

## **Melksham Town Council**

### **Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 1st March 2021**

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Aves (Town Mayor)  
Councillor G Mitcham (Deputy Town Mayor)  
Councillor V Fiorelli  
Councillor J Hubbard  
Councillor K Iles  
Councillor C Jeffries  
Councillor M Pain  
Councillor T Watts  
Councillor T Welch  
Councillor A Westbrook  
Councillor R Wiltshire

**IN ATTENDANCE** Gill Hughes, Inspector Wiltshire Police

<b>OFFICERS:</b>	Linda Roberts	Town Clerk
	David McKnight	Economic Development Manager
	Christine Hunter	Committee Clerk

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Six members of the public and one member of the press were present.

#### **50/21 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Illman, Councillor Sankey and Councillor Brown.

#### **51/21 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **52/21 Police Inspector Gill Hughes**

Councillor Aves welcomed Inspector Gill Hughes to the meeting. Inspector Hughes reported to the Council the steps the police currently have in place for Melksham when the Covid-19 lockdown ends. The Quantum Team will be joined by neighbourhood patrols to bolster response times to incidents, carry out patrols and issue tickets. The local police team are looking to foster good

relationships with the youth of Melksham by working with schools, youth clubs and groups. The Committee raised concerns about:

- motorised scooters are riding in groups, dressed in black, are verbally abusive to runners, have no lights on and are behaving dangerously with cars and are a danger to pedestrians.
- there seems to be groups of young people who are shoplifting and leaving large numbers of nitrous canisters in the park.
- The Town Clerk asked if the Inspector would consider a Restorative Justice programme being implemented in Melksham. Inspector Hughes confirmed she would support such a scheme.

Inspector Hughes asked Councillors to continue to report any potential breaches of Covid-19 regulations or incidents to the police. Inspector Hughes confirmed this would help implement patrol strategies to support specific areas, identify offenders and support a more creative approach, i.e., litter picking and advertising actions taken to help prevent “hot spots”

#### **53/21 Minutes**

The minutes of 13 January 2021 and 25 January 2021, having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record. It was agreed that these would be signed at a later date by the chair Councillor Aves.

#### **54/21 Financial Risk Assessment and Reserves Policy**

##### **Financial Risk Assessment**

Councillor Pain requested an addition to the Financial Risk Assessment to include the wording “councillors, officers and staff who act in an irregular or unlawful manner putting the Council at financial risk”.

It was proposed by Councillor Pain, seconded by Councillor Wiltshire and

**RESOLVED** that the Financial Risk Assessment is approved and adopted subject to the addition suggested by Councillor Pain, if a further risk is considered appropriate by the Town Clerk.

##### **Reserves Policy**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that subject to the inclusion of “the earmarked reserves are set up for identified projects”. The Reserves Policy was approved and adopted.

#### **55/21 Neighbourhood Plan**

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

**RESOLVED** to approve 70% funding to be met by Melksham Town Council and 30% of the costs to be met by Melksham Without Parish Council, and that it be reviewed on an annual basis to confirm the pro rata per capita split.

**56/21 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Terms of Reference**

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

**RESOLVED** that the Neighbourhood Plan Terms of Reference be approved.

**57/21 Melksham Town Council's Response to the Local Plan Review**

The response to the Local Plan Review was noted.

The Town Clerk confirmed that Melksham Town Council officers and members had worked jointly with Melksham Without Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to respond to the Local Plan review. The response was before Council to approve, the Town Clerk added that responses are required by 8 March 2021.

Councillor Westbrook and Councillor Hubbard commended the report to Council.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the town council's response to the Local Plan Review.

**58/21 Conclusion of Audit - Year Ended 31 March 2020**

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

**RESOLVED** to approve and accept the External Auditor Report and Certificate for the 2019/2020 financial year.

**59/21 Internal Audit Report - Circulated with Agenda**

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

**RESOLVED** that Council approve the Internal Audit report and note the actions completed following the recommendations contained in the report.

**60/21 Dorset and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority Technical Rescue Review**

Members noted the Dorset and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority Technical Rescue Review. Councillor Hubbard stated this was a poor decision and was detrimental to the Melksham area community.

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

**RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk be requested to send a letter to Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority indicating that the Council sincerely regrets this decision and highlighting the increased risk to Melksham residents as a result.

**61/21 Motion - Proposed one off donation of £100 to the Food Bank**

Councillors discussed the Motion to make a donation to the Melksham Food Bank for the purchase of Easter Eggs. Councillor Fiorelli was thanked for bringing this matter to the attention of the public. Councillor Fiorelli reported that two businesses had donated Easter eggs to the foodbank. Councillor Fiorelli agreed to withdraw her motion for the one off donation of £100 to the Food Bank for Easter eggs.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk be requested to send a letter of thanks to Claire and Kylie for running a campaign to collect Easter eggs for the Foodbank.

**62/21 Allotment Agreement from 1 March 2022**

Councillor Watts requested an amendment to the wording of the Allotment Agreement.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Allotment Agreement be approved with the change of the word “pesticides” to read “chemicals for the control of weeds or pests, including the use of pesticides”. The new agreement to commence on 1 March 2022

**63/21 Working From Home Allowance**

It was proposed by Councillor Wiltshire, seconded by Councillor Fiorelli and

**RESOLVED** to recommend that Town Council staff are advised to make a claim for tax relief themselves for the Working From Home allowance through HM Revenue and Customs.

**64/21 Carry Forward of Staff Unused Annual leave to 2021/2022**

The report of the Assistant to the Town Clerk was noted.

The Town Clerk confirmed the Employee Handbook included annual leave guidance for staff, but the entitlement under the Working Time (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 allowed for all leave not taken to be carried forward to be used over two years.

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

**RESOLVED** that Council note changes to policy due to the pandemic and approved the carry forward of unused annual leave which may apply to town council staff.

**65/21      Age Friendly Melksham - Community Response**

Councillor Hubbard updated members on the work currently being undertaken by Age Friendly Melksham confirming why replacement admin support was required.

It was proposed by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Westbrook and

**RESOLVED** that Council approves a further 13 hours of time be allocated to support Melksham Community Response by the Facilities Manager until 26 March 2021 and the support provided be reviewed as soon as possible in the new financial year.

**66/21      Spiritualist' Garden Acquisition Update**

The report of the Economic Development Manager was noted. The Economic Development Manager confirmed he had been in contact with the Trustee's solicitor and the project was moving forward.

**67/21      CCTV Working Group**

The report of the Economic Development Manager was noted.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the recommendations and request for up to £250 to support the provision of a CCTV scoping exercise report, using funding from the general reserve fund in the 2020/2021 budget, a corresponding amount to be included in the general reserve fund in the 2021/2022 budget.

**68/21      Canal Working Group**

The Economic Development Manager updated Council on the Canal Working Group and confirmed he had asked Wiltshire Council's Planning Officer for updates. The Town Clerk suggested that council be reminded of the original planning application at a suitable time, after the May elections.

It was proposed by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Pain and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that an invitation is extended from the Council to the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust asking for a presentation on the project to Council after May 2021.

**69/21 CATG**

Members reviewed the schemes included in the report and noted that if all schemes were supported it would mean most of the CATG budget for 2021/2022 would be utilised. The contribution required from the council being £6,750 out of a budget of £7,500.

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

**RESOLVED** to recommend to CATG council's support for the three projects being;

- Dropped Kerbs on Old Broughton Road
- Improvement to footway link between Maple Close and Sandridge Road
- Bollards outside Chicken Hut

with a total contribution from the town council of £6,750.

**70/21 2021 - 2022 Meetings Calendar**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the calendar of meetings for 2021/2022 be approved.

**71/21 Wiltshire Area Localism and Planning Alliance (WALPA)**

Council considered the recommendations in the Wiltshire Area Local Planning Alliance (WALPA). The Economic Development Manager reported on the aims and objectives of WALPA.

It was proposed by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Westbrook and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Economic Development Manager writes to WALPA confirming the Council's support of their work but requests that the Council review all written correspondence containing the Council's name prior to circulation.

**72/21 Shurnhold Fields Working Group**

The Town Clerk reported that the request had financial implications which members not been afforded the correct notice to consider.

It was proposed by Councillor Fiorelli, seconded by Councillor Pain and

**RESOLVED** to defer this item to be considered at the Full Council Meeting on 22 March 2021.

**73/21      Terms of Reference for the Shurnhold Fields Working Group**

Councillor Hubbard recommended removing the delegated spend item from the Terms of Reference as the Council would have no control over the spend of funds allocated.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to request an amendment to the Terms of Reference on the bullet point item starting “The delegated spend”, changing the semi-colon after the word “Fund” to a full stop and remove all the following wording in the bullet point.

**74/21      Date of next meeting**

22 March 2021 at 7.00 pm via Zoom

Meeting Closed at: 9.55 pm

Signed: .....

Dated: