Melksham Town Council

Town Hall, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6ES
Tel: (01225) 704187

Town Clerk and RFO Linda Roberts BA(Hons) PGCAP, FHEA, FLSCC

To: Councillor S Crundell (Town Mayor)
          Councillor S Mortimer (Deputy Town Mayor)
          Councillor P Alford
          Councillor P Aves
          Councillor G Cooke
          Councillor J Crundell
          Councillor G Ellis
          Councillor C Forgacs
          Councillor C Goodhind
          Councillor C Houghton
          Councillor J Hubbard
          Councillor L Lewis
          Councillor J Oatley
          Councillor T Price
          Councillor S Rabey

18 July 2022

Dear Councillors

In accordance with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, Sch 12, paras 10 (2)(b) you are summoned to attend the **Full Council** meeting of Melksham Town Council. The meeting will be held at the Town Hall on **Monday 25th July 2022** commencing at **7.00 pm**.

A period of public participation will take place in accordance with Standing Order 3(e) prior to the formal opening of the meeting. The Press and Public are welcome to attend this meeting in person, alternatively the public and press may join the meeting via Zoom.

In accordance with the Council's commitment to being open and transparent; all Town Council meetings are recorded and broadcast live. The right to do so was established under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations

Yours sincerely

Mrs L A Roberts BA(Hons), PGCAP, FHEA, FSLCC
Town Clerk and RFO

Melksham Town Council
Full Council

Monday 25 July 2022

In the exercise of Council functions. Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and the need to conserve biodiversity. The Council also has a duty to tackle discrimination, provide equality of opportunity for all and foster good relations in the course of developing policies and delivery services under the public sector Equality Duty and Equality 2010.

Public Participation – To receive questions from members of the public.

Virtual Meeting Access

Please follow the joining instructions below for the virtual Zoom meeting:

Join Zoom Meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86292753377?pwd=akRHR3lreHJjampsY2ZFZC81bTk3QT09

Meeting ID: 862 9275 3377   **Passcode:**   989371

Participants will be directly let in the meeting by clicking on the above link. There is no waiting room.

AGENDA

16.   **Neighbourhood Plan** (Pages 1 - 8)

To receive an update from Town Council representatives on the group.

- To approve the amendments to the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Terms of Reference (to follow).

- To note actual spend vs budgeted spend on the Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan during the 2022/2023 financial year, and to consider any additional project spend required (see attached).

- To note the brief prepared by Place Studios for the Melksham Town Centre Vision and Master Plan for which funding has been awarded (see attached).

- To note that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has been successful in obtaining technical support packages for a Town Centre Masterplan and Site Options and Assessments; and to consider the role of Place Consultants in relation

to this work.

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Terms of Reference

Reviewed by the Steering Group on 29th June 220 for approval by MTC & MWPC at their respective full council meetings to be held on Monday 25th July 2022.

Reviewed by members of MTC & MWPC 21/1/21, approved by the NHP Steering Group 24/2/21 and both Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Councils as the Qualifying Bodies at their respective Full Council meetings 1/3/21

1. **Purpose**

1.1   The Steering Group was formed to manage the production of a Neighbourhood Plan (NHP#1) for the Melksham Community Area; with its role now widening to encompass its implementation, review and development of the next version (NHP#2). In broad terms, NHP#1 conforms to the current Core Strategy, with NHP#2 conforming to the emerging Local Plan. The Steering Group brings together representatives of Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council and other stakeholders from the local community.

2.   **Area of Plan**

2.1   The Plan area covers the two parishes of Melksham Town and Melksham Without. The Steering Group will have regard to the views expressed from other parishes that border the two parishes of Melksham Town and Melksham Without if they are affected by strategic content; e.g., transport.

3.   **Accountability**

3.1   The Plan will be jointly led by the two Councils of Melksham Town and Melksham Without, who will jointly appoint permanent members of the Steering Group. The Steering Group will report to both Councils.

3.2   To satisfy a regulation requirement to have one single qualifying body for administrative purposes, the lead Council will be *Melksham Town*. However, in every other respect the two Councils will jointly lead and share responsibility for the Plan.

3.4   The Steering Group will be required to give a short written report of each Meeting (e.g., draft Minutes) to both Councils within 21 days of the Meeting and give other written reports as required at regular intervals on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.5   The community as a whole will be fully involved in the process through community consultation events and be informed of the Steering Group's work through the publication of the agenda, minutes and papers of meetings on the Councils' websites, dedicated Melksham Neighbourhood Plan website (www.melkshamneigbourhoodplan.org), and social media channels. In addition, regular updates will be made in the Melksham Independent News.

4.   **Broad Objectives**

4.1   To agree a vision for the area's future which represents the aspirations of those who live, work or run a business in the Plan area, against which future decisions and recommendations can be made.

4.2   To collect and evaluate information which will identify the priorities for future proposals and plans for the area, with specific focus on identifying any local policy to complement that provided by the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy and emerging Local Plan and identifying any non-strategic sites for allocation to ensure adequate and appropriate housing and development land is available within the area for the period up to 2036. To input into the development of strategic and non-strategic sites to include shaping of local infrastructure, community facilities, connectivity to existing development and good quality, sustainable housing.

4.3   To develop and agree a "Statement of Common Ground" with Wiltshire Council to cover Strategic Priorities that *cover* the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan, the adopted Core Strategy, emerging Local Plan and other elements.

4.4   To inform decisions that are made on development proposals that may come forward during the preparation of the plan.

4.5   To convey to the whole neighbourhood area the importance of the Melksham Spatial Planning process and the wider community's crucial role in ensuring that the future hopes, visions and aspirations of Melksham people are accurately reflected in a Neighbourhood Plan.

4.6   To keep the lead Councils and the community informed of the Plan's progress via accurately recorded decisions, reports and press releases.

4.7   To ensure that a finalised Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with national policy, the local development plan and national policy including the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework)

4.8   To engage the wider community (including hard-to-reach groups) in meaningful debate about key local economic, social and environmental issues through a variety of consultation methods and events, and accurately record their views.

4.9   To ensure that all decisions made throughout the preparation period including local strategic needs for housing, employment, transport, leisure, health, education, town centre regeneration and the environment are based on sound and objective evidence.

4.10   To oversee the production of a Neighbourhood Plan in liaison with the Wiltshire Spatial Planning Service that will secure an improved quality of life for the majority of residents in the parishes of Melksham and Melksham Without through greater economic, environmental and social prosperity.

5.   Plan Topics

5.1   In the Plan preparation, the Steering Group will ensure that the following topics are fully examined and addressed in the context of the detailed guidance contained in the NPPF, the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan: -

NHP#1	NHP#2
Building a strong competitive economy	Local Green Space
Promoting sustainable transport	Housing/Site Allocations
Delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes	Implications of the Bypass
Promoting healthy communities	Town Centre Master Plan
Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding	Environmental Issues
Conserving and enhancing the natural environment	Implications of the Melksham Canal Link
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment	

6. **Scope of work**

For NHP#1:

6.1 Initial phases will include: formalisation of the Steering Group; initial research; defining the project scope; preparing an up-to-date vision; identifying issues and opportunities; identifying possible development sites which may need to be subject to more detailed analysis; and finalising a detailed project plan.

6.2 Further work will be identified once the scoping phase has been completed by the Steering Group following the completion of the scoping phase.

For NHP#2:

6.3 Initial phases will include: review of the Steering Group and encourage new membership; initial research; defining the project scope; preparing an up-to-date vision; identifying issues and opportunities; identifying possible development sites which may need to be subject to more detailed analysis; and finalising a detailed project plan.

7. **Steering Group Membership**

7.1 The Steering Group will comprise 11 permanent voting members comprising:

- Two representatives from Melksham Without Parish Council

- Two representatives from Melksham Town Council

- One representative from Melksham Area Board

7.2 The Steering Group shall seek nominations for representatives of the following through, in the first instance, an open invitation published in Melksham News inviting interested parties to outline in writing the factors supporting their nomination. Representatives must be an appointed representative of a community group. Applications will be considered and appropriate representatives chosen by a majority vote of Steering Group members above presiding at a preliminary meeting. Nominees may be invited to address the preliminary meeting prior to any vote being taken.

- One representative from the business community

- One representative from the health community

- One representative for environmental and climate change interests

- One representative for the historic and built environment

- One representative for transport

- One representative from the "Priority for People" working group

7.3 In addition, the following Council Officers and Consultants will attend where appropriate in an advisory and non-voting capacity:

- One representative from Wiltshire Council's Spatial Planning Team

- Melksham Town Clerk

- Assistant to Melksham Town Clerk

- Melksham Without Parish Clerk

- Melksham Without Parish Officer

7.4 If a Steering Group Member is a member of more than one organisation, they should declare their wider interest. Members must not be "dual hatted", for example, they cannot be a town, parish or Wiltshire councillor if representing a community group.

7.5 Where appropriate, the Steering Group will establish various subject and locality sub-working groups (including hard-to-reach sectors of the community) to provide specific areas of evidence, analysis and expertise. A broad balance of social, environmental and economic interests will strengthen the robustness and integrity of the Plan as a representative community driven document. These working groups can only be established with agreement of the Steering Group.

8. Responsibilities of Steering Group members:

8.1 Responsibility for the effectiveness of the Steering Group and thereby the success of the Neighbourhood Planning process depends on positive commitment, respect for others and contributions from its members. The need to work together to generate and maintain momentum is integral to the success of the project and members must be supportive and committed to the process and its implementation.

8.2   Recognise that the decisions made by the Steering Group require compromise and consensus building; consequently, members should ensure they are committed to helping to guide the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan towards the identification and delivery of a shared vision.

8.3   Agree in principle to work towards unity and to approach all issues with an open mind and not simply promote sectional interests. Once a decision has been made each member will then recognise the group decision and put the interests of the Group as a whole above their own considerations.

8.4   Commit to the development of the plan and attendance at all meetings. In the event that attendance is not possible, representations or comments will be accepted via email. This should be submitted to the group no less than 3 days prior to the date of a meeting. Substitutes will be considered at the discretion of the Steering Group.

8.5   Consider progress reports and work undertaken, including the analysis and interpretation of results from inclusive community engagement and public consultation activities, to inform decision-making and determine appropriate courses of action.

8.6   Agree community engagement and public consultation at appropriate stages to ensure that the information gathered is representative of those living within the area.

8.7   Provide information in the form of evidence to Wiltshire Council's Spatial Planning Service to influence the development of Core Strategy Policy relating to the area/or to be consistent with any strategic policy once the Core Strategy is adopted.

8.8   Ensure consultation with and co-operation from key stakeholders to ensure the deliverability of project and strategy proposals.

8.9   Co-opt additional members where necessary to join the Steering Group if required.

8.10   To invite experts, stakeholders, professionals to meetings for their input into specific discussion points and topics.

8.11   To ensure that any planning related documentation complies with Wiltshire Council's SCI (Statement of Community Involvement) and is appropriate for adoption.

8.12   Promote the appropriate development of the area in accordance with the updated Vision and completed plan.

9.   Commitment from Wiltshire Council

9.1   An Officer from Spatial Planning (Economic Development and Planning) will be assigned to act as advisor and single point of contact for Wiltshire Council to ensure that all recommendations or outcomes of this process are in compliance with current policies and/or strategies, and are used to inform the future development of policies, strategies or direct implementation of work. Specific responsibilities include:

- To respond to requests for information within agreed timescales and proactively suggest options and opportunities to overcome barriers to delivery.

- To engage expertise as required from across the Council and other bodies/organisations to enable delivery.

10.   Steering Group Meetings

10.1   The Steering Group will meet ~~monthly~~ as required on the last Wednesday of the month to review progress of the Plan. ~~Meetings will be held monthly~~ Supplementary meetings will be convened on an ad hoc basis as considered necessary by the Steering Group. The Steering Group must meet at key stages in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. Both Councils will be informed well in advance of any planned supplementary meetings.

10.2   Meetings will convene at 6.~~00~~30 p.m. and finish no later than 8.~~00~~30 p.m.

10.3   The Steering Group shall elect a Chair by open vote who will serve until the next last Wednesday in May. Thereafter every May, a new Chair shall be elected to serve for one year. The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected from members present at the Steering Group meeting. The Chair or Vice Chair may be replaced by voluntary resignation or by a vote of two thirds of the Steering Group members.

10.4   Venues of meetings will be identified on the calling notice and agenda which will be issued to Group members by email by the Council officers at least four working days prior to the date of meeting.

10.5   Matters for the Agenda will be determined by the Officer Working Group that meets the week before the meeting and the Agenda will clearly state matters for discussion at meetings. Once a decision is made, there will be no further discussion on that item. There will be no discussion of matters not specified on the Agenda.

