

Melksham Town Council
Minutes of the Full Council Meeting
on Monday 30th June 2025

PRESENT: Councillor S Rabey Town Mayor
Councillor J Westbrook Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor P Alford
Councillor P Aves
Councillor E Calland
Councillor R Cleary
Councillor M Drewett
Councillor G Elson
Councillor A Griffin
Councillor C Stokes
Councillor A Westbrook

OFFICERS Hayley Bell Acting CEO/Town Clerk

 Sam Haywood Locum RFO

PUBLIC: 5 members of the public and 1 of the press were present and 3 members of the public were present virtually

44/25 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Hubbard and Councillor Crossley

45/25 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

46/25 Public Participation

Public Participation 1

Q. Is there a separate sales ledger for the Assembly Hall?

A. There is a separate sales ledger.

Q. Why is the credit card balance at year end a debit balance?

Q. Are employment and pension costs of £200k connected with settlements?

Public Participation 2

Q. Does the council know of, take part in or co-ordinate any short, medium and long term activities to support the use of our streets and paths for those who are moving around the town with limited mobility? Is there a community group that the council knows of to support

these objectives. Which town council committee would be most appropriate to take this forward?

A. Acting CEO does not know historically what, if anything the Town Council has done but should be working with key partners to act. Cannot find any community group. Has been in contact with Wiltshire Wheelchair Service Team who are happy to work with any community group. Should report to Economic Development & Planning.

Public Participation 3

Q. Where is the evidence that Facebook Live exposes councillors to anti-social behaviour?

A. The Deputy Town Mayor will speak to this when the motion is considered.

Q. At the last Community Development meeting the Civic Awards were mentioned including last years "breaking conventions". What conventions were broken that were not for the better? Was it the way it was planned? Charging councillors and staff members?

A. Deputy Town Mayor. Big concern was way awards were presented. People have said they did not know who won what and what for. Also people did not understand why awardees were getting certain awards. Only one other town was represented. The event was good but it was not a Civic Reception.

Public Participation 4

Concerns over transparency. Co-option process at the last meeting should not have been confidential. Now seeking to reduce transparency with the motion on streaming meetings.

Q. Can the council explain how, under the legislation, it thinks the co-option at the last full council meeting was lawful?

Q. Can the council explain how moving streaming of meetings from Facebook to Teams is in the spirit of transparency?

Public Participation 5

Q. There have been various incidents of anti-social behaviour and vandalism in KGV. Bike maintenance kit has been vandalised. Could we expect this to be dealt with in such a way that the result will act as a deterrent?

A. Sgt Rutter was present and advised it would depend on the CCTV footage and whether an identification could be made. The Acting CEO/Town Clerk thanked the resident for taking the time to report the incident.

Public Participation 6

Q. Facebook Live motion. Under what criteria would footage be edited and who is going to edit it?

A. Deputy Town Mayor. Would only be edited if any confidential material is accidentally recorded.

Q. The Melksham News has been contacted by a member of the public about a deleted social media comment. Is the council more worried about its public image than it is about people being able to criticise?

A. Acting CEO/Town Clerk. So far as is aware, no comments have been deleted and would be interested to have details of the comment. Town Mayor. Councillors have not instructed officers to delete comments and has no policy to do so.

47/25 Minutes

Councillor Alford commented that the minutes did not give much detail and asked for more consistency.

The minutes of Monday 2nd June 2025, having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor and Chair Councillor Rabey.

48/25 Motion on Facebook Streaming

This item was advanced up the agenda.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor J Westbrook spoke to the motion, dealing with Facebook rules and threats to councillors. Members raised questions and made comments. There were concerns about moving away from a widely used platform. There was discussion on the question of abuse of councillors and officers. Standing Orders were suspended during the debate to allow a member of the public to ask a question.

A recorded vote was held.

