

## **Melksham Town Council**

### **Minutes of the Asset Management and Amenities Committee meeting held on Tuesday 11th April 2023**

**PRESENT:** Councillor G Cooke (Chair)  
Councillor C Forgacs (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor G Ellis  
Councillor C Goodhind  
Councillor J Hubbard  
Councillor T Price

**IN ATTENDANCE:** One member of the public and one member of the press were present

**OFFICERS:** Linda Roberts Town Clerk

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

##### **151/22 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Houghton Oatley, Councillor Houghton was substituted by Councillor Rabey.

##### **152/22 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

##### **153/22 Minutes**

The Town Clerk advised that the minute agenda item showed the date of the minutes incorrectly, 6/3/2023, the agenda should have stated 6/2/2023.

The minutes of the Asset Management and Amenities Committee meeting held on 6 February 2023, having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair, Councillor Cooke.

##### **154/22 Eco Loos - Presentation by Piers Dibben - Healthmatic**

Piers Dibben of Healthmatic was present to give members an update on the installation of the Eco Loos.

Piers advised that they were zero composting toilets and would be the first of this type to be installed in the UK adding that Healthmatic were extremely grateful for the opportunity to use Melksham as a showcase. To reflect the gratitude a 50% discount has been offered to make the project work for the Town Council and Healthmatic.

The Eco loos are wooden, fire resistant, up to a point (Piers agreed to check this point for length of time). They are comprised of a galvanised steel frame, with astro cladding on the inside; they are composting toilets developed in France and built to enable a number of uses per day.

The installation date was confirmed as 28 April 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow Ian Cardy to address the Committee.

Mr Cardy asked how often the toilets needed emptying and is this a cost that will have to be met by the Town Council. Piers replied every two weeks, however Piers advised that Healthmatic would be actively managing the toilet for some considerable time in the future.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

Councillor Hubbard stated this was the first he had heard about an emptying charge and thought it was a composting toilet which did not need emptying. Councillor Hubbard reminded members that the council had been let down so many times over the installation and council was now learning there would be an ongoing cost for emptying. Councillor Hubbard asked how long Healthmatic would be managing the emptying and what is the likely cost of emptying the toilets when it becomes the council's responsibility? Councillor Hubbard asked if there were any other maintenance costs, accepting that there may be some from vandalism and fair wear and tear.

Piers explained that Healthmatic will manage the emptying but an exact cost was unknown.

## **155/22    Eco Loos - Report of the Head of Operations**

The report from the Head of Operations was noted.

Members considered the merits of charging 20-50p for using the Eco Toilets. In answer to a question from Councillor Hubbard it was confirmed that to install charging units in both toilets the cost would be £1200 per unit adding that installation retrospectively would be more.

Councillor Hubbard stated that charging people to use toilets does not stop people setting up camp in them overnight; Councillor Price added his concerns that charging might discourage use by the people the town council are trying to provide the service for and they should be free.

Members then considered locking the units on a timer.

It was proposed by Councillor Hubbard seconded by Councillor Goodhind and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Healthmatic procure on the Council's behalf two time lock units, at cost no more than £600.00 per unit.

**156/22     Shambles Festival**

The Chair, Councillor Cook requested that the agenda item on the Shambles Festival be discussed next as James Wilkins the organiser of the Shambles was present.

The Shambles Festival would take place at King George V park on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May. The Head of Operations requested volunteer support from members at the event which could be done on a rota basis.

Councillors Ellis, Forgacs, Hubbard, Price and Rabey agreed to go on the rota which would commence at 12 noon.

**157/22     Sensory Garden - Tender Specification**

The specification was noted.

**158/22     Review of Sensory garden Tender Document**

There was a wide-ranging discussion on aspects of the plan.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to request Expressions of Interest in year one for an initial concept design including examples of what could be added, with the possibility of a contract in year two for such additional works. Year One budget of up to £25000, as previously agreed by Council.

**159/22     Good News Church - Lease of Former Art House Cafe**

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

**RESOLVED** to approve a new lease at a rate of £500 per month including taxes.

**160/22     KGV Lighting - Returned Tenders**

Discussion of item 10 on the agenda was brought forward.

It was proposed by Councillor Cooke, seconded by Councillor Price, and

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Hubbard, Councillor Rabey and Councillor Price be appointed to the tender Review Working Group with a meeting scheduled for Monday 17 April 2023.

**161/22     1870 KGV Lighting Tender comparison names removed**

**162/22     KGV Maintenance Building**

Discussion of item 12 on the agenda was brought forward. Standing Orders were suspended to allow Ian Cardy to address the meeting. Ian Cardy shared his experience in ecology concerning the presence of bats in the building.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to proceed with the demolition of the maintenance shed, subject to the Town Clerk referring to the Bat Conservation Trust website for clarification of the law.

**163/22     Town Hall as a Wedding.Civil Partnership venue**

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

**RESOLVED** the matter be investigated further with more information on the business case for the proposal and that any decision is deferred until that information is available.

**164/22     Health & Safety - Appointment of Councillor/Officer Working Group**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Cooke, Councillor Ellis and Councillor Forgacs to the Health & Safety Working Group.

Meeting Closed at: 9.30 pm

Signed: .....

Dated: