement expenses**	**25,800**	**25,300**

Malvern Hills Trust
General fund budget 2022/23 - cont'd

Forecast for 2021/22 at Nov 21 £		Budget 2022/23 £	Prior year budget £
	Administration and governance expenses		
2,395	6000 - General rates	2,600	3,200
1,254	6001 - Rates British Camp car park	1,400	1,300
4,300	6005 - Water rates	4,400	4,300
13,000	6010 - Buildings maintenance	13,000	13,000
4,545	6015 - Electricity	6,000	5,300
1,053	6016 - Pay & Display meters electricity	1,500	1,060
1,371	6020 - Gas	1,600	1,600
3,013	6025 - Telephones - landlines	2,600	3,600
1,290	6030 - Mobile phones (exc wardens)	1,400	1,290
30,000	8015 - Depreciation - land management equipment	34,000	37,000
5,000	8020 - Depreciation - office equipment	5,000	5,500
29,000	6045 - Insurance	31,000	30,900
3,000	6050 - Office equipment maintenance	3,100	3,000
1,630	6055 - Office equipment purchases under £500	1,500	1,630
1,757	6060 - Photocopier	1,800	1,750
4,500	6065 - IT support costs	4,000	4,500
9,115	6066 - IT other costs	10,500	8,050
300	6070 - Website	1,000	300
28,238	6075 - Legal fees exc governance	25,000	15,000
1,000	6080 - Valuation fees	1,100	1,000
7,000	6085 - Audit fee	7,140	7,000
2,160	6095 - HR consultant	2,203	2,160
10,650	6100 - Other professional fees	12,000	4,650
500	6210 - Room hire	1,000	300
3,000	6215 - Training - Board	3,060	3,000
850	6105 - Subscriptions	900	850
4,650	6110 - Bank charges	4,750	4,650
3,500	6040 - Postage	1,700	1,600
3,500	6125 - Stationery	3,570	3,500
350	6135 - Recycling	250	220
5,000	6035 - Cleaning	5,100	5,000
3,400	6140 - Travelling expenses	4,500	4,192
1,275	6145 - Miscellaneous expenses	1,800	1,750
500	6120 - Newspaper ads	510	500
192,094	**Total administration and governance expenses**	**200,983**	**182,652**
154,244	7000 - Basic salaries - Field Staff	147,500	161,656
79,379	7005 - Basic salaries - Wardens	86,600	86,400
230,565	7010 - Basic salaries - office based staff	230,700	222,900
350	7015 - Basic salaries - casual staff	0	3,000
12,523	7021 - Employer's NI - Field Staff	12,900	15,696
6,812	7025 - Employer's NI - Wardens	6,400	8,500
23,509	7030 - Employer's NI - office based staff	22,800	23,700
21,934	7040 - Pension Contributions - Field Staff	22,000	26,766
9,499	7045 - Pension Contributions - Wardens	11,300	11,300
36,750	7050 - Pension contributions - office based staff	38,200	36,900
66,100	7055 - LGPS lump sum deficit contributions	69,000	66,100
2,500	7060 - Group life assurance	3,000	2,500
6,900	7070 - Training - staff	10,000	6,900
2,127	7075 - Recruitment	2,000	2,000
653,192	**Total staff costs**	**662,400**	**674,318**
(3,255)	Surplus/(deficit) for the year before transfers	(5,164)	(60,375)
(85,890)	Transfer to other funds	(17,890)	(17,890)
18,450	Transfers from other funds	17,762	18,450
(70,695)	Surplus/(deficit) for the year after transfers	(5,292)	(59,815)
439,725	General fund brought forward	369,030	439,725
369,030	**General fund carried forward**	**363,739**	**379,910**

Capital items from the General fund

Printers and IT replacments	3,000
Archive cabinet	2,200
Laptop Operations Manager	900
Chain saws	2,000
Brush cutters	2,000
ATV vehicle for Field Staff	20,000
Van - Electric Warden	24,000
5 or 8 tonne trailer	5,000
3.5 ton twin axle plant trailer	3,500
2.7 ton forwarding trailer (timber)	6,000
	68,600

Malvern Hills Trust
Designated funds budget for the year ended 31st March 2023

N/C	Unrestricted Gifts	Modernisation of Acts	Dog campaign des fund	Fundraising	Election exps des fund	Tree disease des fund	Ash dieback fund	CS North & Central	CS Castlemorton (est)	CS Southern Hills	HLS Chase End	HLS Castlemorton	HLS Southern Hills	HLS Old Hills	Grazing reserve	Single Payment Scheme	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
4015 - Other grants	2,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	4,240	6,240
4020 - Stewardship annual grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	76,000	55,000	17,832	3,144	0	0	5,176	0	0	157,152
4025 - Stewardship capital grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,500	16,732	0	0	0	0	0	0	22,232
4310 - Land rentals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,279	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,579
4325 - Licences	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,500	0	750	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,250
Total income	**2,000**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**83,779**	**60,800**	**35,314**	**3,144**	**0**	**0**	**5,176**	**0**	**4,240**	**194,453**
5000 - Contract labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,000	5,500	17,267	500	0	0	1,000	0	2,000	30,267
5100 - Graziers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	62,400	40,000	15,000	0	0	0	1,382	0	0	118,782
5110 - Stewardship schemes direct costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,000	5,000	2,219	2,083	0	0	500	0	0	12,802
5035 - Treework	0	0	0	0	0	0	68,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	68,000
5400 - Leaflets	0	0	1,501	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,501
5450 - Outside events	0	0	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500
5425 - Signs	12,500	0	1,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,000
5435 - Interpretation boards	18,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18,000
6100 - Other professional fees	2,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,000
Total expenditure	**32,500**	**0**	**3,501**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**68,000**	**69,400**	**50,500**	**34,486**	**2,583**	**0**	**0**	**2,882**	**0**	**2,000**	**265,852**
Surplus/(deficit) for the period before transfers	(30,500)	0	(3,501)	0	0	0	(68,000)	14,379	10,300	828	561	0	0	2,294	0	2,240	(71,399)
4600 - Transfers from other funds	0	0	0	0	5,000	12,890	68,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	85,890
5105 - Transfer to general fund - stewardship staff time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(367)	0	0	(605)	0	0	(972)
8100 - Transfers to other funds	(68,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(68,000)
Surplus/(deficit) for the period after transfers	(98,500)	0	(3,501)	0	5,000	12,890	0	14,379	10,300	828	194	0	0	1,689	0	2,240	(54,481)
Reserves brought forward	434,703	34,899	3,501	5,000	7,207	1,975	0	107,515	0	9,331	1,866	39,134	0	28,775	22,988	16,960	713,854
Reserves carried forward	**336,203**	**34,899**	**0**	**5,000**	**12,207**	**14,865**	**0**	**121,894**	**10,300**	**10,159**	**2,060**	**39,134**	**0**	**30,464**	**22,988**	**19,200**	**659,373**

Cash movement	
Surplus/(deficit) as above	(54,481)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	0
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	0
Net increase/(decrease) in cash	(54,481)
Cash brought forward	567,084
Cash carried forward	512,603

Malvern Hills Trust
Restricted funds budget for the year ended 31st March 2023

N/C	Parliamentary fund	Capital Outlay d'chgd	Lands Purchase fund	Lands Maintenance fund	Restricted Gift fund	Picnic bench donations	NIM book	Tree donation scheme	Boost for biodiversity	FIPL foothill connections	Donkey Shed	SDF fund	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£		£	£
4015 - Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,000	0	20,000
4500 - Investment income @ 3%	11,863	0	27,983	5,527	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45,372
4600 - Transfers from other funds	0	106,000			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	106,000
Total income	**11,863**	**106,000**	**27,983**	**5,527**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**20,000**	**0**	**171,372**
5000 - Contract labour	3,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,000	0	23,000
6115 - Investment manager's charges @ 0.6%	2,373	0	5,597	1,105	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,074
8005 - Depreciation - impts to l&b	0	100,200	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100,200
8100 - Transfers to General fund	11,263	0	0	5,527	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16,790
8100 - Transfers to COD (capital items purchased)[1]	106,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	106,000
Total expenditure	**122,636**	**100,200**	**5,597**	**6,632**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**20,000**	**0**	**255,064**
Surplus/(deficit) for the period	**(110,773)**	**5,800**	**22,386**	**(1,106)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(83,692)**
Reserves brought forward	395,425	1,556,824	932,752	184,224	9,707	183	2,733	700	2,979	11,200	0	453	3,097,180
Reserves carried forward	**284,652**	**1,562,624**	**955,138**	**183,118**	**9,707**	**183**	**2,733**	**700**	**2,979**	**11,200**	**0**	**453**	**3,013,488**

Cash movement	
Surplus/(deficit) as above	(83,692)
Add back COD movement (not cash)	(5,800)
Add back funds transferred from investment portfolio to cover expenditure	106,000
less LA investment income retained in portfolio	(27,983)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash	(11,475)
Cash brought forward	49,823
Cash carried forward	38,348

1 Capital items purchased from Parliamentary fund	
Blac khill car park upgrade	6,000
Lower Shed	100,000
	106,000

Malvern Hills Trust
Cash flow movement by fund group 2022/23

	General fund	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cash balances brought forward	289,450	567,084	49,823	906,357
Net cash inflow/(outflow)	(34,892)	(54,481)	(11,475)	(100,848)
Cash balances carried forward	254,558	512,603	38,348	805,509

General fund monthly cash flow

	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Surplus/(deficit) for the period	(23,539)	(26,140)	215,051	(48,460)	(42,044)	(48,946)	(22,895)	(61,244)	217,367	(51,122)	(61,585)	(51,735)
Add back depreciation	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250	3,250
Less capital expenditure	(68,600)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net cash inflow/(outflow)	(88,889)	(22,890)	218,301	(45,210)	(38,794)	(45,696)	(19,645)	(57,994)	220,617	(47,872)	(58,335)	(48,485)
Cash balance brought forward	289,450	200,561	177,671	395,973	350,763	311,969	266,273	246,628	188,634	409,250	361,378	303,043
Cash balance carried forward	200,561	177,671	395,973	350,763	311,969	266,273	246,628	188,634	409,250	361,378	303,043	254,558

Malvern Hills Trust
Forecast Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2023

	Opening balance sheet 1.4.22	Closing balance sheet 31.3.22
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	1,668,862	**1,704,262**
Investments	1,487,007	**1,408,990**
	3,155,869	**3,113,252**
Current assets		
Livestock	25,320	**25,320**
Debtors, prepayments and accrued income	51,545	**51,545**
Stewardship grant accrual	158,224	**158,224**
Cash at bank	906,357	**805,509**
	1,141,446	**1,040,598**
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	117,251	**117,251**
Net current assets	1,024,195	**923,347**
Pension FRS 102 liability	(2,256,000)	**(2,256,000)**
Net assets	1,924,064	**1,780,599**
Represented by funds:		
Unrestricted - General Fund	369,030	**363,739**
Unrestricted - Designated funds	713,854	**659,373**
Unrestricted - Pension FRS 102 liability	(2,256,000)	**(2,256,000)**
Restricted funds	3,097,180	**3,013,488**
	1,924,064	**1,780,599**

Paper C
For decision

Ordinary meeting of the Board

Replacement of nominated contact – Bullying and Harassment Policy

20th January 2022

As part of the MHT Bullying and Harassment Policy, MHT appoints 4 nominated contacts for people to go to for help with bullying or harassment, and to whom formal complaints are made and progressed. These are 2 members of staff and 2 trustees.

The Nominated staff member (currently the Finance and Administration Manager) should be of a different gender to the CEO and the two nominated trustees should be of different genders. Names of all nominated persons are displayed on notice boards in Manor House and the Top Shed.

Gwyneth Rees was one of the nominated trustees and sadly she left the Board at the beginning of December. Another trustee needs to be appointed by the Board to take her place. The remaining nominated trustee is David Core.

Recommendation

Trustees are asked to appoint a trustee to fill the vacancy.

Susan Satchell
Secretary to the Board
7 January 2022

Ordinary meeting of the Board

Meetings

20th January 2022

Current position

Covid 19 infection rates are now higher than they have ever been, with the transmissibility of the now dominant Omicron strain being a significant contributory factor. Infection rates are rising in older age groups. Slightly under half confirmed cases are in those who have been fully vaccinated. The average age of trustees is approaching 70, meaning the majority of trustees are more at risk of serious symptoms than younger age groups. A number of trustees have expressed concerns about attending meetings in the current circumstances.

Unless the Government reintroduces legislation, the Trust (and local councils) are legally obliged to continue to have face-to-face meetings in order to make decisions, unless that decision making power has been delegated to an appropriate person or group of people.

Any discussions, delivery of reports, question and answer sessions, training etc can be conducted online.

Since face to face meetings were resumed in May 2021, the Trust has carried out risk assessments and put in place procedures to try to minimise the infection risk. . However, these steps have had certain disadvantages including trustees finding it harder to hear what is being said as a result of distancing, mask wearing and external noise arising from ensuring there is adequate ventilation.

With government statistics indicating that on average 1 in 15 in England currently have the virus, there is a greatly increased risk that one or more infected people may be present at one of the Trust's meetings. Along with the health risks to trustees, there is a risk of a number of the senior staff either becoming infected or having to isolate at the same time, causing significant short term impact to the operational capacity of the Trust.

Trustees are therefore asked to revisit the current arrangements and consider whether there are any options available to avoid meeting or to make meeting safer until such time as infection rates have fallen.

Options.

CEO's delegated authority for unbudgeted expenditure

The CEO currently has authority to approve unbudgeted expenditure up to £10,000. This was extended to £20,000 in March 2020 with a limit of £10,000 on any single item but the authority expired in September 2021.

Currently if a major item of unbudgeted expenditure arises, a meeting of FAR or the board has to be called. If the situation worsens, there is an increasing risk of meetings being inquorate.

It would therefore be prudent to reinstate the CEO's authority to approve unbudgeted expenditure to £20,000

Arrangements for meetings and decision making

Possibilities include:

1. Carry on as at present and accept that any trustees who are unwilling to attend have no voice and no vote, and there is a risk to the operational capacity of the Trust if staff are infected.

2. Try to reduce the length of meetings by having a Zoom discussion prior to the meeting (which can be live streamed to the public) to deal with any questions on the papers and to hold preliminary discussions on the matters under consideration.

   This would reduce the time spent together in a meeting room and the risk of transmission. It would also give trustees who were not willing to attend a face-to-face meeting the opportunity to make their observations.

3. Suspend Committee meetings for the time being (there are no committee meetings scheduled before the March board meeting). Updates from Officers can be provided in writing, by outdoor briefings or via Zoom.

4. Board meetings continue, but the agenda is limited to essential items only, to minimise meeting duration. Matters such as reports can be dealt with as suggested in 3 above.

5. Suspend Board meetings temporarily and delegate decision making to the Covid Contingency Committee ("CCC") (made up of the chairs and vice chairs of committees and the Chair and vice-chair of the board). These meetings would still have to be face-to-face and in public. The committee's authority might be restricted - for example approval of the accounts, and anything relating to the proposed Governance changes could be excluded from its remit

6. Suspend Board meetings but delegate decision making (with exclusions as above) to the CEO in consultation with the trustees, such consultation being carried out by Zoom meeting/s.

Meeting rooms

Admin staff have tried to find suitable venues for meeting but options are limited and it is acknowledged that the rooms available are not ideal. The Council Chamber at Malvern Hills District Council is booked if available for normal Board meetings. The cost is £120 per meeting.

The options for committee meetings are Castlemorton Village Hall and United Reform Church Hall. Both of these are available at a cost of £30 per meeting or less. The acoustics are poor in the URC and Castlemorton is further to travel for most trustees. The proposal is to alternate between the two where possible. Officers feel that URC is adequate for a committee meeting but it does require trustees and staff to make an effort to speak clearly and to address the whole room.

Any observations would be welcome.

Meeting timetable

It was agreed that a revised timetable for meetings (with reduced committee meetings and an extra board meeting) should be trialled for 6 months from September 2021. It would be helpful to staff for trustees to consider whether to implement the change permanently, or to extend the trail for a further 6 month period in order to make the necessary room bookings. Leaving the decision until March may result in preferred rooms not being available on the usual dates.

Recommendations

That the board authorise the CEO to approve unbudgeted expenditure to £20k in total (£10,000 for a single item).

That trustees consider the options for meetings as set out above and approve any combination of the options which are considered desirable, with a provision for a time limit or trigger for review.

That trustees decide whether to extend, either permanently or temporarily, the revised meeting schedule.

Susan Satchell
Secretary to the Board
7 January 2022

Malvern Hills Trust

Schedule of Meetings

All meetings at 7pm unless otherwise stated

MONTH	LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES COMMITTEE	BOARD	GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE	STAFFING COMMITTEE	CHAIRMAN'S WORKSHOPS and OTHER
	Date Time	Date Time	Date Time	Date Time	Date Time	Date Time
JANUARY			yes			
FEBRUARY				?		
MARCH			yes			
APRIL	yes				yes	
MAY			yes	?		
JUNE		yes				
JULY			yes			
AUGUST				?		
SEPTEMBER			yes			
OCTOBER	yes (possible site meeting/workshop)				yes	
NOVEMBER			yes	?		
DECEMBER	yes	yes				

worcestershire
county council

Minutes of the Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee by Zoom

Friday, 5 November 2021, 10.00 am

Present:

Prof John Raine (Chairman), Jerry Fryman (Vice Chairman), Cllr Bronwen Behan, Sven Bosley, Prof Richard Bryant, Emma Hamer, Mr J Hervey-Bathurst, Mrs G Rees, Cllr Jack Satterthwaite

Also attended:

David Armitage, AONB Partnership Assistant Manager
James Bisset, Herefordshire Parks and Countryside Service
Duncan Bridges, Malvern Hills Trust
Rachel Datlen, Worcestershire Countryside Service
Robert Deane, Rural Focus (For item 6)
Paul Esrich, AONB Partnership Manager
Karen Humphries, AONB Partnership Assistant Manager
Sarah Warden, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer

712 Apologies and Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Faulkner, Frank Hill, Hazel McDowell, Scott Richardson-Brown and Roger Yeates.

Emma Hamer attended for Sarah Faulkner.

713 Declaration of Interests

James Hervey-Bathurst declared an interest as he lived, worked and owned land within the AONB.

714 To elect a Chairman

Cllr. John Raine was nominated and seconded for the position of Chairman of the Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. There were no other nominations so Cllr. John Raine became Chairman of the JAC for the next year.

Cllr Raine thanked the Committee for their support of him and thanked the outgoing Chairman, Gwyneth Rees for her superb work as Chairman and for

her strong and clear leadership of the Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee.

715 To appoint a Vice-Chairman

Jerry Fryman was nominated and seconded for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. There were no other nominations so Jerry Fryman was appointed to the position for the following year.

716 Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 April 2021 were agreed to be a correct record of the meeting and would be signed by the Chairman.

717 A (draft) nature recovery plan for the Malvern Hills AONB

Robert Deane of Rural Focus Ltd. explained that a Nature Recovery Plan was being developed following one of the pledges made in the Colchester Declaration 'to work towards the creation of Nature Recovery Plans (NRP) for each AONB.' The context for this work was explained, including the findings of the National Landscapes review and the 25 Year Environment Plan which encouraged the development of a Nature Recovery Network. The Environment Bill would introduce statutory Nature Recovery Strategies at a County level and the new Environmental Land Management Schemes looked likely to include Local Nature and Landscape recovery schemes.

The aims of Malvern Hills AONB NRP were to inform and advise, to help to support work at scale, to harness collective effort and to direct resources. The area covered was the AONB plus 3km around the boundary.

The work which had been carried out to date on the NRP included an online survey, one to one discussions and a workshop with partners. As a separate but related process, the AONB Unit had also worked with others to map the provision of ecosystem services (the way nature provides benefits for people) as well as ecological opportunities in the study area.

The consultation work carried out thus far had revealed that most people felt the plan should be about nature in its broadest sense and that it should work with and support farmers and landowners. Also, that it should look at habitat networks rather than going to a detailed field by field approach. This steer had been sed to inform a first draft of the plan.

The next steps were to take account of all the comments that might be received, carry out more one to one sessions, review the mapping data for accuracy, to draft a table of actions and to consider what the future monitoring requirements would be.

Committee members discussed the draft plan and made various comments:

- A member was pleased to see that that there was mention of geology in the plan. In the AONB there were three SSSIs for geology and it was

queried whether quarries should be considered as a habitat in their own right as the areas were unique.

- Questions were asked about why sustainably produced food should be described as 'secure' and was the reference to clean and 'plentiful' water showing that there was an ambition to store more water? In response it was explained that secure food resources referred to food being from our own resources, and 'plentiful' water was a government term which was not about storage of more water in reservoirs but rather enabling constant supplies and considering the effects of climate change.
- There was concern around the term 'encouraging activism' because for farmers activism often meant illegal activity. It was explained that the plan sought to recognise activism in terms of generating community involvement in helping to solve the nature and climate crisis but it was acknowledged that the term could cause concern so a change of term would be considered.
- It was felt that it was difficult to define the character of nature in a particular area as nature was dynamic. Various species were invasive and could easily spread to new areas. It was queried whether there should be an effort to manage the spread of such species to maintain the particular character of an area. The view was that within the plan there could be a focus on the health of habitats rather than species but also that we need to accept that nature was dynamic.
- It was agreed that the report could be shared with other landowners but there was a caution that the plan was still an early (and incomplete) draft and was therefore subject to change. Once a final draft was available this would be widely distributed for consultation.
- It was asked what was meant by "managing game birds for sustainable woodland and hedgerow management". The response was that the phrase was taken from the Landscape Management guidelines and it was agreed that some of the management guidelines in the plan needed to be made more specific.
- Following a query about monitoring, it was explained that this would be at a high level. There was an awareness that there was a shortage of data and some of the data that was available contained inaccuracies. It was also acknowledged that there was a lack of resources available for this work.
- It was suggested that more consideration should be given to re-wilding. This could have a place, however, it was reported that the consultation exercise had shown that people favoured nature friendly farming rather than splitting land into areas with separate objectives. A reminder was given that the AONB was a cultural designation which was shaped by people, it was not a pristine wilderness.
- It was not anticipated that this plan would have a great influence on planning issues as planning guidance and policy was already in place, from national to local levels. However, it could have a role in discharging duties related to Biodiversity net Gain, for example.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

a) Noted the draft plan; and

b) Raised and discussed any issues arising.

718 A meadow restoration project at Old Colwall

Paul Esrich described a practical conservation project which had recently taken place in the AONB, led by the AONB Unit, and showed photographs of the process.

A conversation had initially taken place with the landowner who wished to improve the biodiversity on his holding and one particular field had been selected to improve for biodiversity. The Herefordshire Meadows group produced a restoration timetable and advised that the first action should be dealing with the nettles and docks.

The wild flower seed to be sown was harvested from Malvern Common which was owned by the Malvern Hills Trust; the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust carried out the harvesting after assessments had taken place to check that it would be a suitable donor source. Permission was gained from Natural England as the donor site was a Site of Special Scientific Interest and also from the Rural Payments Agency as Malvern Common was in a current Countryside Stewardship scheme. Approval was then gained from the Rural Payments Agency for the re-seeding of the field in Old Colwall.

As the field to be restored in Old Colwall was on the site of a former medieval village, Hereford Archaeology service were consulted and agreed that provided various conditions were met the seed could be distributed. A botanist had carried out a baseline survey to document the plant species currently in the field so that a comparison could be made with what grows after the restoration. On 24 September volunteers from the Colwall Orchard Group distributed the harvested seed in the field.

The project showed the AONB and its partners working at its best. The groups who contributed were:

- Herefordshire Meadows Group
- The Landowner
- Natural England
- Rural Payments agency
- Herefordshire Wildlife Trust
- Malvern Hills Trust
- Herefordshire Council
- Colwall Orchard Group

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the update and looked forward to seeing the results next year.

719 Farming in Protected Landscapes

Sarah Warden, Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Officer, explained that the FiPL programme was part of the Agricultural Transition Plan and started in July 2021 with four main themes; climate, nature, people and place. A budget of £216,309 was available to the AONB for 2021/22 (including the officer salary

and administration costs), with a provisional budget of £153,728 for 2022/23 and the same amount for 2023/4. The programme would finish at the end of March 2024.

A Local Grant Assessment Panel had been established to consider applications and was made up of representatives from Natural England, the AONB Unit, local farmers, the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, NFU and Historic England. The Panel had met twice and approved 6 applications: two projects from the Colwall Orchard Group, one from the Malvern Hills Trust, two from private individuals and one from the Malvern Hills AONB Unit.

The AONB Unit had finished accepting applications for 2021/22 and was now looking to the following year. Networking with landowners had been building up over the last year so details of the project had been passed on directly to many and communication about the programme was also happening via social media and the AONB website etc. Once the AONB Nature Recovery Plan was complete it would be shared with potential applicants and was expected to provide a steer for future projects.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report.

720 Planning matters and the Malvern Hills AONB

Karen Humphries gave an overview of the planning activity which was considered by the AONB Unit in 2020-21. Generally, two days a week in the AONB Unit were spent on planning issues which could potentially come from five different local planning authorities. Policy came from national plans, all the way down to local plans, neighbourhood development plans and with guidance also produced by the AONB Unit. There was now better dialogue with planning officers and other interested parties such as tree officers or archaeologists who gave support over planning issues.

The AONB was not a statutory consultee which meant it did not have to respond to all applications but unfortunately that also meant that details of applications were not automatically sent through. It was noted that the National Landscapes review had considered whether AONB Partnerships should become a statutory consultee in future.

Various trends had been seen in the use of materials and colours, with lots of wood cladding being used. It was hoped that a checklist could be commissioned to help planning officers to advise applicants on matters such as colour and layout. This was seen as particularly important for agricultural buildings which with modern farming practices were now generally larger than in the past.

The number of equine developments continued to increase, which could have a significant impact on the appearance of the AONB and the quality of pasture etc. The Unit had been talking to planners to encourage equine management plans to be submitted when applications were made.

Light was becoming an increasing issue within the setting of the AONB, especially on the east side of the hills where sports fields and new buildings in the industrial parks were creating more artificial light.

During the ensuing discussion various points were made:

- Those members who were District Councillors commented that they welcomed comments by the AONB Unit as they were knowledgeable and influential additions to the discussion.
- It was noted that some decisions made by Planning Authorities were appealed but that sometimes these appeals were dismissed by the planning inspectorate, in favour of AONB considerations.
- The AONB continued to work with planning enforcement officers to try to deal with issues such as closeboard fencing and dealing with roof lights in agricultural buildings, but such issues were difficult to address due to resource problems. It was pointed out that concerns about crime on private land was often dealt with by increasing lighting; although it was noted that motion sensors could be used.
- The AONB Unit was working with planners to try to track the change of use of fields next to houses. More education was needed to alert homeowners to what planning rules applied in the area. Leaflets had previously been distributed to Estate Agents with regard to legislation and guidance around planning issues but now with more being done online it was necessary to re-think how such information could be disseminated.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

a) Noted the report; and

b) Raised and discussed any issues arising.

721 Information Items

- David Armitage informed the Committee that BBCs Countryfile should be showing a report of various projects on 12 December; including GPS collars to contain cattle and the re-introduction of the Pearl Bordered Fritillary.

- Paul Esrich gave brief details of the Forestry Commission's Tree Health Scheme. The Malvern Hills AONB had been selected as one area for the pilot of this new scheme and expressions of interest were being sought from woodland owners and managers who had diseased trees, with the aim of support being given to help with removing and re-planting trees.

- Defra had released a £6million trees call to action fund. They were looking for new regional partnerships to come together to make use of the funding. Paul Esrich explained that the AONB Unit was looking to join public and private partners in an Expression of Interest.

- It was believed that there would soon be a government response and consultation around the recommendations which came from the National Landscapes Review which had been published two years

before. It was expected that the consultation would include looking at the duties and responsibilities of AONBs and National Parks.

722 Verbal Reports from Partners

- Jerry Fryaman announced that Castlemorten Parish Hall had been opened after its extension and re-vamp. Various new participants had been attracted to make use of the venue.
- Dick Bryant explained that the 2021 geo-maintenance scheme was well underway. Work had taken place at two quarries which were difficult to manage as they are unstable, with the ongoing dilemma of should vegetation be removed to expose the geological features.
- Duncan Bridges gave an update from the Malvern Hills Trust:
  - Ash Dieback felling work in high priority areas was underway and the work would continue for the next five years. It was pointed out that some members of the public were concerned that trees were being felled but it was important that the message was spread as to why such action was necessary.
  - A new land management plan had been put in place in April 2021 and a new five-year business plan was being finalised.
  - The Malvern Hills Trust had been informed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport that a private bill would be required to enact the Governance changes which they had previously consulted on, therefore the Board of the Trust would be considering how they should proceed.
  - Various tree and hedge planting projects were being undertaken but getting hold of supplies was proving to be a challenge.
- Jack Satterthwaite reported that Worcestershire County Council's Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee were undertaking a street light review and a discussion would be had about light pollution.
- James Bissett gave an update from Herefordshire Council:
  - He reported that there had been organisational changes at Herefordshire Council, which would hopefully be completed in early 2022. It had been proving difficult to recruit to posts in the natural environment teams.
  - As supplies of trees was a recognised problem, Defra were looking to provide some grants to tree producers.
  - The Herefordshire Biological Records Centre had started a Hidden Herefordshire Project with Lottery Funding to encourage people to enjoy nature and record what species were around.
- James Hervey-Bathurst mentioned the Queen's Green Canopy project with different organisations and schools being encouraged to plant trees. The Eastnor Estate had a new café at the Woodshed at the south end of the hills; it was hoped that a new gateway to the hills could be encouraged and take some pressure from the north end of the hills.

723 Dates of Future Meetings

Next year meetings would take place on:

- 8 April 2022, and

- 4 November 2022.

The meeting ended at 11.55am

Chairman .....

Recreation Advisory Panel

A meeting of the Recreation Advisory Panel was held on 15 December 2022. At the first meeting since the beginning of the pandemic, much of the agenda provided updates for panel members including the adoption of the new Land Management Plan 2021-2026, successful funding grants and the suspension of trail hunting licences. Members were invited to provide suggestions on where paths require improvements which would be considered for the next 12 months. The next meeting will be held on site in the spring and the focus of the meeting will be to discuss recreational pressures and impacts.

Castlemorton Common Co-ordinating Committee

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Meeting of the Castlemorton Commons Co-ordinating Committee

Castlemorton Parish Hall

Wednesday 24 November 2021 8.00pm

Present: Phil Birley, Ann Brennan, Mick Davies (Chair), David Fellows, Matthew Gardner, Peter Hancock, Keith Stevens, Mike Wilkinson, Susan Windle.

In attendance:
From Malvern Hills Trust (MHT): CEO, Secretary to the Board, Conservation Manager.

2 members of the public

1. **Election of Chair**
   Mick Davies was appointed as Chair for this meeting but suggested the matter could be reviewed at the next meeting when hopefully all committee members would be present.

2. **Apologies for Absence**
   Julie Moore, Barbara Wilkes.

3. **Report of meeting 27 November 2019**
   The report of the meeting was agreed and signed as such by the Chair.

4. **Public Questions**
   There were none.

5. **Matters Arising**
   There were none.

6. **Report from Malvern Hills Trust**
   The CEO reported that the Board of MHT had agreed to take the next step to progress its proposed governance reforms, which was to make an application to the Charity Commission for consent under s74 Charities Act 2011 to spend charity funds on pursuing a Private Bill.
   The Board had agreed to suspend the issuing of licenses permitting trail hunting on Trust land. Hunts were still able to cross MHT land using highways, bridleways and easements to access other property.

The Trust's Annual Review had been published and was available on the website.