Councillor		For	Against	Abstain
Alford			X	
Aves		X		
Calland		X		
Cleary		X		
Crossley				
Drewett		X		
Elson		X		
Griffin				X
Hubbard				
Oatley				
Rabey		X		
Stoke		X		

A Westbrook		X		
J Westbrook		X		
Totals		9	1	1

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

RESOLVED to discontinue the use of Facebook Live for broadcasting Town Council meetings. Meetings will continue to be live streamed via Microsoft Teams, providing real-time public access in a secure and moderated environment. Recordings of each meeting will be uploaded to the Council's official YouTube channel within 24 hours, unless serious safeguarding concerns require a delay or redaction.

49/25 Questions from Councillors

Q. When and how is the vacancy for a councillor going to be advertised and what system will be used to chose?

A. A Co-Option Policy has been drafted and submitted to WALC for review. It will come to the next Full Council meeting for adoption.

Q. Does the council have the option to not co-opt?

A. CEO has been advised that council does not have to co-opt but it would be best practice to.

Q. Does the Council have a formal policy on co-operation with neighbouring councils?

A. There is no formal policy.

50/25 Town Mayor's Announcements

There were no announcements

51/25 Police Report

Sgt Ritter confirmed she was back full time in Melksham and advised on year on year stats.

Burglary and vehicle crime slightly up

Violence, public disorder and sexual offences down.

Robbery at 0.

Sgt Rutter gave an update on recent events and initiatives and answered some questions from councillors.

52/25 Age UK Wiltshire

This item was advanced up the agenda.

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

RESOLVED to pay the sum of £860.00 from the sum allocated for the Town Event.

53/25 Reports from Unitary Councillors

It was reported that Wiltshire Council had recommended approval of the land south of Potterne Park Farm planning application. The Gompels warehouse was going to a Strategic Planning Committee.

54/25 East Melksham Community Centre

Noted.

55/25 Blue Pool

Noted.

56/25 Committee Membership

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to

- confirm the appointment of Councillor Calland and to appoint Councillor Drewett to the Community Development Committee.
- confirm the appointment of Councillor Oatley to Amenities & Facilities Committee but not appoint a further member
- appoint Councillor Calland and Councillor Drewett to the Finance, Governance & Performance Committee.

57/25 Grants Policy

Members discussed the proposed amendments.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow a member of the public to speak on the question of reserves. Standing Orders were re-instated.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to set the dates for all grant applications to be received by the council for consideration as the 30th April and the 30th September annually.

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

RESOLVED that Core Grants will from 2029-2030 (the next 4 year funding cycle) only consider funding up to a maximum of 25% of overall event costs or running costs.

It was agreed that the question of reserves would come back to a meeting of Community Development after consideration of rewording to allow applicants to define and qualify the reason for the reserves.

58/25 Outside Bodies

Noted.

59/25 Card Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Credit Card Policy.

60/25 2024/5 Year End Financials

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to accept the 2025/25 year end financials, including the trial balance, balance sheet, explanation of variances, asset register, reserves reconciliation and income & expenditure.

61/25 2024/25 Internal Auditor Report

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to note the internal auditor report, recommendations and responses to recommendations.

62/25 External Audit (AGAR)

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 of the Annual Governance and Accountability 2024/25 Part 3.

and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve Section 2 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 of the Annual Governance and Accountability 2024/25 Part 3.

63/25 Internal Transfers

It was proposed by Councillor Alford, seconded by Councillor Elson and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the RFO to transfer funds between the Unity current account and Unity Savings account as necessary in order to reduce risk to Council of having a high balance in the current account, and to ensure Council get the best return by depositing in the interest savings account.

64/25 Facilities and Amenities

The minutes of the Facilities & Amenities meeting on 24th February 2025 were received.

65/25 Community Development

The minutes of the Community Development meetings on 3rd February 2025 and 7th April 2025 were received.

66/25 Economic Development & Planning

The minutes of the Economic Development & Planning meetings on 11th March 2025, 1st April 2025, 22nd April 2025 and 20th May 2025 were received.

67/25 Finance, Governance & Performance

The minutes of the Finance, Governance & Performance meetings on 17th February 2025 and 10th March 2025 were received.

68/25 Health & Safety Audit

The Acting SEO/Town Clerk gave an update.

Meeting closed at: 21:05

Signed

Dated