10.6   Any documents which are to be considered prior to a meeting should be received at least 3 working days prior to a meeting *(where possible)* via email.

10.7   Minutes of all meetings will be recorded and kept on file for future reference and examination. Minutes of meetings will be circulated to both Councils following approval by the Steering Group within 14 days of the date of the Meeting. In the interests of openness and transparency, Minutes of public meetings will also be made available on each Council's website, and the dedicated Melksham Neighbourhood Plan website.

10.8   Draft communication statements including press releases will be circulated to Steering Group members and local Councils for approval at least 48 hours prior to release *(within reason).*

10.9   All contributions to meetings and decisions will be made through the Chair who undertakes to be fair and impartial. The Steering Group will seek to reach decisions by consensus which will be recorded in the Minutes. All permanent members will have an equal vote in decision-making within the Steering Group except for the Chair who will have a casting vote in the case of equality of votes at a steering group meeting.

10.10   Decisions on key strategic issues, milestones, appointment of consultants and spend in the neighbourhood planning process will be in the form of recommendations to the two respective parish councils for their formal ratification to ensure legal requirements are met. The two Councils will consider the Steering Group recommendations at the next available Council Meeting and report back to the Steering Group at the next meeting.

10.11   The Steering Group will be quorate when at least a third voting members are present, no less than three. Members may nominate substitutes from their organisation if they are unable to

attend. No decisions will be made without at least one member from each Council being present.

10.12 The Chair will ensure that all members have the right to participate and be heard within an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Members will respect the role of the Chair and accept the Chair's ruling as final. The Chair will have the option to adjourn the Meeting for 15 minutes if he/she feels this is necessary.

10.13 All members, including the Chair have a right to request that an item be deferred if he/she feels that more information is essential to making a wise decision, or if he/she wishes go back to his/her organisation for clarity. The Chair will put any request to defer an item to the vote and the decision will be accepted by all present.

10.14 The item "To receive Declarations of Interest" will be placed on all Steering Group Meeting agendas. All Members are required to declare interests and absent themselves from voting on any issue where there is a potential pecuniary benefit to themselves, their family, or any organisation with which they are associated. All members are to complete a Register of Interests within 28 days of being appointed to the Steering Group and it is the Member's responsibility to update as necessary.

11   Public Participation

11.1   Members of the public shall be admitted to all public meetings of the Steering Group. In the event that items to be discussed are of a confidential nature, members of the public may be excluded, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, by formal resolution. If a person's advice is needed, they may be invited by name to remain after the exclusion resolution is passed.

11.2   Time will be set aside at the start of each meeting for public participation. The total period allowed for public participation shall not exceed twenty minutes.

11.3   Each person wishing to address the Joint Steering Group shall be restricted to a total of three minutes within the time allowed for public participation.

12.   Resolving Conflict

12.1   The Steering Group will seek to resolve any conflict through discussion to reach consensus wherever possible.

12.2   Where there is conflict in procedures linked to the Neighbourhood Plan process, members will be encouraged to seek and accept advice from Council Officers. Officers will have the option to refer a matter for further professional advice and report back to the next Group Meeting.

12.3   Where there is a clear difference of opinion between representatives from the two lead organisations, the Chair will request representatives to take the issue to both Council Meetings for discussion and a formal vote.

12.4   In the extreme event of impasse, officers will arrange for representatives of the two lead councils to meet with an appropriate representative from WALC (Wiltshire Association of Local Councils) and/or the Wiltshire Council Link Officer to agree a way forward...

13. Terms of Reference

12.5 The two Councils will be responsible for agreeing the terms of reference and any changes to them.

Notes on previous versions:

Stephen Gray (Clerk to Melksham Town Council) & Mary Jarvis (Clerk to Melksham Without Parish Council) 7 February 2013

Ratified by Melksham Town Council on 18 February 2013

Ratified by Melksham Without Parish Council on 18 February 2013

UPDATED BY Lorraine McRandle, Melksham Town Council following May 2017 Steering Group meeting

FURTHER UPDATED BY Teresa Strange, Melksham Without Parish Council following June 2017 Steering Group meeting

Approved by MWPC Full Council 17 July 2017 Min 144/17b

Approved by Melksham Town Council on 4 September 2017