

Melksham Town Council
Minutes of the Full Council Meeting
on Monday 20th October 2025

PRESENT: Councillor S Rabey Town Mayor and Chair
 Councillor J Westbrook Deputy Town Mayor and Vice Chair
 Councillor P Alford
 Councillor P Aves
 Councillor E Calland
 Councillor R Cleary
 Councillor J Crossley
 Councillor G Elson
 Councillor J Oatley
 Councillor T Price
 Councillor C Stokes
 Councillor A Westbrook

IN ATTENDANCE Councillor J Hubbard (Wiltshire Council)

OFFICERS Hayley Bell CEO/Town Clerk
 Andrew Meacham Committee Clerk

PUBLIC Four members of the public and one member of the press were present and nine members of the public were present virtually

113/25 Apologies

There were no apologies.

114/25 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

115/25 Minutes

The minutes of 1st September 2025, having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor and Chair Councillor Rabey.

116/25 Public Participation

There was no public participation

117/25 Melksham Bloomers

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Cleary and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to move this item up the agenda.

Terry Welch spoke. Awards were as follows:

- Outstanding (Level 5) Awards
 - Conigre Mead Nature Reserve
 - Prince of Wales Garden & Community Larder
- Thriving (Level 4) Award
 - The Friends Garden
 - Town Centre & Flags
 - Church Walk
- Advancing (Level 3)
 - Canon Square & War Memorial
- Judges Discretion, Best Decorated Pub
 - The Tavern
 - The Bear (runner up)

The Town Mayor Councillor Rabey thanked the Melksham Bloomers for their hard work.

118/25 Questions from Councillors.

Councillor Alford referenced broken links on the website and asked if these could be fixed.

Councillor A Westbrook asked if the Clerk could again confirm that Melksham Town Council met the criteria for General Power of Competence. The CEO/Town Clerk confirmed that Melksham Town Council had the number of elected members to meet the criteria and had a qualified clerk.

119/25 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor had recently visited Alzheimer's Wiltshire to see the benefit from a grant awarded by the Town Council. A very positive experience.

120/25 Police Report

Sgt Rutter gave an update on the incident this weekend in Melksham Town Centre and also spoke to the report in the agenda pack.

121/25 Reports from Unitary Councillors

Councillor Alford

- Cemeteries. Wiltshire Council had plans which would give capacity until 2027 but now expected to reach burial capacity by January 2026.

- Introducing motion to Wiltshire Council on Utility Companies not taking responsibility for the condition of street cabinets.

Councillor Hubbard

- Decreasing Local Authority Funding will mean challenges ahead.
- Grant funding has been obtained for public transport infrastructure improvements
- Thanks to those who took part in consultation for Wiltshire Council Plan
- Blue Badge parking fees. Reinstatement of free parking has been through cabinet and will go to full council.
- WC backbenchers will be able to ask questions without prior notice. 20 minutes will be allocated in each cabinet meeting
- More time between written answers being given and cabinet meeting
- New guidance issued on informing councillors of issues and events in their ward
- Aloeric School selected to be in School Streets trial

Councillor Stokes

- Budget consultations underway. Anyone who missed public consultations can still contact their councillor.

Councillor J Westbrook

- Disability Fair on 5th November 2025
- Area Board on 12th November 2025

122/25 Melksham Adventure Centre Association

It was proposed by The Town Mayor Councillor Rabey, seconded by the Deputy Town Mayor Councillor J Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Cleary as Melksham Town Council representative to Melksham Adventure Centre.

123/25 East Melksham Community Centre

Standing Orders were suspended to allow Councillor Hubbard to speak.

Members debated whether one large or two small halls would be best and whether or not s106 funds were transferrable for a combined hall. It was noted that consultation indicated a majority in favour of one large hall. It was noted that there were other venues in the vicinity.

Councillor A Westbrook left the chamber for a short period and returned after the vote on this item.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Price and **RESOLVED THAT** the CEO/Town Clerk would find out the position with s106 funding and that a wider consultation would be undertaken.

124/25 Grant Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor Oatley, seconded by the Deputy Town Mayor Councillor J Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the recommendation from Community Development Committee to consider December grants in a stand alone meeting before the Community Development meeting.

125/25 Football Provision and Asset Transfer Opportunity – Champion Drive

Councillor J Westbrook left the chamber for a short period and returned before the vote on this item.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the CEO/Town Clerk continues discussions with Wiltshire Council, Future of Football and Wiltshire FA to explore the feasibility of an asset transfer, to return to Full Council in due course for consideration.

126/25 Partnership with Age UK

The Town Mayor Councillor Rabey left the chamber for a short period and the Deputy Town Mayor Councillor J Westbrook took the Chair. The Town Mayor Councillor Rabey returned before the vote on this item.

Councillor Cleary left the chamber for a short period and returned before the vote.

The CEO/ Town Clerk spoke to the item.

Two years was suggested instead of three but this was a joint project and Melksham Town Council needed to be in step with Melksham Without Parish Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Alford, seconded by the Deputy Town Mayor Councillor J Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to renew, as a Service Level Agreement, a three year partnership with Age UK, beginning April 2026, to support ongoing community services, with a provisional annual inflationary uplift of 3%.

127/25 Living Wage Employer

The CEO/Town Clerk spoke to the item and confirmed it would only affect the Assembly Hall casual staff.

It was proposed by the Deputy Town Mayor Councillor J Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Oatley and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Melksham Town Council commits to becoming a Living Wage employer from April 2026, ensuring all directly employed and regular contracted staff are paid at least the Real Living Wage, and seeks formal accreditation through the Living Wage Foundation with the appropriate annual fee.

128/25 Section 96 Licence for Roundabouts

Councillor Price left the chamber for a short period and returned before the vote on this item.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Cleary and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to

- renew its section 96 licence with Wiltshire Council for the planting and maintenance of highways verges and roundabouts
- commit to internal delivery of grass cutting and maintenance services
- continue to develop and implement a formal process for roundabout advertising in line with the licence terms.

129/28 Allotments motion

Councillor Elson withdrew the motion as protection was given by the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan.

130/25 White Ribbon Motion

Councillor Cleary spoke to the item.

There was discussion on the council taking a fully inclusive position on abuse. The CEO confirmed that there was something in the pipeline.

There was discussion on what practical actions would be taken after signing the White Ribbon Promise. It was noted that White Ribbon Day 2025 was on 25th November and the Town Hall could be lit up. It was also suggested that work should be done in schools and to make people aware of what constitutes abuse and it is not just physical violence.

It was proposed by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Drewett and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Melksham Town Council would

- formally sign the White Ribbon Promise, committing to never use, excuse or remain silent about violence against women and girls
- embed the principles of the White Ribbon campaign into Council policy, communications and community engagement activities
- publicly affirm that Melksham is a town that stands for respect, equality and safety for all

131/25 Acceptable Use of Email and Internet Policy

It was proposed by the Deputy Town Clerk Councillor J Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Oatley and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to adopt the policy.

132/25 Awarding Freedom of the Town Policy

It was proposed by the Deputy Town Mayor Councillor J Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Elson and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to adopt the policy.

133/25 Community Engagement Policy

It was proposed by Councillor Price, seconded by the Town Mayor Councillor Rabey and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to adopt the policy.

134/25 Co-Option Policy

It was requested that the policy be amended so that the absolute majority is of votes cast and does not take account of abstentions.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to adopt the policy with the suggested amendment.

135/25 Flag Flying Policy

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to adopt the policy.

136/25 Pre-Application for major Developments Policy

This policy was withdrawn by the CEO/Town Clerk as it was not required.

137/25 Publication Scheme Policy

It was proposed by the Deputy Town Clerk J Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Cleary and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to adopt the policy

138/25 Lone Working Policy

It was noted that Melksham Town Council has a Lone Working Policy

139/25 Fly Posting Policy

It was noted that this policy was redundant and was not being put forward for re-adoption.

140/25 Economic Development & Planning Committee

The minutes of 12th August 2025 and 2nd September 2025 were received.

141/25 Finance, Administration and Performance Committee

The minutes of 28th July 2025 were received.

142/25 Community Development Committee

The minutes of 16th June 2025 were received.

143/25 Amenities & Facilities Committee

The minutes of 9th June 2025 were received.

At this point Councillor Cleary came forward to formally sign Melksham Town Council up to the White Ribbon Pledge.

144/25 Age UK Wiltshire

The item was noted. The town Mayor Councillor Rabey had attended the event.

145/25 Fair Trade

The item was noted

146/25 Wiltshire Council Corporate Plan

The item was noted.

147/25 Blue Pool and Assembly Hall

It was decided that this item should not be in confidential session.

Councillor Oatley left the chamber briefly during this item.

The CEO/Town Clerk spoke to the item. There was discussion and the following put forward.

- Need to pin down the objective
- Public engagement with the Melksham Community (including operators of other halls) is required.

- Suggested invite architects to speak to wider community to show them the “art of the possible”.
- Need to pin down the finances.
 - Public Work Loans rates and repayments.
 - Other sources of funding.
 - Potential income from development to offset some of the loan cost
 - How these factors would affect MTC budget.
 - Can we dispose of other units and incorporate into the development.

148/25 Confidential Session

It was proposed by the Town Mayor Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Stokes

It was **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.

149/25 Public Toilets

The CEO/Town Clerk spoke to the item and outlined the issues. The CEO/Town Clerk confirmed that alternative quotes had been obtained.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to terminate the contract with IdVerde and enter into a new contract.

150/25 Staffing Matters

This item was not dealt with and will be considered at a later date.

Meeting closed at: 21:20

Signed

Dated