



2025

## MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL



# Amenities & Facilities Agenda

*Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025 19:00*



Town Hall,  
Market Place,  
Melksham,  
Wiltshire  
SN12 6ES

01225 704187  
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# MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall,  
Market Place,  
Melksham,  
Wiltshire  
SN12 6ES

CEO Miss Hayley Bell, Assoc CIPD, CertHE, FSLCC

01225 704187

[towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk)

6<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Dear Councillors,

You are summoned in accordance with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, Sch 12, paras 10 (2)(b) to a meeting of Amenities & Facilities Committee of Melksham Town Council for the transaction of the business shown on the agenda below.

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025**, to be held at 19.00 in the Council Chamber, Melksham Town Hall, Market Place, Melksham, SN12 7ES.

The quorum for Amenities & Facilities is 4.

## **Public Participation.**

Members of the public and the press may attend this meeting in person or join the meeting on teams via the following link <https://tinyurl.com/yškyy9ze> . Public participation will take place near the start of the meeting.

Each speaker is limited to three minutes, with a total public session of 20 minutes. Members of the public are requested to send their question to [CEO@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:CEO@melksham-tc.gov.uk) by noon on the working day before the meeting. You should still attend the meeting, in person or online, to ask your question.

No decisions will be made on matters not already on the agenda. The Council may ask the public and press to leave if confidential matters need to be discussed.

## **The Seven Principles of Public Life.**

All members are reminded of their duty under the code of conduct to uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Hayley Bell – CEO

## **Amenities & Facilities Committee Terms of Reference.**

The Amenities & Facilities Committee is responsible for matters relating to all assets owned and/or managed by the Town Council. This includes the town hall, assembly hall and other property owned by the town council, parks and play areas, grounds maintenance, street furniture, public toilets, and all council land/allotments.

**1. Membership: Seven elected Members.**

- 1.1 Invited officers relevant to the management of assets, who will have no voting rights.
- 1.2 No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least 50% of the whole number of members of the committee, rounded up, are present.
- 1.3 Substitution of members- substitutes should be nominated by the member of the committee planning to be absent and notified to the Proper Officer in writing by 15.00 on the day of the meeting.

**2. Delegated Business: The Committee has the following delegated powers:**

- 2.1 To consider and resolve issues relating to the administration and maintenance of the Town Hall, Assembly Hall and all other properties owned by the Town Council, all public owned spaces, play areas, allotments, and the closed churchyard.
- 2.2 To maintain existing bus shelters, street furniture, and CCTV equipment and consider provision of new items where necessary within approved budgets.
- 2.3 To consider the process of redeveloping the Assembly Hall.
- 2.4 To conclude the outstanding works at the King George V Playing Fields and provide updates.
- 2.5 Review all budget lines and monthly accounts for all assets listed, managing relevant budget lines allocated and provide update reports.
- 2.6 To approve expenditure within budget and to refer any requests for expenditure over budget to Full Council.
- 2.7 Have oversight of the asset register and ensure it is regularly updated by the RFO.
- 2.8 Have oversight of the fabric of the buildings and the use of the building and the business case for said use.
- 2.9 To implement any works recommended in the Buildings Condition Surveys Reports.
- 2.10 Setting of fees, terms and conditions of use, and provision of equipment for areas under its control.
- 2.11 Liaison with community organisations which have an interest in recreational facilities in the town.

- 2.12 Vehicles and equipment within the area of its responsibilities and not under the control of any other committee.
- 3. Referred Business: To consider and make recommendations to the Town Council on the following matters:
  - 3.1 Budget estimates, to be prepared no later than October each year and submitted to the RFO.
  - 3.2 Any other matters referred to the Committee by Full Council.
  - 3.3 Any other matters referred to the Committee by Council Working Groups for whom the Committee is the parent Committee.



# AGENDA

## Amenities & Facilities

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| <b>1. Apologies.</b>  | <b>19.00 – 19.01</b> |
| To receive and consider acceptance for apologies and absences               |                      |
| (Local Government Act, 1972 s.85)   |                      |
| <b>2. Declaration of interests.</b>   | <b>19.01 – 19.02</b> |
| To declare an interest relating to the business of the meeting.             |                      |
| (Melksham Town Council Code of Conduct)                                     |                      |
| <b>3. Minutes</b>   | <b>19.02 – 19.05</b> |
| To receive the minutes of the previous meeting                              |                      |
| (Local Government Act 1972, s. 12)  |                      |
| <b>4. Public participation</b>  | <b>19.05 – 19.25</b> |
| To allow public participation, 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes allocation. |                      |
| (Local Government Act 1972, s. 12)  |                      |
| <b>5. Allotment report</b>  | <b>19.25 – 19.30</b> |
| To note completion of lease   |                      |
| To agree the fees for allotment holders for 2026/2027                       |                      |
| (Small Holdings & Allotments Act, 1908 s 23)                                |                      |
| <b>6. Memorial benches and memorial trees report</b>                        | <b>19.30 – 19.40</b> |
| (Melksham Town Council Policy and Local Government Act 1972)                |                      |
| To consider the adoption of Melksham Town Council's policy.                 |                      |
| <b>7. Splashpad</b>   | <b>19:40 – 19:50</b> |
| To receive the report on Splashpad  |                      |
| To approve opening times for 2026/27 season                                 |                      |
| <b>8. Wiltshire Towns Programme</b>   |                      |
| For decision  |                      |



## **9. Letters to Heaven**

For decision on installation of a Letters to Heaven Post Box

## **10. Trees in East Melksham**

For decision on whether to accept in principle responsibility for the trees once planted.

## **11. Flower Displays**

For decision on awarding contract.

## **12. Items to note**

To note items as per report

## **13. Confidential Session**

Members are requested to make the following resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. In view of the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw

## **14. Assembly Hall**

To receive and consider Assembly Hall costs for 2026.

To



2025

## MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL



# Asset & Facilities Report

*Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025*



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## Item 5 Allotments Report

### Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

Policy 14 – Open Spaces and Policy 12 Promoting opportunities for people to lead healthier lifestyles.

**Prepared by: CEO, contributions from the Amenities Supervisor**

#### 1. Introduction

This report provides an update on Melksham Town Council's allotment sites, lease arrangements, site availability, recent resident feedback, and recommendations regarding fees and charges for the forthcoming allotment rental period.

#### 2. Lease agreement confirmation

The CEO can confirm that a sealed lease agreement has been finalised with Wiltshire Council, effective from **31st July 2025 to 31st July 2031**.

#### 3. Allotment sites and plot distribution

Melksham Town Council currently manages a total of **116 allotment plots** across the following sites:

Site	Number of Full Plots
Awdry Park	15
Addison Road	10
Dorset Crescent	3
Methuen Avenue	41
Milton Avenue	2
Portman Road	2
Southbrook Road	39
Wiltshire Crescent	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>

#### 4. Grounds Maintenance and Resident Feedback

The council has received a variety from allotment tenants regarding the grass cutting schedule.



- The **Amenities Team has now completed** the required grass cutting across all sites.

**Recommendation:** The Amenities supervisor is to implement a scheduled maintenance plan to ensure grass cutting is consistently delivered at all sites, with tenant communication to be improved around maintenance timings.

Finance Officer to implement a comprehensive database of all tenants to ensure smooth communication.

Amenities Supervisor and Finance Officer to provide a detailed allotment survey on sites, signage, and water access.

## 5. Rental Charges and Statutory Notice

Under the **Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908**, the Council is required to provide **12 months' notice** to tenants before implementing any increase in rental fees.

It is proposed that the rental fees be approved for the period: **1st October 2026 – 1st October 2027**

- **Full Pitch:** £60.00 + VAT
- **Half Pitch:** £30.00 + VAT  
*(An increase of £10.00 per pitch from the previous rate)*

This proposed increase will support ongoing maintenance, site improvements, and administrative costs associated with managing the allotment service.

## 6. Recommendations - Councillors are requested to:

1. **Note** the completion of the sealed lease with Wiltshire Council.
2. **Approve** the proposed allotment fees for the period 1st October 2026 – 1st October 2027. Officers to formally notify tenants of the rent increase by the required 12-month statutory notice period.

## Item 6 Memorial Benches and Trees

**Report Author:** CEO, contributions from Amenities Manager and Committee Clerk.

### 1. Introduction of the Report

The purpose of this report is to outline the current situation regarding memorial benches and trees in Melksham and to seek Council approval to develop a formal memorial benches and trees policy. The report also recommends initial steps towards creating a more structured, fair, and sustainable approach to how the Council manages memorial requests from members of the public.

