

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Cemeteries Task & Finish Group

on Tuesday 8th July 2025

PRESENT: Councillor P Alford (MTC)
Councillor M Blackham (MWPC)
Councillor J Glover (MWPC)
Councillor A Griffin (MTC)
Councillor M Harris (MWPC)

IN ATTENDANCE

OFFICERS	Hayley Bell	Acting CEO/Town Clerk (MTC)
	Teresa Strange	Clerk (MWPC)
	Andrew Meacham	Committee Clerk (MTC)

1/25 Chair

Councillor Alford was appointed Chair of the meeting.

It was agreed that the chair would alternate each meeting and that the first Chair would be Melksham Town Council as they were hosting the meeting.

2/25 Apologies

There were no apologies

3/25 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4/25 Parameters

Melksham Without Parish Council had suggested amendments to the Terms of Reference, namely:-

Section 5: Membership:

- The number of councillors should be is defined e.g. three (not 'up to three')
- "Council Officers may attend..." to be changed to "One council officer from each council should attend..."

Section 6. Chairing and Meetings:

- The chair will rotate each meeting. The chair has no casting vote
- A majority vote is carried however, in the event that this cannot be achieved a counter proposal would be required.

Terms of Reference were agreed with these amendments and the amendments suggested by Councillor Alford contained in the agenda pack.

5/25 Next Steps

It was agreed to obtain definitive confirmation of Wiltshire Council's position.

It was agreed to explore the options for burials and ashes in the Town, the Greater Melksham Area and further afield.

Officers will

- Contact Wiltshire Council about their future policy on burial provision and the possibility of land adjacent to the existing cemetery being used for interment of ashes. To ascertain current costs of running/maintaining the Melksham facility. To check if cemetery is classed as "community use" for any land designated as such in planning permissions and s106 agreements. This is to include Wiltshire Councillor Cabinet members Cllr Adrian Foster (Strategic Planning re the CIL Infrastructure List funding), Cllr Martin Smith (Highways – as Cemetery under this remit) and Cllr Helen Belcher (Assets)
- Explore other options for burials and ashes in the area (including natural burials, differing religions and crematorium)
- Contact other local persons and organisations involved in burials for their experience/future thoughts (Funeral Directors/Grave Diggers)
- Collate all relevant information for the next meeting including current and future mortality rates and any trends in burials/ashes

The next meeting was set for 17:30 on Tuesday 2nd September 2025 at the offices of Melksham Without Parish Council.

Meeting closed at:

Signed

Dated