

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 27th January 2025

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 G Ellis
Councillor A Griffin
Councillor J Hubbard
Councillor C Stokes
Councillor A Westbrook
Councillor J Westbrook

IN ATTENDANCE:

OFFICERS:	Hugh Davies	Head of Operations
	Andrew Meacham	Committee Clerk
	Tracy Predeth	Locum Clerk
	Hayley Bell	Deputy Clerk
	Brian Bennett	Assembly Hall Manager, CCTV Manager

177/24 Apologies

There were no apologies.

178/24 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

179/24 Public Participation

Local Resident

Finance Administration and Performance meeting on 13th January 2025, Internal audit 24/25. This item was not fully addressed at the meeting. What committee and on what date will the internal audit report be addressed? Was under the impression that these had to go to full council.

The Clerk confirmed that any finance matters would be taken back to the finance meeting.

There have been problems with Year End Closures 22/23 & 23/24. This led to first quarters information not being published on time. Rialtas Omega would offer year end procedures for cash book, purchase ledger and sales ledger. It offers a review for the year and year end closure. Are MTC considering using Rialtas for such procedures for year end 24/25?

The Town Mayor Councillor Price advised that the RFO would be doing the year end and it would be for him to decide.

Councillor Aves joined the meeting at this point.

Local Resident

Came to a meeting about a year ago and suggested that the way forward for the Assembly Hall was as had been done with the Cricketers Café. Appoint a professional who wants to run the venue and offer incentivised rents and co-investment. Great progress has been made at park and café is thriving and is an asset to the town. Assembly Hall should be run in private hands, not by councillors and officers.

Local Press

How can the Council assure residents that the council's vision for the Assembly Hall and Blue Pool will be carried out in a timely manner. The Sensory Garden is still unfinished 6 or more years on.

The Town Mayor Councillor Price replied that there is no time scale as yet and it would be impossible to define a timely manner. The Council needed to engage residents and ensure they did what was right for residents. Work on the Sensory Garden had started and he felt confident that the Council will make the Assembly Hall and Blue Pool a priority but could not speak for the new council after 1st May.

180/24 Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2

The Clerk and Councillor Ellis spoke to this item. Members were unhappy with delegating powers to approve a document when they had no idea of the contents. There was a feeling that the decision should be made by council.

It was agreed to hold a special meeting of full council at 6:30pm on Monday 3rd February 2025.

181/24 Assembly Hall Procedures

Head of Operations and the Assembly Hall Manager spoke to this item. An explanation was given of the Assembly Hall revenue streams. A brief comparison of income from hall hire and ticket split was given.

Members discussed the current operating procedures laid down by Council and the restrictions these put on management of the Assembly Hall. The point was made that the Assembly Hall was a community asset, not a purely commercial asset. Concerns were raised that a move to ticket split may make the Assembly Hall less attractive to promoters.

It was agreed that a detailed written report would be brought to Asset Management and Amenities.

Items that councillors asked the report to cover:-

Pricing structure - annual increase in rates

Income

Examples of income with different options. Retrospective review of 2-3 months events comparing current income with ticket split income.

Measures that can be put in place to avoid a repeat of the situation that led to the hire only decision

What do other venues do

Will we remain competitive and attractive to promoters

Approach some management/promoters for their reaction to any change.

182/24 Future of Assembly Hall and Blue Pool

Officers advised that there was an open day for architects to view the Town Hall, Assembly Hall and Blue Pool on Wednesday 29th January. Councillors were welcome to come along in the afternoon if they wanted to view the Blue Pool.

There was a discussion on Architects Briefs. It was noted that these are usually very long and detailed. It was felt that a short brief could be submitted which would give some ideas and a sense of any experience in similar projects.

Various questions were asked and suggestions on deadlines, involving the future Youth Advisory Board and appointing a project manager were made. There was discussion on the costs and the way forward.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

- to confirm the council was happy to move forward with the Assembly Hall and Blue Pool project.
- After discussions with architects the matter to come back to council to agree a proposal for a brief.
- To approach Melksham Without Parish Council for discussions on whether they wish to be a part of the project and the parameters for the partnership.
- To go out to Contract Finder once the brief is agreed.
- Terms for Public Consultation to be decided on at the next meeting.

183/24 Confidential Session

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that in view of the confidential and sensitive nature of the business about to be transacted, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 the public and press are excluded and are instructed to withdraw.

184/24 Blue Pool Transfer

Held in confidential session.

185/24 Staffing Matters

Held in confidential session.

Meeting Closed at: 8.45 pm

Signed:

Dated: