

## **Melksham Town Council**

### **Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 17th June 2024**

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillor T Price (Town Mayor)  
Councillor S Rabey (Deputy Town Mayor)  
Councillor P Alford  
Councillor P Aves  
Councillor G Cooke  
Councillor S Crundell  
Councillor A Griffin  
Councillor J Oatley  
Councillor C Stokes  
Councillor J Westbrook

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

**OFFICERS:**                      Andrew Meacham                      Committee Clerk

One member of the public was present and two members of the public were present virtually. The Locum Clerk Tracy Predeth and the Locum RFO Louise Steele were present virtually and took part in the meeting via Zoom. Councillor Ellis was present virtually as a member of the public.

#### **19/24      Apologises**

Apologies were received from Councillor Ellis, Councillor Hubbard and Councillor A Westbrook.

(Councillor Forgacs had sent apologies but her email was not seen by the clerk and her apologies were not recorded at the meeting)

#### **20/24      Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **21/24      Public Participation**

Susan Mortimer.

Can I just say before I asked my questions that I am pleased to see the balance sheet is now being produced from the accounting software package. In my time as an Auditor, it would be cause for concern when financial reports were independently produced on excel spreadsheets rather than from the company software so good this is no longer happening.

Q1 - From The Income and Expenditure report it is not possible to see the cost of projects such as Pavilion Refurbishment, Remote CCTV, KGV Lighting Project, Demolition of the Shed, Eco toilets and Lighting in the East of Melksham. This is down to coding issues rather than the report itself.

I know of no reason why these costs should not be available to the public. For the sake of transparency do you agree that the expenditure on cost centre 901 Earmarked Reserves and 902 Sinking Funds be reanalysed/re-coded to an expense heading line for the specific cost of the project? The end column on the detailed income & expenditure report headed Transfer to/from is there to be used to show such movement of the reserves and to give explanations to why the expense is over budget. This is the way Rialtos recommends the software is used.

By not using the software as intended also explains why the Grand Total of Expenditure on the council's Detailed Income and Expenditure for year to 31st March 2024 reports show incorrectly total expenditure as being 60.3% actual against budget. (see page 9 of Income and Expenditure report and page 4 of 10 of year-end report which can be found on page 20 of the agenda pack)

Q2 - Looking at cost centre 501 code 4929 AIB charges is reported as £0.00. The charges I understand are shown as deductions on the AIB statements. By not opening out the charges how are the AIB statements reconciled? There are other statements that it would be beneficial to reconcile individually when producing the accounts on Rialtas. e.g. Assembly Hall Sales report from tickets.com that are given for individual performances.

In addition to her questions Sue was concerned that there was no supporting documentation for the AGAR (part 2). Felt there should be an income & expenditure balance sheet, a fixed assets register and a reconciliation of box 7 to box 8 as a minimum.

## **22/24 Questions from Councillors**

There were no questions.

## **23/24 Minutes**

Queries were raised over items 1/23, 10/23 & 12/23. Alterations were made by hand by the committee clerk, who said he would also amend the minutes published to the website.

The minutes of Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024, having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor, Councillor Price.

## **24/24 Town Mayor's Announcements**

The Town Mayor, Councillor Price announced the installation of a new CCTV system. The question of policy would be on the next agenda.

The Mayor invited Councillor J Westbrook to speak on the event this coming Friday. Councillor Westbrook encouraged members to come along and enjoy an evening of music, food and drink at Sam Evans' Glastonbury warm-up gig.

**25/24 Internal Audit**

This item was advanced up the agenda as it needed to be dealt with before the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements.

It was noted that the report advised changing the way petty cash was dealt with.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Griffin and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to receive the Internal Auditors report and 2023-2024 and the recommendations therein.

**26/24 Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024**

Points were raised on various parts of the return. The Locum RFO responded to concerns and advised councillor could make amendments if they so wished.

It was proposed by Councillor S Crundell, seconded by the Town Mayor Councillor Price and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to agree with Annual Governance Statement (AGAR Part 1) for the financial year 2023-2024, with the amendment that item 3 should be changed from **yes** to **no**.

**27/24 Accounting Statements 2023-2024**

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Griffin and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to agree the Accounting Statements 2023-2024 (AGAR part 2)

**28/24 Dates for Public Inspection of Accounts**

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Griffin and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to agree the dates for the public inspection of accounts as being 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024 to 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2024.

**29/24 Insurance Policy Renewal**

The Locum Clerk spoke to the item. There was discussion on the discount for extending and what Cyber Insurance would cover.

It was noted that the policy had been renewed. The questions of extending the policy and adding Cyber Insurance were deferred to the next meeting as there was insufficient information to make a decision.

### **30/24      Review of Public Participation**

Members discussed the proposal and suggested amendments. The Locum Clerk advised on the procedure for amending Standing Orders and referenced Standing Order 27b. She confirmed she could write a proposal which three councillors would need to endorse and it could then come to the next meeting

3.e– Members of the public may ask questions, make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend on any council business but preferably matters pertaining to that committee (subject to the conditions set out in Section 3)

1a - There shall at the start of all meetings of the Town Council be a period, normally of no more than 30 minutes but at the Chairs discretion, for members of the public and Council to ask questions and/or make representations. The order of questions and any extension of the 30 minute limit will be at the discretion of the Chair

1c – The Appropriate Officer will, prior to the formal opening of the meeting, ask all members of the public and councillors who wish to ask a question or make a representation to indicate and note their names for the record.

2a – Members of the public are encouraged to attend meetings of the Town Council in person or online and to raise questions of public concern at any meeting of the Full Council. At these meetings the public may ask questions or make a representation relating to any issues of council business.

2e -Where possible all questions should be submitted in writing not later than noon on the working day before the meeting to allow the appropriate officer/councillor to prepare a proper written response. Questions will be read out in the meeting by the appropriate officer before giving the answer.

2g – delete this section

3h – delete this section

(The above paragraphs have been constructed by the committee clerk from the discussions held at the meeting. The wording is subject to agreement by councillors at the next meeting.)

**31/24      Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan**

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Aves and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to formally approve draft Neighbourhood Plan (JMNP2), modification statement, evidence documents and community consultation statement for Regulation 14(B) consultation, as a Qualifying Body.

**32/24      Economic Development and Planning Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Oatley, and

**RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

**33/24      Personnel Committee**

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor J Westbrook and

**RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Meeting Closed at: 8.10 pm

**Signed:** .....

**Dated:**