7. **Report from MHT Conservation Manager:**
Mowing and scrub clearance – The Trust had topped the grass adjacent to the roads in July in order to make stock more visible.
Part of the winter scrub work on Castlemorton Common had been carried out and would be completed in the coming months. Volunteers had cleared scrub on Hurst Bank. Clearance work between The Poplars and Woodlands was scheduled for January/February.
Time and resources were currently focused on tackling Ash Dieback
Stock numbers and grazing – Grazing was going well. One of the graziers was reducing his flock, so there would be less sheep on the common. This should have the benefit of lessen the need for supplementary feeding.
Securing the commons – this was on hold, awaiting the governance changes.
Southern Hills and Castlemorton Stewardship schemes – The Scheme for the Southern Hills (which extended to Foxhall/Pink Cottage and which was run in partnership with the Eastnor Estate), started in January. The Trust had applied again for a scheme for Castlemorton to start 1 January 2022 and feedback was awaited on the application. There was currently no external grant funding for grazing Castlemorton Common but the Trust had used some of its reserves to offer some limited funding for all the active commoners.
Pond restoration – The plastic sheeting had been removed from 2 of the ponds. It would not be known for certain whether the technique had been successful in killing the *crassula helmsii* (an invasive non-native plant) until spring.
Projects – The Trust had given permission for 2 studies – one to research what birds were using the common at night and Bumblebee Conservation Trust were researching whether they could use a drone to evaluate bumblebee habitat. The Trust had also been invited to take part in a trial, run in conjunction with the Foundation for Common Land and DEFRA to ascertain how the new ELM (Environmental Land Management) scheme would work on common land. The Malvern Hills and the New Forest were to be the trial sites for lowland commons. Very little detail was available at present.
The AONB had new funding available for all landowners in and adjoining the AONB called "Farming in Protected Landscapes". More information was available in an article published in "All about the Hills"[1] or on the AONB website.

[1] Also see the AONB website

8. **Stock visibility/casualties**
Matthew Gardner said he was aware of 2 accidents involving stock over the summer.

9. **Reports from CCA**
Ann Brennan paid tribute to Lionel Bartlett who had died in May and who had been on the Committee for many years.
The Association had run a number of social events, including the Shindig on Castlemorton Common (for the first time for 4 years). The money made from the event had been donated to Herefordshire MIND, St Richard's Hospice and the St Gregory's building fund.
CCA were considering replacing the goal posts on the common.
They also hoped to replace the oak tree which had split on the boundary between the common and Fairoaks Farm. This was a marker of the boundary between the common and the King's Third. They had not succeeded in opening up a conversation with the owner of the adjoining land. Matt Gardner said here were a number of old oaks along that boundary and a long term succession plan was needed. The AONB had offered to help with funding.
The CCA AGM would be held on 13 January 2022.

10. **Reports from other represented bodies**
Matt Gardner reported that some hedge and bramble had been removed on the boundary of the field on the southeast side of Welland, meaning it was no longer stock-proof. No one was aware of this having been requested by either Parish Council.
Sue Windle reported that some scrub clearance had been carried out on Coombe Green.

11. **Other Information**
The CEO confirmed that Western Power were still monitoring the site on Swinyard Hill where there had been a contamination incident in the autumn.
He believed Severn Trent had again shelved any plans for British Camp Reservoir for the time being. The Conservation Manager invited people to get in touch if they considered any particular areas of scrub needed clearing or trees pollarding.
The CEO said that a review by the Trust of parking charges had been shelved because of visiting patterns having been affected by the pandemic. It was still intended to carry out that review.
It was suggested that the Trust inspect the edges of Hancocks Lane where some preventative maintenance might be useful. **DB**
Peter Hancock said he would monitor the stepping stones by the car park at the Welland end of the common. **PH**

Phil Birley thought he might have seen hunting dogs on the common in the early morning. The CEO confirmed that coursing was illegal and against the byelaws. This would be a matter both for the police and the Trust.

4. **Date of next meeting**
   16 March 2022.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

20 January 2022

MANAGEMENT REPORTS November 2021 – January 2022

CEO

1. Liaison with contractors installing new sewage treatment plant to British Camp toilets.
2. Work on draft Business Plan, workshop and revisions.
3. Dealing with boundary issues at the Purleigh, Lamb Bank and Malvern Common.
4. Site visits and liaison with neighbours over easements and access matters including Fossil Bank, North End Lane, Hollybush, Jubilee Drive and Brockhill Road.
5. Site visits, review and comments on planning applications including Colwall, Townsend Way and Holywell Road.
6. Liaison with solicitors and site visits regarding legacy land at Colwall Coppice.
7. Dealing with WRS and legal matters over Notice and issues at Hayslad Spout.
8. Work in relation to grants and preparation works for projects at Donkey Shed, St Anns Well and Barnards Green Trough.
9. Working on budget preparations for next year and Business Plan.
10. Monitoring and amending Covid precautions including updating risk assessments, staff arrangements and other matters.

Secretary to the Board (SttB)

1. Preparing committee/Board agendas and papers, attending meetings and preparing minutes
2. Working with other staff on arrangements for meetings
3. Arranging, attending and preparing minutes for 4Cs meeting
4. Reviewing planning applications
5. Work on Governance Toolkit
6. Reviewing draft Business Plan
7. Easements and wayleaves – dealing with in excess of 9 ongoing easement and wayleave applications
8. Assisting with acquisition of gift of land from the late Mrs Sealy, including site visit.
9. Assisting in finding specialist solicitors to assist with Notice issued in relation to Hayslad Spring.
10. Attended tree planting task at Upper Colwall
11. Webinar – Reputation Management for Charities
12. Dealing with Board member queries
13. Responding to public queries

Conservation Manager (CM)

1. Completed and claimed 'Boost for Biodiversity' grant with final tree felling work by contractor on Pinnacle Hill.
2. Reviewed the 21/22 tree safety survey and helped with contractor tender process.
3. Attended woodland management training day hosted by the AONB team.
4. Attended Dormouse training day - conservation and legal protection.
5. Attended 'Defra T&T conclusions and ELM and Commons update'.
6. Worked with staff on delivering hedge-planting parts of the FPIL grant.
7. Undertook CCO and CO annual appraisals.
8. Much time spent on RPA contested monies relating to the Northern & Central Hills CS, including meeting with Harriet Baldwin MP.
9. Liaised with Western Power over two utility works (Beacon Road and Britten Drive).
10. Attended 4Cs and Recreation Advisory Panel.
11. Planning and overseeing tree/scrub work with OM.

12. Overseen hedge-laying by contractor on Chase Road.
13. Met with Historic England to consider improvement works to the Shire Ditch.
14. Arranged and attended 'Southern Hills landowners' meeting'.
15. Completed the paperwork to extend the joint HLS agreement for Chase End Hill.
16. Ongoing planning of tree planting scheme funded by Urban Tree Challenge Fund.

Community and Conservation Officer

1. Prepared and put out to tender the tree safety contracts for 2021/22 and selected contractors. Made relevant applications for work to trees in Conservation Areas.
2. Assisted with the response to tree damage resulting from Storm Arwen.
3. Finalised tree planting locations for the Forestry Commissions Urban Tree Challenge Fund grant.
4. Led a volunteer task with local mountain bikers to improve access along bridleways on the Northern Hills.
5. Attended tree planting task at Upper Colwall.
6. Held a Recreation Advisory Panel meeting.
7. Monitored Ledbury Hunt event.
8. Published the 2021 Annual Review.
9. Celebrated National Tree week with social media campaign.
10. Published a winter newsletter with news and updates.
11. Published a number of press releases and social media posts including Farming in Protected Landscapes project, car park closures, and sheep grazing on British Camp.

Conservation Officer (part time)

1. Delivering the FIPL project – ordering hedge-plants, co-coordinating staff and volunteer works.
2. Monitoring the livestock grazing on the Hills and Commons.
3. Running two volunteer conservation days.
4. Overseeing the cattle grazing at Old Hills.
5. Ongoing works to control non-native plants.
6. Working with the woodsman at Park Wood.
7. Attending annual appraisal.
8. Undertaking woodland improvement works on Northern Hills and Old Hollow Land.
9. Attended a forestry first aid course.

Operations Manager and Field Staff
November 2021

1. Vegetation Management - Continuation of grass cut and collect and hauling to top yard for composting from Malvern Common and cut and collect only at Swinyard Hill.
2. Vegetation Management - Grass flailing (Guarlford) and side-arm flail at various road and track-side sites including West Malvern, Westminster Bank, Jubilee Drive, Foley Terrace and Pink Cottage.
3. Vegetation Management - Gorse flailing as per Land Management Plan at Pinnacle Hill and Black Hill.
4. Vegetation Management – Bracken and grass flailing Wynds Point and community woodland, Townsend Way.
5. Vegetation Management – scrub management at Hangman's Hill to create a graded edge between open grassland and woodland as per Land Management Plan.
6. Compost management (turning) at top yard.

7. Completion of new quarry fence at Earnslaw Quarry.
8. Erection of stock fencing to protect new grant-aided hedgerows due to be planted at Colwall Lands, Brockhill Road including coppicing and chipping 40m of existing hawthorn hedgerow requiring gapping up.
9. Removal of wire stock fence at Chase Road in advance to existing hedge being laid.
10. Clearance of storm-damaged trees from rights of way and properties.
11. Strimming areas that are not reachable by flail (i.e., posts and car park stones).
12. Maintain track side drains and grips above St Ann's Well and Happy Valley.
13. Emptying of septic tank at British Camp Toilets.
14. Litter collecting and bins emptying.

December 2021

1. Vegetation Management - Continue with scrub management at Hangman's Hill to create a graded edge between open grassland and woodland as per Land Management Plan.
2. Vegetation Management – cut and burn gorse at North Hill to open areas for grazing.
3. Clear line of proposed electric fence with side-arm flail to aid grazing delivery at Pinnacle Hill.
4. Gate maintenance at Joyners Meadow to prevent the escape of grazing stock.
5. Planting approx. 200m of new grant-aided hedgerows at Colwall Lands, Brockhill Road and complete stock-proof fencing for areas planted by volunteers.
6. Continue with clearance of storm-damaged trees from sites and from affected properties.
7. Clearance of fallen tree blocking access to private property at Frog Island, Upper Wyche.
8. Felling of potentially dangerous trees at Upper Wyche.
9. Drains maintenance at Chandlers Cross, Castlemorton Common to reduce standing water on the road.
10. Trace and repair water leak in supply to St. Anne's Well.
11. Clear fallen leaves at St Ann's Road
12. Emptying of septic tank at British Camp Toilets
13. Litter collecting and bins emptying.

Contractors

November 2021

Matt Rouse – Driving fence posts with tractor-mounted post-knocker – Colwall Lands, Brockhill Road.

Adrian Hope – Removal of diseased ash trees at Wells Road.

Richard Horne – Maintenance of drains at Malvern Common and Westminster Bank

December 2021

Richard Horne – Trace and repair leak to underground water pipe to St. Anne's Well