

## **Melksham Town Council**

### **Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 24th May 2021**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Hubbard (Chair)  
Councillor C Goodhind (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor P Alford  
Councillor P Aves  
Councillor G Cooke  
Councillor J Crundell  
Councillor S Crundell  
Councillor G Ellis  
Councillor L Lewis  
Councillor C Forgacs  
Councillor C Houghton  
Councillor S Mortimer  
Councillor J Oatley  
Councillor T Price  
Councillor S Rabey

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Sgt James Twyford

<b>OFFICERS:</b>	Linda Roberts	Town Clerk
	David McKnight	Economic Development Manager
	Patsy Clover	Assistant to the Town Clerk
	Christine Hunter	Committee Clerk

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

#### **1/21 Welcome from the Town Mayor**

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard welcomed members of the public and press to the Annual Town Meeting and informed those present that this was an opportunity for the Town Council to report on progress made over the last year, and give members of the public an opportunity to question councillors on local issues.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard spoke of articles recently in the local press regarding King George V Park and confirmed that at the Full Council meeting held on 17 May 2021 decisions were made on how the Council manages the work in King George V Park. No decisions were made on the work itself. The issue will be

discussed in more detail at the Asset Management and Amenities Committee meeting on 21 June 2021. The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard stated that members of the public are welcome to attend.

## **2/21 Minutes**

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

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 29 April 2021, having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard.

## **3/21 Melksham Town Council**

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard stated that 13 of the 15 councillors for Melksham were new councillors. Each councillor then introduced themselves. The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard offered those present the opportunity to ask questions of the new councillors, no questions were put.

## **4/21 Policing in Melksham**

Sgt James Twyford provided a presentation on work undertaken by the police over the past year and confirmed proposed interventions and priorities for the forthcoming year. Sgt Twyford confirmed how ongoing work with various neighbourhood groups and the excellent working relationship with Melksham Town Council had helped to reduce crime in Melksham.

Terri Welch asked for an update on the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs). The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard confirmed that the SIDS will be in place by mid-June.

There were no further questions from members of the public.

## **5/21 Reports from Groups who received grants during the year**

Reports were received from twenty-nine groups who had received grants during the year.

## **6/21 Presentations from Community Groups**

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard confirmed that the reports provided by the Area Board and 4Youth Melksham were included in the agenda pack.

### **2385 (Melksham) Air Training Corps**

Flight Lieutenant Greg McKay provided a presentation explaining the variety of practical and outdoor activities that took place over the last year in Covid-safe

environment, with support from community groups and the public sector. The full range of training and activities will commence after 21 June 2021.

### **Community Response**

Philippa Huxtable, the Age Friendly Co-ordinator, gave a presentation on the work carried out by 465 volunteers during the last year throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Services provided during lock-down ranged from collecting prescriptions and shopping, to providing Christmas lunches, which has helped build relationships within the community. Community support work will continue for the residents of Melksham with a new face-to-face video service being launched, the provision of a volunteer companion scheme, and the continuation of friendly phone calls.

### **Melksham in Bloom**

Terri Welch provided a presentation and since Bloom commenced in Melksham over ten years ago, the town has received three Gold awards from the South West in Bloom competition and is aiming for gold again this year.

Terri reported on Town Tidy days for litter picking, works undertaken with the Town Council's Amenities team, volunteers and Melksham Town Council's plans to take over the Friends' Garden.

### **Priority for People**

The Economic Development Manager, David McKnight, provided a presentation on the Priority for People initiative explaining that this was a project which has arisen from the Strategic Plan, Melksham 2020-2036. Priority for People will be launched on 7 June 2021 through a public survey and details can be found on the website [www.priorityforpeople.org](http://www.priorityforpeople.org)

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

The Town Clerk explained that the Neighbourhood Plan was a joint plan covering the boundary of Melksham Town and Melksham Without Parish Council. Neighbourhood Plans are community led planning which go through several stages of scrutiny. Melksham's Plan has taken seven years to get to referendum stage. The referendum will be held on 1 July 2021 and requires a 51% yes vote to be successful; that is 51% of the people voting not the total electorate. If successful the Plan will go into an immediate review which will focus on the Town Centre Masterplan Plan, Local Green Space, Housing Site Allocation, implications of the by-pass proposal and the Melksham Canal Link. The plan is available on the Melksham Town Council website at <https://bit.ly/2SzxHgF>

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard confirmed that, if adopted, the Neighbourhood Plan will protect Melksham from any reduction in a three/ five-

year land supply, and would increase the Community Infrastructure Levy contribution from 15% to 25%.

Adrienne Westbrook stressed the large amount of work required to produce the plan, the importance of the document and the importance of the referendum taking place on 1 July 2021. It gives the opportunity to shape how Melksham housing will develop in the future.

Councillor Ellis and Terri Welch thanked the Town Clerk, Adrienne Westbrook and officers for their hard work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

## **7/21 Open Forum/Questions from Electors**

Questions from Electors:

Richard Wiltshire had asked in advance if the Town Council, through its' Health Working Group, could press the NHS to provide additional services at Melksham Hospital for local patients. Visiting consultants and practitioners would reduce the need for people to attend the RUH Bath and other larger hospitals, thus reducing the pressure on these facilities.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard explained that at the annual meeting of the Town Council on 17 May 2021 membership of the Health Working Group had been discussed. Council were looking to work in partnership with the Wiltshire Council Health Group, that Councillor Nick Holder of the Area Board is establishing, to work with stakeholders and providers. The Chief Executive of the CCG will be in attendance. The Council will support and encourage the NHS in maximising GP services within the town and services to Melksham Hospital.

Adrienne Westbrook expressed concern about amendments to the Terms of Reference for the King George V Park Sub Committee. The Terms of Reference gave delegated authority for spending to the Group not exceeding £501,000, ring fenced for improvements to the Park. Adrienne Westbrook stated she was concerned that the delegated powers for spending had been removed from the KGV Sub Committee when there were still outstanding projects to be completed.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard confirmed there had been no amendment to the budget and that funding was still ring-fenced for use in that or any other project.

The Town Clerk stated that the Terms of Reference for the new committee had not yet been drafted. The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard confirmed that the name of the committee had been changed as agreed at the Town Council Meeting held on 17 May 2021, but that the Terms of Reference could not be changed until they had been amended and approved at Full Council.

From Zoom

Pam Wiltshire asked the Town Council to support the Trees for Jubilee Campaign. She also mentioned that she was concerned that the subject of the Council's Tree Wardens had not been included on the agenda for the Council Meeting held on 17 May 2021 and hoped that their use would be reinstated.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard advised Mrs Wiltshire that both topics would be added to future Council Agendas for consideration.

Paul Johnson from TransWilts gave a verbal update on improvement works undertaken and scheduled at Melksham Station which included re-opening the Café, opening the Melksham Hub. He advised that cycle hire is available from the station and commented on reductions in greenhouse gases achieved through the use of electric vehicle charging points.

Meeting Closed at: 8.45 pm

**Signed:** .....

**Dated:**