

## **Melksham Town Council**

### **Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 19th August 2024**

#### **PRESENT:**

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

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

<b>OFFICERS:</b>	Andrew Meacham	Committee Clerk
	Tracy Predeth	Locum Clerk

#### **57/24 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Alford and Councillor Griffin

#### **58/24 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **59/24 Public Participation**

##### **Mike Sankey – Unitary Councillor.**

Melksham East Community Hall is required as part of planning consent for Hunters Wood and Acorns development. Community facilities for Craybourne Road and Skylark Road area of the development were incorporated in the Forest & Sandridge school.

At time of application the site fell within Melksham Without Parish Council boundaries. The proposed building was too small but there was an option for the Parish Council to take the money and commission their own building. Took this option as developers were not prepared to build anything other than the building as originally planned.

After the boundary review in 2021 the Parish Council transferred CIL funding to Melksham Town Council. This was a sum of £350000 and there is another sum which is

ringfenced from section 106 contributions. The Parish Council also provided plans for the new Berryfields Community Hall for Melksham Town Council to use to save money on architect's fees. It was felt that was the appropriately sized building.

Melksham Town Council took the view that the Spa Road/Snowberry Lane site was too small, and having received the report on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022 from the Deputy Town Clerk a motion was passed instructing officers to pursue an alternative site at Verbena Court. That site now has an application approved for a 70 bed care home so is no longer available.

On 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023 there was an agenda item for council to approve costs and authorise architect to proceed with a planning application. This item was deferred to come back to a future meeting of the Town Council.

On 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 members were advised that the Clerk had instructed architects to submit a planning application for a community centre at the Spa Road/Snowberry Lane site. Members of this council asked to receive a written update when the application had been submitted. I don't believe that has yet taken place.

I addressed the first meeting of this council on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 to ask that you prioritise the delivery of the community hall and now ask that you take this forward as a matter of urgency because there is a risk that the CIL funding might be claimed back from you because it hasn't been used for the intended purpose.

I will be listening to your deliberations with interest tonight and really hope that you can take this forward and get that community hall delivered as soon as possible.

Thank you.

#### **Susan Mortimer – Resident of Melksham.**

Council should be mindful that the JPAG states that Earmarked Reserves must be held for genuine and identifiable purposes and projects. In recent years Melksham Town Council has had a major projects reserve which are not identifiable projects and purposes. The interim audit report of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 states that a more detailed breakdown of the earmarked reserves for major projects needed to show the specific projects that funds have been allocated to. This would be beneficial and more transparent to demonstrate the council's plans in the future. I think this is something the council should bear in mind that it is not really the done thing to have a Major Projects Reserve. They need to be specific items.

It would be helpful to have dates of finance meetings tied in with the quarterly reports. There is a meeting on January 6<sup>th</sup> when the December reports will not be available. March 3<sup>rd</sup> will not have the March reports.

There were no questions from councillors.

**61/24 Minutes**

The minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024, having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor Councillor Price.

**62/24 Town Mayor's Announcements**

The Town Mayor Councillor Price had no announcements but did want to congratulate Craig and Evies Kitchen on the event held on Friday night.

**63/24 Reports from Unitary Councillors**

Councillor Hubbard reported that Wiltshire Council had an underspend last year and about £4.5 million was going to Highways budget for road and pothole repairs.

Councillor Sankey reported that Wiltshire Council have agreed to increase the Fixed Penalty Notice for graffiti to the maximum of £500.

He also reported on the Melksham East Relief Road and roundabout, reading from the media release.

Wiltshire Council are working hard with the developer to complete the final works required to be in a position to open this key link to through traffic and alleviate the high volume of traffic currently using Snowberry Lane. We want to open the route as quickly as possible. However, there are outstanding actions that legally must be completed and signed off to ensure the safety of all users before we can progress.

Following the completion of the Spa Road roundabout works, it will be inspected by our officers along with the two signal controlled Toucan pedestrian crossings and street lighting. A road safety audit will also be completed at the same time before the road is adopted by the council.

Once the roundabout is formally adopted additional factors must also be completed and in operation before the Melksham Eastern Relief Road can be opened to through traffic, including the signal controlled Puffin Pedestrian Crossing link to Melksham Oak must be operational. A Speed Limit Order must be made for the relief road and it must be enforceable with signage in place and final servicing works need to be completed along the link road.

A Traffic Regulation Order for a proposed 40mph speed limit has been advertised and following a number of objections these are being considered by officers before a final decision is made on whether the 40mph limits will be approved.

The current location of the CJL compound on the completed carriageway is not delaying the work still to be completed and we are not sure where this misinformation came from. (Councillor Sankey advised that he had asked CJL and they had told him this).

CJL will demobilise their compound when the roundabout is finished to allow the western end of the Melksham East Relief Road to be surfaced and the Toucan works on this arm to be finished. When the works were first started the compound was located on the land to the North and Northeast of the new roundabout with a temporary construction access taken off Snowberry Lane. This access has since been closed and a smaller compound moved onto the completed carriageway, where it is now. (End of media briefing).

Councillor Sankey advised that he had been making enquiries about the opening of the roundabout and the road. Ultimately went to CJL who stated that the road would not open until Christmas as Wiltshire Council had given permission to use the road as a compound until they finish and move off site.

Councillor Sankey has been working with Nick Holder on outstanding issues, and is grateful for the work Councillor Hubbard has put in on this. He would be having a meeting with Sam Howe Director of Highways, Nick Holder and officers regarding delays and to try to get the project completed and open as soon as possible.

**64/24 CCLA Signature Mandate**

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Hubbard and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to appoint the Clerk Tracy Predeth, Councillor Pat Aves and Councillor Adrienne Westbrook as CCLA signatories.

**65/24 Streaming of meetings.**

The Town Mayor Councillor Price spoke to the item.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to stream live on Facebook and upload to YouTube. Officers to look at the practicalities of streaming live to both Facebook and YouTube.

**66/24 Proposal for amendment to Calendar of Meetings**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to adopt the calendar with the following provisos

- Confirming the Annual Town Meeting as 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024

- Confirming the Annual Meeting as 12<sup>th</sup> May 2024, to be the first meeting after the election
- Giving delegated authority to the Finance, Administration & Performance Committee to change the dates of its meetings.

#### **67/24      Amendment to Fixed Assets**

The amendment was noted.

#### **68/24      Appointment of a Consultant**

Councillor Hubbard spoke to the item. There was discussion on fees and length of engagement. The Clerk advised that Wiltshire Council had confirmed the fees could be paid out of the grant money.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Clerk to appoint a consultant to work on the Wiltshire Towns Programme Activity Generation Grant Programme submission.

#### **69/24      Mayors Reception**

The Town Mayor Councillor Price outlined his proposal for an outdoor community event in place of the sit down Mayors Reception. Members were broadly in favour of such an event but concerns were raised about holding it early in the year and the cost. Members also felt that there was also a place for the formal Mayors Reception which enhanced civic contacts with other Wiltshire towns. It was suggested that the Mayors Reception could be made less formal by having a buffet rather than a sit down meal.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to

- plan a summer civic event for 2025 with authority delegated to Community Development Committee and the Events and Community Development Officer to spend up to £10000. Such sum to be allocated when budget is set for 2025/2026.
- proceed with the formal Mayor's Reception with the existing allocated budget of £2000.

#### **70/24      East Melksham Community Centre**

The Clerk confirmed that there was no update at this time. Members queried the position on the planning application.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow a member of the public to speak.

Sue Mortimer asked about the situation with CIL money and the danger of it being claimed back.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to re-instate Standing Orders.

It was proposed by Councillor S Crundell, seconded by Councillor Hubbard and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that

- The Clerk will move the matter on by responding to questions from the architect, with reference to Full Council if required
- Authority is delegated to the Clerk to employ professional support as she sees fit.
- East Melksham Community Centre will be a standing item on Full Council agenda.

#### **71/24      Sensory Garden**

Councillor A Westbrook spoke to the item and the need to get the area cleared before the next nesting season.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Clerk to consult with Richard Baulch-Collett, chose a quote and move the project forward. £25000 is allocated to complete groundwork and then landscape in-house.

#### **72/24      Eco Loos**

Councillor Ellis queried the provision of hot water. The Committee Clerk confirmed that the resolution of Asset Management & Amenities did include this but it had been left of the Full Council agenda in error.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the resolution and the allocation of £15000 funding from 9244 Major Projects Ear-Marked Reserve.

**73/24      Delegated Powers**

Councillor Hubbard spoke to the item and delegated powers were discussed.

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by Councillor S Crundell and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Council re-iterates the relevant items in our Standing Orders and Financial Regulations that give power to the Town Clerk and their staff to undertake the operational management of day to day business at the council within the spending limits of the annual budget. Council is reminded that the Clerk is entitled to spend up to £20000 within Financial Regulations without reference to Council where there is either an emergency or it is felt appropriate. Council encourages the Clerk and her team to use their delegated powers to expedite the delivery of services from the Council and request that, wherever possible, items are brought to inform Council of what has happened rather than ask permission for what could happen.

Councillor Hubbard raised the idea of creating a Contract Sub Committee with membership open to all councillors so that meetings can be called at short notice. A motion could be introduced at a later date if this was felt to be a good idea.

**74/24      Community Development Committee**

The minutes of the Community Development Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 were received.

**75/24      Economic Development and Planning Committee**

The minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meetings held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024 were received.

Meeting Closed at: 8.32 pm

**Signed:** .....

**Dated:**