

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Finance, Administration and Performance Committee meeting held on Monday 4th November 2024

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

OFFICERS:	Tracy Predeth	Locum Clerk
	Hayley Bell	Deputy Clerk
	Christina Connor	Events & Community Development Officer
	Mel Rolph (virtually)	Finance Officer
	Kalpesh Pate (virtually)	RFO

35/24 Apologies

There were no apologies.

36/24 Declarations of Interest

Councillor J Westbrook and Councillor Hubbard declared non-pecuniary interests in organisations receiving major grants.

37/24 Public Participation

Sue Mortimer.

Had submitted some questions by email but also had some concerns that she wanted to highlight to members.

Budget spent to date and available to spend shows only £20000 left to spend but considerable expenditure. The Chair Councillor Griffin pointed out that a recent full council meeting an increase in salary cost was approved.

Suggested new headings for items currently under licences. The Chair Councillor Griffin advised expenditure headings would be part of budget discussions.

Closure of Lloyds Account. Ticketsource money currently goes into that account.

38/24 Minutes

The minutes of 9th September 2024 having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by Councillor Griffin.

39/24 Financial Risk Assessment

The following observations were made.

Councillor Griffin.

Accounting system. Automated daily back up not mentioned in Risk Monitoring and Mitigation

Allotments. Invoices issued in April of each year but in 2023/24 72% of income was received in February and 22% in March.

Finance Officer confirmed payments due 1st March and invoices go out in January and February. April and May would be surrendered and re-let plots.

The Chair asked for the Financial Risk Assessment to be amended accordingly.

Councillor Hubbard.

Council debit/credit cards. Member of staff personally responsible for use of card issued in their name. FRA says cards kept by RFO. The person responsible for what happens on the card will not be the person who holds the card. They could therefore not reasonably be held responsible. Cards issued should be held by the named person who would be required to agree to the terms of use and safekeeping. Not appropriate or low risk to hold them in a safe that other people can access. Councillor J Westbrook pointed out the RFO does not work full time. Additionally, cards should only be used by the named person.

The Chair Councillor Griffin and the Town Clerk confirmed this would be looked at.

Councillor Hubbard asked that a report come back to the next finance meeting.

40/24 Budget

41/24 Budget 2024/25

Members expressed very strong concern about the lack of financial information coming before the committee and that previous requests had not been actioned

42/24 Budget 2025/26

Members were advised that there was a Chairs meeting with the RFO on Thursday. Members were concerned about the methodology of setting the budget and expressed a wish for the usual procedure of budget meetings open to all councillors before a full council meeting to ratify the budget. Councillor Hubbard commented that he felt there was also a place for a chairs meeting and individual committee discussions in the process.

43/24 Grants Awarded

The Grant Monitoring Forms were received. The Chair, Councillor Griffin thanked the groups who had submitted their forms.

44/24 Grants

The amount available was discussed. £7900 was available for this quarter, £250 had been allocated to Mind, leaving £7650.

Councillor Rabey expressed concern that some applications should not have reached this stage.

The Deputy Clerk advised that grant procedure was being reviewed.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to recommend to full council that the carry over funding from the grants pot where monies have been paid this financial year but were awarded last financial year should come out of general reserves where the underspend will have been put and that for the purposes of this evenings meeting the committee recognises that the total spend so far this year is £4037.13, with £7962.87 available to spend including £250 ring fenced for Wiltshire Mind, leaving a balance of £7712.87.

Members agreed to first identify applications that did not meet Melksham Town Council's criteria for grants. At the request of Councillor J Westbrook, The Chair Councillor Griffin read out the criteria for the public record.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak on the applications and answer questions from members.

Richard Bell spoke on behalf of Avon Bowls Club

David Walker spoke on behalf of Celebrating Age Wiltshire
Sarah Phelps and Tina Oakman spoke on behalf of Forest Community Centre
Amanda Wilkes spoke on behalf of HELP Counselling Services
Two unnamed attendees spoke on behalf of Melksham Phab Club
Sue spoke for Read Easy North and West Wiltshire
Steve Crawley spoke on behalf of Splash – Community First Wiltshire
Charlie Thomson spoke on behalf of The Parochial Church Council of the Melksham
Parish of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Melksham, Salisbury

45/24 Avon Bowls Club

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award the Avon Bowls Club a grant of £1000.

46/24 Back on Track- Stroke Rehab Service

It was noted that awards had been made previously and Melksham and there was no one to talk on behalf of the applicants.

It was proposed by Councillor J Westbrook, seconded by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Rabey and

RESOLVED to decline the request. There was one abstention,

47/24 Celebrating Age Wiltshire

IT was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Rabey and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award Celebrating Age Wiltshire a grant of £790.

48/24 Forest Community Centre

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award Forest Community Centre a grant of £650 and to offer assistance with further fund raising.

49/24 HELP Counselling Services

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award HELP Counselling Services a grant of £1000.

50/24 Melksham Foodbank

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Rabey and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award Melksham Foodbank a grant of £300.

51/24 Melksham Phab Club

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Hubbard and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award Melksham Phab Club a grant of £600.

52/24 Read Easy North and West Wiltshire

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award Read Easy North and West Wiltshire a grant of £500.

53/24 Splash - Community First Wiltshire

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard, seconded by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Rabey and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to award Splash – Community First Wiltshire a grant of £633.50

54/24 The Parochial Church Council of the Melksham Parish of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Melksham, Salisbury

There was concern over the religious aspect and discussion on whether or not Melksham Town Council's legal responsibilities and/or grants policy allowed a grant to be awarded. It was noted that funding had previously been awarded to the Baptist Church's Community Rooms.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to refer the matter to Full Council.

55/24 Major Grants

56/24 Major Grants 2024/25

4Youth. Councillor Hubbard said he would check why monitoring form had not been received but suspected it was staff changes and IT issues.

Melksham Carnival. Michelle and Beth attended. There was discussion of the proposed confetti battle and next year's carnival.

Melksham Food & River Festival. Adrienne Westbrook attended. Next year will be the 10th anniversary of the event. Hope to make some changes to keep the event fresh. A permanent power supply was mentioned.

57/24 2025/26 onwards

The Deputy Clerk spoke to the item, specifically the funding of Christmas Lights as a service-level agreement (SLA) rather than a major grant.

58/24 Lloyds Bank Account

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to give authority to the Clerk to rearrange Melksham Town Council bank arrangements, if necessary opening up a No2 account with Unity Bank

59/24 Lloyds, Unity and Petty Cash

The Chair Councillor Griffin noted that Lloyds, Unity and Petty Cash statements for May, June and July had not been seen and approved and asked the RFO to supply these.

The Clerk said she would check the regulations.

Statements for August and September were received.

60/24 Unity

61/24 Petty Cash

62/24 Bank Reconciliations to March 2023

The Chair Councillor Griffin spoke to the item and asked that a councillor arrange to review and sign the bank reconciliation.

63/24 Project Updates

This item was not considered as the 10pm cut off had been reached.

Meeting Closed at: 10.00 pm

Signed:

Dated: