

## **Melksham Town Council**

### **Minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 1st August 2023**

**PRESENT:** Councillor S Rabey (Chair)  
Councillor J Oatley (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor P Aves  
Councillor G Cooke  
Councillor G Ellis

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Two Melksham Without Parish Council councillors, one Wiltshire councillor and one member of the press were present. One member of the public was present virtually.

<b>OFFICERS:</b>	Linda Roberts	Town Clerk
	Andrew Meacham	Committee Clerk

#### **466/23 Apologises**

Apologises were received from Councillor Mortimer, who was substituted by Councillor Westbrook.

#### **467/23 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **468/23 Minutes**

The minutes of 11 July 2023 having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair, Councillor Rabey.

#### **469/23 Gillings Planning - Presentation on proposals for Care home on land at Verbena Court**

Will Rees introduced Frontier Estates.

Laura Grimason gave details of the proposed home and actions taken.

- 71 beds.
- Provide residential and nursing care.
- Capability to care for dementia patients.
- 900 leaflets sent out to local home online consultation. 3 replies, 12 in support of scheme or in support with reservations and 24 against.

- Two pre-apps submitted, in 2020 and 2021. Discussions held with Wiltshire Council and these have shaped the application they intend to submit.

Ben Garlick introduced his company and gave details of the planned building design.

- 71 beds over three floors
- Each floor has own nurse station, drug store, assisted bathrooms
- Each bedroom en-suite
- Each floor has own dining room and lounge
- Café
- Views from building
- Building materials.

Questions and concerns were raised.

Committee: Site was allocated for a community facility. Hall, Medical Centre, Recycling  
Reps: Primary Care Trust and Wiltshire Council advised site not needed for Medical Centre or Recycling. Community Hall facility provided within school.

Committee: School cannot be used at any time during term-times so not a suitable alternative for a Community Hall.

Committee: Public Consultation. Response rate is a concern. Single leaflet drop not sufficient.

Reps: Previous experience suggests that people who are happy with proposals don't respond.

Committee: Councillor Westbrook recently elected. Door to door visits during campaign showed considerable opposition to plan.

Committee: Staffing. Existing care facilities have difficulty recruiting and retaining staff. How will the proposed home ensure staffing levels?

Reps: Design of building and salaries will make the care home an attractive place to work. If the operator did not think they could recruit, they would not pursue the development.

Committee: Parking. Available parking is an issue, especially during school drop-off and pick-up times.

Reps: Operators will encourage car-sharing and explore providing transport. Shift changes will not coincide with school times.

Committee: Public House. The proposed site is near to a busy pub. Have they considered the possible effect on residents.

Reps: Residents need a connection to the outside world and be able to see some activity. Other sites are located near to public houses, an airfield, busy roads etc. A Noise Assessment will be carried out. Enhanced glazing may be considered if required.

Committee: Time scale of build.

Reps: 18-24 months.

Councillor Sankey (Wiltshire Council) agreed with concerns about staffing. As a member of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group he commented that the Neighbourhood Plan had not identified any need for a care home and asked how they had identified a need.

Reps: Need shown by aging population, so identified as a national rather than local need.

Joe McCann of Melksham Independent News asked what was good about that particular site and how will they engage with the community.

Reps: Site is next to a local centre with permission for development. Would bring in children from the local primary school and make the café available to the community.

**470/23 Planning Considerations**

**471/23 Planning Applications**

**472/23 PL/2023/05417**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the application.

**473/23 PL/2023/05351**

The committee expressed concerns over the lack of EV Charging Points, the available levels of public transport in view of the lack of parking spaces and Place Road access.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the application.

**474/23 PL/2023/05617**

The committee expressed concerns about the parking allocation and the possible problem of visitors seeking parking in the surrounding area. The committee noted the concerns on the lack of swift bricks.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the application.

**475/23 PL/2023/05557**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the application.

**476/23 PL/2023/05351**

This item was a duplication of item 473/23.

**477/23 Planning Decisions**

**478/23 PL/2023/02647**

The decision was noted.

**479/23 PL/2023/02986**

The decision was noted.

**480/23 PL/2023/03807**

The decision was noted.

**481/23 PL/2023/03875**

The decision was noted.

**482/23 PL/2022/08340**

The decision was noted.

**483/23 Sparkle Team and Parish Steward**

Councillor Rabey advised that the one-way sign coming out of Weavers Croft is obscured by foliage.

**484/23 Neighbourhood Plan**

**485/23 Confidential Session**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential business to be transacted that the public and press be excluded from the meeting.

**486/23 Allocations by the Steering Group for approval**

The Town Clerk gave an update on the allocation sites and advised that the Steering Group had accepted the allocation in principal.

There was discussion on the information relayed by the Town Clerk and it was noted that the emerging draft Neighbourhood Plan for Melksham had achieved its quota of housing on sites that should not be contentious.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the allocations as reported.

Meeting Closed at: 8.20 pm

**Signed:** .....

**Dated:**