### 2. Background

Melksham Town Council regularly receives enquiries from residents who wish to commemorate loved ones through the installation of a memorial bench or the planting of a memorial tree within local parks or open spaces. While these requests are received in good faith and reflect important community sentiment, the Council currently does not have up to date policy or process in place to manage such applications.

This can result in inconsistencies in how requests are handled, uncertainty about available locations, and confusion over costs, maintenance responsibilities, and the long-term management of memorials.

### 3. Relevance to the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

The introduction of a Memorial Benches and Trees Policy supports the aims of the **Neighbourhood Plan** by aligning with several key policies and priorities:

#### Protecting and Enhancing Green Infrastructure

- The policy encourages the enhancement of green spaces for community use, biodiversity, and enjoyment. A structured memorial programme respects the integrity of green infrastructure while allowing personal contributions to enhance public spaces.

#### Promoting Health, Wellbeing and Community

Providing respectful opportunities for remembrance contributes to the emotional wellbeing of residents and strengthens community identity and cohesion.

## Local Character and Distinctiveness

- The use of consistent and high-quality memorials ensures they complement and reflect the character of Melksham's open spaces and built environment.

This report and its proposals will help ensure that the Council manages memorials in a way that is consistent with the sustainable growth, quality design, and community values set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.

## 4. Summary of Best Practice

Applications must be made on an official application on the Melksham Town Council website and are subject to Council approval.

- All benches and trees are purchased and installed by the Council to a standard design.
- Donors cover the full cost of the bench or tree, including installation and plaque.
- Maintenance is carried out in line with routine Council schedules.
- Plaques must meet size 200 mm wide x 70 mm and design.
- Additional mementoes (flowers, ornaments, etc.) are not permitted.

## 5. Proposal for Melksham Town Council

It is proposed that Melksham Town Council develop and adopt the Memorial Benches and Trees Policy that would:

- Set out clear guidelines and eligibility criteria for applicants.
- Define approved locations where memorials can be placed.
- Include a standard specification for benches, trees, and plaques.
- Confirm roles and responsibilities for installation, maintenance, and future repairs.
- Ensure full cost recovery from applicants for materials, labour, and administration.
- Establish a Memorial Register for ongoing communication and record-keeping.

## 6. Financial considerations

There are no direct costs to the Council, as all materials and labour would be recovered through fees paid by applicants.

## 7. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. **Approve** the Memorial Benches and Trees Policy
2. **Approve** the Memorial Bench design, which is already installed in KGV.
3. **Approve** pricing structure, cost of native tree, water bag, plaque, and installation costs. Prices may vary.
4. **Approve** cost of the bench £631.77 + Vat, plaque, and installation costs. Price may vary.



## Item 7 Splash Pad

### Melksham Splash Pad – Operational Report and Review (Summer 2025)

#### 1. Introduction

The Splash Pad officially opened for the 2025 summer season on Good Friday, operating daily from 11:00 AM to 18:00. It is a free-to-use public amenity provided and managed by Melksham Town Council.

The facility not only supports community wellbeing but plays a pivotal role in delivering the aspirations of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan by enhancing green space usage, promoting health and wellness, and improving youth and family-friendly infrastructure.

#### 2. Alignment with the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

The Splash Pad directly supports the strategic objectives outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan, particularly:

- **Green Infrastructure and Recreation** – by maintaining and improving leisure facilities within King George V Park.
- **Community Facilities** – by promoting inclusive, intergenerational use of open spaces and enhancing social wellbeing.
- **Accessibility & Inclusion** – by providing accessible play options for children of all abilities, supported through the continuation of **SEN-specific sessions**.

#### 3. Operational Management: Water Testing and Staffing

For the 2025 season, significant updates were implemented:

- **Water Testing Frequency:**
  - Conducted **every 2 hours**, with a **minimum of three tests per day**.
  - A **fourth test** is implemented as a **risk mitigation measure**.



- **New Water Testing Protocol (Summer 2025 Trial):**
  - Water testing has been incorporated into the **Amenities Team's daily routine**.
  - This change was implemented to improve efficiency and internal resource management.
- **Training:**
  - A dedicated water testing training session was delivered in **August 2025**.
  - Attendees: **Facilities Manager, Duty Manager, Community Assistant**, and the **placement student**.
  - **Training Cost:** £500.00 + VAT.
  - Outcome: Broadened internal knowledge base and improved staffing resilience.
- **Operational Flexibility:**
  - The Amenities Team is permitted to be **off-site (within 20 minutes)** unless an issue arises. This maintains flexibility while ensuring response capability.

#### 4. Operational Challenges and Infrastructure Issues

A significant issue has been encountered relating to recent **flooring replacement works**:

- The contractor engaged for the **flooring installation** has been the subject of multiple complaints:
  - **Faults in installation** have led to **unplanned closures** of the Splash Pad.
  - The same contractor performed work in **Swindon** and **Oxford**, with both councils reporting **similar failures**.
- **Actions Taken:**
  - Ongoing correspondence is being led by the **Chief Executive Officer** to address liability and discuss potential **compensation** for downtime and reputational damage.

#### 5. Financial Overview (Summer 2025)

- **Estimated Total Running Costs** (*subject to final review*):

Category	Estimated Cost (£)
Flooring (replacement)	£18,145.44
Annual Service	£13,456.58
Chemicals	£473.00 based on 2024 - 2025
Water usage	£9,123.15 (based on 24 – 25 fees)
Electricity	TBC
Staffing (inc. testing)	£370.00 per week.
Training	£500 + VAT

Note: Exact figures to be confirmed with the financial reporting team at year-end.

## 6. Recommendations for 2026 Season

Based on 2025 observations and community feedback:

- **Recommendation to confirm Seasonal Opening Dates (2026):**
  - **Start: Saturday 1st May**
  - **End: Sunday 27th September**
  - **Easter Holiday Consideration:** 1st – 9th April (Note: the Splash Pad will **not open** during Easter but pre-season checks to be scheduled during this period).
- **Recommendation to continue** to continue the **dedicated weekly SEN-friendly session** every **Wednesday from 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM**.
- **Recommendation for water testing:** continue integrating testing into the **Amenities Team schedule** with support from the wider council team for the mid-day test.
- Officers to discuss with the contractors regarding options for flooring, replacement of the filter, and information and recommendations will be brought back to the council.

## Item 8 Wiltshire Towns Programme

**Report Author:** CEO

### 1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to present a detailed update and overview of the upcoming installation of new **public realm planters** across key locations in Melksham town centre, delivered in partnership with Wiltshire Council through the **Wiltshire Towns Programme**. This report also outlines project status, site details, and how the scheme aligns with the **Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (2020–2026)**.

### 2. Background

Wiltshire Council launched the **Wiltshire Towns Programme** to improve town centre environments, increase footfall, and support civic pride. As part of this initiative, Melksham has been allocated funding to install permanent, high-quality **planters** that will enhance visual appeal, promote biodiversity, and act as passive street barriers where appropriate.

Melksham Town Council is responsible for long-term maintenance under a **10-year Section 96 Highways Licence**, with installation carried out by approved highways contractors.

### 3. Project Status Update

- The **Section 96 licence application** has been **approved by Wiltshire Council**, covering all identified sites.
- The **planters have been ordered**, and we are now **awaiting a confirmed delivery date**, with a **maximum delivery window of 8 weeks**.
- **Water bags** (for efficient summer watering) and **trees** (Silver Birch and Juneberry) will be **ordered in due course** to coincide with installation schedules.
- Locations have been assessed for visibility, pedestrian access, proximity to highways infrastructure, and compatibility with CCTV and utility access.

### 4. Proposed Planter Locations and Specifications

All planters are **circular, timber-clad** units either **1.5m or 2m in diameter** and **1m in height**, some with **integrated seating**. Planting will include **multi-stemmed trees** (Silver Birch or Juneberry).

Location	Planter Size	Details
1. Bradford Road Splitter Island (Opp. Autotech)	1 x Large (2m)	Multi-stemmed Silver Birch. Allow cherry picker access to streetlight.
2. Pavement by Lidl	3 x Small (1.5m)	Maintain visibility of traffic lights.
3. Lowbourne Pavement	3 x Small (1.5m)	Avoid utilities, maintain 2m pedestrian space, no bus stop obstruction.
4. Church Street (Corner by Toilets)	1 x Small (1.5m)	Juneberry tree, no obstructions identified.
5. Market Place (By Bus Stop)	1 x Small (1.5m)	Continue street furniture flow. Juneberry tree.
6. Market Place (Between Poles)	2–3 x Small (1.5m)	Juneberry trees, to deter vehicles.
7. Market Place Taxi Rank (Paved Area)	1 x Large (2m) with Seating	Silver Birch. Existing bin to be relocated. Two small black planters (Bloom in Melksham) to be moved.

## 5. Technical and Legal Considerations

- **Section 96 Licence** – To be approved by Wiltshire Council for 10 years.
- **Installation Requirements:**
  - Minimum **40cm distance** from live carriageway edge.
  - **2m pedestrian walkway** must be retained.
  - Must not block visibility, CCTV coverage, utilities or streetlights.
  - Installation by **NRSA-accredited highways contractors**.
- **Long-term maintenance** to be provided by the Amenities Team and scheduled accordingly.

## 6. Link to the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (2020–2026)

This project supports several key policies within the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan:

- **Green Infrastructure:** Adds visible greening and biodiversity in hardscaped areas.
- **Health & Wellbeing:** Encourages walking, offers seating, and improves the urban environment.
- **Built Environment:** Reflects local character and supports the vision of a distinctive, welcoming town centre.

**Recommendation** to proceed with the section 96 license to utilize the opportunities of roundabout sponsorships and flower and displays.

## Item 9 Letters to Heaven – Partnership with Westerleigh Group, Semington Crematorium

Melksham Town Council is proud to announce a new and heartfelt initiative titled “**Letters to Heaven**”, launched in partnership with **Semington Crematorium** and supported by local businesses and community stakeholders.

### Overview of the Initiative

The *Letters to Heaven* project provides a meaningful and comforting way for individuals to express their thoughts, emotions, and messages to loved ones who have passed away. A dedicated **Letters to Heaven post box** will be installed in **Friends of Melksham Garden**—a peaceful, accessible space open to all members of the community.

Each month, **Melksham Town Council** will collect the letters and deliver them to **Semington Crematorium**, where staff will respectfully handle them. The process provides a symbolic and therapeutic outlet for grief, remembrance, and emotional connection.

### The Story Behind the ‘Letters to Heaven’ Memorial Postboxes

The very first *Letters to Heaven* memorial post box was unveiled in **December 2022** at **Gedling Crematorium** near Nottingham, which is operated by the **Westerleigh Group**. The idea came from then nine-year-old **Matilda Handy**, whose mother, **Leanne**, is a Memorial Advisor at the crematorium.

“Matilda was always saying she wished we could send Mamma and Grandad birthday and Christmas cards for them to read. She was four when my mum died and never met my dad.”

Leanne's father passed away in 2003, and her mother whom Matilda had a very close bond with passed in 2017. Wanting to help her daughter maintain a connection with her grandparents, the idea of a memorial post box was born.

A meeting was recently held between representatives of the Town Council—including the **CEO, Communications Officer, Chair of the Council**, and **Chair of Assets and Facilities** and the **Manager of Semington Crematorium** to plan the collaboration and practical implementation.

The **Friends of Melksham Garden** was chosen as the location for the post box, offering a peaceful environment accessible to all, including residents of the **Appley** and **Townsend** estates.



### **Recommendation.**

Melksham Town Council works in partnership with Westerleigh Group to provide Melksham Residents with a Letter to Heaven Post Box.

### **Item 10 Trees in East Melksham**

The Deputy Mayor has received confirmation from Melksham Green Space that Wiltshire Council have all but agreed to the 400 trees being planted in the East of Melksham location.

The only step left before we receive official confirmation is agreeing an ongoing management plan. The understanding is that Melksham Green Space will take on most of the care, but the Town Council will need to take on the responsibility in principle – perhaps by adding the trees to the regular grounds schedule – even if no immediate action is required.

The Deputy Mayor is happy to work with Annie, Ian, Dave and Adrienne to make sure there's a clear understanding of what's needed. This is a really positive development and a good news story for us.

**Recommendation.** Agree responsibility in principle.

### **Item 11 Flower Displays**

Melksham Town Council Invited to tender for the provision of Flower Displays for 2026 – 2029. Closing Date was 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

**Recommendation** to approve the Flower Display Procurement to be awarded to Bath and Somerset Council for 2026 -2029

### **Item 12 Items to Note**

#### **Open Spaces**

To note that a report will be submitted to the next meeting.

15 dead tresses will be removed week of the 15<sup>th</sup> September.

### **MTC Vehicles**

To note that officers are working on a report to submit to the committee with recommendations for MTC vehicles.

