

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Full Council

At Melksham Town Hall on Monday 27 July 2026

PRESENT:

Councillor R Rabey	Town Mayor and Chair
Councillor G Elson	Deputy Town Mayor and Vice Chair
Councillor P Aves	
Councillor E Calland	
Councillor J Crossley	
Councillor M Drewett	
Councillor A Griffin	
Councillor J Oatley	
Councillor C Stokes	
Councillor A Westbrook	
Councillor J Westbrook	
Councillor A Whitlock	

IN ATTENDANCE

OFFICERS

Hayley Bell	CEO/Town Clerk
Robert Reay-Waugh	Venues Manager
Alla Chaikovska	Events & Hospitality Intern
Andrew Meacham	Committee Clerk
Ian Cunningham (virtual)	Community Officer
Dom Rutterford (virtual)	Communications & Marketing Officer

PUBLIC Three members of the public and one member of the press were present and four members of the public were present virtually

65/26 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Alford and Councillor Price.

66/26 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

67/26 Minutes

The minutes of 15 June 2026 and 22 June 2026, having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor and Chair Councillor Rabey.

68/26 Public Participation

Resident 1.

Q1. When will the council be adding gates to the Blue Pool site? There has recently been a Tik Tok video of people breaking into the Blue Pool.

A1. The Mayor advised she was aware of the video. CEO advised that there was no date for installation, but quotes were being obtained. Will be a priority. Also confirmed in negotiations with companies about one of the shipping containers.

Q2. Why was the Winter Wonderland press release discussion being put into closed session? Closed session should only be used for very specific purposes.

A2. Council is aware that closed session is for specific purposes. CEO will review the Council's procedures on this.

Resident 2.

Q1. Previously asked when is the Annual Biodiversity Progress report going to be published. This is part of Biodiversity Policy but has never seen one.

A1. This is a piece of work that has not been done but does need to be done.

Q2. Agenda item 17.6 Free Parking. Notes that the costs were not in the agenda pack. Why is the own Council considering a scheme that encourages people to use cars? Would it not be better to encourage public transport? During time on the Council resident did look at the Corsham Free Parking Scheme but did not bring it forward.

A2. This is something that has been raised by residents and there are a number of issues that potentially will go to public consultation. The Town Council is not at this time considering introducing a free parking scheme on the Corsham model.

Q3. Previously I asked a question about why the Accountancy charge Nominal code 4057 Cost centre 110 for the year end 31st March 2026 was so high at £10,834 against a budget of £4,000. I was told at the time this was because it included other things. On public inspection the £10,834 includes £3,000.10 paid to Reed Recruitment Agency for recruitment of an RFO. Do councillors think that this entry was a miss posting?

A3. Yes, this was a mis coding. Should have been Legal & Professional Fees.

The resident also noted item 17.7 Church Street Toilets and was encouraged that action was being taken.

69/26 Questions from Councillors

There were no questions from Councillors.

70/26 Town Mayor's Announcements

There were no announcements.

71/26 Police Report

Sgt Chilton gave a report on recent operations and answered questions from Councillors.

72/26 Reports from Unitary Councillors

Councillor Griffin.

Recycling Centre appointment system in place from 14 September 2026. 30 minute slots. Bookings can be made from 8 September 2026. No current changes to opening hours, permits or waste types. Citizen ID account will be required to log on to booking system. Assistance is available via a dedicated telephone number. Has received emails both in favour and against the trial. No evidence in other areas of country of increased fly tipping. Results of trial will inform possible changes to opening days to improve access.

Councillor Stoke.

- Approval given to expand places at Silverwood School from 460 to 562. Not in Melksham but will impact families in Melksham.
- Wiltshire Council have sent draft plan for SEND School White Paper. Changes across county to get more support for SEND families at an earlier age.
- Hideout Club for neurodivergent young people aged 11-25 open until 20 August at Riverside Club.
- Details of summer activities available on Inclusive Wiltshire and from Wiltshire Parent Carer Council.
- Several businesses in Melksham looking into SEND Employer Champion scheme to allow SEND individuals to experience a workplace setting and possible employment.

Councillor J Westbrook.

- Changes to planning, including stopping councillors calling in applications. Wiltshire Council has resolved to write expressing their opposition.
- Introduced motion for Wiltshire Council to recognise that violence against women and girls was a national emergency. A member champion will be appointed, for which there has been cross party interest. Will work within council and liaise with partner organisations.
- Advised members that she had been targeted for changes to the motion. This had been reported to Wiltshire Police.

73/26 WTF 2026

Representatives questioned why the request to be in closed session was denied. It was pointed out that the KGV was a public asset and proposed events should be transparent.

Representatives spoke about proposal to move the festival to the KGV. Councillors asked questions. Members were supportive of the concept of the festival. Points of concern included why move from current site, capacity, amount of KGV to be fenced off from public access, noise control, communication with residents, alcohol consumption control, security, entry to & exit from the site, damage to grass, possibility of providing a community event on the Sunday, park & ride access.

It was suggested representatives contact Wiltshire Police Ops Planning.

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

RESOLVED that organisers hold future meetings with officers and Wiltshire Police Ops Planning to address concerns and the matter come back to the September full council meeting with a clear plan from Festival organisers.

There were two abstentions.

The representatives requested that councillors review the presentation and email concerns to the CEO.

74/26 Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Pafford's knowledge of the subject was noted.

It was noted that other councillors would still be able to attend appeals if they so wished.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor David Pafford to represent both Councils.

75/26 East Melksham Community Centre

Members were unwilling to fully remove the item from future agendas.

It was proposed by Councillor J Westbrook, seconded by Deputy Mayor and Vice Chair Councillor Elson and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to have quarterly updates.

76/26 Operational Flood Working Group

Councillor Griffin confirmed his agreement to be the rep.

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Councillor Griffin be appointed as Melksham Town Council rep to the Operational Flood Working Group.

77/26 Centenarian Motion

It was proposed by the Town Mayor and Chair Councillor Rabey, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and Vice Chair Councillor Elson and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to dedicate a bench in KGV to celebrate Centenarian's of the town.

78/26 Water Safety Equipment

The CEO spoke to the provision of equipment.

There was discussion on funding and maintenance.

The issue of people jumping from the "Black Bridge" was raised. Members requested the CEO look at signage for this area.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to purchase and install Inland Coastal (IC) rescue equipment containers and upgrade and standardise safety signage. Funding to come from £750 from grant budget and the balance from a source identified by the CEO.

The Town Mayor and Chair Councillor Rabey spoke to the issue of the slide.

Members felt that the issue was the terrain rather than the location. The focus should be on this and education rather than relocation.

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor and Vice Chair Councillor Elson, seconded by Councillor Whitlock and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED not to relocate the slide but to promote safety and install signage.

79/26 KGV Licence

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to

- approve the application for a local variation to permit activities at KGV Park from 07:00 to midnight, seven days a week, and agree to the removal of the original conditions set out in the initial application, allowing the Council to retain appropriate oversight while enabling greater flexibility for programming and community use.
- approve that Evie's Kitchen from 1st January 2027 will have its own license and therefore the council does not hold responsibility for a third party company. The council will support Evie's in the process to ensure a joint working relationship.

80/26 Scheme of Delegation

Councillor Griffin spoke to the item. The Town Mayor thanked Councillor Griffin for his work and the item was noted.

81/26 Blue Pool

The item was noted.

82/26 Councillor Register of Interests

The item was noted.

83/26 Berryfields Roundabout

The item was noted.

84/26 Crisis and Resilience Fund Update

The item was noted

85/26 Flag Policy

The item was noted.

86/26 Free Parking

The CEO spoke to the item. Details were not available before publication. Costs to provide free parking were

- Church Street, one hour £59916.58, two hours £79366.44
- King Street, one hour £15416.13, two hours £19254.08.

These figures do not take account of the upcoming price increase. CEO has requested figures for all car parks including income. The item was noted.

87/26 Church Street Toilets

The CEO confirmed initial investigations to confirm needs and costs.

The item was noted.

88/26 Neighbourhood Plan

The briefing note was noted.

89/26 Minutes

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 2 June 2026 & 23 June 2026, People Committee of 2 March 2026 & 22 June 2026, Live Streaming Task & Finish Group of 12 May 2026 and Community Allotment Task & Finish of 26 May 2026 were received.

90/26 Confidential Session

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

RESOLVED to go into confidential session.

91/26 Councillor Leave of Absence

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to grant Councillor Cleary a six month leave of absence from 11th May 2026 to 11th November 2026.

92/26 Winter Wonderland

The CEO spoke to the item and amendments were made to the statement.

Meeting closed at: 21:25

Signed

Dated