

## **Melksham Town Council**

### **Minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 24th October 2023**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Harris of Melksham Without Parish Council

**OFFICERS:** Andrew Meacham Committee Clerk

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** One member of the public was present virtually.

**539/23 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Westbrook, who was substituted by Councillor Stokes.

**540/23 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**541/23 Minutes**

The minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023, having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by Councillor Rabey.

**542/23 Planning Considerations**

**543/23 Planning Applications**

**544/23 PL/2023/07608**

Councillor Oatley read out the comment made by the Highways Department. There was a discussion on access to and from the property and the size of the site.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application in principle on the basis of housing needs but wish to see the Highways Department comments addressed.

**545/23 PL/2023/08679**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application.

**546/23 PL/2023/07185**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application.

**547/23 PL/2023/08677**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application.

**548/23 PL/2023/08046**

The Chair, Councillor Rabey, noted the item was at the request of Councillor Ellis and invited him to comment.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow Councillor Harris of Melksham Without Parish Council to speak.

Councillor Harris advised that MWPC broadly supported the application but had misgivings about the following.

- Access. Only one point of access which is enshrined in outline planning permission and cannot be changed. This may lead to conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. MWPC requested at a pre-app meeting a pedestrian access from the pedestrian crossing on Western Way into the north side of the school site. This was rejected on security grounds but MWPC believe it could be operated without compromising security.
- Traffic. The single point of access combined with a small car park may result in traffic back up and parking on Pathfinder Way and surrounding side streets.
- Design. Not happy with colour scheme. Would prefer a muted scheme.

Members viewed the proposed colour scheme. It was suggested that a scheme similar to Great Bear site would be appropriate.

It was proposed by Councillor Ellis, seconded by Councillor Stokes and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

It was proposed by Councillor Ellis, seconded by Councillor Stokes and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application but to agree with and echo Melksham Without Parish Council comments.

**549/23 PL/2023/07107**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow Councillor Harris to speak.

Councillor Harris advised that Melksham Without Parish Council noted the application does not conform to either the emerging Local Plan or Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan and they opposed the application.

Councillor Ellis noted that part of the land covered by the plan is in Melksham Town.

Councillor Oatley asked if Councillor Holder was requested to call in the application. Councillor Harris was not able to say for sure but noted that there were several applications that Councillor Holder had indicated he would be calling in and this could well be one of them.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

Councillor Stokes drew attention to the evidence of possible habitation by otters, water voles and bats. This was discussed.

There was further discussion on the issues and on the comments made by Melksham Without Parish Council.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to object to the application and to echo the comments of Melksham Without Parish Council.

**550/23 PL/2023/07507**

It was noted that there were no documents available to view on Wiltshire Planning Website. Councillor Ellis noted that the site was in Melksham Without Parish Council when the application was originally considered but was now in Melksham Town.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow Councillor Harris to speak.

There was discussion of the application which relates to a condition of the original permission. Councillor Alford suggested there was no comment needed at this stage.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to make no comment at this stage.

**551/23 Planning Decisions**

**552/23 PL/2023/06483**

Noted.

**553/23 PL/2023/05617**

Noted.

**554/23 PL/2023/04564**

Noted.

**555/23 PL/2023/07337**

Noted.

**556/23 PL/2023/07296**

Noted.

**557/23 The Wiltshire Council Parish of Melksham Path No 107 & Melksham Without Path No 151 Rights of Way Modification Order 2020**

Noted.

**558/23 Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) Issues**

Councillor Alford asked that applications are not submitted to LHFIG before the Town Council has fully considered the matter and made a decision.

There was discussion on Town Council representation at the meetings.

**559/23 Neighbourhood Plan**

Noted. Councillor Oatley commented that members should encourage residents to take part in the consultation.

**560/23 Sparkle Team and Parish Steward**

Councillor asked for the bus shelter opposite George Ward Gardens to be cleared.

Councillor Stokes mentioned weeds growing through drains in East Melksham. Councillor Rabey advised that Wiltshire Council had cut back on weeding and asked Councillor Stokes to supply details to officers.

Councillor Ellis had received complaints about brambles growing out from KGV Playing Fields, over the wall and into the street in Lowbourne.

Members were asked to encourage people to additionally report problems direct to Wiltshire Council via MyWilts.

Councillor Alford asked for clarification on the maintenance and sponsorship of large roundabouts. Councillor Rabey confirmed that Farmers Roundabout was Melksham Town and was sponsored by Chalkland Vets. Other roundabouts are partly Melksham Town and partly Melksham Without.

Councillor Alford asked what policy is adopted on overgrowing hedges. It was confirmed that on previous occasions a letter has been sent asking the resident asking them to cut back the bush. Councillor Alford identified a hedge that he felt was an issue and asked if a letter could be sent. Councillor Rabey suggested the council consider some advertising in the Melksham Independent News and on Facebook.

Meeting Closed at: 8.15 pm

**Signed:** .....

**Dated:**