### **CCTV**

Additional CCTV coverage of Church Walk will be provided by the installation of a high definition camera. The costs is £2,100 ( EX Vat)

### **Item 13 Private and confidential.**

Discussions of Assembly Hall



**Melksham Town Council**  
**Minutes of the Committee**  
**on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

PRESENT: Councillor A Westbrook (chair)  
Councillor P Aves  
Councillor J Crossley  
Councillor A Griffin  
Councillor J Westbrook

IN ATTENDANCE Councillor J Oatley

OFFICERS Hayley Bell Acting CEO/Town Clerk  
Tracy Predeth Locum Clerk  
Dave Elms Amenities Manager  
Brian Bennett Facilities Manager  
Andrew Meacham Committee Clerk

PUBLIC: Three members of the public were present.

**1/25 Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**2/25 Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3/25 Public Participation**

Resident - What are the plans regarding the equipment purchased for the dog park that remain in storage. Where does the council plan to use this and when? Understand that the equipment was going to be modified and replaced.

Chair - Set out a timeline. Equipment is not fit for purpose and has scrap value only, the suppliers having gone out of business. There are no plans to put any equipment into the dog park. No senior officers in post were involved and council must learn from the experience and draw a line in the sand.

Resident - Dog Park area is a flood zone and there has been talk of re-naturalisation. Removal and replacement of the remaining play surface would require flood advice and potentially a licence from the Environment Agency. What flood advice has the council been given regarding the flood zone in KGV and have the licenses been obtained to do the work?

Chair - Confirmed that the contractor was approved by the Environment Agency and has all necessary qualifications and certification to carry out the work. The Chair confirmed that

only the wet pour was being removed. Area will be levelled and very thin layer of topsoil added if required. Contractor has all necessary licences.

Resident - Since COVID, why has the Masterplan not been progressed? What are the timeline and intentions of the current council to finally deliver the masterplan that was consulted on 5 years ago? The Chair has already said that the matter will; be reviewed so presume a timeline will be forthcoming once the review is completed.

Resident – Why were funds used for the dog park when it had not been consulted? Appreciate that councillors present were not involved and it was a decision made by council at the time.

Resident – Would councillors agree that the main park should be fit for use by the whole town including the minority 1% with severe disabilities and how are you looking at ensuring that the plans are being implemented to accommodate them such as installation of changing places, facilities, speciality play equipment and sensory items?

Chair – Essential to get the masterplan back on the agenda. Would like, with council agreement, to get NVB back to do an update.

Resident – What about the actual specification of delivery to include items that are suitable for the 1% most disabled within our community.

Chair – Would hope that would be part of a masterplan update.

Resident – What sources of grant funding are the council exploring to expediate the delivery of the masterplan at KGV and other public spaces to ensure value for money and delivery in the near future.

Chair – Would expect this to be part of any work on the masterplan. First meeting of this committee in new council so many priorities.

Resident – What plans do the council have for managing and enhancing the biodiversity within KGV and other public spaces given the known presence of protected species such as bats and voles and given the high publicity on things such as the UN Sustainability goals for biodiversity and the Government's 25 year Environmental Improvement Plan of 2021.

Chair – Biodiversity is discussed on many occasions and there is an item on the agenda to fund a study. Very keen and again would be part of the masterplan. Biodiversity Plan is a very good idea and high importance but also have to be aware of staffing levels.

Resident – Can council commit to ensuring full, completed ecological surveys are done on all Town Council managed land and that the results of those surveys are published to enable community groups and others to access the information freely. I work for an environmental charity and there are many volunteers willing to carry out annual species and habitat surveys and keep that information up to date. Is that something the council would commit to doing.



Chair – Cannot commit to that tonight as not on the agenda. Can ask the CEO to put it on a future agenda and ask the resident to attend to help move it forward.

#### **4/25 Committee Membership**

This item was advanced up the agenda.

It was proposed by Councillor A Westbrook, seconded by Councillor J Westbrook and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Oatley to the Facilities & Amenities Committee.

#### **5/25 Minutes**

The minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025, having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair Councillor J Westbrook.

#### **6/25 Vice Chair**

It was proposed by Councillor J Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Crossley and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Oatley as Vice Chair of the Facilities & Amenities Committee.

#### **7/25 Finance**

It was noted that there are anomalies and the Acting CEO/Town Clerk would be meeting with the RFO.

#### **8/25 East of Melksham Tree Planting**

Councillor A Westbrook spoke to the item.

It was proposed by Councillor A Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Aves and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve payment of £500 for an Ecology & Diversity Report from the sums held in reserve for the project. Councillor Griffin and Councillor J Westbrook will seek to recover the cost from Wiltshire Council.

#### **9/25 Amenities Team**

The Amenities Manager gave his report

It was proposed by Councillor J Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Griffin and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to devolve power so that the Amenities Manager, in consultation with the CEO/Town Clerk can decide on day to day opening of the Splashpad based on the weather conditions, provided a decision to close is communicated to councillors.

It was felt that no decision was needed on playground upgrades programme as resolutions had been made previously and action could be taken based on ROSPA Report and visual inspection.

The Chair reminded those present that a resolution had been passed that no tree should be planted without a watering bag. It had also been suggested that trees have details to enable residents to contact the Town Hall if they think a tree needs watering.

The committee asked that officers look into improving the provision of water to allotments. It was suggested that water butts could be offered.

The report was noted.

### **10/25 Facilities/Assembly Hall Update Report**

The Facilities Manager gave his report.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow a member of the public to speak on CCTV.

The resident asked for clarification on the exact location of new cameras. It was confirmed that the location was still to be decided on the basis of advice from Wiltshire Police. The resident referenced a letter he had delivered to the Town Hall and asked for a response.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

The report was noted.

### **11/25 Town Centre Regeneration**

The Acting CEO/Town Clerk presented the update.

It was noted that planters on the high pavement had been vetoed by Wiltshire Council.

Members expressed concern about the condition of the K2 telephone box located in Littlejohn Avenue.

### **12/25 Asset Transfer**

It was noted that architects were to be invited to present to the Council.

### **13/25 Confidential Session**

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential and sensitive nature of the business about to be transacted, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 the public and press are excluded and are instructed to withdraw.

### **14/25 Health & Safety Audit Report**

The Locum Clerk, the Acting CEO/Town Clerk and the Facilities Manager spoke to the item.

The Facilities Manager confirmed that there was a schedule of works to address issues in the report. Members asked for a progress report to be provided to Full Council.

Meeting closed at:

Signed ..... Dated .....



# Melksham Town Council Memorial Bench and Tree Policy

Date Adopted:

Date Amended

Date Due For Review:



## 1. Sponsorship of ~~Commemorative~~/Memorial Benches and Trees Policy

~~1.1 To add to the quality of Town Council parks and open spaces, seating is provided to allow visitors to enjoy the environment and the outdoor space. The Town Council believes that seating is an essential element of the out-door offer and something that all well-maintained and managed parks should accommodate. Seating encourages parents to bring children to parks and watch them play in comfort, seating also offers the less able and older people a welcome rest.~~

1.1 Melksham Town Council is committed to providing facilities to allow residents and visitors to enjoy the environment and the outdoor space. Seating and trees are essential elements of the out-door offer and something that all well-maintained and managed parks should accommodate. Seating encourages parents to bring children to parks and offers all a welcome place to rest.

1.2 ~~The~~ Town Council offers opportunities which enable members of the community to sponsor, at approved locations, benches or trees ~~(at approved locations)~~ (hereafter referred to as “the memorial”) in memory of a loved one. It is envisaged that donated memorials benches will be placed in the town’s parks and open spaces and other ~~agreed (in advance)~~ locations that have been agreed in advance.

1.3 Applications for ~~benches~~ memorials in locations other than on the council’s approved list will be considered and if they meet the requirements of Highways and Town Council terms, approval may be granted.

## 2. Principles

2.1 Through this policy the Council will try to ensure that donations and sponsorship at such facilities are appropriate, regulated, and managed. This policy will be reviewed periodically and will be made available to the public and to all applicants for ~~bench donations~~ memorials.

2.2 The Council will ensure a clear, measurable, and sympathetic approach to the provision and management of ~~bench donations~~ memorials and will take into account the ~~sometimes~~, contrasting needs of a variety of users.

2.3 The policy will also seek to ensure that donated benches have a common appearance, style and size which are appropriate for their location and will not cause offence to others.

2.4 The Town Council will not permit third parties to provide their own ~~benches~~ memorials for installation.

## 3. Locations

### 3.1 Donated Benches



Suitable locations within the town where people are likely to make good use of the bench will be considered. Whilst the council will consider any reasonable requests for placing a donated bench we ask prospective donors to be mindful of requesting locations that are accessible and where it can be demonstrated that the bench will be used. Likewise, the council will have to be mindful that to maximise the lifespan of the bench, locations with high levels of vandalism and that offer poor access for maintenance may not be suitable.

Once a bench is erected in a public area, it becomes available for anyone to use. The Town Council has a number of attractive places for memorial benches to be situated, including:

- St Michaels Closed Churchyard
- King George V Park
- All parks and open spaces (under Town Council control)

### 3.2 Existing Benches

The council recognises that in some areas of the town that have a special significance for the donor/person being remembered there may already be a sufficient supply of seating. In this instance, the council may be able to offer the opportunity to replace an existing bench that is coming towards needing to be replaced OR allow the donor to adopt an existing bench for the placement of a suitable plaque with the council being able to use their donation to supply a bench in another area of the town where the council feels it would benefit the community.

### 3.3 Trees

Trees must be suitable for the proposed location and growing environment. Where possible, a selection of suitable types will be offered to the applicant based upon the chosen location.

## 4. Conditions of Scheme

4.1 The Town Council will arrange for the choice, specification and procurement of the bench memorial, its installation and suitable memorial plaque.

4.2 The cost of a memorial ~~bench is £1,000- will be set and reviewed by the Amenities and Facilities Committee with the advice of the Amenities Manager and the CEO/Town Clerk.~~ The cost ~~which~~ includes installation, regular maintenance, a ~~brass~~ plaque (with an approved inscription) 12.5 cm x 5 cm, naming the loved one to be remembered. ~~Purchase of a memorial/commemorative bench will be for the expected life period of the bench only, after which time it will be removed.~~

4.3 Once a ~~donated memorial~~ bench has been installed, it becomes the Town Council's property. When the memorial bench has reached the point of needing to be replaced as it is no longer economically repairable, the council will attempt to contact the donor and offer them the opportunity to replace the memorial bench at whatever the current cost at that

time is. If they choose not to replace the memorial bench the donor accepts that any replacement bench will not continue to display their plaque and may be sponsored by someone else and have a different plaque displayed.

4.4 It will be the responsibility of the donor to notify the Council if their address or contact details change.

4.5 Memorials~~s/commemorative benches~~ may not be used for advertising or commercial purposes.

4.6 ~~Benches~~ Memorials dedicated in memory of someone will require the agreement of the next of kin, personal representative and/or executor.

4.7 The inscribed plaque will be sourced and installed by the Town Council.

4.8 Plaques may contain the name of the person and date of birth and death and must be approved by the CEO/Town Clerk. Any additional personal inscriptions/dedications must also be approved by the CEO/Town Clerk, but such requests would not usually be declined. Where the CEO/Town Clerk recommends a request is rejected, the donor may appeal and ~~request that~~ the matter is will be considered by the council or any committee of the council that such responsibilities have been delegated to.

~~4.9 Dedications and donated benches will only be available to remember deceased people (not pets).~~

4.9 Plaques may not be fitted directly to memorial trees and will be placed adjacent to the tree by way of a ground spike.

4.10 Donated benches become the property of ~~the~~ Melksham Town Council and will be included in the council's standard insurance cover. However, the ~~Town~~ Council reserves the right to remove any bench which in its opinion is damaged or beyond economic repair, where it's replacement or repair is not possible through the council's insurance. In this event, the council would follow the procedure set out in 4.3.

4.11 Memorial trees will be maintained in accordance with Melksham Town Council's usual tree maintenance procedures. Should a memorial tree become diseased, reach the end of its life, become unsightly or become unsafe, Melksham Town Council reserves the right to remove the tree. In this event, the council would follow the procedure set out for benches in 4.3

4.12 The Town Council's open spaces are there for the enjoyment of everyone and as such are not considered to be 'memorial' gardens. Therefore, no additional mementoes e.g. vases, statues, balloons or other ornamentation etc., will be permitted on or around the ~~bench~~ memorial. These will be removed by the Council without reference to the original applicant.

4.13 Notwithstanding clause 4.12 above, the council does recognise that at anniversaries or other significant dates the donor or other individuals may want to place appropriate floral tributes. Such tributes should not prevent the use of the bench and should be removed within seven days. The Town Council reserves the right to remove any floral tributes/wreaths left by a bench after ten days without further reference to the donor.

## **5. Contact**

To arrange for a memorial/commemorative plaque to an existing bench or to donate a new bench, contact the Town Council by email [towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk) or telephone the Town Council office on 01225 704187.

~~Approved by the Asset Management and Amenities committee on 19 April 2022.~~

~~To be reviewed April 2024.~~