

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 28th June 2021

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

IN

ATTENDANCE: Paul Lenaerts Wilts and Berks Canal Trust

OFFICERS: Linda Roberts Town Clerk
David McKnight Economic Development Manager
Patsy Clover Assistant to the Town Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: One member of the public and one member of the press were present.

Adrienne Westbrook expressed her concern that the draft minutes from the Asset Management and Amenities Committee meeting held on 21 June 2021 were incomplete as they did not reflect the fact that electrical works in the King George V Park were still ongoing. It was agreed that this would be investigated.

149/21 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Aves, Councillor J Crundell and Councillor S Crundell.

150/21 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

151/21 Minutes

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2021, having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard.

152/21 Wilts and Berks Canal Trust Presentation

A presentation was given by Paul Lenaerts, Project Manager at the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust, regarding the Melksham Link. He explained that the original planning application for the Melksham Link, to connect the Kennet and Avon Canal to the Wilts and Berks Canal, was submitted in 2012.

An amended planning application is being prepared to address concerns raised by the Environment Agency. This will also incorporate plans for housing, a school, a marina and a bike hub on the 350 acres of land along the proposed route. A hydro electric generator could be built with the potential to sell electricity for electric vehicle and boat charging points. Once the revised planning application is approved, the canal works could be completed within two to three years with the full scheme completed by the late 2020s.

It was agreed to arrange a virtual meeting where more detailed information and explanations could be shared with members.

153/21 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard, advised members six Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) would be erected by the end of the week. The outstanding 20mph SID should be installed by the end of July.

154/21 Police Report

The June 2021 police report was noted.

155/21 Reports from Unitary Councillors

Members received an update from Councillor Alford on the following matters affecting Melksham which had been discussed at Wiltshire Council meetings:

- A presentation had been given to the Area Board about option 10c for the proposed bypass and options for access at the northern and southern ends of the proposed route.
- Melksham Campus is due to be completed in 18 months

- Melksham House will receive substantial investment for repair work and to upgrade its facilities.

156/21 Standing Orders

.1 Addition to Standing Orders

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to amend Standing Orders to include an Order stating that questions from councillors regarding the business of the Council, as reflected in Standing Orders, should be put to the Town Clerk in writing prior to a meeting of Full Council and would be addressed as a separate agenda item at each meeting of Full Council.

.2 Amendments to Standing Orders

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the amendments and additions to Standing Orders subject to the removal of all references to the Leader and the stipulation that only Members of the Staffing Committee would be permitted to attend and participate in meetings of the Committee. The Standing Orders would then stand adjourned until a full clean set is presented and approved at the next meeting of Full Council.

157/21 Representatives on outside bodies

.1 Wiltshire Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership Representative

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Mortimer as the Town Councillor representative on the Wiltshire Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership.

.2 Priority for People Working Group

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Houghton and

Councillor Ellis as additional Town Council representatives on the Priority for People Working Group.

158/21 Accounts

.1 List of Payments

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

RESOLVED to approve the list of payments for months 10 and 11 of the 2020/2021 financial year.

.2 Monthly Financial Statement for April 2021

The monthly financial statement was noted.

.3 Detailed Income & Expenditure Report as at April 2021

The income and expenditure report was noted.

159/21 Internal Audit Report

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard, stated that the Internal Audit report had been circulated by the Town Clerk.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to receive and adopt the Internal Auditor's report and the recommendations contained therein, noting that officers had already addressed the recommendations.

160/21 External Audit 2020/2021- Approval of the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/2021 and for the Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard, to sign the Annual Governance Statement as detailed in Section 1.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statements for 2020/2021 and for the Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard, to sign the Accounting Statements as detailed in Section 2.

161/21 Committee Minutes

.1 Asset Management and Amenities Committee

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Asset Management and Amenities Committee meeting held on 21 June 2021.

The decision by the Asset Management and Amenities Committee to form a 'Friends of' Working Group to research best practice in other towns and apply this to Melksham's green spaces and recreation areas was discussed.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint the following members to the Working Group:

Councillor Hubbard – the Town Mayor
Councillor Rabey
Councillor Goodhind – the Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Mortimer.

.2 Community Development Committee

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Community Development Committee meeting held on 7 June 2021.

.3 Economic Development and Planning Committee

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on 25 May 2021

and the draft minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on 14 June 2021.

162/21 Neighbourhood Plan

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hubbard, urged residents to vote in the Referendum which is being held on 1 July.

163/21 Bath Road Toilets

The report from the Head of Communications was noted.

Discussion took place regarding the reinstatement of the Bath Road toilets and Wiltshire Council's involvement as the current owners of the property.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to delegate to the Town Clerk the responsibility for undertaking the necessary works to reopen the Bath Road toilets as soon as possible at a maximum budget of £45,000 (to be met from general reserves) but to investigate other sources of funding.

An Extraordinary Meeting of the Council would have to be called should the project come in over budget at the tendering stage.

164/21 Melksham Town Council Policies

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to adopt the following policies:

Complaints Policy
Documentation Retention Scheme Policy
Flag Flying Policy
Lone Worker Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Training and Development Policy
Vexatious Complaints Policy.

165/21 Clackers' Brook Habitat Improvement Works

The report of the Economic Development Manager was noted.

Concerns were raised by Members regarding the impact of the project on nearby residents, possible contamination of the excavated spoil, ongoing maintenance

costs for Melksham Town Council and safeguarding issues raised by the erection of a one metre high barrier between Queensway and the play area at The Woody. It was felt that the project, as presented now, differed dramatically from that presented last winter.

It was agreed to request a site visit with a representative from Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) once their proposed scheme had been finalised and to advise WWT that the Town Council were opposed to the creation of a barrier.

166/21 Calendar of Meetings 2021-2022

The calendar of meetings for 2021/2022 was adopted subject to one change in December 2021.

167/21 Items For Information

The Melksham Transport Users Group minutes from their AGM on 27 May 2021 were received and the change of name noted.

168/21 Confidential Session

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that in view of the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be instructed to withdraw from the meeting.

169/21 Business Review Working Group

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

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Business Review Working Group be approved.

Meeting Closed at: 10.05 pm

Signed:

Dated: