

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Finance, Administration and Performance Committee meeting held on Monday 8th July 2024

PRESENT: Councillor A Griffin (Chair)
Councillor C Stokes (Vice-Chair)
Councillor P Aves
Councillor J Hubbard
Councillor G Ellis
Councillor A Westbrook

IN ATTENDANCE:

OFFICERS:	Andrew Meacham	Committee Clerk
	Tracy Predeth	Locum Clerk
	Mel Rolph	Finance Officer
	Kalpesh Patel (virtually)	RFO

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: One member of the public was present.

1/24 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Rabey, who was substituted by Councillor A Westbrook and from Councillor J Westbrook who was substituted by Councillor Ellis

2/24 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3/24 Public Participation

Sue Mortimer.

When is the AGAR section 3 - External Audit Report and Certificate 2022/23 going to be published on the MTC website?

When is the Fixed Asset Register for 31st March 2024 going to be published on the MTC website?

Sue quoted from Practitioners Guide section 2.10. regarding joint arrangements. MTC has financial partnerships with MWPC as follows:

Joint Neighbourhood Plan
Market Place Toilets
Shurnhold Fields
Age UK Wiltshire
Emergency Plans

Real Time Information for Bus Shelters

When are the accounts for these joint ventures going to be published?

The Chair advised that information would be put together and published as soon as possible.

Councillor Hubbard asked that it be minuted that the information had not been published as it should have been.

4/24 Minutes

Councillor Hubbard felt that item 106/23 did not fully reflect the discussion and grants on tonight's agenda did not take account of that discussion. He asked what had happened to the report on grants that was to be prepared and had the information coming out of the last meeting been passed on. Councillor Griffin noted the time period between the last meeting and the grant deadline. He felt it would have been unreasonable to make changes during the process. Councillor Hubbard felt pre screening would have been possible. Councillor A Westbrook noted that there was no grants officer in post.

Councillor Hubbard also expressed concern that project plan updates were not on the agenda. It was noted that projects plans should be a standing item on the agenda with an update coming to each meeting.

The minutes of 13th May 2024, having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by Councillor Griffin.

5/24 Grants

Alzheimer's Support

Concerns. It is a national organisation. Meetings not held in the Parish but no evidence of approach to Melksham Without Parish Council. Insufficient evidence of number of Melksham residents that would benefit.

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor Griffin and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to refuse the application.

Bowerhill Baby and Toddler Group

Concerns. Not in Parish. Insufficient evidence of number of Melksham residents that would benefit.

It was proposed by Councillor A Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Aves and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to refuse the application.

Bowerhill Village Hall Trust

It was proposed by Councillor Griffin, seconded by Councillor Stokes and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to refuse the application.

Carer Support Wiltshire

Concerns. Statutory funded. Held in Westbury

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor Stokes and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to refuse the application.

Celebrating Age Wiltshire (CAW)

Put back to end.

Group Five

Put back to end.

HELP Counselling Services

Concerns. Why is funding needed from MTC – total project cost £15600 and other funding totals £15500. More information required.

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard seconded by Councillor Stokes and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to refuse the application.

Melksham Amateur Swimming Club

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor Stoke and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award the Melksham Amateur Swimming Club a grant of £325.00.

Melksham Gardeners Society

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor A Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award the Melksham Gardeners Society a grant of £273.00 for Assembly Hall room hire.

Melksham Lions Club

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor A Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award the Melksham Lions Club a grant of £281.63, subject to having sight of their Safeguarding policy before payment is made.

Melksham Riverside Centre

Councillor Hubbard declared an interest as a Trustee and MTC representative.

Put to end.

Stepping Stones

Concerns. Nurseries are commercial and statutory funded. No information of match funding.

It was recognised that there were extraordinary needs in the SEND sector.

It was proposed by Councillor Griffin, seconded by Councillor Aves and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to refuse the application.

That Meeting Place

Concerns. Grants not awarded for wages or cleaning supplies.

Noted that they do good work to “incubate” other groups.

Put to end.

Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

Councillor Hubbard pointed out that grants cannot be awarded to organisations giving funding away to other organisations. Councillor A Westbrook said the grant was for hall hire to raise funds for the trust.

It was proposed by Councillor Griffin, seconded by Councillor Stokes and

RESOLVED to award Wilts & Berks Canal Trust a grant of £216.00

Wiltshire & Bath Independent Living Trust Ltd

Concerns. Figures. Request £1000.00. Total cost of project £5000.00 including work already done. Expenditure total £3530.00. Secured funding £3115.00. Clarification needed.

It was proposed by Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Hubbard and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to refuse the application.

Wiltshire Mind

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor A Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award Wiltshire Mind a grant of £1000, to be paid as £250.00 from this quarters grant fund and then £250.00 from each of the remaining quarters grant funds for 2024/25.

The amounts awarded so far were reviewed and the sum remaining from this quarters budget calculated.

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor A Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award £530.87 to each of the remaining five applicants, namely Celebrating Age Wiltshire (CAW), Group Five, Melksham Riverside Centre, That Meeting Place and Wiltshire Search & Rescue.

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor A Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that an application can be automatically returned by officers if it does not meet all of the criteria on the spreadsheet.

During the discussions it was noted that none of the applicant organisations were represented at the meeting, although a couple had sent apologies.

Members stressed that a refused request for funding did not mean the council did not think it was not a worthy cause. Funding was limited and applicants were welcome to resubmit provided they could demonstrate the request met the funding criteria.

It was agreed that application form should be amended to

- (i) Specifically state funding will not be provided for Bowerhill or the surrounding villages
- (ii) Require applicants to attend the meeting

Options were discussed.

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor A Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to explore the use of this grant for street furniture, trees and other greenery and for Councillor Hubbard, Councillor A Westbrook, and Councillor S Crundell if he wishes, to meet with Hugh Davies and Richard Baulch Collett.

It was agreed that Rebecca Lockwood Norris would be asked if she would be able to attend a meeting to give assistance.

7/24 Banking Mandate

Locum Clerk explained why the request was being made. The proposal was discussed.

It was proposed by Councillor A Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Aves and

RESOLVED to add Tracy Predeth, Locum Town Clerk and Kalpesh Patel, Locum RFO to the bank mandate to be able to make payments, transfer, and authorise payments.

8/24 Signatories & Payment Processes

1st & 3rd Monday ready for signing

Councillor A Westbrook was concerned that delays had resulted in suppliers telling her they would no longer deal with MTC. Suggested payroll be fortnightly and advance notice to councillors. Councillor Hubbard noted that MTC had a legal duty to pay within 30 days.

It was agreed that a rota would be produced for councillors to sign. When on rota councillors would have access to the Town Hall from 6:15 on the day of council meetings. If a councillor on the rota was unable to attend it would be their responsibility to arrange alternative cover.

Councillor A Westbrook left the meeting at 8:55.

9/24 Financial Statements

Disappointment was expressed that a new financial year had begun with the same model as the old financial year and that items were still not being coded against budget lines and were being spent directly against reserves. RFO said changes were being made but could not be done overnight. Councillor Hubbard disagreed and change needed to be implemented immediately. It was important that spending can be identified as coming from allocated budget not reserves.

A query was raised on item 9202 Unplanned Maintenance £16613.00. This was explained to be work on the Roundhouse.

10/24 Lloyds

Statement was received.

11/24 Unity

The statement was received.

12/24 Petty Cash

There was a query on an item marked Razors. Finance Officer advised she was unable to remember exactly what they were but confirmed it was a legitimate purchase relating to the work of the Amenities Team.

The statement was received.

13/24 Income & Expenditure

It was questioned why May statements were not available. The Chair advised focus had been on year end accounts. Locum clerk advised that a system error delayed the year end. May had now been produced, the system was working correctly and going forward work could be done on mis-coding.

Councillor Hubbard – Correct coding required on purchase order and checked on invoice. Information will then be correct when accounts team record spending and produce reports.

It was queried whether committee should receive or approve. Clerk advised accounts on agenda to be available to councillors and the public and for questions to be raised.

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor Aves and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED not to receive the Income & Expenditure Report and for a corrected version to be put to members at the next meeting.

14/24 Confidential Session

It was moved by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor Griffin and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to go into confidential session.

15/24 Council leases/licenses

The lease for the Cricket Pavilion was reviewed and discussed. Members voted on a proposal which contains confidential information.

Licences relating to moving the Avon War Memorial and installation of CCTV were signed.

Meeting Closed at: 9.40 pm

Signed:

Dated: