

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 22nd May 2023

PRESENT:

Councillor S Crundell (Town Mayor)
Councillor T Price (Deputy Town Mayor)
Councillor S Mortimer
Councillor P Alford
Councillor P Aves
Councillor G Ellis
Councillor C Forgacs
Councillor C Goodhind
Councillor C Houghton
Councillor S Rabey

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the press and three members of the public were present, and one member of the public was present virtually

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Town Mayor invited members of the public to address council.

Lisa Ellis asked the following questions:

- Can it be confirmed that the purchase of Melksham House by Melksham Town Council is now off the table because of Wiltshire Council's decision to accept their internal offer by SEND on the 14th of February 2023?
 - Can it be confirmed that the Melksham Assembly Hall will remain at its present location, with necessary repairs made urgently to fix faults?
 - Can it be confirmed that Melksham Town Hall will remain an asset of the Town Council?
 - Will the Town Council work with interested community members in an open way to help take forward the town's assets for the benefit of our community including establishing a policy of having at least two members of the public on each working group?
- The Town mayor, Councillor S Crundell confirmed that a written response would be provided.

Howard Jones referred to his Freedom of Information Request made 15 April 2023, chased on 17 May 2023 with a reply on 18

May 2023 stating the matter had been referred to the Historical Association. He wished to establish ownership of the Blue Pool and referenced the possibility of Wiltshire Council demolishing the site. He asked the following questions:

- Through Asset Transfer or other means as required would the Town Council consider acquiring the Blue Pool building in order to enhance the attached Assembly Hall with facilities such as an improved entrance and reception area, an increase to the number of men's and women's toilets and an accessible toilet, to establish a museum with the extra space available, to convert the current entrance to an emergency exit, to provide dedicated parking to ease the strain on parking in the Melksham Campus and provide better access to the new museum and Assembly Hall for those bringing equipment and bulky items into and out of the building?
- Can the hand out produced be included into the minutes of this meeting so it can be given full and serious consideration at the next meeting of the appropriate committee?
- Can the three Wiltshire Councillors representing Melksham take this request to Wiltshire Council for consideration?
- Why was my Freedom of Information request passed to a private organisation which is not subject to FOI

The Town Clerk advised Mr Jones that she had not seen his Freedom of Information request and the assets are in the ownership of Wiltshire Council so we would probably not be of much help.

The Town Clerk also advised Mr Jones that his proposal document cannot be included in the minutes but that Councillors can read to document and it can be considered as an agenda item at a later date.

Mike Saunders asked the following questions:

- Could he request an answer to the question he raised at the meeting on 15 May 2023?
- Is the Council losing interest on the Environment and Climate Working Group?

Councillor S Crundell, the Town Mayor advised that new membership of the ECWG was elected at the last meeting and it remains an important group.

OFFICERS:

Linda Roberts
Hugh Davies
Andrew Meacham

Town Clerk
Head of Operations
Committee Clerk

Apologies were received from Councillor Cooke, Councillor J Crundell, Councillor Hubbard and Councillor Oatley

509/23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

510/23 Questions from Councillors

There were no questions from Councillors.

511/23 Minutes

Councillor Mortimer's nomination as Deputy Mayor to be recorded.

The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, suggested that future votes for Mayor and Deputy Mayor be by Recorded Vote.

Proposed by Councillor Forgacs, seconded by Councillor Rabey and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that future votes for Mayor and Deputy Mayor be by recorded vote.

Councillor Ellis asked that when questions from a member of the public cannot be answered at the meeting it be minuted that someone will get back to them. The Town Clerk advised Public Participation was not an agenda item but an advisory note could be made.

Councillor Goodhind felt the minutes did not accurately reflect the questions out by Robert Carter. The Town Mayor and The Town Clerk confirmed a meeting had been held with Mr Carter earlier that evening.

Subject to above the minutes of 15th May 2023 having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell.

512/23 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Town Mayor announced the death of former Town Clerk Jean Harris. The Town Mayor said she would be remembered for her energy, enthusiasm and outstanding service.

513/23 Police Report

Sgt Rutter introduced herself and reported on recent action and future initiatives and concerns.

514/23 Reports from Unitary Councillors

Members received an update from Councillor Alford on Wiltshire Council's Climate Strategy, including

£3.6 million funding secured to reduce carbon footprint.

90 homes retro fitted to be energy efficient.

£50 million programme to insulate housing stock.

Plans to bring some housing in Wiltshire under the control of Wiltshire Council rather than Housing Associations.

£300000 Government funding for Woodland Area planting

Wiltshire Council's partnership with Solar Direct

Councillor Alford answered members questions relating to his report.

515/23 Accounts

515/23.1 List of Payments

Proposed by Councillor Forgacs, seconded by Councillor Rabey, and

RESOLVED to approve the list of payments circulated with the agenda pack.

515/23.2 Petty Cash

Proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Forgacs, and

RESOLVED to approve the list of payments circulated with the agenda pack.

515/23.3 Monthly Financial Statement

Proposed by Councillor Forgacs, seconded by Councillor Aves, and

RESOLVED to note the monthly financial statement.

515/23.4 Detailed Income & Expenditure Report as at

Proposed by Councillor Rabbi, seconded by Councillor Forgacs, and

RESOLVED to note the Income and Expenditure Report.

516/23 Committee Minutes

516/23.1 Economic Development and Planning Committee

The minutes were received.

516/23.2 Finance Administration and Performance Committee

The minutes were received.

517/23 Finance Administration and Performance draft Minutes of 9 May 2023

It was proposed by Councillor Rabbi, seconded by The Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Price, and

RESOLVED to approve the recommendation to add £2000 from the General Grant Budget to the General Reserve.

518/23 Staffing Committee

The minutes were received.

519/23 Working Group Minutes

The notes of The Environment and Climate Working Group were not attached to the agenda pack. This item is deferred to the next meeting

The notes of the Events Working Group meetings on 2 March 2023, 4 April 2023 and 2 May 2023 were received.

520/23 Neighbourhood Plan

Members noted the Neighbourhood Plans part in the refusal of planning permission for 210 houses south of Melksham Town. It was noted for the benefit of the public that the plan does not stop house building but ensures development is on a planned basis.

Regulation 14 protection comes to an end on 8 July 2023. Work is proceeding to get a new plan into place. The Town Clerk advised that the plan should be ready for Regulation 14 submission between July and September 2023.

521/23 Hire Charges

The report on pricing structures for the Town Hall and the Assembly Hall for 2023/2024 financial year was received.

It was proposed by Councillor Mortimer, seconded by Councillor Rabbi, and

RESOLVED to approve the proposed pricing structures.

522/23 For Information

522/23.1 Community Police Reports

The reports for February and March 2023 were received.

523/23 Wilts and Berks Canal Trust

The minutes of 21 February 2023 were received.

524/23 Standing Orders

Proposed by The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, seconded by Councillor Mortimer, and

RESOLVED to approve the updated Standing Orders 2023.

525/23 Financial Regulations 2023

526/23 Procurement - Legal Topic Note 87

Proposed by Councillor Houghton, seconded by Councillor Ellis, and

RESOLVED to approve the updated Financial Regulations 2023.

527/23 Drainage at KGV

Questions were answered by the Head of Operations.

Proposed by Councillor S Crundell, the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Rabey, and

RESOLVED to accept quote A.

Meeting Closed at: 8.45 pm

Signed:

Dated: