

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Full Council Annual Meeting

held on Monday 11 May 2026 at the Town Hall, Market Place, Melksham

PRESENT:	Councillor S Rabey	Town Mayor and Chair
	Councillor J Westbrook	
	Councillor P Alford	
	Councillor P Aves	
	Councillor E Calland	
	Councillor R Cleary	
	Councillor J Crossley	
	Councillor M Drewett	
	Councillor G Elson	
	Councillor J Oatley	
	Councillor T Price	
	Councillor C Stokes	
	Councillor A Westbrook	
	Councillor A Whitlock	
IN ATTENDANCE	Unitary Councillor J Hubbard	
OFFICERS	Hayley Bell	CEO/Town Clerk
	Ian Cunningham	Community
	Nicki Hudson	People
	Amelie Huxtable (virtually)	Placement Student
	Andrew Meacham	Committee Clerk
	Robert Reay-Waugh	Venues Manager
	Dominic Rutterford (virtually)	Communications & Marketing

PUBLIC One member of the public and one member of the press were present and seven members of the public were present virtually

1/26 Election of the Town Mayor

The Town Mayor, Councillor Rabey, called for nominations for the office of Town Mayor.

Councillor Rabey was proposed by Councillor J Westbrook and seconded by Councillor Elson.

Councillor Drewett was proposed by Councillor Oatley and seconded by Councillor Alford.

A recorded vote was held.

	Councillor Drewett	Councillor Rabey
Councillor Rabey		X
Councillor J Westbrook		X
Councillor Alford	X	
Councillor Aves		X
Councillor Calland	X	
Councillor Cleary	X	
Councillor Crossley		X
Councillor Drewett	X	
Councillor Elson		X
Councillor Griffin	Not present	Not present
Councillor Oatley	X	
Councillor Price	X	
Councillor Stokes		X
Councillor A Westbrook		X
Councillor Whitlock	x	
Totals	7	7

In accordance with Standing Orders the casting vote was given by the Town Mayor, Councillor Rabey.

Councillor Rabey was elected as Town Mayor.

2/26 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The newly elected Town Mayor, Councillor Rabey signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed and signed by the Town Clerk

3/26 Outgoing Mayor's Address

“Chair, Members of Council, officers,

As I come to the end of my term as Mayor, I would like to take a few minutes to reflect on the past year and to offer my sincere thanks to those who have supported me and worked alongside me during that time.

Serving as Mayor has been both an honour and a responsibility that I have taken very seriously. Representing Melksham, and this council, has given me an even deeper appreciation of the importance of the work we do and the impact it has on our town.

Over the past twelve months, I have seen the value of constructive debate, collaboration across committees, and a shared commitment to public service. While we do not always agree, I am proud of the way this council continues to work through issues thoughtfully and democratically, with Melksham firmly at the centre of our decision-making.

This year has reinforced for me how important it is to have a clear sense of direction for our town—supporting strong communities, encouraging local economic activity, protecting our environment, and planning responsibly for the future. These priorities are reflected in the decisions we make and the partnerships we build, both within this council and beyond it.

I would like to thank my fellow councillors for the time, care, and dedication you bring to your roles. Public service often sits alongside work, family, and other commitments, and that contribution should never be underestimated. It has been a genuine privilege to serve alongside you this year.

My thanks also go to our officers and staff. Your professionalism, expertise, and steady support are fundamental to the effective running of this council. Much of what you do happens behind the scenes, but it underpins everything we achieve and is very much appreciated.

Beyond this chamber, I have been continually inspired by the commitment of community groups, volunteers, charities, and local businesses. Their contribution to Melksham is extraordinary, and the council’s role in supporting and working in partnership with them remains vitally important.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my family and colleagues for their patience and encouragement over the past year. The role of Mayor extends well beyond formal meetings, and I have been grateful for the support I have received.

Thank you for the trust you placed in me, for the opportunity to serve as your Mayor, and for everything you do to support Melksham and those who live here. I look forward to continuing to serve this council and our town in the year ahead.”

4/26 Newly Elected Mayor’s Address

As the Town Mayor was re-elected a separate address was not given.

5/26 Election of Deputy Town Mayor

The Town Mayor, Councillor Rabey, called for nominations for the office of Deputy Town Mayor.

Councillor Elson was proposed by Councillor Rabey and seconded by Councillor J Westbrook.

Councillor Alford was proposed by Councillor Drewett and seconded by Councillor Cleary.

A recorded vote was held.

	Councillor Alford	Councillor Elson
Councillor Rabey		X
Councillor J Westbrook		X
Councillor Alford	X	

Councillor Aves		X
Councillor Calland	X	
Councillor Cleary	X	
Councillor Crossley		X
Councillor Drewett	X	
Councillor Elson		X
Councillor Griffin	Not present	Not present
Councillor Oatley	X	
Councillor Price	X	
Councillor Stokes		X
Councillor A Westbrook		X
Councillor Whitlock	x	
Totals	7	7

In accordance with Standing Orders the casting vote was given by the Town Mayor, Councillor Rabey.

Councillor Elson was elected as Deputy Town Mayor.

Councillor Drewett left the meeting at 7:10.

6/26 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The newly elected Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Elson signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed and signed by the Town Clerk.

7/26 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Griffin.

8/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

9/26 Public Participation

PP 1: Has the Council changed it's mind about reporting Splashpad closures and issues on the main Council Facebook page?

PP 2: Wish the council well in the coming year and hopes that the Council will honour the Ruel of Law.

10/26 Minutes

The minutes of 7 April 2026 , having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair and Town Mayor Councillor Rabey.

11/26 Civility & Respect Pledge

There was some debate about the impact of the pledge and the appropriateness of councillors signing it.

It was left to individual councillors to decide whether or not to sign.

12/26 Signing of Deeds and Legal Documents

It was proposed by The Town Mayor Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Crossley and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint the Town Mayor Councillor Rabey, the Deputy Town Mayor Councillor Elson, Councillor Aves and Councillor A Westbrook to sign Deeds and Legal Documents.

13/26 Signatories

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the existing six authorised Councillors, together with Councillor Crossley, The Deputy Town Mayor Councillor Elson, Councillor Oatley and Councillor Whitlock be appointed to the pool of signatories.

14/26 Standing Orders

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the Standing Orders 2026.

15/26 Financial Regulation

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the Financial Regulations 2026.

16/26 Investment Report

The report was noted.

17/26 Terms of Reference

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the terms of reference 2026

18/26 Operations Committee

The change of name to Operations Committee was raised. There was a clear wish to revisit the decision.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to rename Operations Committee as Assets & Facilities Committee.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Alford, Councillor Aves, Councillor Oatley, Councillor Rabey, Councillor A Westbrook, Councillor J Westbrook and Councillor Whitlock to the Assets & Facilities Committee.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor A Westbrook Chair of Assets and Facilities Committee.

19/26 Community Committee

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Aves, Councillor Calland, Councillor Crossley, Councillor Elson, Councillor Price, Councillor J Westbrook and Councillor Whitlock to the Community Committee.

Councillor J Westbrook was appointed chair of the Community Committee

20/26 Planning Committee

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Alford, Councillor Aves, Councillor Cleary, Councillor Griffin, Councillor Oatley, Councillor Rabey and Councillor Stokes to the Planning Committee.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Rabey Chair of Planning Committee.

21/26 Finance Committee

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Aves, Councillor Calland, Councillor Cleary, Councillor Crossley, Councillor Griffin, Councillor Rabey and Councillor A Westbrook to the Finance Committee.

Councillor Griffin was proposed as Chair by Councillor J Westbrook and seconded by Councillor A Westbrook.

Councillor Cleary was proposed as Chair by Councillor Oatley and seconded by Councillor Alford.

A recorded vote was held.

	Councillor Cleary	Councillor Griffin
Councillor Alford	X	
Councillor Aves		X
Councillor Calland		X
Councillor Cleary	X	
Councillor Crossley		X
Councillor Drewett	Not present	Not present
Councillor Elson		X
Councillor Griffin	Not present	Not present
Councillor Oatley	X	
Councillor Price	X	
Councillor Rabey		X
Councillor Stokes		X
Councillor A Westbrook		X
Councillor J Westbrook		X
Councillor Whitlock		X
Totals	4	9

Councillor Griffin was appointed Chair of the Finance Committee.

22/26 People

It was noted that under Standing Orders The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are automatic members and other members are appointed for the 4 year life of the Council. One appointment was needed due to the change of Deputy Mayor.

Councillor J Westbrook put herself forward and was seconded by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Elson.

Councillor Calland put herself forward and was seconded by Councillor Price.

By a majority vote Councillor J Westbrook was appointed.

Councillor Aves stood down as a substitute and was replaced by Councillor Calland.

People Committee membership confirmed as The Town Mayor Councillor Rabey, The Deputy Town Mayor Councillor Elson, Councillor Oatley, Councillor Stokes and Councillor J Westbrook. Subs were Councillor Alford and Councillor Calland

23/26 Budget Working Group

No appointments. Meetings are open to all councillors.

24/26 Cemeteries Task & Finish Group

Councillor Alford, Councillor Griffin and Councillor Stokes were appointed.

25/26 CCTV and Community Safety Working Group

Councillor Aves, Councillor Cleary and Councillor Stokes were appointed.

26/26 Community Allotment Task & Finish Group

Councillor Aves, Councillor A Westbrook, Councillor J Westbrook and Councillor Whitlock were appointed.

27/26 CIL Working Group

It was noted that Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council would have separate groups.

Councillor Alford, Councillor Crossley and Councillor A Westbrook were appointed.

28/26 Streaming Task & Finish Group

Councillor Elson, Councillor Price, Councillor Rabey and Councillor J Westbrook were appointed.

29/26 Shurnhold Fields Working Group

Councillor Alford, Councillor Calland and Councillor Rabey were appointed.

30/26 East of Melksham Community Centre (Melksham Without Parish Council)

Councillor Stokes was appointed as Town Council representative.

31/26 Outside Bodies

Appointments were made as follows.

Outside Body	Representative
2385 (Melksham) Air Training Corps	Councillor Elson, Councillor Whitlock
Area Board	Councillor Rabey
Friends of Melksham Hospital	Councillor Elson as informal point of first contact
LHFIG	Councillor Aves
Melksham Adventure Centre	Councillor Whitlock
Melksham Alms Houses Charities	Councillor Rabey and Councillor A Westbrook
Melksham Carnival	Councillor Elson and Councillor J Westbrook

Melksham Community Transport	Councillor Crossley
Melksham Health & Wellbeing Group	Councillor Crossley
Melksham Transport Users Group	Councillor Calland and Councillor Rabey
Rachel Fowler Centre Management Committee	Councillor Whitlock
Riverside Club Management Committee	Councillor J Westbrook
Shurnhold Fields (Friends of)	Councillor Alford or Councillor Rabey as point of contact
Wiltshire Association of Local Councils	Councillor Rabey
Wilts & Berks Canal Trust	Councillor Griffin
West Wiltshire – Elblag – Twinning Association	Councillor Aves

Meeting closed at: 19:56

Signed

Dated